FINDING CREW

Some of you are going to be a lot more gregarious than Steve and I and appreciate the company of crew on passages and perhaps when anchored. If this is the case, the question then becomes how do you find the ideal crew?

Experience

Some of our friends that carry crew consider sailing experience a prerequisite. If potential crew can't help with boat handling, why take them, goes the reasoning. If this is your approach, you'll want to check some references to make sure the crew has done what they claim. A test sail with helming and sail handling is also a good idea.

Compatibility

Other folks we know who carry crew are much more interested in compatibility than sailing experience. They want to be sure the "vibes" are good and that their new crewmember will fit in.

This gets you into areas such as eating habits, personal hygiene, smoking, language, music, sense of humor, even priorities on seating and bunk protocol.

If your crew is new to the game, be sure that he or she understands the fresh-water consumption rules.

The Food Chain

One source of friction with new crew may be the food stores and how they are consumed. The odds are you will have inventories of some items that are hard to come by and so you tend to ration their consumption. Being clear about how much of and how often these items available for consumption helps keep a peaceful ship.

Drugs

In many parts of the world if the authorities find drugs or drug paraphrenalia aboard your vessel, your home is subject to forfeit. This is way to big a chance to take and so we get into the sticky question of what a new crewmember brings aboard. Some owners will search the crew's belongings to make sure no contraband is stowed aboard. Others feel very uncomfortable with the prospect. But if you don't make the search, how do you know the new crew is "clean?"

Checking References

Everyone we know who takes outside crew recommends getting and checking references (both land and sea-based). This is the only way to assure yourself that the background of your new shipmate is what you want it to be.

When we've spoken to law enforcement and Coast Guard officials about security issues, they have always emphasized careful background checks of crew.

Contributions to Cruising Kitty

When you take crew along are they there for the ride, or do they help pay their way? Many who take crew expect a modest contribution to the cruising kitty, perhaps enough to covert consumption of stores. We've heard folks sharing from $50 to $150 per week.

Where To Look

There are all sorts of ways of finding crew from word of mouth to the bulletin boards of harbor masters, marinas, and yacht clubs. Most cruising magazines have crew-wanted classified adds, and several run parties periodically where those looking for a ride can meet up with those looking for crew.

ABOARD *TINDORA*

Doris and Ussi Aspiala have spent the last 12 years cruising on a Swan 57, *Tindora*, most of the time with crew aboard. They enjoy the company and need help with the Swan's massive rig. They were happy to give us some advice about dealing with crew.

I asked Doris how they decide on a crewmember. "Get to know them first," she suggested, "It takes a couple of weeks to tell if someone is going to work out or not." The best way to do this is to take a short cruise, testing how well you and the crewmember get along on a 24-hour basis.

Doris looks for people with easy-going personalities who will adapt easily to the way she and Ussi like to live. While most of their crew have become good friends, inviting friends to crew is ill-advised they contend. Ussi warns, "It can be difficult to assign chores and run as tight a ship with someone you've known a long time." "This is not a democracy," Doris stresses, "The deci-

sions are made by us, not by anybody else."

They ask ahead of time about food likes and dislikes. Although they're pretty flexible about their own eating habits, they have found discord over food to be a major problem at sea. It's best to have an understanding up front.

The Swan 57 *Tindora* anchored off Epsiritu Santo in the Sea of Cortez.

Once a new crewmember is selected, he or she goes through a sort of "orientation period." Ussi breaks them in on deck, and Doris goes over the systems used down below. They also cover safety procedures, such as the man-overboard routine; location and use of fire extinguishers; and rules about wearing harnesses. "We have a firm rule on harnesses," Ussi explains, "They are always worn when leaving the interior at night or in heavy weather." This breaking-in period is a good time to discuss abandon-ship preparations: How one crewmember would be in charge of gathering abandon-ship bags, another would radio a mayday, and someone else would look for the problem.

Doris is fussy about how the boat looks down below, and about what goes on in the galley. (Just like me!) The crew must adapt to the *Tindora* way of doing things. Doris does the cooking; a crewmember does the dishes. Usually one member of the crew is assigned domestic chores for the day. This can include galley clean-up, as well as wiping down the varnish and cabin soles, and vacuuming.

Crew always have their own sleeping space and storage area. This way the saloon doesn't become a bunk room. Gear is kept stowed, rather than left all over the place.

I asked Ussi and Doris if they ever posted written rules for the crew. They keep a *positive* list of reminders taped to the bulkhead. Some of the items covered are: Wear a shirt to dinner; keep a positive attitude; be considerate of others aboard; lend a hand as needed; and anticipate jobs and do them ahead of time.

I wondered how they handled the logistics of transporting the crew, breaking them in, etc. Ussi told me they expect crew to pay for their own airfare to the boat and back. Since their style of cruising involves laying the boat up each year, a definite location for the return ticket can be arranged in advance. Doris and Ussi supply food and a place to sleep. They also pick up the tab for dining ashore. Crew must bring their own spending money.

They schedule crew to arrive two weeks before the departure date. This affords time for plenty of hard work getting the boat ready to go to sea. Sails are bent back on, and various repairs are taken care of. If Doris and Ussi aren't yet living aboard, they give the crew a *per diem* to cover meals — something in the neighborhood of US$20 a day.

Once embarked, the work schedule tapers off to around an hour a day.

Each morning at breakfast, they run over the jobs for the day. Crewmembers are expected to get

Doris and Ussi Aspialla in the saloon of *Tindora*.

their work done without any prompting. "I hate bossing people around," says Ussi. He and Doris do their chores right alongside the crew.

What if things don't work out? They make sure it's understood in advance that a crewmember can be asked to leave at any harbor with an airport. Fortunately, they've only had to do this once.

Their first crewmember was a friend who planned to visit for a couple of months and ended up staying for most of the year. This person referred a friend, who crewed for a while and in turn referred other friends. Many of their crew have been Finnish Sea Scouts. Most have had at least some small-boat-sailing experience.

