



Before Throwing In the (Electrical) Towels, Give It A Go (part 2)

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Back in early 2009, we wrote about various techniques you could try before throwing the towel and calling for help, whether that be the towing services or your brother-in-law. (See SSP, "Before You Throw In The Towel, Give It a Go!" 2/18/09.) Mechanical issues are one thing. Electrical are another. This column is about that.

For 1,000 years, Safety at Sea starts at the Dock

So, said Admiral Halsey a half century+ ago. It was true then, true before and true forever. And a key to safety of life at sea is a reliable boat under you. And, with the ever increasing reliance on electronics and computers aboard, we need to be sure that our electrical system is ready to go. This starts with preventative maintenance (PM.) I'll admit that I hate PM; as I'm working on something, I'm saying to myself, "the odds on this being a problem are million-to-one!" But I keep working on it because a little voice in my head keeps saying, "wanna be that millionth guy...?"

I start PM where the boat starts - with the ignition system. For most boats, it is simply a key and a safety-lanyard cut-off key. That is the lanyard that you are supposed to attach to yourself so, if you fall overboard, the boat doesn't keep going down the bay or, worse, spin around until it runs you over. Most boaters don't attach that lanyard to themselves for reasons that become self-evident if you've ever put it on. You reach over to help somebody with something 2feet away and the boat stops. (There are electronic ones now that are wireless and let you walk around the boat to your heart's content.)



But what about the guy with an enclosed engine space. Quite likely, there is a solenoid switch down there which is an integral part of the starter system. It is mounted low on the engine, not too far from the bilge. Take a good look at it. If you see any salt on it, it is likely from evaporated seawater that has splashed on it. Think about putting a splash plate under it, to keep the bilge water from giving it a bath in heavy seas. Also, check to see that the terminal nuts are properly tightened. You don't want them working loose. My mechanics will tell you that faulty wiring connections are the most common reason for failure. Take a look at every wiring connection; nothing wrong with removing them, checking them, then cleaning and refastening. Visually check the cable looms and look for signs of chafe or

damage.

Next, take a look at the battery or batteries. Are the cables clean and securely fastened to the battery terminals? They shouldn't have any "white powder" on them (leaking solution from the battery itself is likely the problem and that means it may be time for a new battery.) The cables shouldn't move at all when prodded, even with a good rap with a hammer. If they do move, this can set up a condition of poor connectivity, high resistance and poor starting power.

Any good mechanic will check the battery for voltage. But, even if it reads 12 volts, it may not be giving out the proper voltage under starting load, which is the greatest time of energy drain on the batteries. Under start-up, a battery should never drop below 9.5 to 10 volts. If it does, go back and check those terminal connections noted above. And don't forget the negative post too. It is just as important as the positive connection. A bad or loose negative connection can stop an engine as surely as no power at all.

If the engine doesn't get enough starting power to reach starting RPM, it just won't start. Most of us think, "Ugh! The battery is dead" and move to get a new battery. There are over a dozen places where connections can work loose, almost imperceptively to the human eye - but not to the electronic components.

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

PORGY TIME ALL AROUND

As we begin to settle in for the annual run of the summer doldrums, it doesn't appear to be anywhere in sight. In fact, it seems just the opposite as it seems the hotter the weather, the hotter the fishing. This comes as a pleasant surprise thus far this season as in years past, late July and early August were better suited for swimming pools and air conditioning.

Along the north shore, there is no shortage of action. According to Candy Carafitis over at Carafitis Fishing Station on Main Street in Port Jeff Village, several rental skiffs made it out this week all returning with limits of quality porgies. Pete Cardi and his nephew fished the Middle Grounds for their limit. Although the duo returned feeling pretty warm with all that hot weather, they were very happy as well. The scup are also much closer to home with all the points of land that jut out with rock piles.

In addition to the scup, there are quite a few sea bass around as well, and although most range on the short end of the stick, there are some quality keepers up for grabs as well. Speaking of bass, the ones with stripes continue to impress on this side of town, particularly by Old Field Point and Cranes Neck. On Saturday, Don Floyd flopped a beauty of a striper onto the Carafitis scale weighing in at a nifty 15-pounds. Candy reports that Don took the fish in 15 feet of water off Old Field Point employing a bunker chunk. Candy also reports lots of fluke are around, but you really need to cull through a number of fish to find a keeper or two.

Along the south shore, fluke continue to dominate the bays, but finding a keeper or two seems to be quite a challenge for most anglers. On days when sea conditions permit, there are some quality flatfish to be found in the deep cool ocean waters; however strong riptides and rough conditions at the inlets have made most small boat fisherman rethink their strategy. In addition to the fluke, anglers working the local reefs and wrecks are finding no shortage in the way of sea bass and porgies. The open boats the Rosie, Shinnecock Star and the Hampton Lady are designed to cut the rough inlets and when they do so, they have been experiencing top shelf sea bass and porgy fishing in between innings with the fluke.



fish caught aboard the open boat the Rosie



Suffolk County Legislator Jack Eddington

HOLDS SECOND PLAY FOR PEACE SOCCER TOURNAMENT

Saturday, July 31 • Patchogue-Medford Youth Soccer Fields
Opening Ceremonies: 9:30 am • First Game: 10:00 am

Legislator Jack Eddington and Chief of Staff Rob Calarco are proud to announce the Patchogue-Medford Community's Second Multi-Cultural Sports Event. The Play For Peace/Jugando Por La Paz Soccer Tournament is a showcase soccer tournament geared to thrill soccer fans and celebrate through sport the diversity within the Pat-Med Community.

The tournament will feature eight men's teams, comprised of different nationalities, in an exciting day of friendly competition. Each team will play three games, with the champions being decided in a playoff of the two teams with the best records.

"The talent on those soccer fields last year was incredible. The players gave it all they had and really wowed the spectators. It was heartening to see everyone put aside their differences and just play for the sheer pleasure of it," said Leg. Eddington.

Organized by Leg. Eddington after the Marcello Lucero tragedy, the Play For Peace Soccer Tournament has been one positive step to help the Pat-Med Community find common ground and heal. Chief of Staff Rob Calarco, one of the primary organizers for the event, has spoken on La Fiesta Radio twice this past July to promote the event and its message of unity. La Fiesta Radio will be on site to help open and promote the event.

This year's tournament will kick off with a presentation of the Colors by the Civil Air Patrol. Following the Colors will be a salute to the tournament's many dedicated sponsors, including the Patchogue-Medford Youth Soccer League, which for the second year will be hosting the event on its fields; Kevin Gershowitz of Gershow Recycling, who has once again made a generous donation to help fund the tournament; the East Patchogue Church of the Nazarene who will provide volunteers to work the event; and Patchogue Village. And finally the volunteers from Medford Ambulance Company will be on hand for safety purposes. Concession stands will be open for spectators, along with Mr. Frostie ice creams and the inflatable Bouncy Ride for kids.

This year's players should represent a greater cross-section of the diversity that exists within the Pat-Med and surrounding communities, explained Chief of Staff Rob Calarco. "We have American, Turkish, Salvadorian, and Ecuadorian players. Many of these young men have long and established roots in this country while some of the other players are true first-generation immigrants. And the best part is, once play begins, none of that will matter," he said.