

The Silhouette Owner

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Sailing Trim

By Robert Tucker

BECAUSE no two sailboats can ever be exactly alike, each has its own personality and needs individual handling. Like a friend, it serves you well if you treat it properly, respect its quirks and learn its likes and dislikes. That's half the joy of sailing. So let's see how to get the best out of a Silhouette.

Hull trim. Most calculations in yacht design are based on the waterline, and a yacht will perform as she should only when trimmed to this line correctly. Make sure that the bottom of the transom is 2-3 inches out of the water when the crew are aboard in their sailing positions. The chine at its lowest point should be about $\frac{3}{4}$ inch below still-water level. Move stores and gear to ensure correct trim, and remember that the stern locker must be kept light. A crew of three weighs half as much as the Silhouette.

Tuning the rig. The mast should be perfectly vertical when viewed from bow or stern. Check athwartships trim with a spirit level, and adjust shroud tension until the main halliard, used as a plumb line, aligns with the mast track. Recheck the fore and aft hull trim and adjust the tension in the forestay to make the distance from the back of the mast to the plumb-line $2\frac{1}{2}$ -3 inches. Standing rigging should be just tight enough to give a deep note when plucked (low notes of a string bass should be about right). Set up backstay with just enough tension to keep it straight. Make sure that all locknuts on rigging screws are tight and all shackle pins securely screwed home. Secure with locking wire if you feel safer that way.

Adjusting sail battens. Each batten should be about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch shorter than its pocket. Wooden battens are usually too stiff at the inboard end, so plane them to a long taper. The finer the end the softer the curve, and the more easily a batten breaks: a minimum thickness of $1\frac{1}{2}$ mm is a safe compromise. The top batten needs the most curvature, the bottom one the least: mark them, and keep them for their proper places. Sand each batten really smooth, and give it a couple of coats of varnish.

Setting the mainsail. Never set a sail without its battens. Slide the foot into the groove in the boom, and fasten the tack securely. Thread the clew outhaul through the hole in the boom, back through the clew cringle, then back through both again. Pull out until all the wrinkles have disappeared completely, using this crude pulley system, and then make fast the fall of the outhaul round its standing parts. Don't leave loose ends hanging. With the gooseneck to the top of its track, hoist the mainsail as far as it will go, and sweat up the halliard. Cleat the halliard, coil the falls and stow it; then push the gooseneck down its track as far as possible, and tighten the lock screw firmly. When the sail catches the wind it should be free from wrinkles, hard



spots and lines. Adjust the tension in the foot and luff (and the batten lengths, if necessary) to secure this smoothness.

Setting the jib. Shackle the tack to its deck fitting, fasten the luff clips to the forestay, and sweat up the jib halliard until the forestay slackens, then make fast and stow. A tight jib-luff is essential for efficient sailing. Check the lead of the jib sheets with the sail full of wind: the foot and leach should curve smoothly, showing neither flats nor straights. It may be necessary to move the fairleads (or add a shackle to the tack) to secure this flow, so don't aim for perfection until the sail is stretched properly.

Setting the genoa. Proceed as for the working jib, but set the fairleads to give a little more fullness in the top of the leach, so flattening the foot: this will reduce the backwind effect on the mainsail. Note that moving the fairleads forward slackens the foot and tightens the leach: moving them aft does the reverse.

Reefing the mainsail. In strong winds your Silhouette will go faster with less sail area, because she will sail more upright. The area of the mainsail is reduced by rolling it round the boom; slack off the main halliard, set the gooseneck at the top of its slide, and ease the boom off the square shoulder of the gooseneck. Roll the sail round the boom two or three times, slip the boom firmly back on the gooseneck, and tighten the main halliard again. Ensure that the luff rope is evenly rolled and that the final turn comes off close to the mast; then work along the boom smoothing the wrinkles from the turns, and pull the leach out tight. Finally, see that the halliard is sweated up hard, and then add the last tension with the sliding gooseneck. The sail will set smoothly and free from wrinkles, and with a little less flow than before. Note: A reef made properly and in time is the mark of a good sailor: a novice leaves it too late, and makes a hash.