Part-Time Circumnavigation

Doris and Ussi have used an interesting approach to cruising during their circumnavigation. Because of business commitments they have moved the boat in stages, leaving it for a time in ports along the way. Each stage was usually two to four months long.

When they would start to think about laying up the boat for the season they would try to find a good place via word of mouth, with someone to look after the boat. This usually worked out, but not always. When they left *Tindora* in Papeete they would give a young friend a ticket and some food money and say "Here, fly down to Tahiti, live aboard, keep and eye on things, and have a good time." As you can imagine to someone from Finland, this was a dream come true. The problem came when they went back to the boat. After two different people had lived aboard things were in a real mess, a "pig sty," as Ussi put it.

In another location, when *Tindora* was left afloat, they would have a local look after her. This worked while in Sydney, Australia, for example, where the manager of a local boat yard kept an eye on her.

Ussi would have the engine and all other systems run once a week, the heads pumped out (to keep everything moving), and all through hulls opened and closed a couple of times.

Their preference was to leave the boat hauled out. In Cape Town, South Africa, they stored *Tindora* in a government-run storage area; very secure, if somewhat dirty.

Ussi and Doris point out that you have to leave a couple of weeks available when arriving at the storage point to get the boat ready to store and to find out what is happening locally, choose the best people to look after the boat, and generally put things in order.

If you have trouble getting several years off at once, or want to return home periodically to keep an eye on things (and maybe build up the cruising kitty) this part time approach to sailing around the world can make a lot of sense.

DREAM CHASER

Ron and Caroline Teschke were experienced cruisers when Steve and I first met them in Rhode Island. They had cruised the Eastern Seaboard in various boats and at one point had taken a year off to do an "Atlantic Circle" with their three children, the youngest of whom was a baby at the

The Teschke family. From left, Michael, Ron, Caroline (kneeling) Joanna, and Max. Circumnavigators all.

time. They were interested in a new boat, in which they planned to do a circumnavigation. They eventually decided that one of our Sundeer 64s might do the job for them, and a year or so later they took delivery.

Rather than have their boat commissioned in Rhode Island, they transported her to Maine. There they contracted with the crew at Bass Harbor Marine to work in the details experience had taught them would be necessary for a boat with two adults, a teenage daughter, and two young sons. The commissioning process took place over the winter, and when the weather showed signs of being pleasant enough to sail, *Dream Chaser* was launched.

Steve and I knew that Ron and Caroline planned a circumnavigation, but we didn't realize that they planned to do it in a year. Part of their reason for this schedule was the challenge of doing a family circumnavigation in such a short period of time — everyone thought they were a little nuts. The other reason was their daughter Joanna's social life. Ron and Caroline didn't think it was fair to take her away from her school friends for more than a year.

The Teschkes followed the normal west-about pattern for a circumnavigation. Leaving Maine in May with their two sons, Michael (age 10) and Max (age 7), they made a direct shot to Bermuda, then through the Bahamas, stopping in the Turks and Caicos, before making the run down to Panama. Joanna (age 13) met the boat in Panama, having just finished the ninth grade.

Cruising Routine

The children helped run the boat almost from the first. "Every day at 1:00 p.m.(after school) Ron and I would go to the forward cabin to nap or read and the kids would run the boat," Caroline says, "They did everything. They sailed, they navigated — Ron taught them all celestial navigation. We'd lie there and hear them raising sails and making decisions. By the end it was incredible. Joanna could have dropped us off and sailed around the world by herself."

From Panama *Dream Chaser* made the passage to the Galapagos, then on across the tradewind belt to Rangiroa in the Tuamotus. They spent three weeks enjoying the easy-going lifestyle of the Tuamotians before heading off across the central South Pacific. It was during this next 3,000-mile-leg that a minor equipment failure brought the family closer.

Michael practicing a sun sight. All three of the Teschke children learned and practiced celestial navigation. It is way more fun than just pusing a button to find out where you are!

The Teschkes had installed a WH drive system for their autopilot using a Robertson control head. The central processing unit of the Robertson was mounted on the forward bulkhead of the lazaret, and contrary to labeling, was not immune to moisture. When a small drip found its way into the "brain", they were forced to hand-steer for 1,000 miles until they reached Tonga (where Ron found he could easily repair the problem himself). Everybody had to chip in with the driving chores.

"It was really when the autopilot went out that things changed dramatically on the boat," explains Caroline, "It brought us together as a family." Joanna, like any teenager, really didn't want to go on the trip. After all, what 13-year-old would want to be cooped up on a boat with two younger brothers, not to mention her parents? But becoming a full-time watchkeeper changed all that.

"It sparked my interest in sailing. I started to fall in love with the boat," says Joanna.

Caroline adds, "At 2:00 in the morning, Joanna would be up on deck in her foul-weather gear with her Walkman blaring — this little girl steering a 64-foot-boat. And she never complained."

Dream Chaser, a Sundeer 64, during seatrials. She is flying a very nice-looking suit of John Conser's sails. The outer jib is actually free flying, set on the end of the anchoring sprit. (Jeri Conser photo.)

