

# CAPT'N KEVO'S

## Boating Tips

### Divers

I met Nick Dadigan, owner of Dadigan Diving, in the parking lot of our marina on the Delta Loop in the dead of winter. It was raining and he was busy unloading tools and gear for “diving” our 38-foot boat, *Her Way*. I was impressed with his preparedness and attention to detail. No doubt he knew what he was doing.

The first thing I noticed about Nick is that he was very safety minded. After donning his (considerable) gear we headed down to the dock. He asked me to shut off the power to our boat as well as those on either side while he dove the boat. (Although very uncommon, it is possible to get electrocuted by power sources near boats in harbors.)

I presumed he would want to enter the water from our swim platform, but instead he chose to jump right in off an 18-inch high dock. I asked him how he intended to get out of the water with all his gear on and he said: You just watch! (He flew out of the water like a sea lion at Pier 39.) Burrrrr...

When he saw the job and analyzed the needs of the boat, he decided to do a very soft

scrubbing of the bottom. (The bottom was painted six months ago and we berth in the Delta.)

After the bottom, rudders and props were scrubbed clean, I took the boat for a 42-mile trip from Riverboat Marina to Pittsburg Yacht Club and back. I must admit that I was skeptical at first about the value of getting the bottom cleaned since the boat is berthed in the Delta. I don't see too much growth near the waterline, but who knows what is happening in regard to the entire bottom. However, on a speed trial I was able to achieve 1.5 mph faster with no current than before the bottom cleaning.

So I asked Nick to give our read-



Nick Dadigan of Dadigan Diving.

ers a little background on him. Here is his story:



BY KEVIN O'LEARY

“I began diving under boats over 20 years ago, during my bachelor days, while living on a boat in beautiful Santa Barbara. Being an avid sports diver, I loved the ability to be underwater for both work and play. The physical challenge of underwater work was also a big attraction that I have always welcomed.

“After thinking that I would never leave the California coast, I surprised myself when I relocated to Sacramento (for the only reason that would take me away from my coastal paradise: a wonderful woman who

eventually became my wife). However, I completely missed my daily diving experiences and knew that if we were going to stay in the valley I would have to find a way to work in the water here as well. I began working in the local marinas offering hull cleanings as well as detailing of large boats.

“As my business grew, I focused my work strictly to jobs below the waterline

and expanded my service area. My work now takes me to countless



marinas up and down the valley, as well as marinas in Lake Tahoe, and numerous marinas along the coast.

"Diving has also made me very popular with my two children Hannah and Hunter. Not only do they think that good old dad has a pretty cool job, but my diving experiences have given me the title of number one storyteller in our house. I am always able to share a fantastic adventure of some sort whether it was the time that a huge bass continually bit me on my arm while I was cleaning a hull near her precious eggs, or the time that the giant Canadian goose chased me and tried to flock me down when diving at the Sacramento Marina.

"The kids love to hear about the time I was greeted nose to nose by a friendly seal when diving at a marina along the coast. The story always ends with... and we parted ways blowing bubbles in each other's faces.

"My son particularly likes hearing about my spider man likenesses. During diving when currents are strong, I attach myself to the bottom of boats with the help of



Some serious underwater scrubbing gear.



Nick getting ready to take the plunge!

very large suction cups. These stories have allowed me to obtain super hero status at home."

Question: Why would I want to hire a diver?

Nick: A trained and experienced diver is able to inspect all underwater parts of a boat without a costly haulout and with just a simple phone call.

Question: What are zincs and their purpose?

Nick: Zincs are the "sacrificial lambs" that protect all metal parts under the waterline. Without zincs very costly damage can occur.

Question: Do I need bottom paint?

Nick: A diver can visually inspect the bottom of a boat and tell you if paint is needed or if blistering is occurring on the hull.

Question: How often do I need hull cleanings and inspections?

Nick: Every boat is different and the frequency depends on many factors, such as sun exposure, covered or uncovered slips, usage, bottom paint and water type (salt or fresh water).

Question: What if I hit something and bend a prop or possibly do other damage?

Nick: All of these things can be fixed underwater by a skilled, experienced diver.

# CAPTAIN KEVO'S

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## CAPT'N KEVO'S *Boating Tips*

**Question:** Once props are removed if damage has occurred, what do I do then?

**Nick:** A diver works with many professionals in all areas of marine repair and can guide you in the right direction.

**Question:** What if I get stuck somewhere on my boat and need help?

**Nick:** With a simple phone call I am able to come to you wherever your boat may be on the water or on land.

**Question:** What kind of equipment do you use to clean hulls and props?

**Nick:** I use very non-abrasive pads either by hand or hydraulic machine depending on the application that is required.

### **Kevo's Tip:**

If your boat is berthed on the Delta and hasn't been used in the last six months or so, I recommend having the boat dived. The diver can check for zinc erosion and advise you on preventative maintenance. For those berthing in salt water, diving the boat is definitely recommended at least every six months.

Special thanks to Nick Dadigan of Dadigan Diving for his help in putting together this column. Nick can be reached at 916/217-3549.

Be safe & happy boating!

**As always, feedback is appreciated. I can be reached at 925/890-8428 or kevo@yachtsmanmagazine.com. 🚤**