Sailing. Sailing to windward calls for finesse and understanding. Adjust the mainsheet until the end of the boom is just inside the

line of the toerail; pull in the jibsheet until the luff of the mainsail just begins to flutter, then ease it out an inch. Now bring your course towards the wind until both sails begin to flutter, then ease off very gently until both are drawing well. Check that the jib sheet requires no further adjustment. A bilge-keel yacht performs best when the leeward keel is vertical, so heel the yacht to about 15°. In light winds this may mean sitting your crew to leeward; in strong winds sit them to windward to prevent the heel exceeding this figure, since too much heel will slow the yacht and cause weather helm. Ensure that the fore-and-aft hull trim is maintained. Winds are never steady, and the gusts are freer than the average wind. Instead of letting them heel the boat, let the inherent helm make her sail closer to the wind until the gust has passed. Don't let the sails shiver afterwards. Well-sailed bilge-keel Silhouettes have made windward passages without leeway. In very confined waters the Silhouette can be driven very hard, with sheets as hard as they will come; there is some loss of speed and an increase in weather helm, but no loss of control. Such techniques should be reserved for emergencies.

Going about is slow but positive. Put the helm down smoothly, and not more than 45°. As soon as the sails begin to flutter, free the jib sheet and haul in the main. Once the head has passed the wind's eye, begin to tighten the jib sheet on the new tack, but be sure that it is not taken aback. Retain as before as soon as the new course is taken. Do not attempt to spin a Silhouette like a racing centre-boarder, but let her come round in her own time.

National Trophy at Southend

ENTRIES for the Silhouette National Class Championship Meeting during Southend Yachting Week should be sent, together with the entrance fee of 6s. per boat, to reach the Hon. Secretary, Yachting Week Committee, Alexandra Yacht Club, Southend-on-Sea, not later than Monday, May 22. Entry forms may be obtained from the Hon. Sec. of the Silhouette Owners' Association, or from regional group secretaries. There will be points races on two Saturdays, June 10 and June 17, and races for a trophy on the two Sundays in Southend Yachting Week, June 11 and June 19. It is hoped that as many Silhouettes owners as possible will try to get to Southend for this first national championship meeting for the class.

Racing will be under the rules of the IYRU, the RYA, and class regulations made by the SOA. All boats will have to conform with the measurements entitling them to be registered as Silhouettes. The National Committee of the SOA has decided that spinnakers shall not be permitted, but that genoas with the standard rig may be used. Boats with the new masthead rig and with standard rig carrying genoas will start from scratch. The provisional handicapping system worked out by the NW Group in the Menai Straits, giving boats with standard rig (without genoa) and Terylene sails an allowance of five minutes in

THE SILHOUETTE OWNERS' ASSOCIATION

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The Association exists to promote the interests of Silhouette Owners throughout the world. The annual subscription is 15s.

the hour, and standard rig with cotton sails an allowance of eight minutes, will be adopted. These handicap figures are, however, provisional, and the NW Group has undertaken to revise them if necessary in the light of experience by Whitsun. This will be in time for the revised figures (if revision seems desirable) to be used in the Southend Yachting Week Races.

The six clubs promoting Southend Yachting Week—Alexandra, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex, Benfleet, Thames Estuary and Chapman Sands—have generously agreed to make all visiting yachtsmen honorary members during the week. A parking area for dinghies and offshore mooring will be provided free of charge to competitors.

Easter Rally

ALTHOUGH Easter came so early this year, seven Silhouettes, a Caprice and a Leeward assembled at Glyngarth for the Easter Rally of the North-West Group of the SOA. The weather was pretty mixed, but the sun came out nobly on Easter Sunday afternoon and dried everybody's sails.

