

Tips For Prospective Blue Water Cruisers

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PART 5

WENDY HINMAN AND GARTH WILCOX SAILED 34,000 MILES OVER 7 YEARS ABOARD THEIR 31-FOOT WYLIE-DESIGNED BOAT, VEELLA, CIRCUMNAVIGATING THE PACIFIC OCEAN, WITH A FORAY INTO THE SOUTH CHINA SEA.

WENDY IS CURRENTLY WRITING A BOOK ABOUT THEIR ADVENTURES.

ANCHOR WINCH

1st winch: Simpson Lawrence Anchorman, manual with vertical capstan. This worked well for 5 years. Difficult to raise anchor in over 50' although a ratcheting winch handle helped with this. The separate chain pipe was easy to block with clay. (Clay

seals well, molds to any shape, and can be removed cleanly. In the tropics it is nice and soft but in Northwest it is hard as a rock. Use oil based clay not play dough. Flower arranging clay works can handle submersion more effectively.)

2nd winch: Lofrans Project 1000 with 1000W motor and vertical capstan. This wasn't as powerful as the manual winch. Integral chain pipe leaks like crazy and is impossible to seal, even with lots of clay. Manual backup is available instantly but is too high friction for deep water. We used a switch on a cord rather than cutting holes in the deck. This was not available quickly in an emergency. Reverse mode was never hooked up but might be handy. (We only used power for raising the anchor and lowered it manually.)

Muir 1000/1200 has good manual function which is always available and separate chain pipe. Also good would be the Anchorman with a power winch handle.

MOORING

Rub rails are designed to work directly against vertical pilings which we never docked against. Otherwise they are useless or vulnerable to damage. They catch on things when rolling or with tide. Fenders don't work with them. For isolated protuberances or vertical pilings a pair of fenders with a fender board works much better.

We carried 3-10" "Big B" fenders. These take a lot of space but you want the biggest ones you can fit. Carry a pump and deflate them. In Japan, with

lots of gnarly wharfs, we picked up 2-24" diameter Styrofoam floats on beaches to use as fenders. Round fenders rotate and transfer dirt to your topsides. Square would be better. Fenders can be cleaned with orange hand cleaner - GoJo Brand.

2-5/8" x 75' nylon lines the same as our anchor rode to allow dual use. 12" cleats were minimal for this size line. 10" was definitely too small. You need to be able to tie 2 lines to each cleat when using spring lines.

RIGGING

Reefing

All reefing is handled at the mast. Worked well for single handing. Stainless tack hooks broke and were replaced by Wichard hooks. Clew blocks on tracks are terrible because they pinch and chafe the sail and chafe the reef line. Spinlock clutches were very nice and we used them for our last 2 years. Reef in jib was vital several times but a hard job to put in.

Stayloks

Worked well. Easy to install and reuse. Rerigged boat once for \$100-and replaced back stay in the Philippines with materials on board. (We carried an extra forestay, our longest stay, in case we needed a replacement.)

Halyards

3/8" Vectran worked well. The rest were 5/16 spectra and a bit stretchy. We had a spare main and jib halyard which were not really needed. Mostly these were used to climb the mast. All halyards were terminated at the mast to allow single handed sail handling.

Running Backstays

We used line because wire chafes the sail. Spectra was too stretchy and used to howl in high winds. Polyester covered Technora was ideal.

Preventers

We used them constantly. 2:1 tackle from mid boom led aft to cockpit on each side of boat. Used 1/4" nylon with

shock cord retractors to keep them off the deck to allow ducking under when walking forward on the deck.

Flag Halyards

Aladdin shroud cleats are a very good product. Parachute cord rots quickly with UV and often needs to be replaced.

Our favorite Knots:

- Figure eight usual stopper knot
 - Oysterman's stopper a larger stopper - jams
 - Bowline usual loop
 - Climber's loop loop in a bight
 - Overhand eye loop for shock cord
 - Buntline hitch compact very secure hitch - jams
 - Rolling hitch can tie with line under tension, adjustable
 - Icicle hitch won't slip on anything, changing sheets, jib wraps
 - Cow hitch better than clove hitch
 - Cleat hitch for cleatsy
 - Sheet bend different sized lines
 - Zeppelin bend best bend - strong, symmetrical
 - Truelove bend for shock cord - jams
 - Diamond knot for making spectra strops
 - Jarsling water bottle handles
 - Constrictor temporary lashing, wire bundles
- Note: stoppers are for keeping the tail of a line from pulling through something, hitches are for securing a line to something, bends are for tying 2 lines together.

SAILS

We carried a very roachy fully battened main that overlapped the backstay with 3 reefs and a fully battened non-overlapping jib. For heavy air we reefed the jib or set a storm stay sail on a removable inner forestay. We carried a storm trysail which we never

used. We did sometimes rig the storm trysail in case we needed it, but found it was often in the way and a third reef in the main was adequate. For light air we had a 150% light weight genoa and an asymmetrical cruising chute with an ATN snuffer.

Jib battens

Full length battens maintained good sail shape and reduced twist while reaching. These made jibing with the pole more difficult resulting in cracked battens. We removed them when we wanted to keep the inner forestay rigged on longer passages.

Main battens

We had full length battens with BattCars. BattCars worked flawlessly. Flat battens split lengthwise due to twisting. Round battens broke. We finally found a heavy duty diamond shape and this shape worked the best. Main roach overlapped our backstay by up to 18" UHMW sewn onto batten pockets helped the sail slip past the backstay easily in winds over 5 knots. Under 5 knots, tacking requires a special technique (tighten mainsheet, pop battens, then let out main sheet). UHMW patches lasted about 2 years in UV. We drilled holes in the UHMW where stitching was needed before sewing them on because otherwise pushing the needle through the material was too hard.

Boom angle

We cut the mainsail to raise up the aft end of boom to clear heads and prevent dragging the boom in water when rolling. This caused a lot of strain on the sail and slides as the boom drooped when furling, particularly if the outhaul or reef lines were tight. We ripped some of the grommets right out of the sail and pulled many rivets out of the mast track over time.

Leach line

We couldn't safely reach the leach line at the clew in rough weather. A leach cord operated from the mast would be much better.

To be continued.