



Winter

January 2009

### Jan 2009 Commodore's Comments.

On our 101 sailing day on 1<sup>st</sup> February, I looked up from the calm waters and gentle breeze of the bay and took in the crystal clear views of snow capped Mauna Kea and reflected on recent storms passed. January brought heavy airs to our sailing club and we were incredibly lucky to survive with nothing worse than a few ruffled feathers.

Early in the morning of Jan 17<sup>th</sup>, high winds and waves caused Cheers to break free of her mooring. We were incredibly lucky in that Mauricio and Paula were keeping an overnight watch on their boat nearby and Cheers literally drifted over to them where they were able to catch hold of her and hang on while calling for help by sounding 5 blasts on an air horn. Tom Wolff who was aboard his trimaran nearby heard the call and came over to help and between them they were able to secure Cheers to a nearby mooring and drop an anchor. I cannot emphasise both how incredibly lucky we were that Cheers was saved in this manner, and also of course the depth of our gratitude to Mauricio, Paula, Tom and Ivo Hanza for their heroics in the small hours of the morning!

In total, four boats went AWOL from their normal mooring locations in Reeds bay that day; three were saved, one was unfortunately not so lucky. Moorings in Reed's bay are decidedly finicky. The mixture of fresh and salt water, combined with some strong electric currents through the water corrode

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### January Storms Offer Some Lessons!



A sad day.

By LaVonne Stewart

Mahalo and hats off to Mauricio Barbis of Volcano for his part in averting disaster for Na Hoa Holomoku two weeks ago during a northerly blow. Marine Weather had been predicting strong winds from the northwest for four days, then issued an all-clear for the weekend on Friday. As a result, Mauricio and

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# January Sailing 101



Left: Abandon Ship!

Below: Sailing Along on Hilo Bay



Above: How Sweet it is!

**Learn to Sail:** The first Sunday of each month is devoted to Sailing 101. Come on down to our Bayfront pavilion and get instruction on sailing our sunfish. You need not be a club member to join in!

Below: Tying a bowline



The BBQ is ready!

Always lots of new faces and lots of fun. Generally light winds make Hilo bay an exceptionally nice location for learning to sail.



Above: Been there, done that

## January Work Day

This month's projects included building a new storage container at our site on Bayfront. Members are encouraged to come and lend a hand.

Some ongoing projects include:

The restoration of Private Dancer, a sister-ship to Cheers.

Maintenance and repairs on our sailing fleet.



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metals quickly, and the weak tides combined with the gentle outflow of spring water conspire to alternately slack and tug on lines and cause them to twist up in difficult to understand ways. Most of our moorings use bluesteel polypro - an inch thick polypropylene line, with metal thimbles eyespliced into the ends, and galvanised shackles and swivels to form couplings and prevent twisting. We'd found the line on Cheers' mooring polypro was unravelling, with the individual strands twisting up and breaking, so we'd replaced the polypro with a webbing vehicle tow strap rated at 22,500lbs breaking strain. An inspection of the strap in December had shown it to be in good condition, however it seems that the hobby-horsing motion of Cheers in the higher waves had abraided the loop in the end of the strap to the point of literally sawing through it.

Richar Hudak, Alex Laurich and myself battled the wind and waves and went out to Cheers in the safety boat on Saturday morning and put some extra anchors out, though the conditions were too rough to consider repairing the mooring. Richard and I returned again on Sunday morning before the club sail day and I spent half an hour or so on SCUBA underwater but the zero visibility conditions underwater prevented us from locating the mooring. Another try on Monday brought success in that we were able to locate the mooring and replace the broken tow strap with another one - all that we had to hand at short notice, and move Cheers back home to her own mooring. To finish up the repair, Ron and myself went out on Jan 31<sup>st</sup> and re-built the

mooring using 3/8 inch galvanised chain. The underwater visibility on the seabed was a good eight inches, maybe up to a foot at times - not exactly the best dive site on the island, but enough to get the seizing wire on the shackles. Again, many mahalos to all who helped out during this time!

On that note, we shall be dedicating our next Potluck meeting on Feb 11<sup>th</sup> to saying a big thank you to Mauricio, Paula, Tom and Ivo for their heroics in saving Cheers, please do come along and join us. I would like to take this opportunity to say a couple of words about safety out on the water and on our club sailing events. A complete reminder on boating safety would of course be an article on it's own - I'd like to simply remind everyone to keep their eyes open and be alert on the beach and on the water. As you all know, we have the safety boat present at club events and we're being especially keen to ensure that someone is either on the boat on patrol, or on the beach and ready to go. If you see someone or some situation that causes you any cause for concern, then please do make sure that the person on safety boat duty is aware of it.

