

THE *Typhoon*

a newsletter for owners of CAPE DORY TYPHOON sailboats, and other Cape Dory sailboats, as well as for those who want to own one, and those who once owned one, and now realize that selling the neat little boats they had was the biggest mistake of their lives.

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This issue of *the Typhoon* is not only being written *about* Typhoons, it's being written *on* a Typhoon (at least for starters). It's so hot (102° F., 40° C.) in the Great Central Valley of California that I fled down to the Berkeley Marina to write. This issue will reach 91 subscribers in 25 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. Most of you live along the Atlantic and Gulf coasts, plus the Great Lakes region; a few in California, Colorado and Arkansas. For you who are new, e. g. subscribers who got this after it was published, you will get this issue plus an Owners' Directory, free of charge. If you want back issues, I have them on my computer and will be glad to send them free. If you are already a subscriber, and have a Directory, you may want to request a new one, since people send in their entries from time to time, and the Directory — which is not congruent with the mailing list — is thereby updated.

There are several Cape Dory associations around the country — I had hoped to meet with one when I was in Chicago in June — but no national organization, and at present this newsletter is the only known national means of communication, other than the exchange of local letters. If you want to get in touch with owners/sailors in your area, I might be able to help you. Since I am not running an organization, there are no dues, but contributions are greatly appreciated. The last issue, dated May 1995, cost \$30.03 for printing, \$2.50 for envelopes, and \$24.96 for postage; total \$57.59. (Since the last issue, I have received \$30, so if you can spare a little it would help).

Finally, Typhoons can be trailered — at least the Daysailer, and possibly the Weekender. There is a Trailer/Sailers Association; they publish a members' directory (including cruising grounds, etc.) and a semi-annual publication; annual cost is \$12, which includes the option of joining BOAT/U.S. for half price. Summer address: Bob Hodgson, 10239 Cedar Cove Lane, Clarkston, MI 48348, (810) 620-6639; winter address, 5012 Marshfield Road, Sarasota, FL 34235; (941) 378-3270. This association would be especially valuable for sailors who find themselves well inland and far from sailable water. The directory also lists owners who would be willing to give advice and assistance on specific projects and problems.

MEET IN MARTINEZ: The California Cape Dory Association met on Alfa Dock, Martinez, the weekend of 5-6 August 1995. There were some thirty people present, all of them owners of the larger Cape Dorys (although the membership list includes one Typhoon owner, who was not present). The boats represented on the tour were motorsailers, 28' to 36', family boats in immaculate condition. Re-elected as chair of the Association was Michael Fahy (P. O. Box 861, Martinez, CA 94553); the membership list is available only to members and is not to be sold, but the "ship's scribe" gave us a copy of their newsletter, which detailed what happened to the rights to produce various sizes of Cape Dorys, and where to find them. We borrow from this source:

Newport Shipyards, 334 S. Bayview Avenue, Amityville, NY 11701, (516) 264-1313, makes Cape Dory 40 power yachts, and the 28' powerboat.

Robinhood Boatbuilders, Robinhood Marine Center, Robinhood, ME 04530, (800) 255-5206, is building 36' and 40' sailboats, under the name Robinhood. This is Andy Vavalotis's old business address. Spartan Marine, same address, (800) 325-3287, is producing fittings; for replacement of your old bronze fittings, contact them.

Nauset Marine, as explained below, is producing Typhoons, as well as the 30', 33', and 42' powerboats, but on a custom basis only; Route 6A, P. O. Box 357, Orleans, MA 02653, (508) 255-0777.

Meanwhile, if you live in California (northern), you are invited to join the Cape Dory Owner's Association; only catch, you have to buy a hat! They come in white with blue lettering, or blue with gold lettering and braid. They cost \$20; that's for dues, and the only dues there are!

These matters over, there was a dockside potluck, and the next morning a sail-past (which we did not attend; we drove in, and the other folks slept on their big motorsailers). Further meets are scheduled for the future.

TECHNICAL STUFF: CDR John R. Butler, USCG (ret.), who provided the above information about the Trailer/Sailers, and whom we met in the last issue describing Hull Identification Numbers, weighs in with some structural failures, not necessarily confined to Typhoons. One is that the lower shrouds are apt to come down if supported by “circle keys”. The key works its way out of the pin, then the pin works its way out of the tang. The cure is to replace the circle key with a regular cotter key, of stainless steel.

The other failure (same boat, owned by a friend) is due to the rudder assembly disintegrating, allowing the rudder pintle to come out of its gudgeon; allowing the rudder shaft, in turn, to come out of its keeper. The shaft was bent some 70° at the top of the rudder, where the shaft enters the tube through the bottom of the hull. The cost was considerable (did insurance cover it?) and the Commander describes the apparent cause as follows: “The only thing that holds the entire rudder assembly down (beside sheer weight) is the bearing surface between the top of the rudder and the bottom of the hull.” He therefore “added a bit of epoxy glue/microballoon mix to the top of the rudder, to make sure that the rudder can’t lift very much.” This sounds to me like a temporary solution, but I’m no mechanic. The question is, has anyone else had this kind of problem?