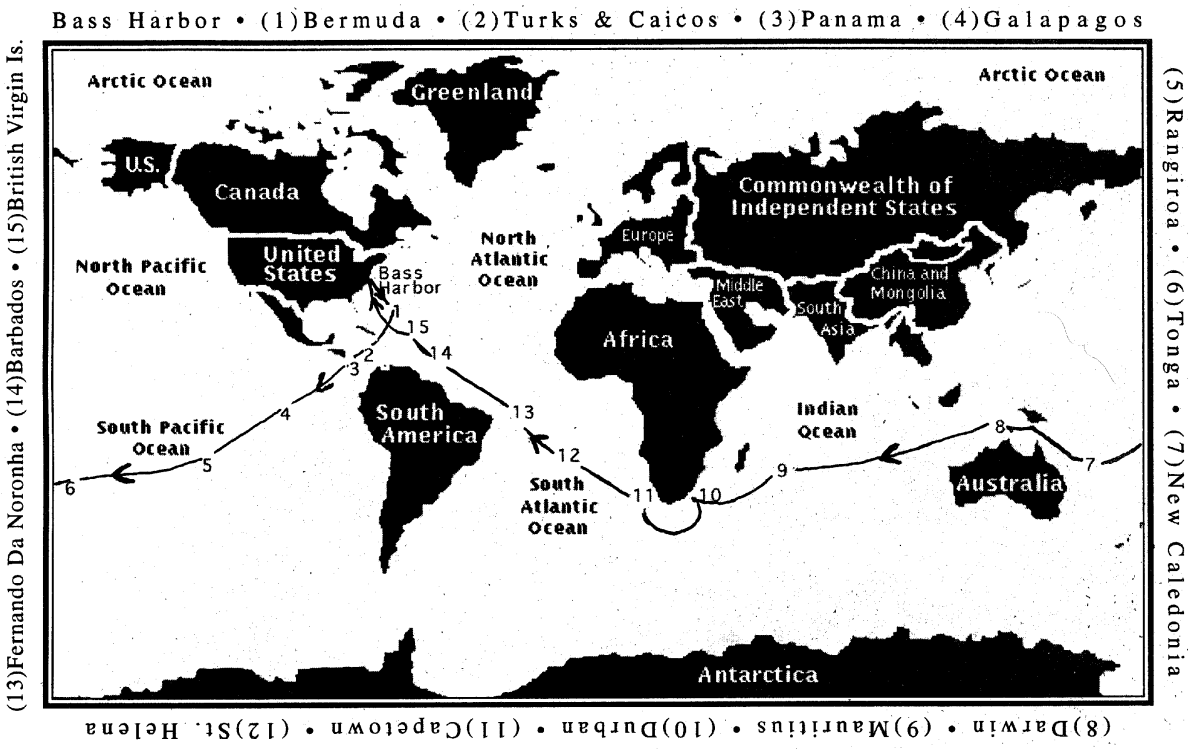
Weather Patterns

At the age of eight Max took his trick at the helm just like everyone else aboard.

In general, as you can see by the table at the end of this section, almost the entire year-long passage was done within normal cruising seasons.

Leaving in May for Bermuda is fine in a well-prepared boat, especially one that can make good speed while keeping an eye on the continental weather coming toward the coast. Heading down to Panama in June is considered okay, but again you need to keep an eye peeled for the odd early hurricane. When you get through the Windward Passage (between Cuba and Haiti) and halfway to Panama, the hurricane threat is substantially reduced. From Panama on you are out of the hurricane belt and/or within the proper cruising season all the way across the South Pacific. Southern hemisphere winter is ideal for tradewinds, temperature, and cyclone threats. The only weather issues normally dealt with are "tropical convergences." While these can bring rain and reinforced trades, they should not be an issue for a well-found yacht.

Everyone crossing the Indian Ocean to South Africa faces the same problems with weather. Various issues crowd you toward the end of the southern hemisphere winter/spring season for departure from Darwin. You end up passaging across this enormous stretch of ocean in typically strong southeast trades. The difficulties come toward the western end of the trip. From Mauritius on, this is one of the most active cyclone regions in the world. The pilot charts are almost solid red with storm tracks — and these are large, intense storms, typically a much greater threat than their relatively tame North Atlantic and Caribbean counterparts. So it behooves one to be safely into Durban, on the South African coast, before the start of the summer cyclone season. If you are late,



Dream Chaser's track around the world was quite normal. What was so different was their time frame, just 12 months total for the trip, including 155 days at sea.

it usually means spending the summer in Mauritius and ducking into the graving docks in Port Louis when a storm threatens the island. (Once all the boats are in the dock, the water level is lowered, substantially reducing the cyclonic wind impact.)

Passage	Season	Dates	Weather	Comments
lv. Bass Harbor arr. Bermuda	15 May 1995 19 May	spring spring	variable direction. light to brisk strength	normal time of year for this passages
lv. Bermuda arr. Turks & Caicos	29 May 3 June	spring summer	moderate ESE trades	early for hurricanes but must watch carefully
lv. Turks & Caicos arr. Panama	15 June 19 June	summer summer	moderate SE trades	SW Caribbean usually safe for hurricanes
lv. Panama arr. Galapagos	27 June 2 July	summer n/a	light SE trades	no seasons on the equator
lv. Galapagos arr. Rangiroa	12 July 31 July	n/a winter	light SE trades	ideal time of year
lv. Rangiroa arr. Tonga	16 Aug 24 Aug	winter winter	light SE trades	ideal time of year
lv. Tonga arr. New Caledonia	2 Sept 9 Sept	winter winter	light to moderate SE-E trades	ideal time of year
lv. New Caledonia arr. Darwin	25 Sept 10 Oct	winter winter	light to moderate SE-E trades	ideal time of year
lv. Darwin arr. Mauritius	23 Oct 16 Nov	spring spring	strong SE trades	getting late in year risk of early cyclones
lv. Mauritius arr. Durban	21 Nov 2 Dec.	spring summer	variable one gale	need to watch cyclone development
lv. Durban arr. Cape Town	28 Jan 3 Feb	summer summer	variable one gale	watch for weather window to head down coast
lv. Cape Town arr. St. Helena	17 Feb 28 Feb	summer summer	light trades	normal time of year for this passage
lv. St. Helena arr. Fernando Noronha	7 Mar 20 Mar	summer summer	light trades	ideal time of year but trades light
lv. Fernando Noronha arr. Barbados	25 Mar 5 Apr	fall spring	light trades	ideal time of year but trades light
lv. Barbados arr. British Virgins	16 Apr 18 Apr	spring spring	light trades	ideal time of year but trades light
lv. British Virgins arr. Bass Harbor	4 May 13 May	spring spring	variable one gale	normal time of year

What is so interesting to me in the Teschke's approach is that the weather they had, and the seasons they traveled, were almost a mirror image of our three-and-a-half year circumnavigation aboard *Intermezzo*.

