

# OCEAN SAILOR



MAY 2020

Sponsored by Kraken Yachts

## Sailing the World: Voyage Planning

In part one of a three part series, Dick Beaumont spells out what you won't find in the almanac.

### Technical & Equipment

Choosing the right sails. Sail cuts and cloth materials, explained by Dick Beaumont

### K50 Update

Come below...to a K50 future: Trystan Grace showcases the K50 interior

### Travel & Discovery

Paradise Found. Skipper and crew agree: Madagascar is Nirvana

### Sailors Stories

Get to know Tom Cooper, Kraken Yachts' New CEO



# MAY 2020

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## WELCOME TO



# OCEAN SAILOR

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Dear Reader,

As you can see we have changed the name of our monthly online magazine from Kraken News to Ocean Sailor. The reason for doing this is that as the magazine has developed and gained momentum, it's clear that many of the features and articles now included have great interest to sailors worldwide, whether their initial contact was through Kraken Yachts or not.

The support and kind comments readers have made is a great encouragement and confirmation that this type of publication is very much in demand by blue water cruisers.

Please be assured that OS will continue in its current format keeping Kraken followers updated with all the developments we are making.

The publication will continue to be fully sponsored by Kraken Yachts and as such will remain free to all and will not have its stories, articles and features diluted by advertising.

Please do give us your feedback, comments and any requests you might have for future articles that relate to blue water cruising.

There are now 1,200 subscribers to our magazine, which in just a few months is pretty amazing, but please do tell your friends or sailing club members to sign up and get in the Ocean Sailor loop.

In these incredibly difficult times, as we all battle to overcome the dreadful effects of the current problems caused by the Covid 19 virus, let's all try to stay focused on simply living to fight, and sail, another day.

I wish all readers stay safe and well.

**Dick Beaumont**

*Chairman Kraken Yachts*

## LEGENDARY EDITOR RETIRES

Peter Nielsen, editor-in-chief of the US publication Sail Magazine has retired to do more sailing. His successor as editor in chief is Adam Court, Peter's long standing assistant editor.

Peter, who has been a huge supporter of Kraken Yachts, joined White Dragon, the Kraken 66 Flagship in Cape Town, South Africa, to carry out a sail test. He commented in the visitors log upon his departure: 'Beautiful yacht and a fantastic design.'

His report in SAIL Magazine concluded with these very complimentary words, 'On the evidence of this boat, Kraken Yachts is a worthy addition to the slender ranks of dedicated bluewater cruisers. Solidly built and boasting a generous standard inventory at a highly competitive price point, the Kraken 66 deserves a long, hard look from anyone lucky enough to be shopping for a luxury cruiser in this size range.'

Thanks for your fantastic support Peter, good luck with your well deserved sailing retirement. Maybe a K50 for your retirement yacht !?

**Dick Beaumont**

*Chairman Kraken Yachts*

[More Sailing News on page eighteen.](#)





# SAILING THE WORLD

A THREE-PART SERIES

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## PART ONE: VOYAGE PLANNING

Before setting off on any offshore cruise it is essential to understand, in depth, the vagaries of the world's weather systems and ocean currents. All sailors must be able to make their own decisions independently of any route planning services or pilot book. They must develop their own voyage and passage plans, and will feel empowered once they have seen their calculations at the chart table pay off in practice.

A single trip from A to B is a passage. A voyage is a series of passages linked together over several months or even a year. In military terms a passage is a tactic, a voyage a strategy.

The first step is to decide where you want to go, the weather and climate will dictate when you can go.



# TYPHOON, CYCLONE AND HURRICANE PLANNING

All three of these are just regional names for the same weather systems, namely intense depressions.

The primary consideration when planning an extended voyage is knowing your entry and exit times for a given cyclone area, so developing a ‘helicopter view’ of the whole voyage and the no go areas and times, is essential.

It follows that unless you are prepared to stay in a given area for 8-12 months plus, to await next year’s weather windows, and are prepared to stay put through the cyclone season, your time visiting these areas will be restricted.

If you want to spend several months exploring the region you have arrived in, you must you therefore get there with adequate time to cruise that area allowing for the passage time to get well out of the cyclone area as a whole, and then have adequate time to get to the next cyclone area at the start of the cyclone free season.

For instance, if you want to be in the Caribbean and sail the Windward Islands and the Leeward Islands there’s no point arriving there in May, as the hurricane season begins at the start of June and lasts through to end of November.

## CYCLONE ZONES OF THE WORLD





# SAILING THE WORLD

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Instead, you need to arrive there in early December and depart by mid-April.

If your voyage plan is from Europe to New Zealand, and includes the Caribbean you have to get from the Caribbean through the Panama Canal, but the earliest you can arrive in the eastern South Pacific cyclone belt is around mid-May *and* you'll need to depart from the western side of the South Pacific cyclone belt by mid-October. So working backwards, if you are starting out from Europe you need to leave the Canary Islands at the end of (the previous) October.

It's worth noting that, although rare, hurricanes, typhoons or cyclones can and do occur well outside their prescribed 'season' and area. Due to global warming violent storms both inside and outside of the season's 'slot' are increasing and cyclones are occurring outside of the recognised cyclone areas.

Five years ago on 25th October I was anchored inside Kapingamarangi Atoll in Micronesia on a voyage from New Zealand to Hong Kong.

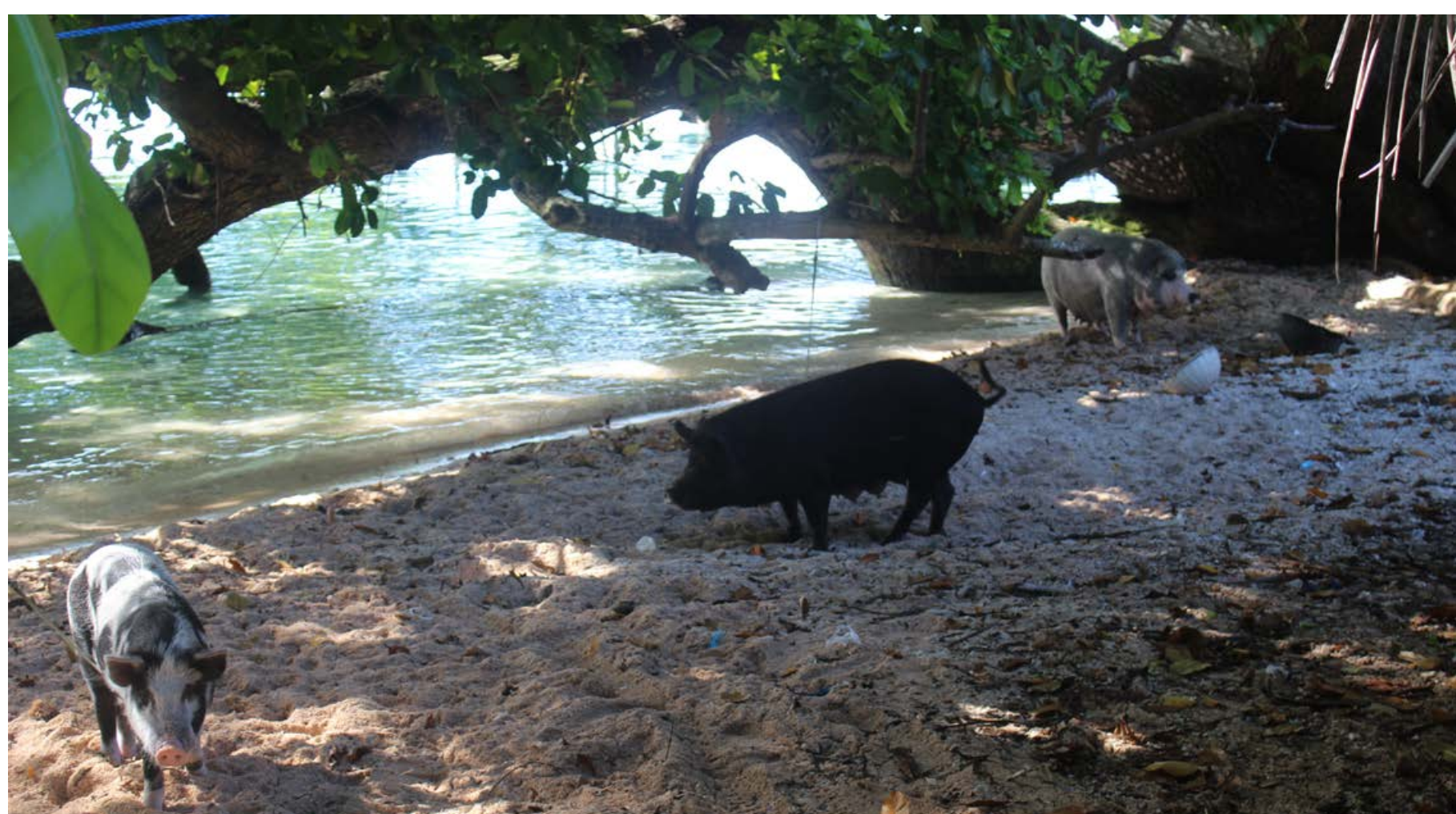
We were a long way below the cyclone belt in an area that was considered safe from cyclones, however, on checking the grib file weather charts that morning I noticed that east of our position the isobars were unexpectedly close together, so I checked the next area even further to the east and to my horror saw a cyclone heading our way.

