



Happy Trails While Trailering - Part I

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We've written in the past about commissioning (making ready) the boat for the summer months. And you may recall that we started with making sure that the trailer was capable of safely transporting your boat from the driveway to the boat ramp. This column expands considerably on that, now that the summer is in full swing! Since this is a topic that can take up lots of space just due to safety precautions, this is part I of a two-part series...

Safety First!

I have an uncle that drives his boat pretty hard - WOT (Wide Open Throttle) and dead-stop are his two favorite speeds. As you might expect, the boat is wearing out around him from stress and strain. When he complained to me about it, I said, "If you constantly drove your brand-new car at full speed over a bumpy road, would you be surprised that it might start to shake loose?" He said, "hmm..."

Well, that started me thinking about trailering - when you are driving your boat over many types of road (how about those winter-created pot holes?) at relatively high speeds... Stresses from over-the-road travel can be more punishing than normal operation. A boat is designed to sit in water, along her waterline. While the manufacturer may even put some markings along the waterline that say "trailer strap goes here", nothing "extra" is there - it is simply a mathematical recommendation about the weight displacement of the boat. And that is before you added all that gear... (see SSP, 5/23/07, "We all Get Heavier With Age - Including Our Boats!") So, trailering is, by its nature, more stressful on the boat than riding at anchor...

So, start with making sure that what the boat sits on isn't adding to the stress. You don't want your rollers or bunkers stressing, scratching or gouging

the hull. Make sure that the tie-downs (and engine support) do not permit the boat to bounce on the trailer. How can you be sure? Well, you aren't going to be able to lift the boat up to see - too heavy by far. Unfortunately, the only way to be sure is by testing... Have someone follow you over a course and watch the boat. Speed limit only! If any air shows, stop and adjust the straps. Then, once all is secure, make some marks or apply some tell-tales so you can consistently have the boat sit snugly on her trailer.

But first - be sure she is sitting properly in the first place! What does that mean? No more than 7%-10% of the total weight of the boat should be on the trailer "tongue" - the part that attaches the ball and coupler together. This means that a 3,000 pound boat, including engine, cooler, etc., can have no more than 210 lbs. to 300 lbs. on the tongue. Well, how do you tell that!? You'll need a couple of bathroom scales and a strong friend. Each of you stand on the scale(s) while lifting the tongue together. Note the combined weight. Step off, weigh yourselves and subtract... if that comes to more than 300 lbs., the boat is too far forward. If it is less than 210 lbs., it is too far aft. Why is that important? Well, too much weight at the back (too light at the front), will tend to pry your car's rear tires up. Less traction than designed by the manufacturer! Too much weight on the tongue (too heavy at the front), will tend to pry your car's front tires up. Less steering control than designed by the manufacturer! Neither is going to be good for you...

The car must be properly configured:

1. Engine of adequate power.
2. Transmission designed for towing.
3. Larger cooling systems for the engine and transmission.
4. Heavy duty brakes.

5. Load bearing hitch attached to the frame, not the bumper.

The tow ball and coupler must be the same size, exactly. The boat may be properly secured to the trailer but the trailer has to be properly secured to your car or you may see her pass you on the highway...

The safety chains are attached and crisscrossed under the coupler to the frame of the tow vehicle. If the ball and coupler were to break apart, the trailer would fall into the chains, which now are a safety net.

Underway, Making Way...

Now you're ready to go. Before going too far, be sure that the lights on the trailer function properly. Remember, each time you come up that boat ramp, your lights have been in (cold) salt water. As have your brakes - so check them too. Drive forward and apply the brakes several times at increasing speeds to determine a safe stopping distance.

Check tires (including spare) and wheel bearings for proper inflation - and remember that the trailer tires are likely to be far smaller than the car or truck tires. This means that they will be spinning faster just to stay in place. Faster equals more stress on the bearings. And don't forget that the aft-most set of tires will be in salt water at least twice a day when you go boating!

Well, that will get you thinking. The next column will be on things to think about at the launch ramp...

BTW, if you are interested in being part of USCG Forces, email me at JoinUSCGAux@aol.com or go direct to the D1SR Human Resources department, who are in charge of new members matters, at DSO-HR and we will help you "get in this thing..."