On a brighter note, I spoke to many sailors who had ventured beyond the breakwall on Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> Feb, to be rewarded with watching some Humpback Whales breaching, splashing out in the bay. If you're thinking about getting qualified to sail the big boats, what more incentive can we offer? Come and join us on Sailday Feb. 15<sup>th</sup>!

Aloha, and fair winds,

Commodore Paul.

## Racing News – The Finish of the Vendee Globe

### Racing to the Limits by Ron Reilly

Michel Desjoyeaux aboard his 60 foot yacht FONCIA has proved himself to be the best single handed racer in the world winning the event (the Vendee Globe) in 84 days and 3 hours. This years Vendee Globe is being rated as one of the toughest on record with only 12 yachts remaining of the 30 that started some three months ago



British sailor Dee Caffari aboard AVIVA is in 6<sup>th</sup> place at latitude 2 degrees south and about to drive her boat north across the equator some 1700 nautical miles from the finish says, “To watch him is totally inspiring. Even for people who are not interested in sailing, it has been an amazing performance. And then when he arrived in Les Sables d’Olonne he would have looked cool. He would have had a shave and a wash and a change of clothes. He would not have come in looking like he’d spent 80 days at sea. He would have come in looking like he was going out for dinner. That is part of the Desjoyeaux package. So cool.”



The only other woman in this year’s race British sailor Samantha Davies aboard ROXY and currently in 3<sup>rd</sup> place, says, “Every time I have been asked who my sailing hero is, I answered Mich (as everybody calls him) Desjoyeaux. I now think that many more people will understand why. He was always my favorite to win the race. Roxy and I have a special connection with him because my old lady is no other than the boat he won the race in for the first time eight years ago. Mich and I have been communicating by email through the race and it has been very important for me. In hard times, a little message from his Foncia would come to Roxy and encourage me and give me motivation. He has inspired me and I always try my best in his wake. Mich has just showed again what the sailing world already knew, he is one of the world’s best sailors of all time.”

The only American sailor in the race is Rich Wilson aboard GREAT AMERICA THREE. Rich has just exited the roaring forties and is now off the east coast of Brazil some 4452 nautical miles from the finish. Rich describes his “accidental gybe from hell” on Feb 1<sup>st</sup> as follows:

*The past 24 hours have been among the most difficult so far. A huge low, much wider east-west than forecast, has taken its toll. After finally getting to the west side which had the southerly winds, we took off at high speed with storm jib and 3 reefs in the mainsail in the late afternoon/evening. Into the dark the wind built from 25-30-35-40-45-50knots. It turns out that we had the fastest run for that period in the fleet. It was not intentional. The pilot was doing well, set on its highest response settings, but the wind and boatspeed kept rising. The highest I saw was 24.5 knots, the fastest of the whole race. Finally at about 3 am I realized that this could only end in disaster, the wind was not abating, and there was not way to know how much we might get, or how big the seas might*

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*get. Already, they were 25' and climbing, just gigantic, breaking in every direction, angry, and huge, gigantic masses of water with no good intentions. Another risk is if the mainsail is down and the boatspeed drops to 4 or 5 knots with just the storm jib, then you are at the mercy of the seas, and could get rolled over. There is dynamic stability in speed. Anyway, decided to try, had one arm in the foul weather gear, and the worst happened, the boat veered high, then low as the pilot tried to correct, I saw the number 40 degrees low OH NO, then a huge CRASH and the boat laid over on its side. The boat had gybed, and now the wind was on the wrong side of the mainsail, and the keel was canted fully on the wrong side. The boat laid over at about 70 degrees of heel and just sat there then the autopilot alarm went off, just to add to the fray. Got the jacket on, helmet on, gloves on, and went into the cockpit sideways. All old handholds are useless when you turn your world on its side. Waves were washing down the deck, but not too much coming into the cockpit because it was to leeward. The mast was still there. I tried to jam the tiller over, no response. Then I remembered, that is not the sequence. This has happened in various conditions 3 times before. OK*

*got to the keel, walking along the walls below, center the keel with the keel motor winch, was able to do this, and good that the batteries were up. Then go to the cockpit and try the tiller again, to try to gybe back. The boat was now more upright with the keel movement, and I pushed the tiller over hard, nothing, then something, then here it comes, she's turning, oh boy there's going to be a gigantic CRASH when it gybes back, hang on and duck, BAM, the mainsail gybed back again. I write this in the late afternoon, the wind is down to 35 knots, the seas are still gigantic, and perhaps I'll try to get the main back up before it gets dark if the wind continues to abate a bit. Anyway, dodged a gigantic bullet there, could have lost the rig, runners, could have gotten hurt trying to get the boat back in its right direction, or in bringing the sail down."*