I went ashore and warned the villagers then reluctantly weighed anchor and headed out to run further west to keep four days ahead of the cyclone affected area.

That cyclone was heading due west but was forecast to swing north the following day. Instead it just continued to head due west. We kept three or four days ahead of it as we hurried across Micronesia.

Our original passage plan was to go to Yap, which was further west and a little north of our route, but we erred on the side of caution, missed Yap and went west and south instead, to Palau. The cyclone went right through Yap flattening the villages and devastating the island. If you check you'll find that cyclones are expected to pass well north of Yap.

**Continued...**





# SAILING THE WORLD



# TRADE WINDS, OR PREVAILING WINDS

To make the best use of a fair breeze you will require a wind pilot for the ocean or area you will sail in for the months you will sail there.

This wind pilot (as below) covers the Atlantic Ocean for the month of October, by zooming in you will soon be able to understand where your course must take you to take advantage of the prevailing wind at this time of the year.

Wind Pilot charts covering the whole world's seas and oceans can be downloaded

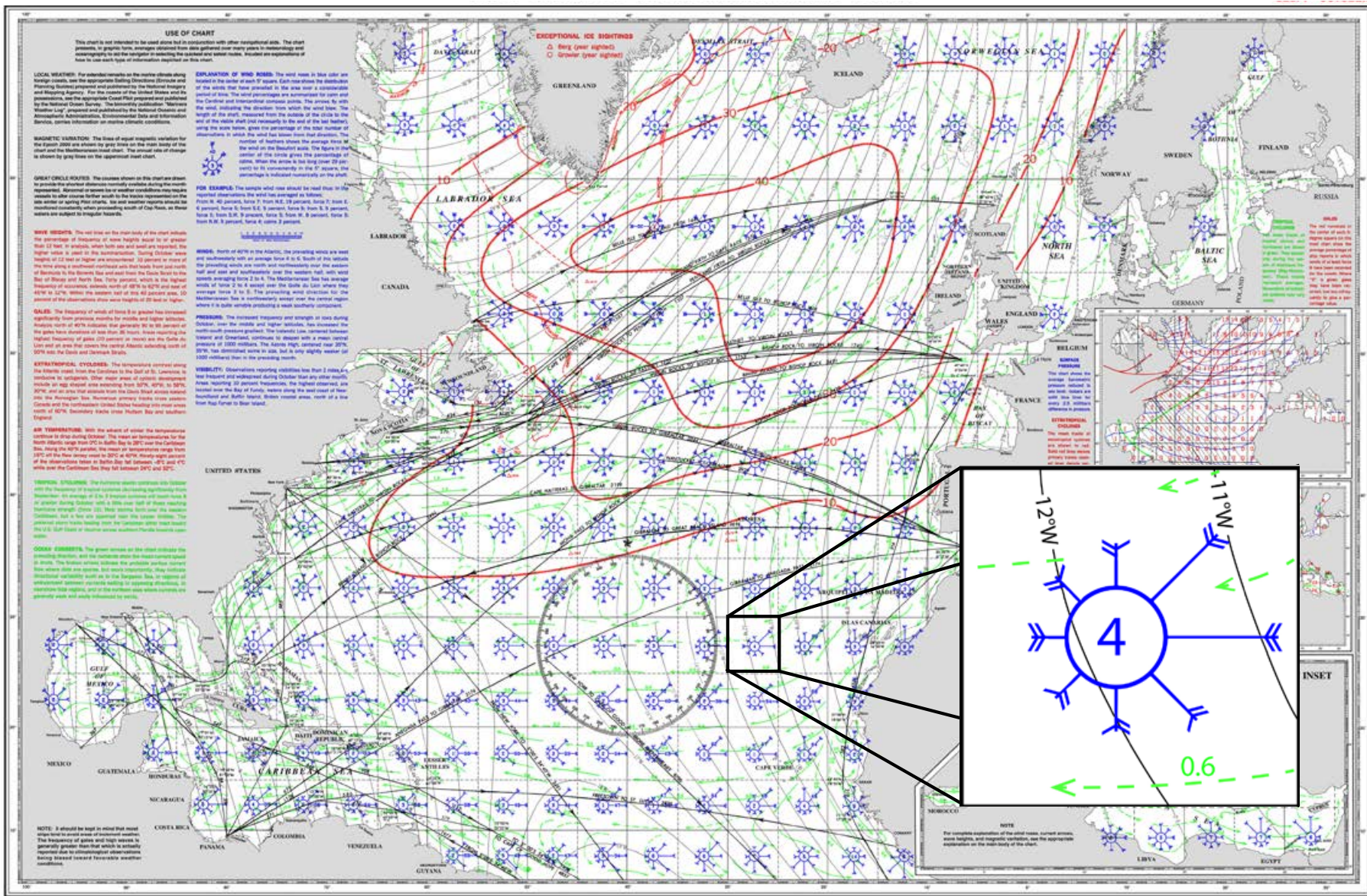
free of charge, surprisingly, at <https://www.offshoreblue.com/navigation/pilot-charts.php>

In an open ocean there is an enormous difference from sailing with a 35 kt wind behind you and sailing against it. Sir Chay Blyth did make a circumnavigation going the ‘wrong way,’ but this was a stunt voyage to break a new record and nothing to do with cruising.

It's vital to plan voyages not only to take advantage of trade winds and prevailing regional winds, but considering when and

where there is a high expectation of calm or light winds.

It's a common mistake for a less experienced skipper to head out when the forecast is for very light winds to ensure an easy passage, however, many yachts, other than Krakens, do not carry sufficient diesel fuel to run for more than three or four days of motoring. Therefore setting out with light or variable winds can be a frustrating and expensive mistake.



## PILOT CHART OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC OCEAN

### Sec. 1 - October

A full explanation is of how to use the info on the wind rose is given on each wind pilot chart. This example shows the prevailing winds are East or North Easterly, and the most common wind strength from these directions is force four, since each feather segment on the wind direction arrow represents one force of wind. The number four in the center is how many days a month it is dead calm.

It must be understood that whilst the wind will most regularly blow from the east or north east, in this area, in this month of the year, it is by no means guaranteed that it will, and, as the rose shows, for several days a month it may blow from any other direction.