Herbert Firth, the secretary of the NW Group, whose boat *Dolphin* was already at moorings at Glyngarth, managed to get there on Thursday night, March 30, and he and Geoffrey Walton, who lives not far away at Beaumaris, organised a most efficient volunteer force of members for giving help with launchings. Most members launched on Good Friday or Saturday morning. Derek Birse, with *Blue Jay*,

Bridge Company has offered a remarkably generous rate for members who may want to fly boats back from Calais to Southend. A trailer would have to be flown over from Southend, and Channel Air Bridge would do this and fly back boat and trailer to Southend for £10. This, of course, does not include passenger travel, and the company asks, reasonably, that it should be allowed to load the boats when it had space in an aeroplane; that is, it could not guarantee to put the boat on a particular flight. This arrangement for getting boats back to England seems most helpful to those who for one reason or another may not want, or may not have time if good weather has to be waited for, to sail back.

Thoughts On Compasses

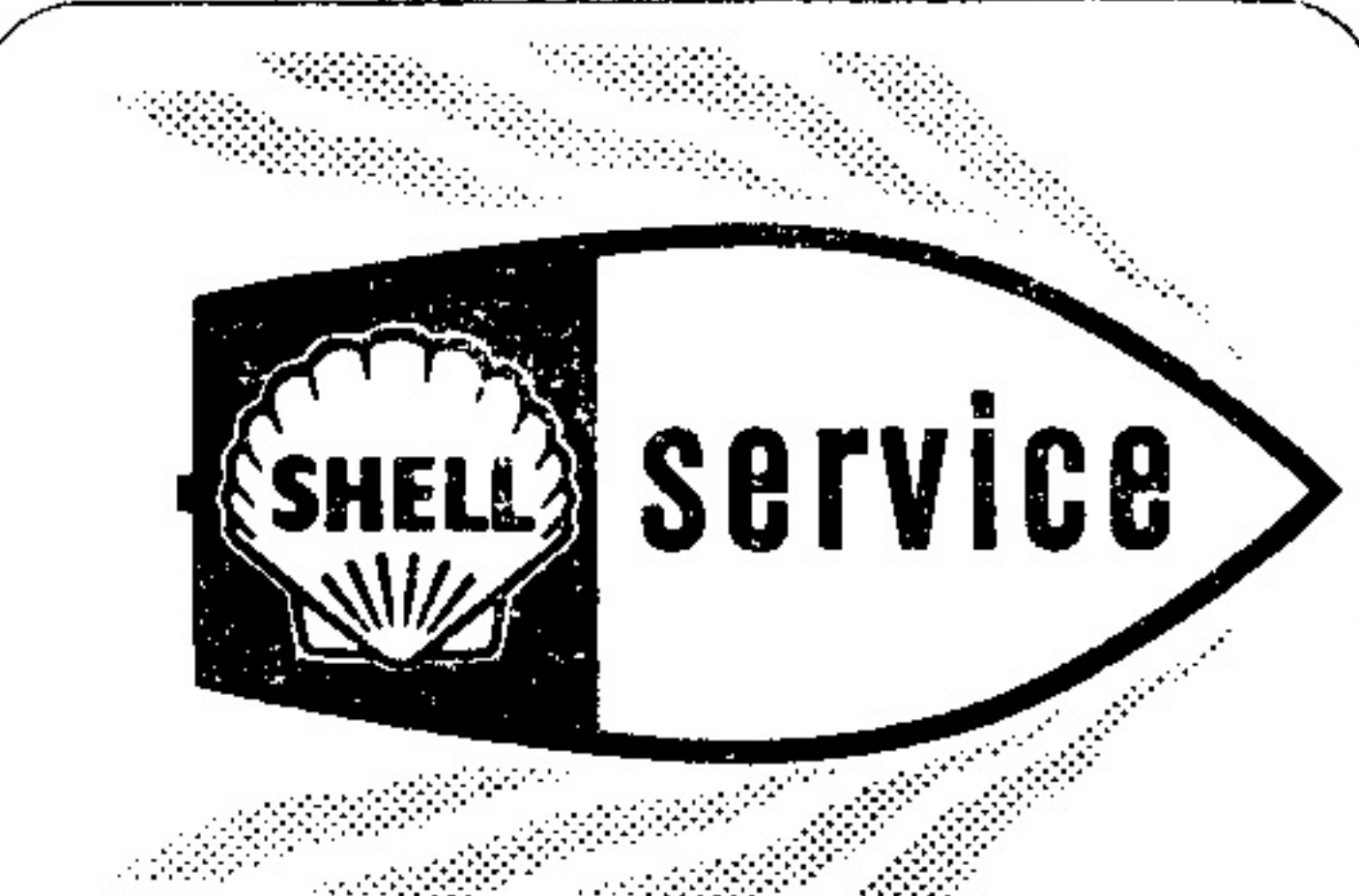
By Tim Law

NOW that Silhouette owners are making longer passages, a note on compasses may help. The coastal navigator should constantly be asking himself, "If fog comes down thick in five minutes' time, will I be able to set a confident compass course?" The answer should always be, "Yes."

Ideally, one needs two compasses, a steering compass and a hand-bearing compass (HBC). In addition, to use them profitably you need a chart, a flat surface (drawing board about 24 ins. by 16 ins., with bulldog clips to secure chart), a 14 in. (minimum) parallel ruler (expensive: an adequate one can be made for 2s.), soft lead pencils, rubber and dividers. Any ferrous metal interferes with a compass slightly. Magnets interfere most, and most boats carry three powerful magnets—one in the Seagull magneto, another in the portable radio and a third in a photographic exposure meter. The two compasses (steering and HBC) may also interfere mutually. The permanent stowage of the radio and exposure meter should be right forward, but the Seagull stowage at sea is almost certain to be near the steering