

At Ease at Anchor – Part II

By Samuel Sanford, Fort Macon Sail & Power Squadron



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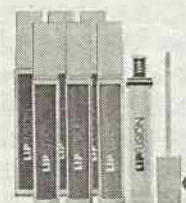
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Last month we talked about how and why anchors work. In this issue, we will examine several types of anchors and an introduction to rodes.

Ground tackle refers to anchors and the chain, line and associated items needed to employ them. Boaters today have a wealth of choices when considering ground tackle. The first piece of equipment to choose is the anchor. New designs of anchors are being brought to the market place, but there are a number that have been proven over time. The mariner who expects to encounter different types of bottom should carry more than one type of anchor.

One of the most popular anchors is the Danforth brand anchor. It is light in weight compared to its holding power, and is superb in sand and mud. Its flat configuration makes it easy to carry aboard. The Danforth is manufactured in standard and high tensile models. The high tensile model doesn't necessarily

have greater holding power, but it will take much more strain before deforming and failing. This type anchor does not set well in hard bottoms and grass can keep it from reaching the bottom. There are a number of similar anchors on the market. At least one, the Fortress, is fabricated of aluminum. In a strong current the broad flukes of the Danforth and other light weight (LWT) anchors can sometimes make them actually sail through the water rather than sinking to the bottom.

Another of the burying anchors and an old standard of cruising sailors is the Simpson-Lawrence CQR plow. CQR is a sort of phonetic abbreviation for the word "secure." The CQR is manufactured in Scotland of drop forged steel in the shape of a farmer's plow, but with a hinged shank. As with other burying anchors, the greater the pull, the deeper it buries. Because it is more three-dimensional than many LWT anchors, it is more difficult to stow, and is best carried on an anchor platform. The manufacturer claims that this anchor will reset itself if it is tripped due to a change in direction of pull. This anchor may not bury in hard bottoms, but it is more effective in grass than the LWTs.

The Bruce is another burying anchor. It came on the market fairly recently, but has attracted a large following. It is three-dimensional like the plow, so an anchor platform is desirable for stowage. This anchor is also said to be able to reset itself

if tripped. The Bruce anchor does not do well in hard bottoms, and the shape of the flukes makes it vulnerable to fouling in heavy grass.

The Yachtsman or kedge works well in sand and mud, and is better in hard bottoms and grass than the other three. It has to be much heavier than burying anchors to achieve equivalent holding power. This anchor, when properly set, has one fluke buried while the other sticks up out of the bottom. That makes it possible for the rode to wrap around the exposed fluke and unintentionally trip the anchor. It is also difficult to stow unless it can be disassembled, and most can't. The Luke Yachtsman anchor is fabricated from solid bronze and can be disassembled into three pieces for easy stowing. It should be assembled and rigged ahead of time when its use is anticipated.

The grapnel anchor is good on a rock bottom as its narrow tines are more likely to snag a small crevice while others will simply slide over the bottom. When temporarily anchoring on reefs or wrecks, a small grapnel with soft tines is useful. If it fouls, a moderate amount of strain will straighten the fouled tine so the anchor can be retrieved. The tine can then be straightened for future use. West Marine carries a grapnel manufactured by Mighty Mite that has malleable aluminum tines. Grapnels should be used only for short periods in settled weather and calm seas.

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