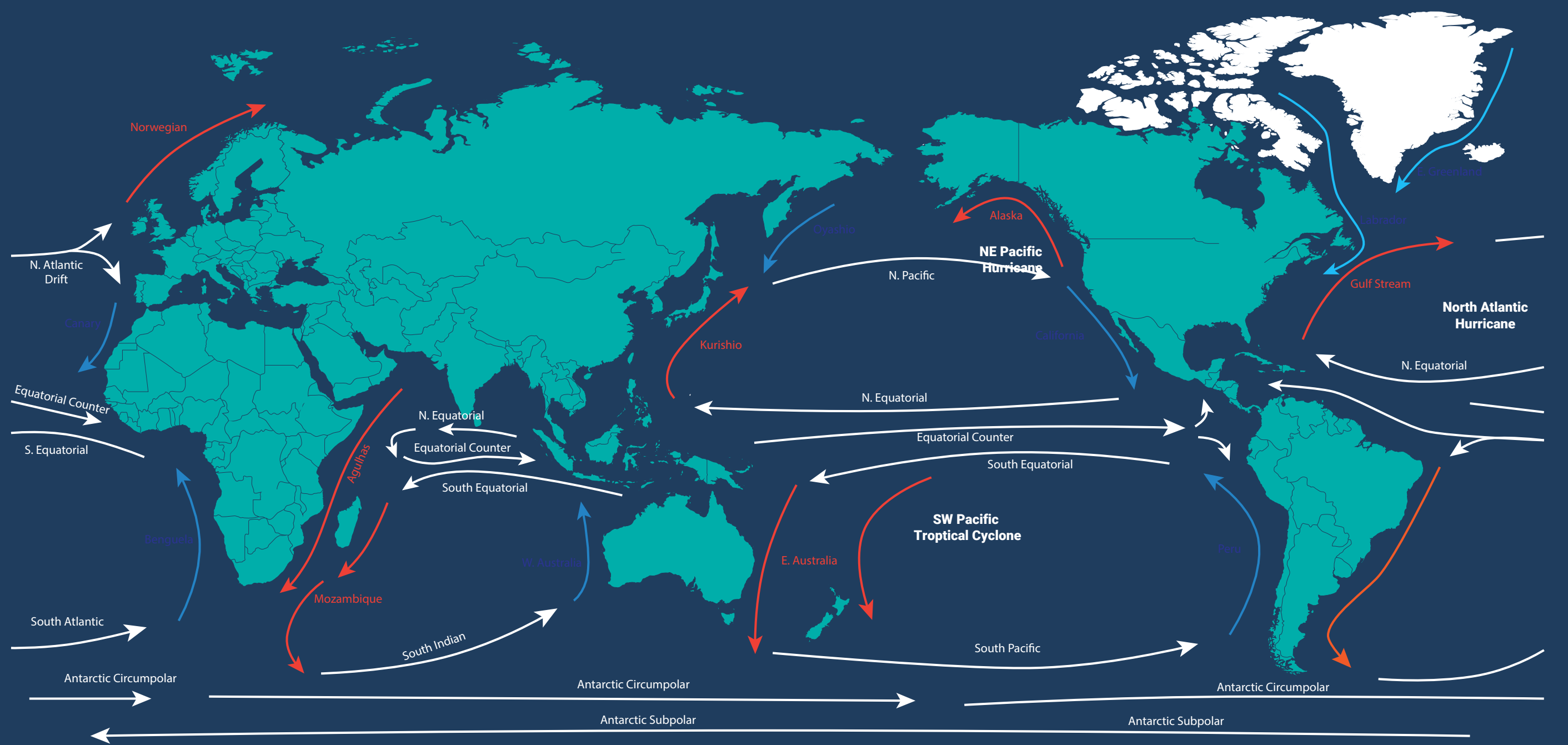
CLIMATE AT YOUR DESTINATION

It’s always preferable to arrive in a region that is enjoying its best and settled weather season. This can be the winter season, as in the Caribbean, or the summer season, as in the Mediterranean.

Some areas like the North-West Passage, or the Aleutian Islands route from Russia to Canada and North America, must only be attempted in the areas’ summer season.

OCEAN CURRENTS

Although these currents generally run constantly in the same direction, they do strengthen or weaken at seasonal times. It is essential you know when they are with you or against you.



I hope this gives the reader an overview and will encourage skippers and their crew to understand what they need to know, so they can plan for themselves.

Information is readily available on the web, and Wikipedia and Noonsite are particularly helpful, but there are many other websites, some of them government run cyclone watch sites, that will assist the sailor to make his or her own plan.

**Remember, plan a place, or a date, but never plan a place and a date!**

In developing a voyage plan, you need a Plan A, Plan B and Plan C. No matter how committed and determined you are, there

are many unforeseen situations that can come along to derail you, so having a pre-planned alternative and bolt holes along the route is very desirable, if possible.

I knew one blue water yachtsman who was in Phi Phi Don, in Thailand when the tsunami hit and after this life changing event he said he never plans anything more than a few weeks in advance. Whilst such a mind set, is understandable, in reality you have to plan months in advance to take into consideration the factors I’ve mentioned above, however, I think his philosophy is sound; to make plans with a relaxed attitude, accepting that they can radically change at any time.

The current Corona Virus pandemic is a case in point. Yachts have been restricted or even impounded upon arrival at a foreign destination. In some cases this has resulted in crews being unable to depart cyclone or typhoon areas at the correct time.

**So plan certainly, but understand that it cannot and should not be a certain plan.**

NEXT MONTH  
**PART TWO: PASSAGE PLANNING**



TECHNICAL & EQUIPMENT

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# CHOOSING THE RIGHT SAILS

SAIL CUTS AND CLOTH  
MATERIALS, EXPLAINED  
BY DICK BEAUMONT.





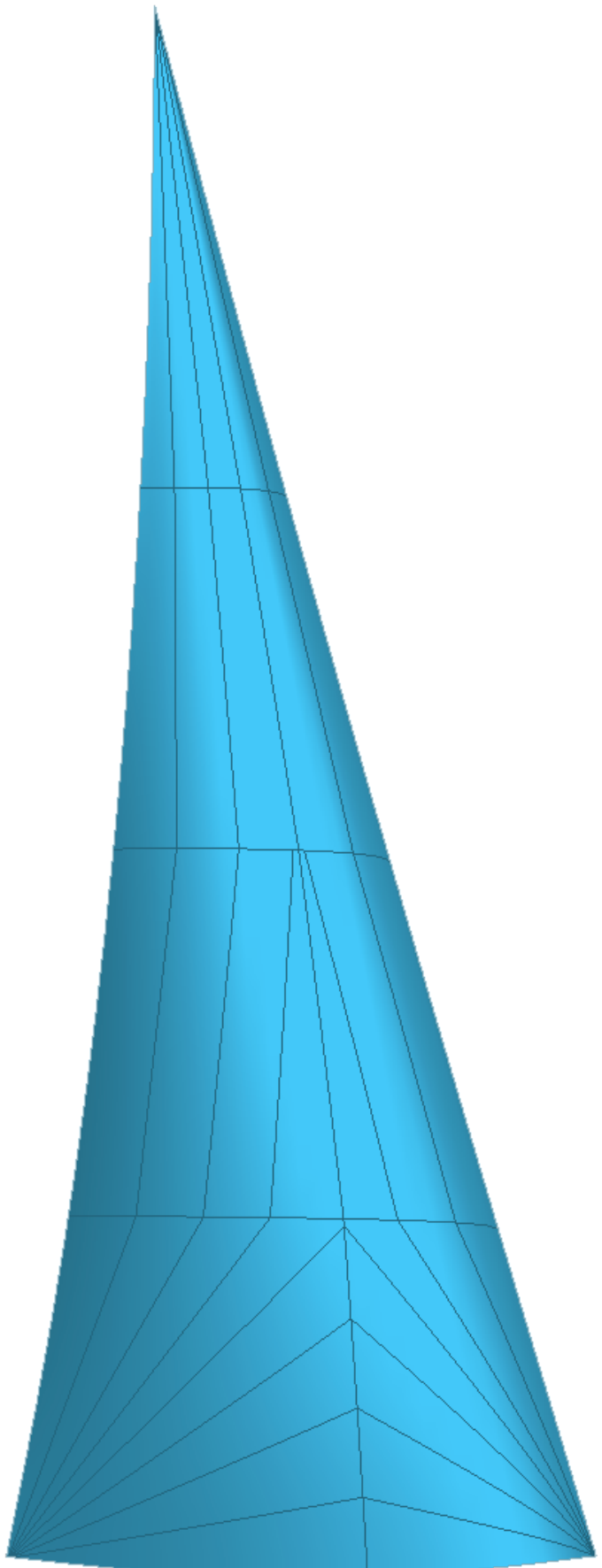
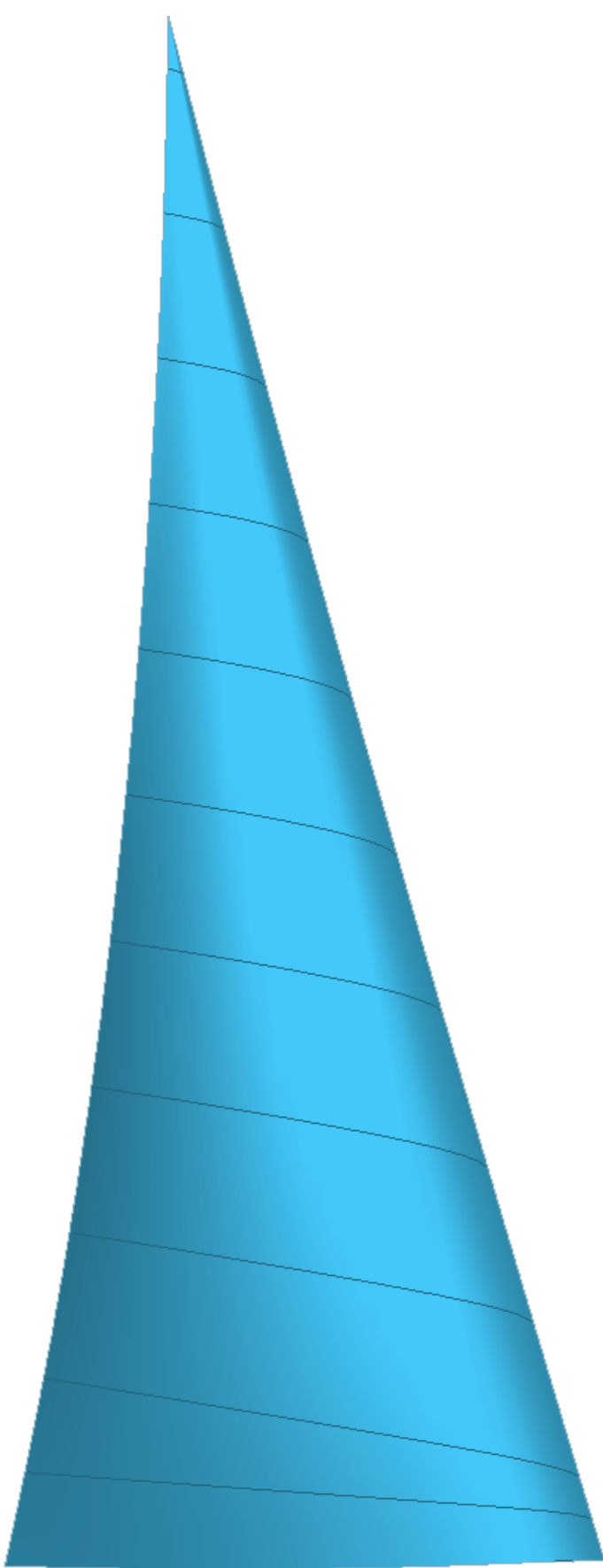
The cruising yachtsman should take as much care selecting his sail wardrobe as his racing colleagues.