compass. Get the magneto and compass as far apart as possible, then turn the magneto head in the locker until experiment shows the magnet to be vertical; a mark can be made on the flywheel and the magneto base, then with these in line when the outboard is stowed magneto error is minimised. Magneto error will reappear slightly when the boat is heeled under sail. Technical men may try to correct this by fixing a light bar magnet in opposite polarity to the magneto-head nearer the compass. If an owner can afford both steering compass and HBC, he should generally assume that the steering compass is the less accurate, for when he is standing in the cockpit using the HBC at eye level, it will normally be far enough away from magnetic distractions to be unaffected.

Fixes taken standing with the HBC will often work well. In sight of land accurate courses may be steered by picking a point of distant land by HBC and steering for that. Stars serve at night. Courses

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should be re-checked at about half-hourly intervals, to correct for tidal drift and star movement. When land is not in sight, use the HBC to pick a distant cloud which is right ahead on your chosen course, point the boat straight at it and note the steering compass reading. This will serve as a course to steer until a new one is needed.

Don't forget to stow the radio right forward again after you have listened to the weather forecast.

The Menai Straits Race

By John Anderson

THERE were seven starters for the first Menai Straits race of the season organised by the NW Group of the Silhouette Owners' Association on Saturday, April 1. The race was sailed on a triangular course of roughly six miles, in a South-Westerly wind of Force 4—5. Conditions at times were quite hard. The results were:

	Sail No.	Rig	hrs. min. sec.
1. <i>Blue Jay</i> (D. Birse)	619	Masthead	1 16 20
2. <i>Sanpan</i> (D. McKnight)	C.37	Caprice	1 17 15
3. <i>Two Gees</i> (G. Walton)	602	Old Rig (Terylene)	1 21 20
4. <i>Buttercup II</i> (R. Bradbury)	818	Old Rig (Terylene)	1 23 25
5. <i>Dolphin</i> (H. Firth)	488	Old Rig (cotton)	1 23 50
6. <i>Mary Lane</i> (J. Anderson)	397	Old Rig (cotton)	1 30 00 (approx.)
7. <i>Gazelle</i> (R. Pegg)	23	— Retired —	

