

mistral

Newsletter of the NZ Mistral Owners' Association

Volume 1 Issue 2

www.hyc.org.nz/mistral

September 2006

Editorial

The pressure is on to get this issue of Mistral "out the door" before the school holidays. While Rob Mason contemplates the imminent start of the summer sailing season in his column opposite, our household still has a week of skiing (hopefully) to negotiate!

Winter Happenings

As our President has explained, it has been a busy winter for the MOA Committee. "New" Mistrals are now a reality, evidenced by the prototype elsewhere in this issue. The receipt of four orders represents an encouraging degree of interest and will hopefully be the first of many more.

Sail Construction

The MOA has also turned its attention to sail construction in response to changes in the way sails are made and the supply of the material they are made of. At present, Doyles Sails follow our detailed instructions for the construction of Mistral sails, even though improved methods now exist. They have suggested the MOA consider:

- Digitizing the current sail patterns for all sails to enable their production from a computer file
- Revising the jib and mainsail cloths – generally a similar weight but slightly different tempers and generally better characteristics.
- Alterations to jib battens to prolong sail life plus a larger clew patch
- Minor alterations to mainsail tack and iv. batten pockets to improve sail setting and to match new fittings.
- Spinnaker stitching to be modernised (stuck flap seams)

This means migrating our sail patterns into the computer based sail cutting equipment that Doyle Sails and other similar lofts now use. The result should be a suite of sails that show very little variability from one batch to the next. The sail materials are also changing, so the MOA will be considering recommendations from Doyles about the alternative cloths that are similar to the current material.

The Zephyr Owners' Association is in the final stages of a similar sail "redesign" exercise with its mainsail. The end result looks like being a computer cut sail that is very close to the original Zephyr sail in performance. In exploring the issues, the ZOA realized that many of the older "one design" Zephyr sails actually differed considerably from each other - this will no longer be the case. ZOA members' concerns that the new sails may be "super-sails", making previous sails obsolete, have not so far been borne out. The original Zephyr sail is actually quite a good one - vastly improved performance just cannot be had!

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President's Report

The opening day for the summer season is just about upon us! This summer looks to be an outstanding Mistral season. I hear that Mistrals are being beautifully restored for the new season at Tamaki, Manly, Whitianga, Hamilton and KeriKeri Yacht clubs. I have seen photos of some of these restorations and the results can only be described as magnificent.

I have no doubt that some of these beautiful old boats will be seen at the front of the fleets at their local clubs and at the nationals this season.

The MOA Committee has been very aware that some Mistrallers prefer to purchase a new Mistral in fibreglass. To this end the Committee and Trustees have worked tirelessly through the winter months, in liaison with Peter Johnston of Bonito Boats, to ensure that new fibreglass boats are available for purchase for the 2006-2007 season. Thanks Mike Norton, and Don Grayson for the liaison work you have done on behalf of the committee. As this newsletter goes to print final costings are being made for a competitively priced 'off the shelf Mistral'. Of course, further significant savings may be made by those who choose to do work such as installing deck and spar fittings themselves. Ross Burtenshaw, in consultation with the committee, has put a lot of thought into ways these new Mistrals can be effectively, but economically fitted out. Enquires regarding order of new Mistrals can be made via the Mistral Owners Association. Already, two new fibreglass Mistrals have been ordered by both the Tamaki Yacht Club to on-sell to its members, and Kerikeri High School have also ordered two new boats from Bonito Boats.

The Committee has also received interest in the sails being manufactured in a more durable modern cloth, and with more consistent cut, and a few minor improvements to assist with strengthening and the set of these sails, while not changing in basic profile, or significantly altering overall performance. To this end discussions led by Don Grayson, have been held with Chris McMaster, from Doyles Sails who is presently cutting a trial jib which will be trialed at the Tamaki and Whitianga clubs in the coming season. He will then move on to work on the mainsail, and then the spinnaker. There is no need to worry if you have, as I have, recently bought new sails. You will not be disadvantaged, or be forced to immediately go out and buy new sails. It simply seemed logical to commence this updating work at the same time as the new fibreglass hulls are being introduced. Members will be kept fully informed as sails are being trialed.

