

NEWSLETTER – FEBRUARY 2010

COMING SOON! The TMOS Guide to a Career in Sailing!



A NEW YACHT! Congratulations to YMOS student Kevin Ward on acquiring the Elan Impression 43, *Canace*. We wish Kevin many happy days sailing her, wherever the wind may take them.



The **Yachtmaster Ocean Sailing School** offers the full range of RYA theory and practical courses. Go to www.yachtmaster.co.za for more details.

CONGRATULATIONS! Well done to the following

RYA Day Skipper:

Bryan Turner
Barry Preston
Brent Radcliffe
Laubser Pepler
Roy Hamlyn
Eduardo Abramor
Raymond Monk
Victor Monk
Cuan Nicolay
Claire Johnson

RYA Coastal Skipper:

PJ Smitsdorff

RYA Yachtmaster Ocean:

Kim Weltner
Gary Shaw
Andre Salt

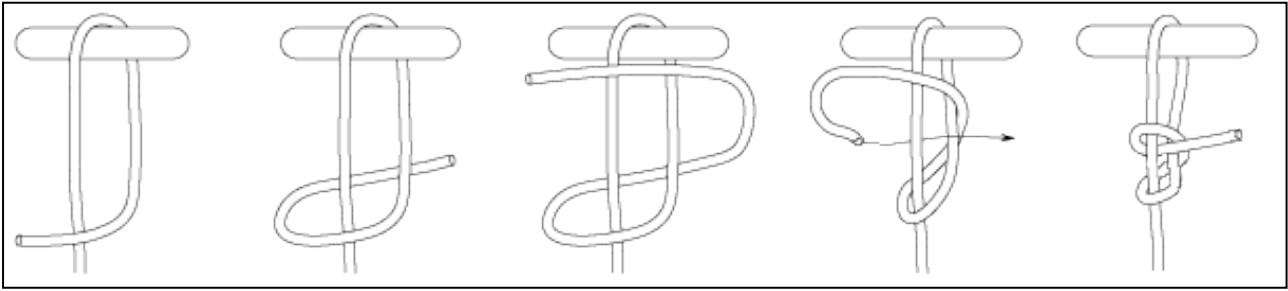


Building up Your Miles Unless you own or have easy access to a yacht, it is often difficult to gain experience or build up your sea miles without attending a formal course. YMOS offer week long (or longer!) experience weeks, the contents of which are tailored according to the student's requirements. For example, the need may be to accumulate 60 mile passages towards the RYA Yachtmaster Offshore exam, or to practise pilotage in unfamiliar waters, using traditional methods and chart plotters and radar. Alternatively, you may just want a week's challenging sailing! The experience weeks take place on Donna Mia and a YM Instructor is provided. Visit the YMOS website for more details.

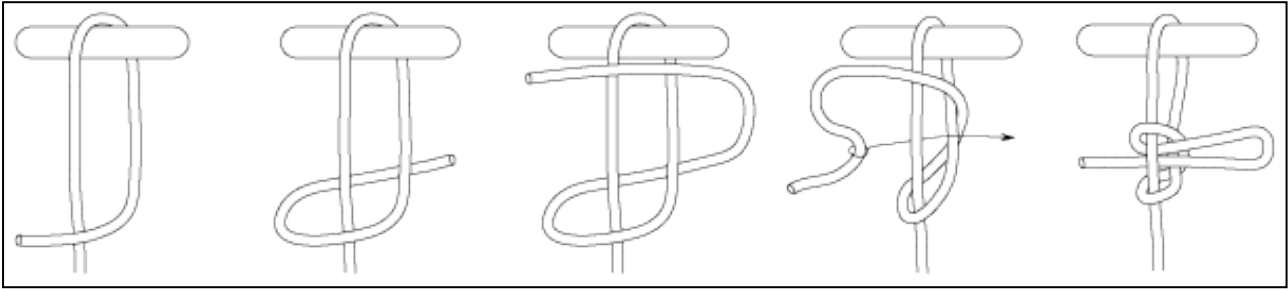
Knot of the Month - The Buntline Hitch The buntline hitch is an extremely useful knot for attaching a line to an object. In the days of sail, it was used to attach lines to the foot of sails. I often use it to attach a sheet or halyard to a shackle, as it is very compact but secure, and works extremely well on modern, slippery, synthetic ropes. The buntline knot locks when under load, so if it is tied as a temporary attachment the slipped version should be used.