The sails of any yacht are its ‘engine,’ a fact often overlooked by the cruising fraternity. This issue came to a head recently when a Kraken client asked us to quote for a hybrid drive system. It was expensive and yet still relied, albeit less so, on main engine power. Having analysed the request, I concluded that if you want to sail around the world leaving the smallest possible carbon footprint, do just that, sail. To do so efficiently one needs to have a rig and a wardrobe of sails that can best utilise whatever wind there is for your intended voyages, wherever they may be. These, combined with good planning, will have you sailing carbon free passages (See Part 1 of Sailing the World in this edition).

We covered light wind cruising chutes and code sails in the April edition. If you missed it, all the Kraken News/ Ocean Sailor back articles are now cataloged on our website.

Choosing the right sail and cloth cut, and material for your type of cruising, will bring many benefits.

I went to talk to my friend Kaan Is of Quantum Sails, Kraken Yachts’s partner for sails, at his Turkish sail loft.



CUT OR BUILD OF THE SAILS

Sails can be made from woven cloth in panels which are stitched together, or membrane fibre material, which are one piece or several large pieces that are glued or welded.

For blue water cruising a woven cloth made in panels stitched together is the best choice, because any sail loft in the world can work on a panel sail to replace a damaged panel, or repair stitching.

Generally, woven sails are either: Cross-Cut or Radial-Cut.

CROSS-CUT

Cross-Cut sails are relatively low cost, this is the only real advantage over Radial-Cut. The material used is woven polyester, popularly known as Dacron which is actually a Dupont brand name for the thread that the sails may be made from.

The disadvantages of Cross-Cut sails are threefold.

- 1. The load that is applied to the sail is not in line with the direction of effort, so the sail will lose shape more quickly.
- 2. The sailmaker must use the same weight of cloth across the whole sail, so the sail is heavier and not so responsive in lighter wind.
- 3. The stitching does not run in the direction of load and therefore will require more maintenance.

RADIAL-CUT

Radial-Cut panel sails are made from polyester cloths, or other materials and are much more labour intensive, therefore the main disadvantage is cost.

The benefits of a Radial-Cut sail are.

- 1. The sail panels are built with the weave and fill (weft) in the direction of load so that the sail will hold its shape for longer.
- 2. The panels which take less load than other parts of the sail, can be made of lighter cloth which improves the drive of the sail.
- 3. The stitching of the panels lay in the direction of load and therefore is under less tension and lasts longer.



# SAIL CLOTHS AND MATERIALS

There are four types of cloths or materials to choose from for mainsails and foresails, in the order of cost they are:



## 1. PLAIN WOVEN POLYESTER CLOTHS

These break down into those suitable for Cross-Cut sails or Radial-Cut sails. Woven polyester does stretch over time so the sail will lose its shape. They are suitable for low cost cruising sails.

**Plain woven polyester cloths suitable for Cross-Cut sails**

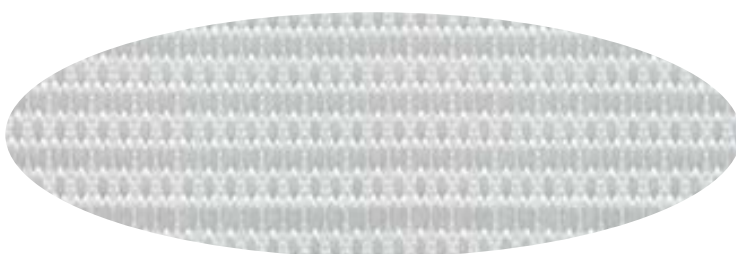
**Examples of these cloths are:**

- Fibercon by Contender Sailcloth, AP Low Aspect and C Breeze by Dimension Polyant.
- C Breeze is more expensive but has high tenacity and it will stretch less and last longer. It is standard with all Kraken yachts.

**Plain woven polyester cloths suitable for Radial-Cut sails**

**Examples of these cloths are:**

- Fibercon Pro Radial, which we recommend as the first upgrade from standard Cross-Cut.
- Dimension Pro Radial



## 3. HYDRA NET ULTRA PE CLOTHS

This is a relatively new, high cost material developed by Dimension Polyant and is seen as a replacement to cruising laminates.

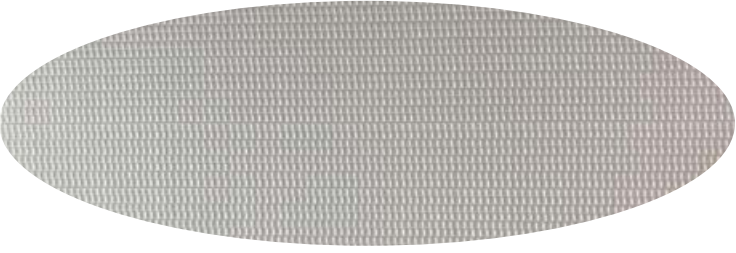
**Advantages over Hybrid cloths:**

- It is stronger and can therefore be lighter.
- It will stretch less.
- It will last longer.
- It is mildew resistant

**Advantages over laminate:**

- Whilst holding its shape equally it lasts much longer
- It is lighter
- It is thinner

1. Plain polyester cloths
2. Enhanced Polyester/Dyneema Hybrid cloths
3. Hydra Net Ultra PE cloths
4. Laminate cloths (not recommended now)



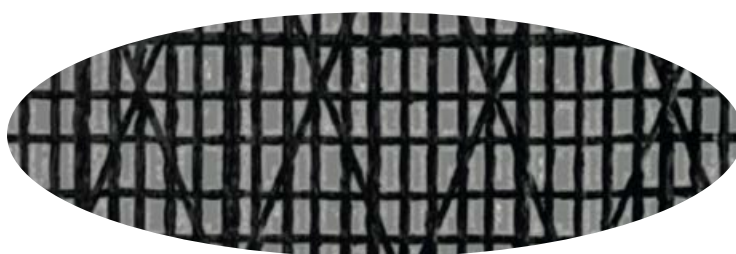
## 2. ENHANCED POLYESTER/DYNEEMA HYBRID CLOTHS

These are polyester cloths strengthened with Dyneema fibres.