Ron reported that for the most part winds were lighter than predicted on the pilot charts. This mainly meant winds below 12 knots (true) from a very broad reach to dead astern. The only exception was the Indian Ocean where, as Ron comments, "From the longitude of the west coast of Australia, wind conditions fit precisely those predicted for the Indian Ocean and we flew for weeks on a broad-reach port tack. We no doubt could have run even higher daily averages, but remember we were always walking a fine line between making decent speed and breaking vital equipment — which would have been a trip-ender in so far as getting around the world in less than a year, not to mention getting to Africa before the cyclone season." It was during this leg of the trip that *Dream Chaser* saw her best day's run, 295 miles with several more days of 250-plus miles thrown in for good measure. (By comparison, *Intermezzo* could only manage 200 miles on her best day on this passage.)

Ron says that their experience with the North Atlantic was typical, with the wind "all over the place — generally easterly, and when it blew at all, not of the pilot chart-predicted proportions.'Heavy Weather Preparations

In preparation for heavy weather, the Teschkes had three very deep reefs put into the main and mizzen. In addition, they had a heavy storm staysail that could be flown hanked on the cutter stay. They also added one of Donald Jordan's series drogues for use in extremely severe conditions where they might want to slow down due to sea conditions or lack of sea room in which to run off.

This series drogue was attached to the mooring cleats on the afterdeck, with its bulk stored on the inboard end of the swim step. This took up quite a bit of valuable real estate, but it was only in place when there was a potential for its use. Ron says they brought it out of storage and set if up ready to deploy before leaving Darwin, Australia. The drogue was removed and stowed before leaving Cape Town for the more temperate weather of the Atlantic.

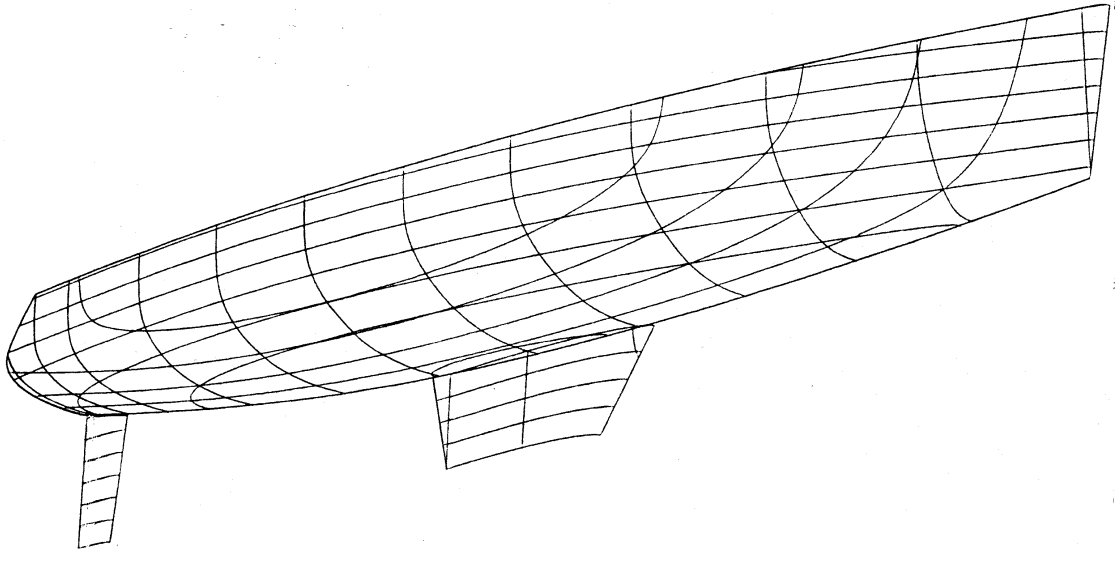
One of the issues to face when slowed down with the stern facing the sea is the possibility of being swept, stern to bow, by a breaking sea. Ron reports that, "to that end I constructed a 1.5-inch (37mm) thick plywood pre-drop board that rested up nicely against the structural lip on both sides of the companionway and against a several-inch (50mm) elevation at its base. So that this would be able to dissipate some of the energy of a breaking sweeping sea without having to absorb all of it, I drilled ten 1-inch (25mm) holes in it. Thus some, but not all of the load would be taken by the 1/2-inch (12.6 mm) Lexan drop board behind it." Fortunately, the drogue was never required.

Heaving-To

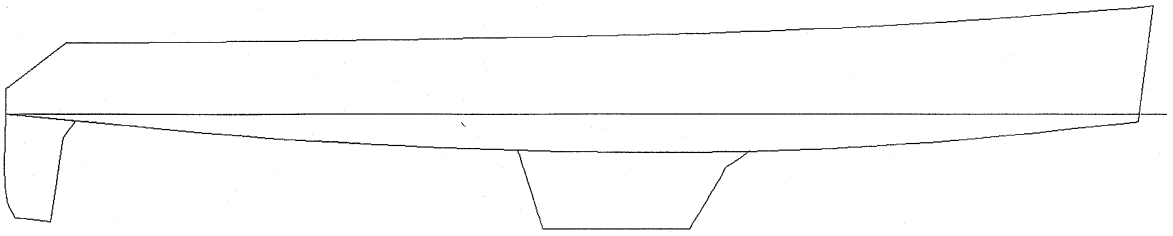
There were three instances where gales led the Teschke's to heave-to. The first time was 200 miles off the coast of Durban, on the edge of the Aghulas current in 50-plus knots of wind. (Everyone seems to get nailed in this spot — we certainly did!)

With the wind coming at you from the southwest, if you want to maintain station or keep going, this means beating into large breaking seas. A lot of folks would claim it's impossible to get a light-displacement, short fin-keeled yacht to heave-to, especially one with as little in the water and as much above as the Sundeer 64. So we were very interested in the tactics used by the Teschkes, as well as the results.