I am regularly getting enquiries from people wishing to buy second hand Mistrals so that they can join in sailing at their local Mistral club. If you know of a boat that is not being used, or of an owner who wishes to sell, please let either myself, or, Rob Ebert (Class Secretary), know so we can link this to a keen new club sailor.

It is good to see the effort each club is putting in to encourage new Mistral members. It is also very heartening to hear the work that is being put in with training programmes at Tamaki (Matthew O'Maigh), Kerikeri (Derry Godbert), Whitianga (Robbie Moyes & Kate Hayes), Manly (Rick Keesing & Mike Pascoe), and Hamilton (Rob Ebert).

The first big Mistral interclub event this year will be the Peter Blake Memorial in December at Torbay. Until then, I wish you the best of Mistral sailing in the new season.

Rob Mason
President

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The ZOA experience leads me to believe that Mistral sails can benefit from this approach too, yielding better sails of similar performance to our current rig.

MOA (Inc)

The Mistral Owners' Association is now an Incorporated Society again thanks to Treasurer, Tony Beckett.

A Mistral for beginners? - Townson Starlet

Des Townson has designed an alternative rig for the Starling. The same total sail area has been split between a reduced mainsail and a jib. The mast has been shortened and moved aft. The adjacent photo shows the Starlet being tried by a couple of Opti sailors in 15knots of breeze. The initiative is designed to give new life to old Starlings as training boats for those kids who like company when on the water. It is early days yet, but the idea shows some promise and a couple more "conversions" are planned. Any two-handed sailing initiative like this will ultimately benefit the Mistral Class!!

Mistrals in Hamilton

I am currently restoring #80, *Missy*, with the aim of having a second Mistral here in Hamilton. There has been extensive separation of the hull from the keel, so the repairs, while not difficult, have been time consuming. I am hopeful of having her at the Nationals next year.

Rob Ebert

Mistral Tips and Tricks

Proverb

The person who is at one with his/her boat goes faster. We all sail our boats according to our own sailing personalities so set your boat up so that it feels good for you coupled with the parameters for optimum performance.

Tuning

When tuning, alter one thing at a time, and remember, if you alter something, e.g. mast rake, you might have to alter the jib leads or the height of the jib tack above the deck. Yes, the Mistral is a highly strung and temperamental challenge.

Things to think about.

- Make sure the "prod" at the bow which keeps the spinnaker sheet out of the water is either collapsible or will fold up. They have been known to punch holes in boats.
- You need a tow rope. Get some laid rope, splice an eye in it which will fit over the forestay fitting and will be held in place by the jib luff shackle. Take the line back around the mast and secure it with a bowline.
- If you have a halyard with a wire strop which fits into a key on the mast always carry a spare strop. They always break when you least want them to. Also, make sure the halyard is properly locked when you set the boat up, especially if you are in a hurry.

Love your jib

Look after your jib! Try not to let it flog, particularly against the mast when you are coming up the ramp, check it with a jib sheet, and when at rest on the hard do the same. Look after the jib and it will look after you.

Value your crew!

Be kind to your forward hand. Pamper them, be generous at the bar (it's good for club profits). Tell them how great they are and that it does not matter when they lose the spinnaker under the boat!. To my sorrow I think I neglected to do all of the



Members of the MOA and Peter Johnston of Bonito Boats with the prototype Mistral



The Starlet, a Mistral for beginners - a Townson Starling with a jib, set up as a junior training boat.

above at times. Give your forward hand the very best of gear to work with even if your own life jacket fails the buoyancy test!! Young forward hands may find it easier if the spinnaker boom has wooden rowlock jaws, then they can put it on the mast facing aft. To make it easy to stow the spinnaker boom at the outer end of the boom try angels wings connected to the bottom batten by a light line. All the forward hand has to do is shove the boom into the angels wings.

Leaking Venturis?

If your venturis leak try covering them with grease to make a seal between the drop down part and the frame.

Happy Mistralling

The Grey Ghost

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