The tenacity of the hybrid cloth is much higher and has two advantages over plain polyester:

- Because it is stronger a lighter cloth can be used with all the benefits of handling which come with that, as well as better performance and tighter more compact furling. Weight aloft is also reduced assisting righting moment.
- The Dyneema fibres hold the sail in shape much longer.

This cloth is made by Contender Sailcloth and is called Fibercon Hybrid



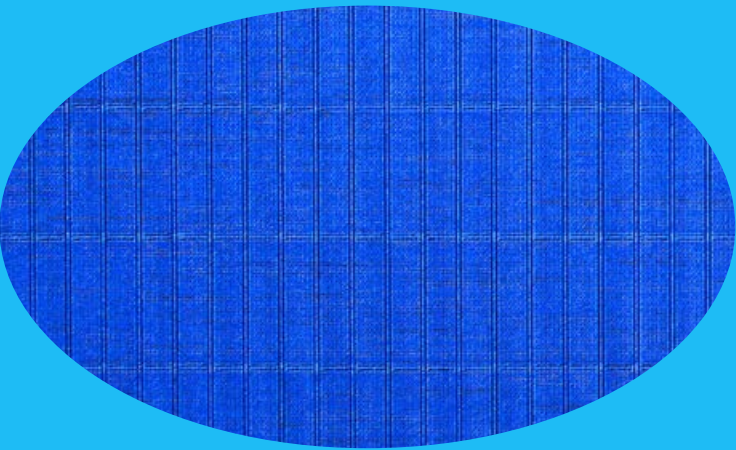
## 4. LAMINATES

Considering the advances of Hybrid and Hydra Net materials, laminates are no longer an appropriate choice for blue water or world cruising yachts, in my opinion, because both these materials hold their shape very well and have much longer life than laminates.

# FLYING SAIL CLOTHS AND MATERIALS

For flying sails ( cruising chutes, gennakers or code sails ) for a blue water cruiser there are two types of materials to choose from:

1. Nylon
2. Rip stop polyester PP300



## 1. NYLON

Nylon is available in weights 1.5-2.1 oz but even at the heavier end still has a low wind threshold, 2-15 kts apparent wind is its working range . It's excellent for cruising chutes but the crew have to keep a careful eye on the apparent wind strength as otherwise the sail soon becomes unmanageable and may blow out. Nylon is also very susceptible to UV and will deteriorate quite quickly if left exposed to sunlight.



## 2. RIPSTOP POLYESTER PP300

Ripstop Polyester PP300 is a little heavier than nylon and is therefore not as effective in very light winds but has a much wider wind threshold 5-20kts and a greater wind angle threshold, 180 round to 90 deg, depending on the sail cut, and because it can be easily used on a continuous furler and can be UV proofed, the sail is used easily and more often.



# TECHNICAL REVIEW

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## IN SUMMARY

Dacron based polyester is a tried and tested quality cloth that will be sufficient for offshore cruising. A radial cut sail based on polyester will undoubtedly improve performance and will last longer than a Cross-Cut sail if the comparisons are uniform. The cost of upgrading from polyester Cross-Cut to polyester Radial-Cut is approx 6,000 euros on a Kraken 50 for mainsail, jib and genoa, for an example.

If the sailor is expecting to voyage across oceans and clock up above average nautical miles, the move up to hybrid cloths will be well justified as the sails are likely to last a lot longer in good shape and require a great deal less maintenance, a bonus in areas where competent sail lofts are a rarity. The cost of upgrading to Hybrid Radial-Cut sails from standard Cross-Cut polyester is approx 9,000 euros for the same yacht and sails.

If budget is not a concern Hydra Net is the ultimate solution.

The cost of upgrading to Hydra Net from standard Cross-Cut polyester is approx 15,000 euros like for like.

As our sail maker Kaan Is said 'Once you've sold a customer Hydra Net sails you can wave him goodbye, he won't need a sail loft for a very long time'.





# KRAKEN 50 V2 IN-BUILD

## COME BELOW...TO A K50 FUTURE

Following restrictions placed on us by the Covid 19 lockdown, we are unable to continue coverage of the K50 V2 build in this issue as we have paused production.

Instead, we are providing a sneak preview of yacht interior designer Donna Maree's work on the project, maximising space to provide a bright, spacious and comfortable interior whilst retaining ample stowage. In this issue we can reveal how this works with the aft master cabin which features a large double berth, en-suite head and shower and impressive stowage and hanging space.

The standard timber choices are oak, cherry or walnut with an upgrade to teak available. The cabin sole is built with solid planking in either oak or walnut and again, with an upgrade, to teak or teak and holly stripe. The images shown here are of a lighter oak interior.

The overall fabric and fibre choices lend the interior of this Kraken 50 to a more modern European style, but clients are able to choose darker, more traditional timbers depending on personal taste and requirements.

Each element of a Kraken interior is meticulously designed to ensure comfort and safety, as the yacht is built to cruise worldwide and cross oceans. To that end each corner is radiused to prevent injury, there are abundant handholds and each surface includes strong fiddle rails.

The aft cabin includes four large non opening port-lights, two large opening deck hatches and a smaller portlight which opens to the cockpit. These ensure the cabin is well lit and ventilated.

The large, comfortable, double berth on the centre line, sports berth length lee boards that can be flipped up and locked into place in heavy weather. Large drawers are built into the foot of the berth and a section raised on gas struts provides extra stowage.

The berth side tables have been redesigned to offer more drawer storage and include a recessed top section to prevent items sliding around when underway. Large drawers are available at the foot of the berth, again with a section raised on gas struts to both port and starboard.







# TOM COOPER

## KRAKEN YACHTS' NEW CEO



Greymouth on the west coast of New Zealand's South Island is not the first place that springs to mind when contemplating yachting. Yet two illustrious names from the world of sailing are associated with it.

Sir Francis Chichester got lost searching for gold in the forests of the Southern Alps which dominate the skyline behind the town, thirty four years later Tom Cooper, Kraken New CEO, was born in Greymouth, a town founded on the gold mining, as well as timber, coal and construction.

Tom was encouraged to make a start in the building trade as a young man, but: 'I felt the natural pull of the ocean, having been boating since I was a kid.'

So he swapped a hard hat for a souwester, retrained and landed a job slipping vessels in Australia's Drummoyne Shipyard. Here his college studies in mechanical and hydraulic engineering and the use of non-ferrous metals, soon landed him the role of manager for the refitting of vessels as well as being in charge of the engineering department.

It was good to be in a steady job, but that 'pull of the ocean' still played on his mind and led him to take time off to sail and explore the east coast of Australia from Melbourne to Cairns in a 28ft John Alden sloop.

'It was an introduction to a much bigger country,' Tom said and also an invaluable cruise along the Great Barrier Reef which was to loom large in his business life later on.

Having eased the wanderlust out of his system, Tom returned to Sydney and enrolled in Technical and Further Education (TAFE) courses as a marine master and marine engineer.

Now aged 31, and needing a break from the world of academia the wanderlust returned and Tom went back-packing from Singapore, through Southeast Asia and into China, Tibet and across to India. His two-year travels took him to Europe including the UK and a summer job, en route, as manager for a beach sports complex in the Greek Islands. Eventually, he returned to Sydney and took up a new role as captain of a 140 passenger charter vessel for Freyja Charters, a job which resulted in Tom becoming general manager.

Meanwhile, back at TAFE he gained certification in GMDSS, Radar Operation and Medical. As well as having all his qualifications recognised by the UK Maritime & Coastguard Agency (MCA) now applicable as the international standard. In 1992, Tom started his own company, Tom Cooper Marine & Harbour Events which took off almost immediately.

Warren Yachts contracted Tom to become the test captain of their 43m superyachts in charge of sea trials.

For Oceanfast Motor Yachts he carried out multiple deliveries in power up to 72m and in sail up to 32m.

For Australian Customs he trained officers and crew in handling jet powered vessels and he also ran a yacht charter business handling clients' craft ranging between 20 to 35m employing up to 12 staff, except during the Sydney Olympics in 2000 when he employed 70 staff.