The race was particularly interesting because it included one Caprice sailing against six Silhouette IIs, and the Silhouettes had both

the new and the old rig, and both cotton and Terylene sails. The Caprice led for most of the way but was overtaken near the finish by Derek Birse in his masthead-rigged *Blue Jay* in a brilliant burst of speed, which put him across the line first. Geoff. Walton in *Two Gees*, who finished third, might have been more highly placed, for he was well up with the leaders earlier in the race. But he had trouble with a spinnaker set for the first time during the race, and his manoeuvres with the spinnaker cost him a good deal of ground. *Dolphin* and *Buttercup II* fought each other closely throughout the race, and there was only 25 seconds between them at the finish. Herbert Firth in *Dolphin* was handicapped by having only one batten in his mainsail. *Mary Lane* was handicapped by the fact that I had only just recovered from pneumonia, and the time that Helen and I might have spent in fitting out was spent by me in bed and by Helen in nursing me. Joe Wallace sailed with *Mary Lane*, nominally as crew, but in fact as helmsman and he was assisted to a slight extent by me and to a great extent by Glyn Jones, the fourteen year old son of the Assistant Coxswain of the Beaumaris lifeboat, who came along for the race and proved a splendid crew. In twenty minutes before the race *Mary Lane* was bending on her sails for the first time since last year, and at the start she still had her outboard shipped—it had brought her up under power from Menai Bridge to her moorings the previous day. This had to be unshipped and stowed during the race, and the drag before the engine was brought in cost her some ground. In writing this I should like to say as *Mary Lane's* master how greatly indebted I feel to Joe and Glyn, who sailed throughout in a most sporting way, even though it was soon fairly obvious that we were going to finish last. By the time we did cross the finishing line, the timekeepers, understandably, had packed up, so our time is only approximate. *Gazelle* had trouble with her forestay and retired, fortunately without suffering any damage. Helen Anderson crewed for Herbert Firth. Mrs. Wallace and Mrs. Walton acted as starters and timekeepers.

After a study of this race, the NW Group has adopted a provisional system of handicapping for boats with new and old rig. At any rate until more experience of comparative performance has been gained, boats with masthead rig will be reckoned as scratch, and they will give five minutes in the hour to boats with the old rig with Terylene sails, and eight minutes in the hour to the old rig with cotton sails. Caprices and Leewards which may sometimes sail with Silhouettes will be reckoned as scratch.

Insurance

EDWARD Lumley (Yacht Insurance) Limited, of Lumley House, 43/51, St Mary Axe, London, EC 3, offer special facilities to members of the Silhouette Owners' Association for all forms of insurance connected with their boats. Details and proposal forms can be obtained from the Hon. Treasurer.

From The Log of Haydn Rock

By Howard Horne (who crewed)

Saturday, September 3: Chichester to sea and back. (16 miles; six and three quarter hours.)

CREW went aboard at ten past nine to shift from the mooring to Dell Quay Sailing Club jetty. Not until 11.00, however, did the captain appear, with mountains of provisions which were hastily stowed. After farewells to the captain's wife and baby son, we cast off and started down the seven miles of estuary towards Chichester harbour bar. Off Itchenor we set working sail, later taking in two reefs as we were sailing rather uncomfortably in choppy enclosed waters thrown up by the S.W. wind. Between the heads wind against tide was heaping up a steep breaking sea. The loyal crew, slaving below, was surprised to hear "Cripes, it's a WALL!" after which everything rose off the shelves, and crashed to the bunks, the crew being pitched violently forward by the boat's stopping, bows down, in the next trough. The next thing the captain saw was the crew appearing hurriedly on deck, diving for the lee-side . . . We turned back.

