

Dear Cap'n Drew: As with Ken from San Francisco, I injured my knees while boating. I did mine in while returning under the Golden Gate in San Francisco, to the famous "pumpkin patch." I tore my meniscus in my left knee and hurt my right knee which will need surgery later on. You can purchase a Neoprene knee brace or one that prevents Lateral movement that will help. But the best thing I'm afraid, is to use the Captain chair in the boat and maybe buy a foot step to help in rough water.

David B. in San Jose, CA

Drew: Regarding the guy with the bad knees; I have a 24' Baja that slams the wakes pretty hard sometimes and I have a bad back. After each weekend, I find myself in dire pain lest not for a fistful of Hydros. Until I heard about "Seashocks"- eggshell-type mats that absorb the impact. I'm not with this company I swear, but I do swear by its worth! www.seashocks.com.

Mike G, Wet Magic, Lewisville TX

Hello Cap'n Drew: The May 2007 issue of Boat U.S. you wrote about Ken with the bad knees and asked for input? I am a manufacture rep for "Cactus Mat" Cactus Mat makes a mat called "red cloud" and yes it is like standing on a cloud.

When we do equipment shows here in Las Vegas we stand on our own mat to take the pain out of standing for 10 hours in one place.

Dennis J. in Las Vegas, Nevada

Dear Dave, Mike and Dennis: Thanks for the input and information. I wasn't aware that there were so many remedies for knee problems on the water! I usually stand while at the helm of my boat because my kids like to laugh at my jiggling stomach. My knees are still in pretty good shape, but I probably be the bionic man within a few years. I think that I'll start looking into these products now.

Dear Cap'n Drew: There is obviously some nautical background to the comment "he's four sheets to the wind" commonly used to describe anyone who has spilled too much rum on his lower lip. "Under full sail in a gale" I could appreciate, but since (as every sailor knows) sheets are not sails and sails are not sheets, I am at a loss as to the connection between inebriation and (pardon the term) rope in an air current. Can you help me out with the origin of the term? Perhaps it derives from power boats and the aftermath of bed-wetting.

Charles in NW Florida

Dear Charles: Great question! Pretty good dig on powerboaters, too. My nose is still bleeding! In the phrase "three sheets to the wind," the term "sheets" refers not to sails, but ropes. The ropes have various names according to which function they serve (i.e. halyards, sheets and lines). The sheets in this case are those ropes which hold the sails in place. If one sheet is loose, the sail will flap in the wind and the ship will become unsteady. Two sheets loose and you have a major problem, and with "three sheets in the wind," the ship reels like a drunken sailor.

Evidently, back in the "olden days," sailors rated each other's level of drunkenness, where "one



by Capt. Drew Brown

sheet" meant "slightly tipsy," "two sheets" meant "good'n buzzed" and so on, with "four sheets in the wind," meaning completely ossified. I assume that, after being rated "four sheets," a good bed-wetting would often follow.

This also begs the question why boaters are so afraid of the word "rope." We boaters will call a rope ANYTHING BUT "rope." While I can't understand the distain for the term, I've compiled a list of alternative words which may be substituted for rope while on your boat.

Some Good Nautical Alternatives to the Word "Rope"

1. Line
2. Sheet
3. Strap
4. Halyard
5. Hemp
6. Fred
7. String
8. Mr. Stretchy
9. Cord
10. Slinky

Dear Cap'n Drew: I love fishing But there is one problem that I'm sure you here about all the time. (SEA SICKNESS). I have tried everything from pills to wrist bands. The only thing that has helped is the patch behind the ear but it causes dizziness and blurred vision. I have heard it said that if you go out in rough seas about ten or twelve times in a row you will get use to it but I wouldn't want to try something so drastic unless there is some proof that it works. Do you have any ideas or suggestions?

Vomit Man in Miami, FL

Dear VM: You're asking the wrong guy. I happen to LIKE dizziness and blurred vision. In fact, I usually consume cheap scotch which not only gives me dizziness and blurred vision; but it makes me nauseous as well- giving me ALL the symptoms of seasickness! While I never actually get seasick, I just ran out and bought a case of those patches. Next time I go out, I'm going to serve cheese, crackers and ear-patches. Hopefully this will save me a few bucks at the liquor store.

Dear Cap'n Drew: I have a situation that I need help with ASAP. It is time to put the boats back in the water in Minnesota. With a very short boating season; we are in a hurry to get our 30 foot Maxum in the water. To make long story short, last week a fellow boater knocked the bow of our boat off of its

stands into another boat and onto the ground. We can see the surface damage, but what can we do to find the damage we can't see? I am afraid the integrity of the hull may have been compromised and we may find more damage as time goes by, from use. I also worry about re-sale. We have to disclose that, I would imagine. Do you have any advice as far as dealing with the insurance company of the marina, since the insurance of the boater does not cover? I would feel safer to total the boat, but it is unlikely that would happen right? I am afraid we will hit a big wave and something bad will happen. I hope you have some advice; I am not sure who to trust on the safety of our vessel.

Thanks,

Sharon C. in Stillwater, MN

PS: the insurer is not Boat/US

Dear Sharon: You never mentioned the extent of the damage! How did this guy know it over? Was he drunk, or just on ear-patches like our buddy in the previous letter? If there is a scratch on the hull, I doubt that you have very much to worry about. If you have a gaping hole at the waterline, there's probably cause for a bit more concern.

Get the name of a reputable marine surveyor in your area and have the surveyor come and check the hull. Based on what you told me, you shouldn't need to have the entire boat surveyed, just the bow (much cheaper). This will let you know the extent of the damage. Use this information to make a "Third-Party Claim" with the insurance carrier of the person who knocked over the boat or the boat club or both. This means that you go DIRECTLY to their insurance company- not your own. This will help to prevent any rise in your own boat insurance rates. The insurance company will typically attempt to minimize the damage and thus reduce their costs. The survey results will help you to ensure that you are fully compensated.

If you DO have a gaping hole in the bow, and can't wait to get it repaired; let your in-laws borrow it for a day before you go out on it yourselves. Hope this helps.

Boat Models That Never Made it to Production

1. Cobalt Corndog
2. Grady-White Gelding
3. Sea Ray Sweatstorm
4. Formula Ferret
5. Pearson Pyongyanger
6. Bayliner Barnacle
7. Sailmaster Baiter
8. Jeanneau Jihad
9. Newport Nutcracker
10. Johnson Cup

Cap'n Drew Brown has been boating for fifteen years with his wife, Meg (Windlass), and their three children, Fender and Cleat and Stay. He is the author of the boating humor book "What's A Hoy? A Guide to Modern Boating." Send questions via e-mail to capn@capndrew.com or visit his website at www.capndrew.com