For six months of the next six years Tom skippered a client's 32m vessel to the Great Barrier Reef and the South Pacific for cruising and diving expeditions.

Tom's charter clients included US President George Bush, senior, and Secretary of State, Colin Powell, the Crown Prince of Thailand; Country & Western legend, Willie Nelson; horse racing magnate Jim Fleming and wife Angela; industrial tycoon Sir Saxon of the Tate & Lyle family and media millionaire Ted Turner of CNN, who won the Fastnet Race, on handicap during the disastrous storm which killed 15 sailors.

Tom has also been project manager for three of top yacht designer Ed Dubois' craft: a 125ft motor yacht; a 118ft motor yacht and a 121ft sailing yacht. He has also managed projects for Dehler Yachts.

In Taiwan, Tom headed up a new business project managing a fleet of 23m luxury motor sailors, whilst also founding Marine Centre which was a distributor for Raymarine, Webasto, Tru Design and Fastmount amongst other major marine equipment manufactures.

His technical skills led him at this time to train engineers for marine industrial giants such as Raymarine, Inteller and Webasto. He also made several yacht deliveries across the Taiwan Straits.

During his time in Taiwan he met Dick Beaumont and the first Kraken Yacht was born, White Dragon, a K66, the building of which Tom was the project manager for. He is now coordinating the interiors, digital electrical design and electronics for the K50 and the K58.

There can be few marine project managers who have built and sailed vessels in as diverse a range as from Sydney Harbour Skiffs to Superyachts.

Tom is married to Yvonne and has one daughter from a previous marriage.



An aerial photograph of a sailboat with white sails sailing on deep blue water. In the background, a small tropical island with green trees and a white sandy beach is visible under a clear sky. The water transitions from a deep blue to a lighter turquoise near the island.

TRAVEL & DISCOVERY

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# PARADISE FOUND

SKIPPER AND  
CREW AGREE:  
MADAGASCAR  
IS NIRVANA



# TRAVEL & DISCOVERY

As White Dragon approached the southerly end of Isle Saint Marie we eagerly anticipated seeing the humpback whales which congregate to breed and give birth there from July to mid September, writes Dick Beaumont. It was 2nd September, would we be too late?

Our fears were allayed as we saw the first humpback breach five miles before we were

even inside the channel that separated the island from mainland Madagascar.

Suddenly there were whales ahead, astern and on both sides of White Dragon, as she sailed into the channel.

These huge animals were jumping completely clear and crashing back into the waves leaving huge plumes of water.

Some were tail slapping, others rolling, what a display! We had seen 30 humpback whales in the two hours it took us to enter the channel and run up to the quirky little town of Ambodifotatra on Isles Saint Marie where we had to clear in.



Clearing into Madagascar is a pretty hit and miss affair. The tourist information desk sent us to government officials who had no idea what we wanted and the fact I couldn't speak French, left me wishing Madagascar had been an English colony and not a Gallic one.

After much gesticulating and repetitive requests for 'parlez vous anglais' all to no avail, we were rescued by a very helpful young French woman, Emily, who explained we needed to visit the police station and gave me a lift there on the back of her bright pink, Lambretta scooter.

The police station was of course shut for a 2 hour lunch, but after eventually registering with the police station, I then set off to the 'port', to meet the customs, immigration and coastguard who insisted on a visit aboard the next morning. See the photo below of Customs, Immigration and Port officials arriving in their launch!

The whole process had taken up more or less a day, but everyone was very helpful and pleased that we were visiting their country. For every official cost we incurred, a receipt with several stamps and signatures was provided.

The following two days we headed out into the channel to see the whales, which were everywhere, mostly mothers and calves, but on several occasions we were treated to magnificent displays by pods of up to 15 whales. We scuba dived several times and hearing the whale song was other worldly. We could clearly hear the deep rumbling sound of the mothers being answered by a high pitched whine from their calves.

Isles Saint Marie was the base port for the notorious Captain Kidd and dozens of other pirates and their crews.

We just had to make the short trip out of town so see the famous pirates graveyard. Captain Kidd himself wasn't buried there but this ancient graveyard is the resting place of many less notorious pirates, as our guide explained, whilst they were considered pirates in England, in Madagascar they were dignitaries who brought wealth and prosperity to their shores.

Ambodifotatra is a strange eclectic mix of good French style cafes, restaurants and yet desperate poverty too. At the market, we could get good fruit, vegetables and Madagascan spices of all sorts. Meat, fish, prawns and squid were fresh, plentiful, and cheap so we stocked up our depleting fridges and freezer. The stocks of wahoo, tuna and mahi mahi we'd caught on our crossing were running out.

On our last evening we jumped into a bright yellow tut-tut and visited Chez Nath, the lovely bungalow hotel and restaurant owned by my clearance guide and chauffeur Emily. It is just a mile or so out of town and one of the best restaurants in the area. We enjoyed a variety of tapas and grilled zebu, which looks like a cross between a cow and a water buffalo.

Zebu is finer grain than beef and is very tasty, especially washed down with a few tots of first class local rum.

Continued...





# TRAVEL & DISCOVERY

As assignments go photographing a 66ft luxury yacht in warm, tropical waters was not too shabby, writes Trystan Grace. Dick was very keen to show off White Dragon, Kraken's 66 flagship in a truly remote tropical paradise for the front cover of Sailing Today magazine, which contained their Blue Water Yacht of the Year Award, which the Kraken 66 had won!

Where better than the northern reaches of Madagascar to highlight the true blue water attributes of the Kraken 66. With that, I found myself changing onto a small commuter jet in Johannesburg with maybe eight other people bound for Nosy Be, a large island with a beautiful coastline, inlets and diving spots, in the north of Madagascar.

I arrived at the very small airport with a shack sized terminal building, only to find that my passport needed to be checked by at least five staff before I was allowed to enter. A visa is required and purchased on arrival, 25 euros in cash at the time. I collected my luggage and made for the exit, only to be stopped and my passport checked once again. My passport was again returned, I set off, but didn't get far. A smiling gentleman, blocking the corridor casually asked, 'So, do you have something for me?'

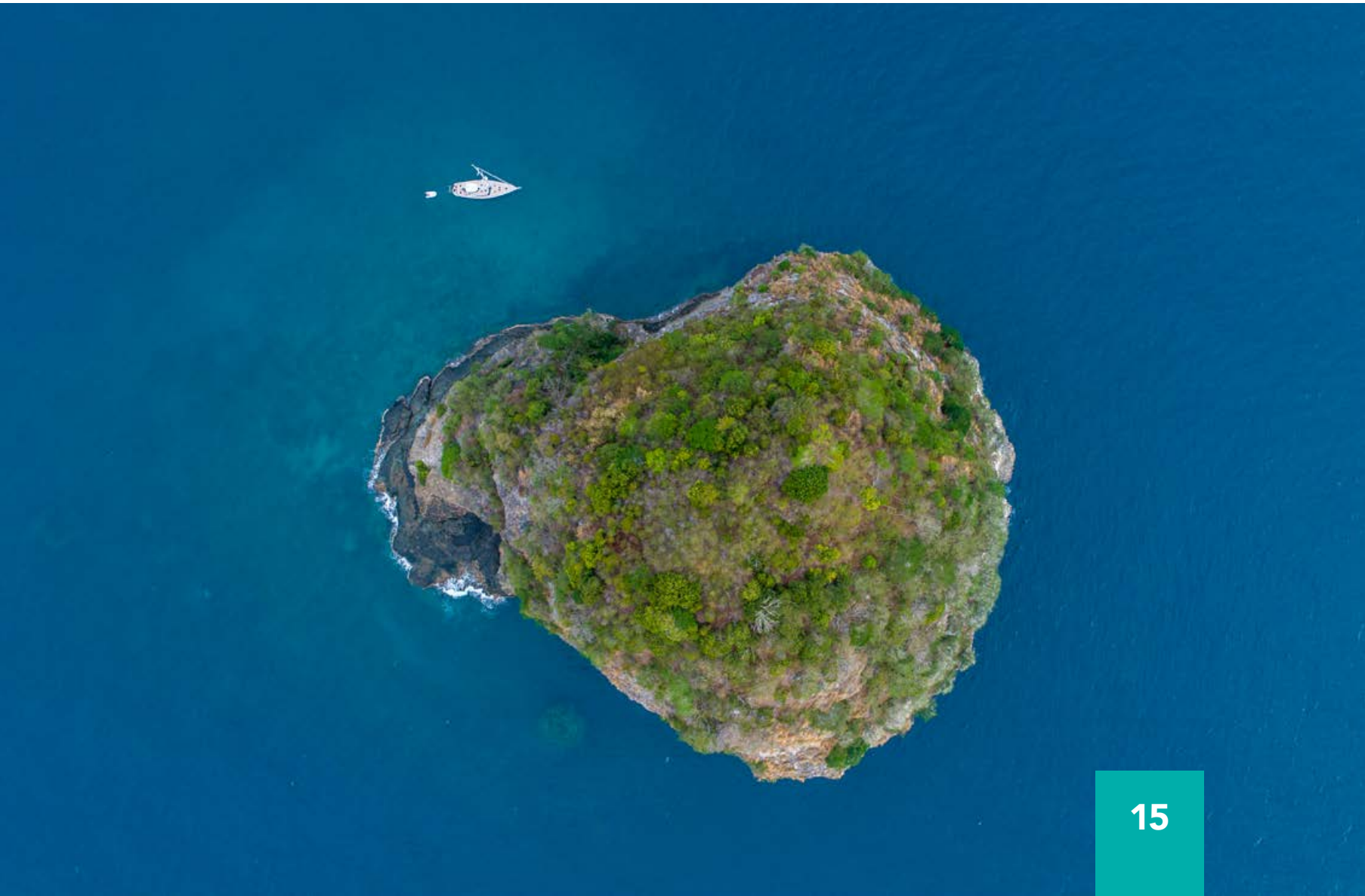
I did not and hastily made an exit to meet Dick, who drove me to the boat through wild forest and endless banana trees.