They hove-to with storm staysail sheeted to weather opposed by a triple-reefed mizzen, the normal way of setting things up when hove-to with ketch rigs. With the mizzen sheeted on center, *Dream Chaser* would lie at about 30 degrees to the wind, slowly working forward against the



The Teschke's Sundeer 64 draws 6 1/2 feet (2 m), most of which is taken up by a short, fin keel. The hull fin combination is designed to be quite efficient upwind in a cruising context. However, the bottom line in the design of *Dream Chaser* is the ability to absorb wave impact and skid to leeward while dissipating wave energy (which might otherwise turn into a knockdown or rollover). The shallow fin rapidly rolls out of the water with excessive heel and the boat skids easily on its topsides (with no fin to hold her against the force of the breaking sea. We've found that this type of design also does well when hove-to, making a nice slick to weather while drifting off to leeward.



The fin keel on the Sundeer 64 is considered short by many standards. However, the fact that this hull moves so quickly through the water makes it actually quite efficient (as lift is a function of boatspeed squared). The longitudinal center of gravity (with empty fuel tanks) is forward of the aft end of the keel, so the boat can be supported on the keel when hauled out. The short fin adds to maneuverability, making the autopilot's job that much easier at sea.

waves. However, according to Ron, "when lying like that...there were several occasions when the apparent wind would briefly swing dead ahead, causing us concern that the next time the boat might inadvertently tack through the wind." He felt more comfortable with the mizzen sheet eased down 10 to 20 degrees, at which point *Dream Chaser* would lie at about 60 degrees from the wind, with no concern on the part of the crew that she'd tack herself.

Of course there might be times when it would be safer to lie closer to the wind. It might improve the angle of the slick made by the hull towards the waves, not to mention taking the wave impacts more on the bow (as opposed to the beam). Ron comments, "if one wished ardently to lie at 30 degrees, one could. Just keep a close watch, and be ready to jump to the mizzen sheet and/or handle an inadvertent tack....This might be highly desirable under imaginable circumstances, making the watch-keeping worthwhile."

The Teschkes found "helm position...to be largely irrelevant. After beginning with it hard over, we ended keeping it mid line. We made just under 2 knots leeway, drifting 120 degrees downwind, while lying at 60 degrees to the wind. The slippage was a bonus. We never came near tripping, and it was almost surreally comfortable down below. The 1.8-knot speed average was determined by GPS, on multiple tacks, in two different oceans. It would probably be substantially less in, say, a steady 30-to-35 knots as opposed to the constant 43-to-50 (true) that we were in."

Ron is aware of the trade-offs in a cruising yacht. "If one wants a buoy-to-buoy or coastal racer, on a triangular course the slippage to leeward which comes with a shallow draft keel like the Sundeer 64's is a problem. Offshore, where you rarely sail at tight angles, the penalties are minor. And if one wants a bluewater cruiser/racer that is exceptionally unlikely to trip on her keel — and chance getting knocked down — the question answers itself."

"It is important in analyzing the type of boat upon which you are going to cruise to be honest as to the genuine *ultimate* goal. If one expects to cross a sea or an ocean, one has to think backwards. What is the worst that is going to happen? Am I prepared? Do I have the right boat? With the slippage, we found hove-to we left a slick to weather. This seemed to diminish the breaking crests of oncoming seas. What more could you ask for?"

Ron and Caroline Teschke snuggled up in *Dream Chaser's* pilot house off the Cape of Good Hope.

Of the other two gales the Teschkes encountered, one was between Durban and Cape Town, and the other was at the end of the trip just entering the Gulf of Maine.

Downwind Rig

The sailplan on *Dream Chaser*, like that on most of the Sundeer 64s, is a ketch configuration, with spreaders swept aft 25 degrees,

eliminating the need for permanent backstays. This allows the use of very efficient *high-roach* mains and mizzens. We can pack a lot of sail area into a short rig this way. It is fast and easy to handle. However, when running downwind at very deep angles, the sails cannot be let out as far as with in-line spreaders, and one has to watch chafe more carefully.

Max tossing a message into the sea in mid-Atlantic. At last report he is still waiting for a reply.

Ketches in general do not like running square, as the mizzen tends to blanket the mainsail. The approach Steve and I use is to head up 15 or 20 degrees from a dead run and pull the apparent wind forward, so that rig is broad reaching rather than running. You cover more distance, but usually do it faster so that you end up making better time overall. However, this approach requires proactive participation on the part of the crew.

The Teschkes found that *Dream Chaser* was simpler to sail dead downwind when they dropped the main and mizzen, set the jib on a carbon-fiber spinnaker pole to weather while using a free-flying reacher, sheeted through the end of the main boom to leeward.

As Ron puts it, this rig is "sweet as you please sailing 30 degrees either side of 180. Squall at night? Just depower by reefing or furling either of the roller furlers."

Ron feels there is much less wear on the rig this way (as the main and mizzen sails are not banging around) and you don't have the noise of the boom vangs to deal with. He says, "this bonus is particularly appreciated in the period immediately post-squall when seas are typically sloppy and the wind is slight to nonexistent."

The one negative in this approach is boatspeed. You will have a slower passage running like this in light airs than would be the case jibing down wind. Ron reports that in the normal light trades of 10 knots of true wind, they slipped along at 6.5 knots. When the breeze came up to 12 true, speed was 7. In 14 knots of breeze they averaged 8.

Slow is a relative term. They did make it around the world in 155 days of sailing time. And running square is certainly less work, so maybe they have something here.

And what about full-length battens? They went through the same learning curve as have most of our clients. Starting out with lightweight, flat, tapered battens, after breaking these they switched to hollow, round fiberglass. These broke too, so they ended up with solid fiberglass battens — which did the trick.

Dream Chaser started her cruise with two asymmetric spinnakers flown from a cantilevered bowsprit. Ron feels that he wouldn't purchase the bowsprit for another cruise. "I wouldn't even take along a cruising spinnaker."