Sunday, September 4: Dell Quay to Cowes. (24 miles; nine hours. Winds 3, fine night.)

We cleared Chichester heads for the second time at 19.30 hrs., having spent the day cruising about the harbour (and buying Sea-legs). The tide was just turning westward in the offing as we sailed on through the gathering dusk. We passed the Dolphins (a poor dim light) just before 22.00. After a quiet sail we turned the point into a sleeping Cowes forty minutes after midnight, and easily found a vacant mooring.

Monday, September 5: Cowes to Christchurch. (24 miles; 6½ hours. Winds 2, dying to calms. Hot sultry sun.)

We left Cowes at 11.30, setting course for the Hurst Castle passage. We cleared the castle and now, in open waters, altered course for Christchurch, seven and a half miles away in the haze. Coming to Christchurch for the first time one should wait for slack water (which only lasts ten minutes), or for local help; we arrived just before low water, and grounded on the bar in a calm. The crew, willing as always, went overboard to push, since the *Seagull* was misbehaving. Pushing was little good, since the water seemed to be shallow everywhere, so we waited until a local boat went by. We noticed that he hugged the inside of the channel (port hand buoys) very closely, so we shifted over towards this deeper water with our one man-power drive. Water under the keel put the *Seagull* in a better temper, and we were able to creep in towards Mudeford Quay; keeping well to the edge of the tide, with the engine doing full revs, yet moving at only about half a knot past the land. We tied up at the quay and went ashore to stretch our

legs, having moored securely with a spring. Twenty minutes later we returned to find *Haydn Rock* continually bashing the quay: the tide was now racing in at about six knots but the spring had been laid for a tide going out at that rate. We left Mudeford Quay with ample time to reach Christchurch town before dusk, but as the sun set over the town we were still two miles away, becalmed and anchored in mid-channel, with pieces of magneto strewn around the cockpit. Reassembled by torchlight, the *Seagull* took us on to a most hospitable yacht club, with visitor's mooring, a bar, and a willing audience.

*Tuesday, September 6: Christchurch to Poole town. (17 miles; 6½ hours
Winds 3-4 with continuous heavy rain later.)*

We left Mudeford Quay just after 14.00 in sultry, threatening weather. We went about off Bournemouth pier, which gave us a good departure into the gloom, keeping half hour tricks to recover from the driving rain. We were pleased when accurate dead reckoning brought us neatly onto the Poole bar buoy at 18.00. It was dark when we tied up in the industrial heart of Poole Town, and we went below leaving the cockpit littered with sodden clothing. A hot supper was very welcome.

Wednesday, September 7: Poole to Yarmouth I.O.W. (25 miles; 6¾ hours.)

After a quiet drink with Poole Yacht Club, we picked up a mooring off Lilliput, and, dressed overall with wet clothes, lunched in the sunshine. It being fine sailing weather, we left Poole heads at four o'clock without waiting for a favourable tide. Sunset found us an hour off the Needles, and in the increasing dusk we could see the alternating red and green lights of a ketch beating up towards the Needles channel ahead of us. Within an hour and a quarter we had them abeam, and by the time we passed Hurst Castle at five knots (sideways) their lights were lost astern in the orderly display of the Needles channel lights. We tied in Yarmouth at 22.30.

Thursday, September 8: Yarmouth I.O.W. to Portsmouth. (21 miles; 10½ hours.)

The next day, though fine and hot, was again windless; we made our way to Portsmouth Harbour, using the *Seagull* a lot.

Friday, September 9: At Portsmouth and Portsmouth to Dell Quay, (23 miles; 9 hours.)