Tides for Moriches Inlet starting with July 25, 2012

Day	High/Low	Tide Time	Height Feet	Sunrise/Sunset	Moon Time	% Moon Visible
Wed. 25	Low	5:40 AM	0.1	5:42 AM	Rise 12:47 PM	33
25	High	12:21 PM	3.3	8:13 PM	Set 11:33 PM	
25	Low	6:27 PM	0.4			
Thur. 26	High	12:33 AM	3.0	5:42 AM	Rise 1:56 PM	44
26	Low	6:39 AM	0.2	8:12 PM		
26	High	1:16 PM	3.3			
26	Low	7:40 PM	0.4			
Fri. 27	High	1:33 AM	2.9	5:43 AM	Set 12:14 AM	55
27	Low	7:48 AM	0.2	8:11 PM	Rise 3:05 PM	
27	High	2:15 PM	3.4			
27	Low	8:50 PM	0.4			
Sat. 28	High	2:38 AM	2.8	5:44 AM	Set 1:01 AM	66
28	Low	8:57 AM	0.2	8:10 PM	Rise 4:12 PM	
28	High	3:18 PM	3.5			
28	Low	9:53 PM	0.2			
Sun. 29	High	3:46 AM	2.8	5:45 AM	Set 1:56 AM	77
29	Low	9:59 AM	0.1	8:09 PM	Rise 5:13 PM	
29	High	4:22 PM	3.5			
29	Low	10:51 PM	0.1			
Mon. 30	High	4:53 AM	2.9	5:46 AM	Set 2:58 AM	86
30	Low	10:58 AM	0.0	8:08 PM	Rise 6:07 PM	
30	High	5:24 PM	3.7			
30	Low	11:46 PM	-0.1			
Tues. 31	High	5:54 AM	3.1	5:47 AM	Set 4:05 AM	93
31	Low	11:54 AM	-0.1	8:07 PM	Rise 6:54 PM	
31	High	6:19 PM	3.8			
Wed. 1	Low	12:38 AM	-0.2	5:48 AM	Set 5:14 AM	97
1	High	6:48 AM	3.2	8:06 PM	Rise 7:34 PM	
1	Low	12:48 PM	-0.1			
1	High	7:09 PM	3.8			
Thur. 2	Low	1:27 AM	-0.3	5:49 AM	Set 6:23 AM	99
2	High	7:38 AM	3.3	8:05 PM	Rise 8:09 PM	
2	Low	1:40 PM	-0.1			
2	High	7:56 PM	3.8			
Fri. 3	Low	2:13 AM	-0.3	5:50 AM	Set 7:31 AM	99
3	High	8:25 AM	3.3	8:04 PM	Rise 8:40 PM	
3	Low	2:28 PM	-0.1			
3	High	8:42 PM	3.7			
Sat. 4	Low	2:56 AM	-0.2	5:51 AM	Set 8:37 AM	96
4	High	9:12 AM	3.3	8:03 PM	Rise 9:08 PM	
4	Low	3:14 PM	0.0			
4	High	9:28 PM	3.5			



by TONY SALERNO

FISHING WITH TONY

THE BEST DAY FISHING EVER

I guess when you spend most of your life pursuing your favorite sport of fishing, the fishing gods smile upon you from time to time. And nothing could have been closer to the truth than this past Thursday when my 9-year-old son Johnny and I teamed up with our friends and fishing buddies Pete Ranaudo and his 12-year-old son Matthew.

Pete and I had been looking for the right window of opportunity to get the boys together for a simple trip inside the bay of Moriches, where the boys could keep busy bending rods with fluke and sea robins regardless of their size. We were optimistic that the boys were not going to be disappointed as the current status on the fishing proved that there was loads of action with shorts at buoys 15 and the West Cut at the top of the tide with a few quality keepers for those who were at the right place at the right time.

With that in mind, Thursday's forecast called for sun in the morning with winds out of the north at 5 to 10 knots. Blend those elements with incoming tide until 10:30 a.m., and it would have been a day tailor-made for a day of good fishing. However, as with most predicted forecasts, instead we were greeted with ominous storm clouds and gusty winds coming from the northeast at 15 to 20 knots. Although Pete and I were a bit skeptical on whether to call the trip for a nicer day, the boys were not to be deterred and were ready to set sail aboard my Parker for a morning of what they long awaited.

Who were we to argue and so at a bit before 7 a.m. it was off to the area south of buoys 14 and 15. With light combo spinners in the 10-pound class in hand, armed with bucktails tip with spearing, it was only a matter of seconds before Matthew got the party started with a quality short, while Johnny got the cooler going icing the first keeper of 20-inches of the day. Well, the action continued and continued, and even well into the ebb tide, it continued. By the time the dust had settled of all rods constantly bending, 14 keeper fluke between 20 and 22-inches found their way into the ice box, with both boys slamming their limits, plus another 20 or so shorts apiece, while the dads could only raise up three keepers apiece.

Yes 14 fish of that size caliber among four anglers is an exceptional day at any of the south shore bays that line the coast of Long Island, but it really wasn't about the fluke or the fishing. Instead, it was two dads and two sons having the time of their lives spending quality time with the ones they love. This summer, remember your kids and the impact a day of quality time will have in your and their lives.