Does This Approach Make Sense For You?

When Steve and I discussed the Teschke's schedule, my initial reaction was that it was much too fast. But then I started to compare it to our passage across the South Pacific in *Beowulf* in 1995. Yes, we made a couple of additional stops, but for the most part we didn't spend any more time than the Teschkes. Whereas they stopped in Rangiroa for three weeks, we did the same in the Tuamotus, except our stop was in Takaroa. Their ten-day stay in Tonga was the same length as ours. Trade our time in Fiji for their stop in New Caledonia, and we were almost even up. And by the time we arrived in New Zealand, just four months after leaving Los Angeles, we didn't feel hurried at all.

In South Africa they took three months between stopping in Durban and leaving Cape Town. That's the same time period we had spent there on *Intermezzo* in 1979. In fact, our schedule aboard *Intermezzo*, once we started across the Indian Ocean, was about the same as theirs all the

Joanna, Max, and Michael, nearly home after a year of cruising in the Gulf of Maine

way back to the States — except we were a great deal slower at sea! The major difference was that we left Darwin a couple of months earlier, then spent a month in Bali with intermediate stops in Cocos Keeling and Rodrigues before arriving in Mauritius. However, with a faster, more comfortable boat there would be no *need* for these intermediate rest stops.

The major difference in our circumnavigations was at the beginning. We took our time through Polynesia, New Zealand, and Melanesia. That 2 1/2 years we cruised could have easily been compressed into 6 months or less.

When Steve asked Caroline about the pressure of the relatively fast time schedule, her reply started us thinking. "We had all the time we needed at each stop to get in lots of sightseeing, and I mean a lot. What we didn't do was join in the yacht cruising scene. Ron and I love being at sea on *Dream Chaser* so the trip did not at all seem like a burden. People say 'Maybe you missed out,' but we didn't feel deprived. And we felt it was quite exciting to be pushing along."

If you want to do a circumnavigation, are short on time, and have a fast, reliable boat, the Teschkes have obviously proven it can be done in a comfortable manner. A major factor will be how much you enjoy (or don't enjoy) being at sea. They obviously relished passage time as much as time in port.

The seasons and weather patterns work out well. What you miss out on is the time most folks spend getting into the local rhythm of life, both with natives and cruisers. But if the choice is between hanging out for a couple of months at a time or not going around at all because you don't think you have the time, and if you have the proper tools to do the job, this concept makes a lot of sense.

"You have to have the right boat and you have to have a crew that gets along with each other," is how Ron puts it, "What it boils down to is that the kids made it possible."

We'll let Caroline have the final word. "I'd take off all the time. I particularly love it," she says. "I like being at sea more than I like being on land. There's a wonderful simplicity. You come to enjoy just watching the waves. I saw 155 dawns come up over the sea. And that's intrinsically pleasurable."

LEGAL ISSUES

Before we leave the subject of crew (and guests) we need to chat about some legal issues. As much as Steve and I hate the concept of covering one's hind end, if you use a boat in the U.S. in this day and age, you need to understand your rights and responsibilities.

We are fortunate to have a legal expert in the family. Steve's "baby" brother was for many years a practicing attorney, specializing in litigation. He has since been "elevated," as they say, to the bench. Today, Anthony J. Mohr is a judge in Southern California. And, as you would expect in our family, he has some experience with the sea. What follows is Tony's take on legal the situation.

Avoiding Litigation

Like any pursuit, boating carries its share of accidents, which is why we buy liability insurance. But occasionally a catastrophic injury happens — the kind giving rise to whopping jury verdicts that test the limits of your policy. If the judgment exceeds your insurance policy, your personal assets are at risk. Worse yet, some states allow punitive damages if a jury finds that a boat owner engaged in willful misconduct, occasionally known as gross negligence. No insurance company covers (or is allowed to cover) punitive damages, which means the money comes out of your own pocket.

What Is Negligence?

Negligence means you did something that a reasonably prudent person would not do. You failed to use ordinary or reasonable care, with the result that thanks to what you did, an injury occured. Willful misconduct is an aggravated form of negligence involving a reckless disregard for the safety of others. It includes acts like drinking before you go sailing; allowing an inexperienced friend to use your boat without your supervision; aggressive behavior at sea; or violating right-of-way rules.

It is vital to make sure that such charges cannot be leveled at you. Even though your guests are cordial and understanding at the time, many old friends end up in litigation. For example, a California attorney filed a negligence suit on behalf of a passenger who hurt his leg jumping from the boat to the dock. Both he and the owner had been drinking. Although the plaintiff is an experienced sailor, the theory of the case is that the owner should have been sober when bringing his boat into the slip and should have warned his friend that the dock might "wobble". The suit is pending. Another attorney, who is a judge pro tem and ought to know better, got sued when he took his girl riend to his yacht one night; the hatch was open and she fell through.

Minimize Your Risks

While no one can eliminate the possibility of serious injuries, boat owners can minimize their risk, thus making it hard for anyone to claim willful misconduct. This is accomplished first by being as careful as possible and, failing that, maximizing the careless role the injured person played in an accident (known in the law either as contributory negligence or comparative negligence).

Your best defense may be to prove that the person who got hurt was just as negligent as you, if not more so. In some suits this will bar a plaintiff from winning anything. In other states, such as California, a plaintiff's carelessness will not defeat a recovery, but may reduce the dollar amount in proportion to the degree of his comparative negligence.

Even if you are cruising and are at a remote island, be careful how you treat guests. If, for example, you live in California or your boat is a California vessel, the plaintiff-oriented laws of California may apply instead of the more defense-oriented laws of the area you are visiting. That means if a local is injured, he will have his choice of suing you where the accident occurred or suing you in your home state.

With these principles in mind, here's how to reduce the chance of being accused of negligence.