We spent the morning touring round the harbour, taking photographs of H.M. ships, and being becalmed for a time under *Victorious's* flight deck. After lunch on a Gosport Mooring we made sail out of the harbour, picking up a good east-bound tide. We were fifty minutes to the Dolphins, and an hour and forty minutes from there to the Chichester bar buoy. When we turned in on the leading marks there was an eight ton bermudan cutter stemming the ebb tide about two cables ahead of us; naturally this put a bit of competitive spirit

into our sailing. Watching carefully through the binoculars we could see that our every move was also being studied. With the crew at the helm, we overhauled them steadily, and passing fifty yards under their lee we called out a cocky greeting. The tide, however, was still pouring out, and though we were ahead, our lead was slowly being cut down as we each tried to stem the racing tide off Treloar Home. Suddenly we heard astern the distinct throbbing of an inboard engine (shocking cheats). With its aid they managed very slowly to overhaul us. Only when they had gained a lead of half a cable did we ship our *Seagull*. As we swept past them for the second time we hailed, "A fine evening, though a little short of wind." A fine evening it was, and a race like that to finish our week's cruise put us in a wonderful frame of mind to face the dreary shorebound months ahead.

The Apprentices

IN theory, most children like boats, but I doubt whether many children under the age of about eight really enjoy sailing: they love it for a few minutes, but then they get bored. There is not enough that they can be trusted to do. I did once know a boy of six who could take the tiller and steer quite well, but he was an exceptional case, having been all but born on a boat and practically brought up at sea. Round about eight, children seem to begin a new range of experience, and suddenly become much more responsible; after eight, the young apprentice starts to be really useful on board. Whatever you try to do, younger children remain a real problem.

But it is a problem that many of us have to face. It can be approached in two ways—(i) you can accept defeat, and put all thoughts of sailing into cold storage until the children are old enough to take part properly or (ii) you can determine to sail somehow, and make the best of things. We decided on the latter, and after one season's experience we've proved that at least it can be done, though the nervous strain at times is pretty severe. David last year was 3½ and Timothy 1½. On the whole, they were not bad, but with only two adults on board we had to accept that one had pretty well a full time job in looking after the children. At critical moments like getting under way, or mooring, they could be shut in the cabin, but once let loose in the cockpit one of us had to be constantly on child watch. There must be some inflexible rules. Ours are (i) except when asleep down below, life jackets must be worn always (ii) when under way, a child must never leave the cockpit (iii) when under way, children must *always* be harnessed to lifelines. Last year the children wore kapok life jackets of the standard Board of Trade pattern. These have a number of merits, but the disadvantage of being rather bulky, and on hot days especially the children found them a bit uncomfortable. This year we are going to try Marksway waistcoats. Whatever the pattern, however, the rule that life jackets must be worn must never be broken. Lifelines

Notes On Pilotage: The Menai Straits

By Geoff Walton

Remember that you are sailing on the sea: the Straits can look like a duck pond, but can also be extremely rough.

Make a note that the wind is in its most dangerous quarter when it blows from the East or South-East.

Study the chart, particularly noting the position of sandbanks. It is a good idea to motor from Beaumaris to Penmon at low water springs, noting and taking a bearing on particular hazards.

The tide can run at 5 knots, therefore keep well clear of piers, jetties and moored craft when under sail. Bangor pier is a particularly bad spot: the tide is running here at its maximum one hour before and after high water.

Do not attempt to make a passage through Puffin Sound or to land on Puffin Island when there is any North or West in the wind.

If you run aground, get over the side quickly and push. You will be in only 18 ins. of water, and one person's weight will often lighten the boat sufficiently to get her off.

You may encounter large passenger and cargo vessels in the Straits. Don't insist on the "rule of the road" — you can get out of the way; often they can't.

Fit a chain roller on the stem of your boat. In bouncy weather a chain will play havoc with your gunwales.

Watch for squalls, particularly when leaving the lee of high ground.

The local people are extremely helpful. If in doubt, ask.

Do not attempt a passage through the Swellies without a pilot.

These notes are for your guidance, and *not* an attempt to scare you off. The Menai Straits are a yachtsman's paradise if elementary precautions are taken.

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