**Rich Wilson (Great American III) in his daily message 1/2/09**



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**his wife Paula went out on their Petrel for an evening sail. The prevailing trades died to a flat calm and they did not return to their Reeds Bay mooring until very late and decided to remain on the boat over the night.**

**Around one-thirty in the morning, strong winds blew in from the north and boats began to drag and break free from their moorings. Mauricio and his wife spent the remainder of the night through early Saturday rescuing Island Song, Makani Kai, Imua and Cheers. Unfortunately, D. Foote's 28' Pearson Tritan, Patience, ran aground and was not able to be saved.**

**Mauricio sailed to the Islands in 1998 as navigator on a 63' schooner-rigged double canoe from Peru**

**where he had been a civilian sailing instructor for the Peruvian Navy. When asked how he felt being the hero of the day on Saturday he paused. "The boats," he said with a smile, "they just came to me." He credits the avoidance of total disaster to the fact that small-boat launching is available 24 hours a day at Reeds Bay allowing rescuers to put in Saturday without delay.**

**Thanks to all who turned out to check on the safety of the boats especially club leaders and Tom Wolff who is currently completing the salvage of the sloop Patience that ended up on the rocks. Maybe an honorary membership into the club is in order?**





## Want to buy a boat?

John M. Luchau

Many new sailors are interested in purchasing their very first boat and sometimes have a very limited amount of boating experience and really have no idea of what they really want. I think our club provides the opportunity for folks to get out on the water and experience different styles of boats so that our club members can get a feel for what they might want to purchase. I've been sailing for going on to 40 years and still have doubts as to what I might purchase if I were to look for a different boat. Here's how I would go about considering boats if I was going to do it the objective way: Purpose, hull material, hull design, keel shape, rig, engine type and size of boat

Above: That's the boat I want!

**Purpose:** The purpose and most use you will put your boat to should be the first item of consideration. You wouldn't want to purchase a \$50K ocean cruiser if the majority of your sailing will be in Hilo Bay only on light wind days and wanting to launch from the beach. So, if you wish to do coastal cruising or just inter-island hopping your boat could be a very inexpensive production boat up to 30 feet with an outboard engine. If you just want to enjoy a few afternoons a month and like catamarans, then maybe a Hobie 16 catamaran would do or if you prefer monohulls as I do then a Sunfish or a Laser or a Flying Junior might suit your needs better. Each is different and has distinguishable sailing characteristics.

**Hull Material:** Once you've decided the purpose of your boat then it's time to decide on what hull material you might wish to have. Each has an advantage or disadvantage depending on where the boat will be used the most. Of all the materials, fiberglass seems easiest to maintain and the easiest to repair with minimal skill and equipment. Its fault is that if pushed on the rocks after its mooring has broken the hull can be abraded to the point where holes appear and water comes gushing in. Steel can bounce off those rocks to a certain point and just have big dents in the boat like driving your 49 Ford pickup truck into the side of the barn. Big dents but they can all be pulled out. Steel needs more maintenance to keep away the rust. Where steel meets wood there is always the chance that moisture can be there and eat away the metal. Jon Olson has a very good expression; "Rust never sleeps." To repair steel, you'll need to have some welding equipment and more talent than I currently have. Aluminum is similar but has additional problems dealing with galvanic reaction and electrolysis. More skill and more sophisticated equipment are required to weld and repair aluminum. Wood boats are good in colder water areas where shipworms don't occur so readily. Rainwater is not good in wood boats and causes dry rot. Ferro cement boats have been around quite awhile if constructed properly can be a good solid hull. Some problems occurring with fibrocement is that if there is water intrusion in the concrete the wire armature can expand and crack the layers of concrete that encases the armature causing more water to intrude. This is not an ideal situation. Some fiberglass boats have plywood, foam or balsa for coring to give the glass some stiffness. When the fiberglass exterior layer is penetrated then these cores can fill with water and actually rot between the layers of glass and the whole area becomes soft. This is not a good situation so if the boat you choose has this type of coring be aware that it might be or become a problem. So have you chosen your hull material?

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## Buy a boat? Continued from page 6

**Hull design:** Hull design follows purpose quite closely. There is a choice of monohull (my preference), trimaran (three hulls) and catamaran (two hulls). Trimarans and catamarans have distinct advantages in shallow water areas where they can sail close to shore without going aground. They also enjoy a great deal of stability and sail flat most the time. Monohulls come in different configurations as well. They can be hard chined where you see an angle on the side of the hull compared to a smooth transition from bottom of the hull to the sides. Hard chined boats have good initial stability before they really start heeling over and scaring your passengers. Soft chined boats start heeling immediately and fear of capsizing increases slowly. They can have a spoon bow or clipper bow or a canoe stern or flat stern. There are terms called tumblehome and shear that you'll need to consider when picking the hull you might be wanting to buy. Overhangs are how much over the waterline your bow and stern hang. Long overhangs certainly are pretty but makes for a shorter waterline when going through the water in light winds. Narrow bows like a clipper

bow and narrow sterns like a canoe stern doesn't provide as much buoyancy and might cause hobby horsing when sailing in a seaway. Also with a clipper bow and canoe stern there is less interior space for length on deck. So are you seeing that there are several choices in hull design?

