

TECHNIQUES IN ANCHORING

By Richard Sorokin

In a motor boat the helmsman can be a great assistant with his crew in setting the anchor and raising it. First the coxswain has to decide the length of the rod [the anchor line] he feels he will need. This depends on the sea conditions, height of waves, strength of wind, depth of water and where he wants the boat to sit.

The anchor line should be made of nylon with a length of chain between the anchor and the rod. The length of chain and the diameter of the line will depend on the size and weight of the boat. The chain not only helps bury the anchor, it also absorbs wave action by being pulled off the bottom. The nylon line also will stretch and absorb the wave and wind effects. Seven times the depth is the recommended length. This is not always necessary if conditions are mild. Experience and knowledge will play a big part in this decision.

Once you decide on the length that you will use, put the boat on the spot you want it to be on, then run the anchor line the distance you decided on into the wind or waves; whichever will have the greater effect on the boat. Drop the anchor, let out the line until the anchor hits bottom. Have your crew continually let out the line as the wind and waves back you up or in calm conditions you could put the engine in reverse and back slowly. Let your crew know what you are doing. When the line is out as far as you want have the crew take a turn on a cleat. Then give the motor a short shot in reverse. This will make sure the anchor is holding.

To raise the anchor, have your crew start pulling in the anchor line. You can assist at the helm by going into a very slow forward thrust. Make sure it is slow enough that you do not run over the line. The wind and wave conditions will decide on how much power to use.

When the anchor line is straight up put the motor in neutral. The anchor should be easy to lift by your crew. If not cleat it and give the motor a small shot. Tell the crew what you are doing at all times. This should break the anchor out. A cooperative effort makes it easy for everyone.

When anchoring it's a good idea to take some sights on your location because the anchor can drag due to change in wind or current velocity and the tide coming in or out and changing the depth. Carrying a spare anchor is also a good idea