White Dragon was anchored in Crater Bay, a large safe spot which was home to the islands' only yacht club. Sailors sat chatting and drinking in front of the bar and restaurant, made up of old train carriages. Life in Madagascar for the next few days ran like clockwork: in the afternoon, experience some of the best sailing conditions as the wind picks up and then find a beautiful, calm anchorage in the evening. We sailed past locals in their dhows, a simple Madagascan boat of Arab origin with over 1000 years of history. I love the shape of the sails as they are so photogenic.



On day two, the crew decided to go on a dive in the morning before the wind got up. Dick had his sights on a small island (Nosy Kivinjy) which he considered would be a good spot for a wall dive. Deciding to stay onboard, I flew the drone high over the yacht and island, the overhead perspective providing some idyllic shots.

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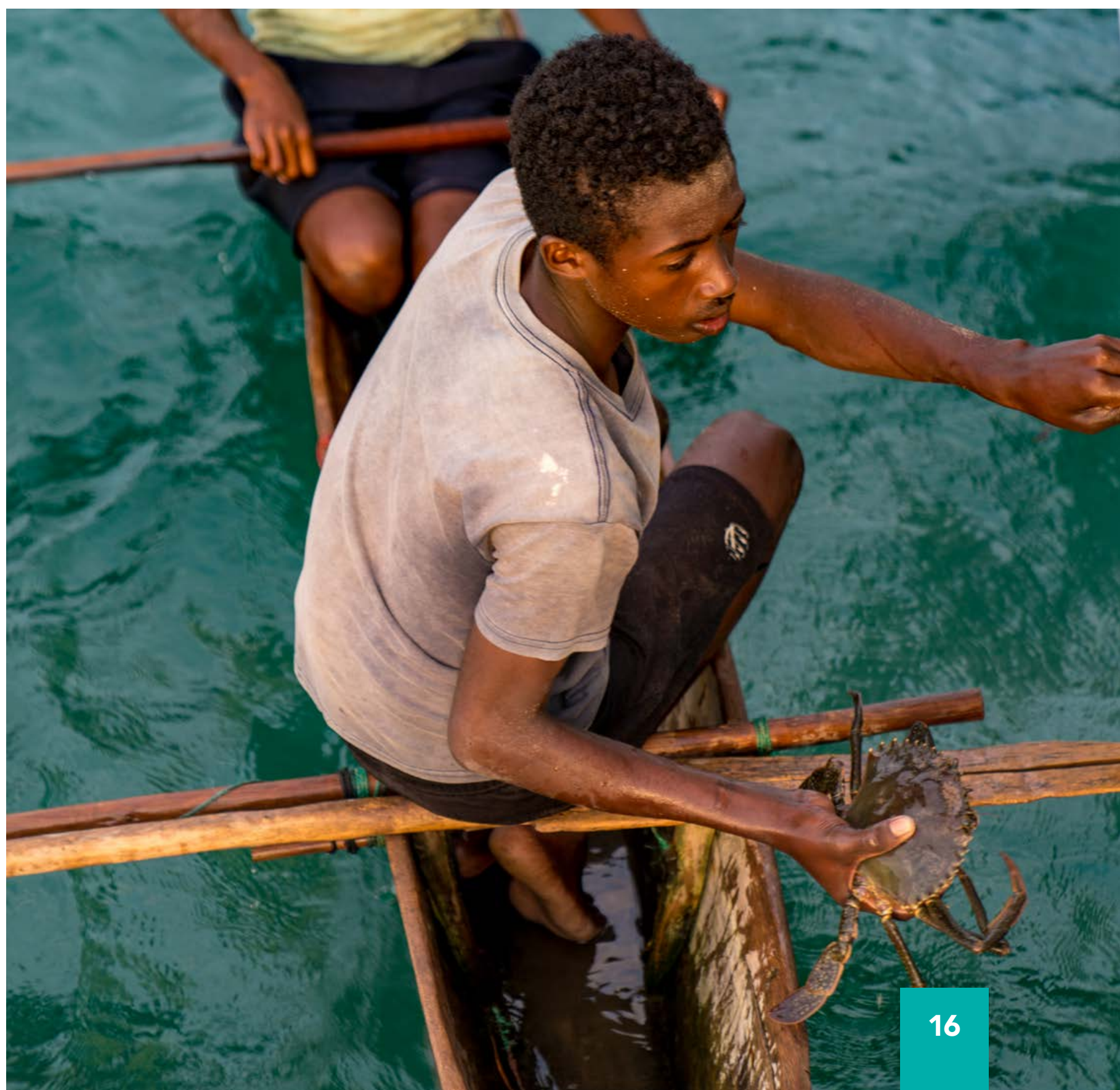
# TRAVEL & DISCOVERY



After the dive, the ever predictable afternoon breeze whistled through the rigging so we stowed the dive gear and set off. I circled the yacht with the drone, trying to capture each angle, using the coastline and dhows as a backdrop. Sailing past a smaller island on our way to the evening anchorage, we could hear the thunderous racket of hundreds of lemurs ashore.

As the wind died down and the sun sank lazily towards the horizon, we rounded a headland and sailed up the Honey River channel to find a safe spot to stop overnight. After boxing the anchor several times we eventually found a perfect anchorage and dropped the hook in front of a small village, a hive of activity with children playing and the locals mooring dhows on the beach. Not long after the anchor was set, a couple of teenage boys approached in a small dugout. Dick smiled knowingly and winked at us before walking to the transom to talk with them. Intrigued, I peered down and saw one of the boys reaching carefully into a sack, retrieving a large crab and holding it up for Dick to inspect.

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A few minutes later they paddled off towards the village, happy with the sale and Dick set about preparing the evening's meal.

I remember the first time I came aboard White Dragon, I thought how well laid out the galley was and I soon realised that even down to the moulded fiddle rail, Dick had specified how each element had been designed to make cooking at sea an effortless experience. Now with music playing, our captain set about chopping this, mixing that, almost dancing around the galley. Before we knew it, a huge pot of chilli and ginger crab was placed in the centre of the cockpit table, the fragrance



of ginger and chilli took me back to Hong Kong. Thus concluded the perfect end to a perfect day, sat in a beautiful anchorage, ravenous sailors digging into the delicious dinner Dick had prepared, accompanied of course with local vanilla spiced rum, a luxury which will set you back US\$1 a bottle...This is my kind of cruising, remote idyllic islands where you can detach from the hustle and bustle of modern life, with the bonus of creature comforts and self-sufficiency that a yacht like White Dragon provides.