- **Be prepared for your guests:** Your inexperienced friends have no clue how to behave when they leave the dock. Be ready for them. Have a bunch of old deck shoes available so they don't slip (and ruin your deck) in their leather-sole shoes. Supply sweatshirts, sunscreen and extra hats. Offer them seasick pills (but not scopolamine, which is a prescription drug). Carry a good first-aid kit.

- **Educate your guests:** Non-sailors will show up wearing the wrong clothes and expect a martini before leaving the dock. Their kids will want to run around the deck as you head through swells. Make them understand the dangers. Teach them respect for the sea. Take the time to explain how a yacht works. According to Dave Worden of Commodore Insurance Services, novices have a penchant for tripping, catching fingers in winches, and getting rope burn. If you're on a sailboat, describe what heeling means. Tell them a boom can be deadly when the wind shifts.

Consider writing a simple set of safety rules which each guest must read before leaving the dock. When my father, Stanley Dashew, first launched his 68-foot (20.9m) cutter, *Deerfoot*, he prepared a two-page description of the boat. It contained instructions like "one hand for you, one hand for the ship." First time guests were asked to read this sheet as soon as they came aboard.

To protect yourself, write each guest's name into the ship's log along with a notion that they were, for example, "furnished a copy of 'Day Sail Instructions' and told to read them." This entry will constitute helpful evidence if there is an accident followed by a lawsuit.

- **Warn about dangers:** The law provides a duty to warn about dangerous conditions. Cases against railroads, for example, often turn on the failure to operate signals properly. The same analogy applies at sea. Not long ago a doctor and lawyer who co-own a boat invited a mutual friend sailing. She was not experienced, and no one warned her that yachts pitch and roll. She lacerated her chin while falling down the companionway.

If you are sailing and are about to tack, do more than yell "ready about," because a guest may not understand the phrase. Don't let someone inexperienced jump onto the dock with your bow line. Don't let inexperienced friends steer without your close supervision. The owner of a Merit 25 is suing another sailboat owner whose guest refused to yield right-of-way in 25 knots of wind and running seas. To avoid a collision, the plaintiff spun his boat around, causing him to fall across the cockpit and hurt his back.

• **Document injuries even if they are minor:** If someone gets hurt despite your precautions, you must take certain actions not only to assist the victim but to minimize legal exposure.

Write in the log a detailed narrative of what happened. This is evidence and may be used in court. It also may help a treating physician to determine the extent of the person's injuries.

Include a full description of how the person feels. If s/he is conscious, ask if s/he is in pain and if so where. Note any objective symptoms. If your guest walked unassisted off the boat at the end of the day, you should say so in the log. Again, this is for your protection in case years later the guest claims a more serious injury. Many institutions use this technique. Next time you attend a baseball game, watch the ushers when a foul goes into the stands. They immediately find the person and ask how he is. They're not just being polite: they want to commit him to a statement of his mental and physical condition for use as evidence should that person exaggerate the event.

Get written statements by other guests and your crew. Their versions of the incident will be valuable. Put copies into the log, and keep the originals elsewhere.

The "Jones" Act

The problem becomes more complex if someone who becomes part of your crew gets hurt. That person who offers to help crew on a trip from Los Angeles to Cabo San Lucas may claim that he was a hired employee. Several years ago the owners of a C&C 44 prevailed, but just barely, in San Francisco federal court against a crewmember who was injured during a race. The plaintiff claimed that even though he was not being paid for his services, he was a seaman for hire and therefore entitled to benefits under the Jones Act. This two-week jury trial must be viewed as a warning shot. Even paying for the crew's lodging or reimbursing their expenses might be enough to invoke the Jones Act should something go wrong during the race. Kathy Taylor Folso, the former commodore of the Martinez Yacht Club, testified for the defense. Commenting after the verdict, she said, "Unless Congress changes the law, racing enthusiasts would be wise to consult their lawyers and make sure their liability insurance is paid up." So be careful about paying a friendly neighbor a few dollars to take care of the boat for the weekend or, say, run it to the fuel dock. I was told of one case where an owner gave his slipmate a few dollars to watch his boat "and if you want to use my moped (which he kept on board)." When she was involved in an accident, the court viewed her as a paid hand acting in the service of the vessel.

Each of these suggestions involves little more than common sense. But if they become part of your boating routine, the chance of having your time and assets consumed by lawsuits will be much less.

HOW BIG CAN YOU GO?

Just how large a yacht a couple can sail is the subject of some conjecture. Some sailors feel that by relying upon hydraulic roller furlers, stowaway mainsails, and other bits of exotic gear, almost any size can be handled (as long as the gear upon which you depend works!) But leave these systems on the marine chandler's shelf, and very quickly you begin to find the outer limits for prudent seamanship.

Locura

Move with us now to Baja, California, aboard the Deerfoot 72 ketch *Locura*, to see how far it's possible to go with a two-person yacht.

An 8-foot (2.5m) sea starts to lift *Locura*'s stern. Instinctively, like the surfer he is, Tom Miller lets the helm slip to windward as he rolls the bow upwind, positioning us for another ride on the face of a wave. *Locura* hesitates for a second, then, feeling the drive build in her 1.5-ounce spinnaker, accelerates forward with an adrenaline-building rush of speed.

Casually, without a pause in his conversation with Steve, Tom pulls the wheel downwind with his left hand, gesturing with his right to the steamer lights on our starboard quarter. "We're putting

it to those guys now," he says. All night long we've been racing this ship, sometimes a little faster, other times dropping back. But during the last hour the wind has built into the mid-20-knot range and *Locura* is averaging better than 13 knots. The steamer is slowly dropping astern.

With the bow heading straight into the trough of the wave ahead, the speedometer starts its climb to 13.75, 14.5, 15. No comment comes from the crew. But at 16 knots, Tom pauses in the flow of conversation to call out the speed. "Sixteen-and-a-half — come on, baby." *Locura* hangs in the wave face for 10, maybe 15 seconds. Tom grips the 60-inch (1.5m) wheel with both hands, though not because he needs to. He could just as easily let his 72-foot (22m) dinghy pick its own way to the bottom of the wave. Now Tom is pushing on the wheel, urging *Locura* faster down the wave. "Seventeen, seventeen two - Ah, now *that* feels good!"

