

SCANDVIK

I'd like to commend Scandvik Inc. (www.scandvik.com), the US importer of Andersen winches, for its above and beyond customer support. I had a problem with a particular brand of rope jamming the self-tailing mechanism in my Andersen ST40s. This happened to the point of causing damage to the winch. When I contacted Scandvik about this problem on one winch, Scandvik President Sebastian Blackman asked if I would send him some pictures of the innards of the winch in question. Upon examination, he sent me replacement drums for both winches. There was never any question of whether this was covered under warranty. My hat's off to this fine company!

Joel Bondy
1978 Pearson 323
Bayside, N.Y.

THE DUTCHMAN

I cannot remember when I received customer service as good as that provided by the Dutchman company (www.mvbinfo.com). Two years ago, I ordered a new main and mizzen with full battens and Dutchman flaking. After delivery, the flaking did not look right. The sailmaker waffled a bit, saying that it would take a while for the sails to "learn" the folds and that he had followed Dutchman guidelines. Who was I to argue with the "expert" and get into a small-claims court hassle?

I photographed the flaked sails and showed them to company President Martin Van Breems at the Sail Chicago show. He agreed the flaking looked peculiar and invited me to stop by his shop in Norwalk, Conn., since I was planning to cruise to Long Island Sound, so he could correct things. He did so without charge.

Martin not only corrected the placement of some filament guides, but he gave us free docking and a ride to a supermarket. Then he gave us material to add the third guideline I had specified (which the sailmaker ignored) and installed a plastic guide to locate the third set.

But more important than fixing the Dutchman installation, he pointed out that the battens were too long, which caused most of the irregular flaking. On his advice, I shortened them, thus preventing undue stretching of the sails—and their premature demise—and improving the flaking.

Norris Larson
Easy Reach, Pearson 424 ketch
Evanston, Ill.

XINTEX-FIREBOY

I wanted to let you know of a company that goes above and beyond for its customers. In your May 2008 issue, you reviewed holding-tank sensors. I purchased the recommended Xintex-Fireboy sensors and monitors (PTS and LLM-1) from an online chandler and installed them.

There was no problem with the sensors in the water tanks, but the holding-tank sensors clogged, rendering the system unreliable. Daven Wood from Xintex-Fireboy helped me troubleshoot the system. He determined that the online marine supplier had sent an older generation of sensors with the new monitors, not the sensors that *PS* had evaluated and recommended.

Although it really wasn't their problem, Xintex-Fireboy shipped me two new sensors at no charge for my holding tanks which, as advertised, work very well.

Bill Roderick
Breezaway, Catalina 400
Sandusky, Ohio



Xintex Fireboy
PTS and LLM-1



Dutchman President Martin Van Breems (right) installs the Dutchman flaking system.

DEFENDER MARINE

I have used Defender Industries (www.defender.com) on and off for several years. They regularly have the best prices, and in the past, when I have had to return any faulty item, they have made the process easy and facilitated conversations with original manufacturers. Last year, I purchased a Weems & Plath Star Finder through Defender. After sailing from the USA to Antigua, we realized that one of the templates we needed was missing.

I contacted Weems & Plath but had no response after two weeks. So, I contacted Defender, asking if they could help with the communications with Weems. They replied instead that they would check their stock for the missing template and that the company owner and his wife were traveling to Antigua on vacation and would be prepared to meet up with me to give me the missing template.

MaryAnne Webb
Gemini 105Mc
Portland, Ore.; Lying in Antigua