Tying the Knot See the diagrams below. Note that it is important that the turns of the clove hitch must progress towards the object, otherwise a much less secure two half hitches will be formed. Although not required, a round turn may be made around the object.





The Standard Buntline Knot



The Slipped Buntline Knot

RYA NEWS

In recent years, there has been some debate about when and where you should be wearing your lifejacket. Should it be made compulsory? Obviously when you step ashore it's not really an issue, but what about out on the water? Forty years ago, hardly any of us wore one, but then forty years ago none of us wore seatbelts in cars. The RYA provides the following useful guidance:

Of course, the bottom line is that a lifejacket can save your life. But it remains a thorny issue: we boaters are a fairly independent minded bunch, so the last thing we want is people telling us what to do.

On the other hand, the RYA as the governing body of boating, has a certain obligation to provide some advice on this matter. After all the RYA is dedicated to promoting safe boating and obviously lifejackets are pretty fundamentally useful in that area. One of the central tenets of the RYA ethos is that boaters have an excellent safety record without regulation- we work on the theory that sailors are capable of making a sensible decision. That doesn't mean the RYA can't offer advice though. In particular for novice boaters who might be less capable of making a good judgment call on lifejackets. And the advice is really as follows: *'wear a buoyancy aid or lifejacket unless you are sure you don't need to.'*

Guidelines In addition to this, the RYA strongly recommends that you wear a lifejacket in the following circumstances:

- If you're a non-swimmer and there is any possibility of entering the water
- When the skipper deems it necessary
- When abandoning ship
- When you feel you want to wear one or if you are not totally sure that you do not need to wear one.

Suitability Obviously there is no point wearing a lifejacket if it is not suitable for the purpose, so here are a few guidelines.

Buoyancy Aids are suitable for:

- Using personal watercraft
- When sailing a dinghy
- Novice windsurfers
- Providing safety cover for such an activity

Lifejackets are suitable:

- When on an open boat (eg. small powerboat or RIB)
- When going ashore in a yacht tender
- On a sailing yacht or motor cruise



Levels of Buoyancy In addition to selecting between a life jacket and a buoyancy aid, consideration also needs to be given to the level of buoyancy that is required. Buoyancy aids and lifejackets have different levels of buoyancy. These levels of buoyancy should be considered and influence your choice. There are four main buoyancy levels: 50, 100, 150 and 275. In general terms, Level 50 is a buoyancy aid designed for when help is close at hand, whereas Level 150 is a general purpose lifejacket used for offshore cruising and motor boating. Specialist life-jackets are available for infants and children.



Things to look for You should also consider fitting or buying a lifejacket that is fitted with:

- Crotch straps to stop the lifejacket riding up over your head
- Spray-hood to stop waves and spray entering your mouth and lights.
- Harness D ring for harness attachment to stop you falling off in the first place

Crotch straps, spray-hoods and lights are frequently not fitted as standard to a lifejacket, but are really essential to actually keep you alive in the water and aid your location.

Just remember the unfortunate crew of the yacht *Ouzo*, which mysteriously disappeared off the Isle of Wight in 2006. All the crew were picked out of the water several hours later. All were wearing lifejackets, but without crotch straps holding them out of the water, they eventually drowned.

A Career in Sailing

Watch the YMOS website for our new “Guide to a Career in Sailing”. The aim of the guide is to provide a handy reference for all of you who want to work in the professional sailing world. The guide will include information on what careers are available, what training and qualifications are required and how to go about finding work and gaining experience. We plan to have the Guide available as a pdf on the website by mid February.



Fair winds and full sails

Peter and the YMOS Team