



Scotch & (Sea)Water - A Deadly Cocktail

by VINCENT T. PICA, II

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Drunk driving, whether that be in a car or in a boat, is one place where I actually feel the legal penalties are too lenient. If a person, uninfluenced by booze, drove a car or a boat recklessly and hurt or even killed someone, they would get a more severe sentencing in many jurisdictions than doing the same thing while drunk, "under the influence" as the legal saying goes. In past ages, drinking and still being able to drive, whether that be a car or boat, might have been considered a badge of honor in certain circles. Today, thank goodness, it is considered reckless lunacy. And things are worse on the water than on the land. This column is about that.

Oh That Swaying Feeling

Often times, when I come in from a boat ride with the family, some of the more lubberly members of the family say, "I can still feel the swaying!" If they happen to jump in the shower, it really gets intensified and they joke that they had to hold on to the shower wall to keep from tipping over! This is clear evidence of the dramatic impact the marine environment has the body's sensory perception system. While boating, we are confronted with conflicting information from the eyes, feet and inner ear. The horizon is constantly moving - up, down and sideways - as the boat moves beneath our feet. Our conscious brain has no problem with intellectualizing this. But the unconscious part of our brain is getting sensory overload. This can result in reactions ranging from slight queasiness to absolutely debilitating nausea (see SSP, "Mal de Mer", 2/21/07.)

The marine environment is full of "stressors" - the Sun, glare, vibration - to name a few are all pretty common on there. Stressors intensify the effects

of alcohol, drugs and some medications. They can cause fatigue, reduced coordination, weak judgment and slow reaction time. And forget about the vision of the St. Bernard saving you from the cold by giving you brandy. Alcohol makes the body more susceptible to the effects of cold water, not less.

Not surprisingly, all of this adds to boating accidents. U.S. Coast Guard data shows that, in boating deaths involving driving under the influence, more than half the victims capsized their boats and/or fell overboard. Over 1 in 5 boating deaths are linked back to the use of alcohol.

The Law

Every state in the Union prohibits the operation of a boat while under the influence of alcohol. The U.S. Coast Guard, as a federal entity, enforces a federal law that prohibits Boating Under the Influence (BUI). This law pertains to every vessel, foreign or domestic, operating in U.S. waters, as well as U.S. vessels on the high seas. Penalties may include fines, jail, impoundment of boats and in some states the loss of boating and/or driving privileges. (see table below.)

Back in 2008, "Operation Dry Water" was started in partnership with the U.S. Coast Guard, the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators and partner agencies. It is a national weekend of BUI detection and enforcement aimed at reducing the number of alcohol-related accidents and fatalities, and fostering a stronger and more visible deterrent to alcohol use on the water. The program was held this past weekend on June 25-27. Zero tolerance is of course the posture, then and now.



photo and table courtesy of Joseph Carro,

U.S. Coast Guard Boating Safety Division

Booze kills.

REAL RISKS. REAL CONSEQUENCES.

Boating under the influence of alcohol or drugs could cost you:

- Someone else's life
- Your own life
- Your driver's license
- The time, expense and shame of an arrest
- A fine
- Boat repairs from an accident
- Property damage from an accident
- Medical treatment

Essential Boat Operating Skills Adversely Affected by Alcohol or Drug Use

- Peripheral vision
- Night vision
- Inhibitions
- Ability to distinguish colors
- Cognitive abilities
- Judgment
- Balance
- Coordination
- Reaction time

BTW, if you are interested in being part of USCG Forces, email me at JoinUSCGAux2010@aol.com or go direct to John Blevins, who is in charge of new members matters, at FSO-PS@emcg.us and we will help you "get in this thing..."



by TONY SALERNO

FISHING WITH TONY

SUMMER MIX BAG:
COME AND GET THEM

Whether you decide to fish the north or south shore this week, it really isn't going to matter. You see the fishing has been second to none on both shores and despite the triple H's of summer; the news comes as an added bonus.

Along the north shore, Candy Carafitis of Carafitis Fishing Station along Main Street in Port Jefferson reports fantastic action on fluke, scup and bass from both the rentals and the area open boats.

During the week, Frank Conroy came in and weighed in a fluke caught with Captain Jack C, and it tipped the scale at 5.4 pounds. "The duo had a fun day out there and that is all that counts, it's better than working and enjoying some time with a good friend" states Candy.

The shop also had 15-year-old Jimmy Presser stop in to weigh in an impressive 6-pound fluke taken aboard the open boat the Osprey. In addition, Jimmy had a mess of porgies weighing up to 2.8 pounds.

Candy adds that stripers are in the harbor-trolling worms, and also by buoy 11 with clams, trolling lures and diamond jigging. Porgies are all over the place with worms and clams and you'll even get them jigging with small diamond jigs by buoy 11 and any shoal. Fluke are everywhere. This week might be a little funny because of the full moon tides coming up...be patient.... they are right by the red racing buoy's by the Belle Terre beaches and they are by Flax Pond and points west, and of course off Cedar Beach and points east. However you don't have to go that far.

Along the south shore, the last three hours of the incoming and first three hours of the outgoing tides have produced some insane fluke action inside Shinnecock and Moriches Bays, particularly when the wind and tide coincide with each other. The Shinnecock based open boats the Shinnecock Star and the Hampton Lady have both been enjoying a great bay run with plenty of keepers to 12 pounds to go around.

Just to the west, Captain James Russo of the Center Moriches based open boat the Rosie has been enjoying great fluke action inside the bay on the top of the tide where the boat has been seeing pool fish on a daily basis between 6 and 9 pounds. On the off tides, Captain James has been treating fares to some good wreck fishing where sea bass, ling, triggerfish and blues fill out hefty bags of fillets.



Jimmy Presser with a 6 pound fluke taken along the north shore.

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