These problems are associated with Weekenders and may relate to the problems, mentioned earlier, of keeping those boats’ cabins on. John L. Harrar, of Hatboro, Pennsylvania, suggests that the area near the chain-plates needs to be “beefed-up” and the pop-out hole area made more supportive. “The problem was caused mostly by the down-pressure exerted on the cabin top at the mast step by the tension on all the stays and the upward tension on the chain plates and shrouds.” He would also like to know where is the battery and fuse switch panel, and where is the factory-installed bilge pump if there ever was one. My own answer is that I have a Daysailer, not a Weekender, and there is indeed a Rule 80 bilge pump, in the bilge, accessible via a teak hatch; the location of the battery is on the port side, under the cuddy, and the fuse/switch panel on the starboard. It becomes more and more obvious that Cape Dory Yachts, Inc. varied the details as they went along; perhaps some of these boats were customized.

Dr. Doug Walters, of 11 Drumcliffe, Warren, Pennsylvania 16365, who sails his *Puffin* on Chautauqua Lake (forty miles across the New York state line), has a whole lot of questions and statements which I am editing as follows: He finds his Weekender slow downwind in light air, and hard to keep on track downwind in heavy air; the lake runs obliquely northwest-southeast, so under certain conditions it must pack a lot of wave action. He also rarely uses his outboard, as the boat doesn’t often need it (I have had the same experience, also the outboard

is too heavy to wrestle aboard unless absolutely necessary). He also wonders if there have been any long voyages or coastal cruises (yes, at least one reader has taken his Typhoon down the Intercoastal Waterway), and any ocean cruises (there is a rumor that somebody took a Typhoon to Bermuda, but I wouldn't do it on a bet). Is there a trailer for the Typhoon? The E-Z Loader Boat Trailer Company claims to make more boat trailers than any other company in the world; they have national and world-wide distribution and dealerships, and make 40,000 trailers a year. If you can't find one near you, write them at P. O. Box 3263, Spokane, WA 99220, or phone them at (509) 489-0181.

Dr. Walters asks if you can launch a Typhoon from a trailer by yourself, or do you need a lift? (I can't answer that, as *Fair American* stays in the water year round, and the trailer is back here on the ranch, so I don't have to pay rent to store it. See below, the account of Dr. John Long's great trailer trip, with his E-Z Loader trailer). Does anyone have recommendations for caring for teak, topsides, sails? He uses Bon Ami for his gelcoat. I use teak oil, and clean the topside of black marks with acetone; however, I had a sail cover specially made (for \$900, but worth it), which saves me lots of time and work. San Francisco Bay is famous for its ocean bird life, and the American snowy egret (*Casmerodius albus*) has a particularly acid dump. It takes time to hank the two halves of the sail cover together at the end of the day, but spend the money on a custom sail cover and you'll never regret it. (Of course with a Weekender you may only wish to cover the cockpit).

More questions: does anyone have specs for storm jib and trysail? Are owners providing for grounding of rigs, in case of lightning, and have any Typhoons been struck? (Probably the Typhoon is no different in this respect than other boats; some of the back issues of *SAIL* should have something on this; I give my copies away to a sailing club at the University, so I don't have an easy reference. Somebody out there, give him a tip!) Anyone ever tried to rig a self-steering mechanism (not an autopilot) aboard a Typhoon? (I find sailing mine so easy, I wouldn't think of it). Who owns the molds for the Typhoon, and is there any plan to put the boat back into production? As explained in previous issues, Nauset Marine, P. O. Box 357, Orleans, MA 02653 (508-255-0777) owns the molds and the rights; they built one boat, and exhibited it at the Boston Boat Show in February. According to President Philip A. Deschamps, the boat is in production but only on a custom basis; they also make trailers by the same arrangement.

Has anybody ever had their boat sink, or be knocked down or swamped? Great *Neptune* forbid! Of course there is no such thing as an unsinkable vessel, of whatever size, but the double-hulled construction should keep a Typhoon afloat even when swamped, and the full keel (ballast 900 lbs.) should resist broaching.

AND HERE IS THE REPORT ABOUT THE GREAT TRAILER TRIP: Dr. John Long, of San Luis Obispo, California, bought a Typhoon two years ago, and trailered it down to San Diego. He writes:

“To set the stage for the tale of the San Diego Trip you must have a bit of the background. Back when I was negotiating with the owner, I had just got him to say that he would sell to me. As I was hanging up the phone, it rang, and it was Julie, Bill’s girlfriend, to tell us that she had rooms for us at the Princess Resort for Sunday through Thursday. This was great news as I had visions of trailering the boat down and sailing on Mission Bay. Bill said he had Sunday and Monday off so that he could spend some time with us and go out on the boat.

16 July 1992: I took possession of my Typhoon on Morro Bay. I purchased the boat in the water and was assured that a trailer was part of the bargain. The trailer was an E-Z Loader, the type that has an extension mechanism for the tongue that allows one to pull a pin and extend the tongue by at least 6 feet to keep the tow vehicle out of the water during a ramp launch. This was never demonstrated, just described by the seller after he loaded the boat and pulled the boat from the bay with his old pickup. I then hitched up the trailer and went back to San Luis Obispo with my new treasure. The same day my son Jim and I took the boat to Port San Luis and launched it via the slings at the old boat launch. This resulted in about an hour’s sail getting to know the boat.