The perfect way to visit Madagascar is by yacht as so much is unreachable by other means of transport. This is part of the charm, the wildness like stepping back in time. The Indian Ocean can bite when the wind and waves get up but with the right boat and good seamanship, the rewards for traversing it are bountiful.

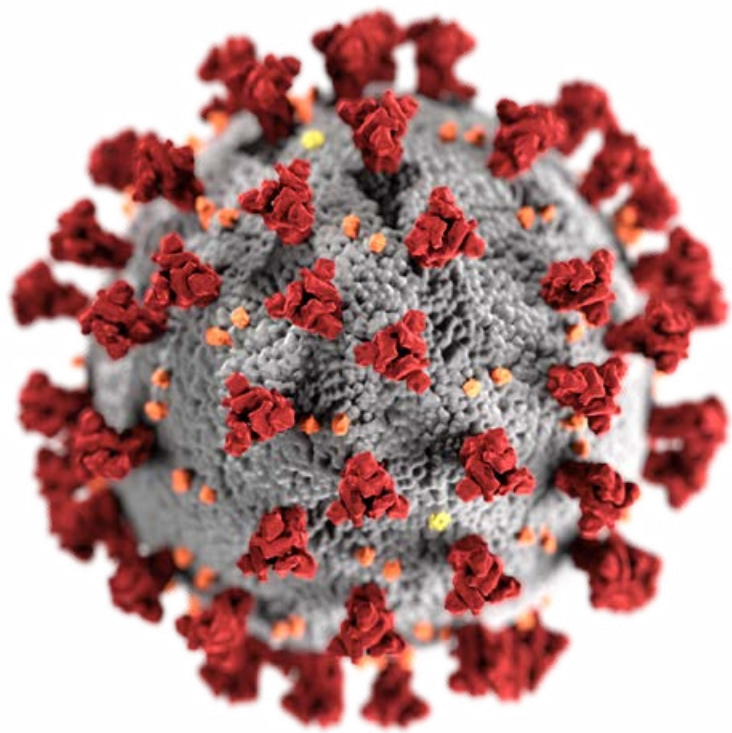
## DICK'S CANTONESE CHILLI CRAB

### Ingredients:

2x Large Crabs  
1x Cup of Ginger (finely chopped)  
1/2 Cup Corn Flour  
3x Spring Onions (sliced lengthwise)  
1x Whole Garlic (crushed and chopped)  
4x Green or Red Chillies  
1/2 Pint of Fish or Lobster Stock  
1/3 Cup Oyster Sauce  
2x Tbsp Light Soy Sauce  
1/2 Lemon

1. Take the raw crabs and chop them up into 6 or 7 large pieces shell and all, being careful to remove the dead man's fingers. Dust with corn flour.
2. Bring the oil to full temperature and deep fry the crab for 3 minutes before removing (note: the cornflower batter must not go brown.)
3. Take a wok (or similar) and add 2 tablespoons of sunflower oil and 1 tablespoon of sesame oil. Throw in the garlic and fry until light golden brown. Then add the ginger and chillies, stirring all the time for 3 or 4 minutes.
4. Add the fish or lobster stock, then the oyster sauce, 2 tablespoons of light soy sauce and a squeeze in the lemon juice. Bring to the boil.
5. Add the crab and stir fry until it takes on a gloopy sticky texture.
6. Throw on the top the spring onions.
7. We suggest serving with fried egg noodles or plain rice and cold cold beer.





# COVID-19'S IMPACT ON WORLD SAILING

Under the microscope the Covid-19 virus looks like planet earth impregnated with spikes and this image appropriately symbolises the pandemic's global effect on the world of sailing.

Everywhere you plant a pin on the world a yachting event has been cancelled, postponed or banned.

The list is endless: the America's Cup World Series, cancelled, the Tokyo Olympics, cancelled, the TP52 Super Series, Sail GP, Antigua Sailing Week, ARC Portugal....all gone this year.

Sir Robin Knox-Johnston's Clipper Round the World Race has been halted and crews flown home – just in time before flights, too, were cancelled. It won't be re-started until 2021, which in turn will impact on that year's event.

The fall-out of alleged bat blood contamination from China has seen yachts abandoned in ports that crews are denied access to.

In France, marinas were turning away visiting yachts – even for fresh water – according to some accounts.

Boat shows, local club racing, regattas and harbour days, too, have all been cancelled and in the UK's Thames Estuary the Port of London Authority (PLA) 'recommended' the thousands of yacht owners in the vast area to leave their craft in their berths or on their moorings, for fear that should the RNLI's assistance be required their crews maybe in 'lock-down.'

At least one police force has taken it upon itself to make the 'recommendation' a punishable offence. Essex Marine Police have warned any yachtsmen found out in the estuary who refuses to return to his mooring will face a fine.

One enterprising outfit, Ancasta, the boat brokerage company, held a virtual boat show to beat the bug. With staff on hand via video to show visitors around the boats and later to answer emails.



## J CLASS START LINE COLLISION

Two crew were thrown overboard and seriously injured in a top-speed collision between J Class superyachts jockeying for position on the start line of the Antigua Superyacht Challenge.

Both Svea and Topaz retired immediately with severe damage.

The 140ft, 180 tonne yacht smash was filmed by a guest aboard another competitor. The video went viral. Louise Morton, Class Secretary, said: 'As a class we remain thankful that the injuries to crews were not more serious or more widespread. We have fully reviewed what happened and lessons for the future have been learned in every different area.' Morton refused to comment on what those lessons were when Ocean Sailor contacted her.

One crew suffered several broken ribs.



# SOLO YACHTSMAN HUMPHREYS SAYS REAL HEROES ARE NHS WORKERS

Triple round-the-world sailor and race champ, Conrad Humphreys, has revealed he ‘sobbed irrationally’ at the start of the Vendée Globe race.

He told Yachting Monthly magazine that the popular thinking about lone yachtsmen was that they have ‘incredible mental



strength,’ but added it was frontline workers who were the real heroes.

Humphreys, 47, said: ‘If you compare us to our amazing NHS workers today, they are the ones with incredible mental resilience. This comes from working in team environments where everyone plays

their part and each draws strength from the other.’

Humphreys’ break down was at the thought of not seeing his family for three months. In an interview discussing isolation, he said his UK race team gave him the strength to carry on.

# KEEL LOSS INVESTIGATED BY SAIL MAGAZINE

The latest reported keel loss of a sailing yacht has been analysed by an award-winning journalist for the leading US yachting journal, Sail. Ran Tan II lost her keel in mid-Pacific in May last year and her three crew were rescued from a life-raft.

Journalist Rebecca Hayter interviewed the 50ft Elliot race yacht’s designer, Greg Elliot and also a leading expert on design, Andy Kensington. Elliot revealed the lifting keel had been modified to a canting keel.

Kensington, consultant with the America’s Cup defender, Emirates Team New Zealand, said canting keels underwent much higher stress levels than fixed keels.



Such keels go through what is known in the industry as ‘cycles’, ie the number of times it bends. Remarkably these cycles are notched up every time the boat tacks, gybes or even goes over a wave!

Some experts say such keels should be replaced every 30,000 miles because of the

number of cycles the boat will have accrued in that time, Hayter reports.

The article concludes Ran Tan II’s keel failed not because of strength, but fatigue.





# SATELLITE SAFETY SYSTEM UPDATED

The UK’s Maritime & Coastguard Agency (MCA) has replaced the CG66 system of alerting search and rescue services with the RYA SafeTrx mobile phone app.

This system sends the vessel’s position to the SafeTrx server every five minutes. Even if the phone signal is lost, positions are stored and transmitted as soon as the signal returns.

If the sailor fails to report their safe arrival, repeated messages are sent to the boat asking the skipper to either extend his or her ETA or end it.

If no answer is received after 30 minutes, search and rescue services are alerted.



# JOYON BREWS UP TEA ROUTE RECORD

Champion ocean yachtsman Francis Joyon has knocked four days off the Tea Route record, sailing from Hong Kong to London in 31 days and 23 hours. The new record, achieved by Joyon and crew aboard the maxi-trimaran IDEC SPORT overtakes Giovanni Soldini’s record in his mod70, Maserati.

The Tea Route celebrates the great clipper ships of the mid-19th Century which raced home with the first leaves of the season. The record of 99 days was made by Ariel in 1866.





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