**Keel (and rudder) shape:** Fin keel or centerboard boats generally can point to windward a little better and can spin on a dime when turning. That's very good for bay sailing and intercoastal work while going into harbors.  $\frac{3}{4}$  or cutaway keelboats have a little bit better turning radius than full keel boats but full keel boats take some coaxing to turn. So, you might ask, why would you ever want a full keel boat? Well, because most cruising vessels travel with the trade winds in regular trade routes. When going with the wind a full keel boat will stay on a course much easier than a fin keel boat and will nearly steer itself if all conditions are good. Full keel boats for the most part have their rudder attached to the rear of the keel in at least three places and it is very protected and doesn't work as hard on a single point as does a spade rudder hung at the stern of a fin keel boat. So many full keel boats make ocean crossings with very few rudder casualties whereas every year we welcome fin keel boats into Hilo with broken or lost spade rudders. The reason is that when sailing downwind (from California to Hilo) there is a lot more pressure and working side to side required to steer a boat with a fin keel and spade rudder. So now you've chosen what keel and rudder style you like, right?

**Rig Type:** Modern boats generally are sloop rigs with one long mast with a mainsail and a jib. Because modern metals and fibers can create really long masts and stainless wires over one or two sets of spreaders with toggles, tangs, turnbuckles connected to thick chainplates can support them from top to bottom. So why would anyone want a split rig like a ketch, yawl or schooner or a single masted cutter with two foresails? The real reason is that one very large mainsail is harder to handle than two smaller sails like a main and mizzen and when the wind starts to blow that really large mainsail can be a handful to reef. For smaller boats a sloop is hard to beat for simplicity and efficiency sailing to windward but for larger vessels it might best be to have a bit smaller mainsail to handle. Also with a split rig there are many more options when meeting different weather conditions. With a ketch when sailing on a close reach to broad reach and the wind pipes up all you need to do is take down the mainsail and you can sail just as well balanced with the jib and mizzen. That's not possible with a tall sloop. Now you've chosen your rig, right?

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**Engine Type:** Engine types for the most part in modern sailing are inboard diesel, outboard 4 stroke gas, outboard 2 stroke gas or outboard electric. Inboard electrics are starting to surface but there aren't that many existing currently. Inboard diesel engines are heavy and smelly but very economical and reliable if cared for properly. You see most of them in boats 28 feet and longer although there are some smaller boats with inboard diesels. Outboard 4 stroke engines mount on the stern, are quite heavy compared with 2 strokes, are more economical than 2 strokes but may upset the balance of your boat having an extra 20lbs over and above a 2 stroke hanging on the stern. Outboards often have their props out of the water in a seaway when bouncing up and down in the waves and swell. 2 stroke outboards develop good power for their weight but use quite a bit more fuel. They are simpler to work on but require mixing gas with oil. Outboard electric motors are becoming more common. They are quiet and pretty light compared with regular outboards. They do require extra batteries and a means in which to charge the batteries. They also are a bit limited in power and in running time per battery capability.



**Size:** After sailing for a gazillion years I have determined that my favorite sized boats are from 32 to 36 feet length on deck. I could go a couple feet either way. Length and beam measurements determine load carrying capacity and speed in a displacement hull. Some boats with a clipper bow and canoe stern of 36 foot LOD (length on deck) may not have the interior volume of a 32 footer. Some boats of 36 feet LOD only have a 27 foot waterline length and therefore would be no faster than a 32 foot LOD boat with a LWL (length at waterline) of 27 feet. The formula for determining theoretical hull speed is the square root of the waterline length times 1.34. The determining factor in how much speed you can attain if your boat is incapable of planing is the length of the waterline. The other reason for liking 32 to 36 LOD boats is that there are many low cost production boats in that category which can be very seaworthy and that hardware, rigging and sails are much less expensive for a 36 footer than a 40 footer. In addition, the shorter your boat the less you'll pay for mooring and slip fees. All of these factors add up to my appreciating seaworthy 32 to 36 foot boats most of all.

This short article should get you thinking about some of the things that you might want to consider before your boat purchase and we've just touched the surface. I've not covered all the options and have just skimmed the surface. How about steering system, wheel versus tiller, center cockpit versus aft cockpit, auto pilot, wind vane, onboard head, radar, GPS? These are all things to think about between now and purchase time. So good luck and happy dreaming.

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