17 July: Jim and I launched again at Port San Luis: more experience and I finished the day by myself. This included lowering the mast and hauling out the boat, and readying for trailering.

18 July: Jim, Kit (my wife) and I launched again for more experience with the Typhoon. A good day!

19 July: Kit and I departed for San Diego and a four-day vacation at the Princess Resort on Mission Bay with some great expectations of sailing in San Diego. We left San Luis about 9 a.m. and found that the boat was not a real hindrance while driving. With a few stops, we arrived about 6 p.m. and called Bill to come over and go out for dinner. When we arrived at the resort I registered, and a boy on a bicycle led us to our room, down a curved narrow drive with parked cars on either side. Well, the quaint little Japanese bridge was too humped for the boat trailer to cross. I got stuck, had to back up half a block and take another route; embarrassing!

20 July: We could not find a sling launch facility in San Diego: called three marinas, the Harbor Patrol, a yacht club, a marine supply shop and a boat yard.

The boat yard would launch the boat for ... \$150. We tried launching it from a ramp; I borrowed a sledge hammer and worked up a sweat trying to loosen the tongue enough to ramp-launch the boat: no success! To ease my frustration I did rent a small sailboat at the resort for a time and enjoyed it with Bill. We cut the trip short by one day and I chose to return to San Luis Obispo so that I might get in some sailing. It was the trip home that was worth mentioning!

22 July: We left early Wednesday; and first the trailer lock stuck and I cut my finger getting the lock off. Then I tried to stop at a Marie Callender's for breakfast but they didn't open until ten a.m. The boat trailer place we stopped at in Santa Ana said I shouldn't put any money into the trailer but should buy one of theirs (no kidding!) I finally got away to Interstate 405 to beat the rush hour traffic, and felt good about getting onto the Ventura Freeway before 3 p.m.

We were about a mile onto the Ventura Freeway in the middle lane when I felt a lurch and a bump! I looked in my rear-view mirror in time to see my left trailer wheel come off and bounce across two lanes of traffic, without hitting anything, and come to a rest against the divider. We came to a grinding halt, of course, in the middle lane.

There was no way I was going to cross two lanes of traffic to get to a call box, so we just sat and waited for the Highway Patrol. We waited about fifteen minutes; the officer called a tow truck who arrived in another twenty. The tow truck was unable to tow the trailer, so I had to drag the trailer, with the van, across two lanes to the shoulder. We then got into the truck and drove off to buy five new wheel bolts. Thirty minutes later we were on our way with no significant damage except to our pride. It was something to listen to KNXT-1070 radio to hear about the traffic jam on the Ventura Freeway and know it was us!!! And ... this was our anniversary, no less. (We did get in a bit of sailing the next weekend and that eased the pain a little).

MORAL: A careful check of the trailer before each use is important, as well as a rehearsal of all phases of launching. The problem on the trailer was loose lug bolts. I was able to tighten the right wheel bolts easily with a small wrench while the tow truck driver was installing those on the left wheel. They must have been quite loose: the left ones just backed out — all of them — and the wheel, accordingly, departed. Since this trip I disassembled the trailer, freed up the tongue, and repainted the whole assembly: Now it works fine.”

Editor's comment: Dr. John and Kit Long were lucky. I have personally seen a small car pulling a U-Haul trailer over the low pass between Vallejo and Fairfield, on Interstate 80 in northern California. The trailer started to fishtail, the driver slammed on the brakes, and thanks to an effect first described

mathematically by Sir Isaac Newton (1642-1727), the U-Haul trailer swung around and slammed the small car on the driver's side, pushing the car into the ditch, while a loose wheel from the trailer rolled rapidly not three meters in front of my own wheels. I pulled off at the next exit, telephoned the Highway Patrol, and went on my way with many prayers. I don't attempt to trailer my boat, because my car is only a Toyota Corolla wagon, and I fear that I might be victim number whatever-it-might-be. In any case, I would have the lug bolts checked by a mechanic at the garage in Winters before taking the trailer anywhere, loaded or not.

Sailing on San Diego Bay is quite delightful; we chartered a Cal 27 and skipper there last month, and spent a happy morning, viewing small vessels and great; San Diego is a naval base, so we could see two U. S. aircraft carriers, plus a Canadian destroyer, HMCS *Huron*, which we went aboard two days later.

Finally: the breakfast place that doesn't open until ten on Wednesday, and the trailer outfit which, finding you in difficulties, tries to make a quick sale and trade-in, are phenomena so common in California as to be scarcely worth more than a wry face. They order these matters better, no doubt, in Massachusetts, Florida, or possibly even in France.

That's all the information I have for the moment; I need more technical stuff, more useful addresses, and above all anecdotes and pleasantries. I can't pay you for your written contributions but they're what make this newsletter fun to read. The next issue will come out — when? When I have more material from you!