Locura, anchored in the Sea of Cortez.

This is no ordinary mom-and-pop cruiser, but a 72-foot (22m) high-performance cruising machine. Even though the ketch rig is of modest proportions, we're carrying 1,850 square feet (171.9 square meters) of canvas *without* any form of roller-furling system.

Steve and I are aboard to observe how Tom and Lisa Miller handle their boat. Since this is *Locura*'s first offshore passage, we've agreed to come aboard and pass on what we've learned sailing our own large yachts offshore. But our interaction is to be limited to talk and eating. Tom and Lisa are to do the sailhandling. As the bow begins to nip into the back of the next wave Tom rolls the bow to windward for the next ride.

"You know, one of these days we're going to have to jibe to port," Steve comments. "We're already an hour past the layline for Cabo San Lucas. We'll probably have to drop the spinnaker and carry the reacher now."

Lisa arrives with a big bowl of popcorn for herself and me and separate bags for Tom and Steve. "You guys eat popcorn so fast we won't get our ration if we let you share, so now we each have our own."

The four of us make small talk. Lisa asks about cruising with young children. We chat about the autopilot, where to anchor at Cabo, and that meal of *huevos rancheros* and Carta Blanca beer we know will be waiting for us in a few hours. The four of us are dry, well rested, comfortable in the extreme - and traveling at exhilarating speed. There's just one problem: We can't put off jibing much longer, and that means someone will have to go forward and deal with 2,300 square feet (213.8 square meters) of straining nylon. That thought in the back of our minds adds an unstated element of tension to the evening's festivities.

It was three years ago almost to the day when Tom met us at the dock in San Diego as we completed our six-year circumnavigation.

"I want to go cruising; take off for a couple of years with Lisa and Randy — as soon as we make a brother for Randy — and get a boat together."

It was like looking into a mirror at ourselves 10 years before. Tom and Lisa live in the

pressure-cooker world of suburban Los Angeles. With a large, successful contracting business to watch over, Tom was constantly working full-tilt, traveling away from home much of the time. Together they had a demanding schedule of obligations to meet. There was no time to smell the flowers. And Tom was ready for a change.

Tom was full of questions. Having owned a series of progressively larger yachts since the days in which we raced catamarans together, he had a pretty good idea of what he wanted to go cruising in. But he wasn't sure how to make it all work together. In the end, Tom opted for a purist's rig: no roller furling, no spinnaker snuffers, not even lazyjacks to help with the 700-square-foot (65.1-square-meter) mainsail.

"This boat is not a daysailer," he reasoned. "Why pay the penalties and risks imposed by that sort of equipment when we're only going to be handling sails at the beginning and end of passages? Lisa and I can physically do the work necessary. Sure, we may have to shorten down ahead of weather, and maybe we can't push as hard -- but in the end we know that it's up to us. There won't be any sailhandling systems to fail."

"I guess we had better jibe this mother," Tom says. The moment of truth.

"What do you mean we?" I ask. "Steve and I are just along for the ride. This is a two-person boat, remember?"

"I'll go forward and get everything ready. Try not to get me wet." Tom hands me the wheel and hooks his safety harness to the jackline.

Now in theory, there shouldn't be any difference in stripping the spinnaker on *Locura* from the many times Steve and I had done the same on our own smaller boats. The proportions are a little different, that's all. Let the afterguy on the spinnaker pole go forward. Ease the main boom all the way out. Choke down the spinnaker sheet so its leech is tight against the leeward side of the mainsail. Then run off square before the wind and the chute will collapse docilely in the lee of the main.

Lisa watches anxiously from the cockpit as Tom flakes down the spinnaker halyard, tightens up the foreguy, and moves the spinnaker sheet forward. Meanwhile I restrain myself from carving up to windward to build boatspeed.

"Why don't you go forward and give Tom a hand?" I suggest. "If you ease the spinnaker halyard for him he'll have both hands free to get the sail down on deck. Steve and I have done this lots of times together when the wind was blowing really hard, and it's barely blowing 25 knots right now." By the look on Lisa's face I'm not sure my attempt at easing her concern has been successful. But she snaps her harness on the jackline and walks forward to help Tom, just the same.

"Okay, we're ready." comes the cry from the foredeck."Square off, ease out the afterguy, and collapse the spinnaker."

I head downwind, watching the luff of the chute as it gently folds back towards the mainsail. Lisa begins to ease the halyard, hesitantly at first and then as fast as she can go. Tom's arms flail nylon and he's lost in a maze of color in the glare of the spreader lights. Thirty seconds later the sail is safely on deck. Tom opens the locker hatch and dumps the sail below. The spinnaker pole is dropped down on deck and secured, the main and mizzen are jibed, and then Tom hoists the reaching jib. He and Lisa swagger back to the cockpit, their confidence level now several notches higher.

"Come on," Steve says,"let's get this sucker moving. That freighter is starting to catch us!"

Defining the Limit

How do you know what's too big? Size by itself is not the issue. In the end, it comes down to how the boat is designed and how difficult she is to handle on sail and power.

Since Steve and I helped the Millers with *Locura* we've done a series of 75-footers (22.9m) that have been sailed by couples and have now pushed the upper limit to 80 feet (24.4 m).

And the 80-footers (24.4m) we are doing today are a lot easier to handle under sail and power than our 62-footer (18.9m) was. Compared to *Locura* they are an order of magnitude faster, more comfortable and easier for a couple to handle.

Size And Budget

Having just made the above comments about big boats let me reiterate that size is relative. While it's always nice to go cruising in the biggest boat you can afford, *the real issue is going cruising*. Don't wait for the bucks to accumulate until you can afford a maxi cruiser. Go now with what you have!