

REVIEW

HEAVY WEATHER SAILING – Peter Bruce, 7th edition. Published in hard covers by Adlard Coles Nautical [www.adlardcoles.com] at £35.00 / US \$50.00. 310 255mm x 180mm pages with many colour photos and technical diagrams. ISBN 978-1-4729-2319-6

The seventh edition of this classic book, a direct descendant of Adlard Coles's 1967 original, has once again been updated by Peter Bruce. Adlard was one of the 'cheated generation' who lost six years' of sailing due to the Second World War, and when that event came to a conclusion those of us who had endured the wasted years were more than desperate to get afloat. We engaged in some rash heavy weather sailing as a result, and learned a lot, all to be found in the pages of the new edition of this book.

At least Adlard had plenty of sailing before the war started. The few British OCC members of the 'cheated generation' still going strong – well, fairly strong if a bit creaky – did not get much sailing before September 1939 when the world went mad, and to war. This explains why some elderly OCC people are still leaving harbour when common sense says one should really wait for the wind to abate.

Adlard wrote this book in a clever way. He got a variety of experienced people to contribute, giving information about how to deal with severe conditions offshore. His own experience was also included and he had plenty of sea-time as he did a full summer's offshore racing year after year. He suffered from diabetes, so had to have three proper hot meals each day at sea. On rival boats food was not so well organised and sometimes consisted of biscuits ... followed by more biscuits, and maybe an occasional sandwich. Adlard's food formula was a race-winner.

This fine book has never been equalled, and this new edition has even more data. It should be called *Heavy Weather Sailing and Motorboating* because there is now lots of good sense about survival at sea in power boats. There is also a valuable foreword by Sir Robin Knox-Johnston, OCC.

If I might be so arrogant as to disagree with Robin on one point, he says that it is not worth having a separate track on the mast for a trysail because of the immense difficulty of hanking on this storm sail in brutal weather. He is right about the problem of getting the slides into the track when the wind is shrieking in the rigging – the way round this is to keep the trysail permanently hanked to its track, complete with halyard and sheets secured. A fairly tight-fitting bag holds the sail snugly until it is needed. Then when the weather goes off the clock one lowers the mainsail and hoists the small, tough trysail without undue effort.

In such a competent, densely-packed book it is a tiny bit irritating that on page 298 the cabin sole is referred to as the 'floor'. On a boat, a 'floor' is that part of the athwartships structure which joins the bottom ends of frames to each other and to the keel. Much can be forgiven, however, when reading such a fine tome.

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