

# CAPT'N KEVO'S

## Boating Tips

*Correction from last month:*

*Although the new life jacket law states now that anyone under the age of 13 MUST wear a life jacket at all times, it still remains that no one under the age of 16 is permitted to wear an inflatable-type life vest.*

### Raftout At Mandeville

**W**e were the first to arrive. It was a nice day and one of our buddies told us slack tide was at 0100 hours. Piece of cake! We were on schedule to leave so we would arrive at "The Gauntlet" at Mandeville right at that time. Only it wasn't slack by any means. It was ripping really badly to the east. I should have known better.

I have the tide tables for the

Bay and Delta on my iPhone with an app called Tide Graph. I find this app very useful during the course of teaching close quarters maneuvering/docking in that I can predict what the tide and, more important, the current are doing wherever I'm instructing that day, but I digress...

We packed up the boat for the weekend and headed out to establish the foundation of the Sacramento Bayliner Club's raftout. The Hino 175-hp naturally aspirated diesels fired up in about .5 seconds (I love that!). Next, I let my wife, Susan (The Admiral), take the helm and pull the boat out of the slip with the dinghy attached securely to the swim platform and in the water. This retards the performance character-



BY KEVIN O'LEARY

istics when pivoting, but offered good "helm time" for her under these circumstances.

The trip to Mandeville was uneventful. We cruised at 1500 rpm with the dinghy towline consisting of 75 feet of 9/16th iridescent yellow line, which floats so it (hopefully) can't get wrapped in the props. When we got there we found two rental houseboats tied up to poles but no one else. There were plenty of poles for us to tie onto.

Next came the fun part: Susan goes up to the bow and lassoes one of the poles. She gave it about 20 feet of slack because we anticipated larger boats arriving and needed the room between our boat and the poles; so far so good. The boat took off sideways but was secure for now.

So we get into the dink with our auxiliary anchor and pay out as much scope as possible (215 feet). We set this anchor as far up-current as we could. When we got back to the boat the current was so strong we could not pull in the auxiliary anchor without risking breaking it out.

Our buddies, Terry and Stephanie, showed up with their 32-foot Bayliner and tied off next to me. Now we had two boats swinging with the current. We set his anchor with the dink just like we did ours.

Then I turned the dink into a



Sacramento Bayliner Club May raftout at Mandeville.



Pat LaRondelle, Susan (The Admiral) and Stephanie Counts enjoying their kayaks at Mandeville.



Our neighbors, Gloria and Pete Allison of Bethel Island got a kick out of all the fun going on next door.

“tugboat.” This works really well with inflatables because the tubes soften the blow when coming in contact with another boat and the rubber tends to make the dink stick to the boat. So, as I’m pushing the two vessels back into the proper position (bow facing shore), both boats snuggled up their auxiliary anchors and we were holding steady.

By now we had a half dozen boats waiting to land and getting a bit impatient. Susan (also The Momadore) put a stop to that on the radio in a hurry. We were not finished yet. When you’ve seen and heard of as many raftouts that broke up because of inadequate ground tackle as I have you take no chances. HA!

Anyway, the next move was to take the dink around to the bow of the second boat and tie a line around the same pole. Now we have two bow lines and two stern anchors set perfectly to hold the rest of the incoming

boats while they deploy stern anchors and attach to poles where possible.

At the end of the day we had accomplished our goal of securing the entire raftout so we could sleep at night. HA! Uncle Bob, Murphy, Susan and I settled in to enjoy the weekend with a chicken kabob dinner.

Saturday, half the club took off in their nice center console dinks to Windmill Cove for lunch and cocktails. I stayed back at the boat, but knew Susan would be in good hands with my good friend, Sam, and his totally cool dink. Oh, and Sam... When are you going to get tired of your dink and just give it to us?

They didn’t come back for 5 hours; however, they did bring with them my good friend and former client Dr. Arnie Goldschlager (aka “Daddy”), who was on his way back from Tinsley Island to Bethel Harbor in his 26-foot Cobalt. We caught up on boating and our mutual friendship before he had to depart back to Bethel Harbor.

Saturday night, we all piled on to Sam’s 56-foot Sea Ray (yes, we do allow them in the club) for dinner and a great party. Everyone had a grand time and thank you Sam for being a great host!

Sunday morning we had our monthly club meeting. Not much to talk about at this one except to bestow the

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

“Chicken Award” to the most worthy (attending) member. The “Chicken Award” is given out to whoever does the dumbest thing during the raftout/cruise-in. The person who has it has to give it away. So there are “spies” everywhere! This actually serves a good purpose in that no one wants to get the “Chicken Award” and tries their best to not do dumb things, resulting in a fun and safe weekend for all.

After breakfast it was time to dismantle this contraption we call a raftout. We could do it the hard way or the easy way. Thankfully (most) members chose the easy and safe way.

The current was flowing to the east, so if the vessel on the far east side departed first, it would prevent boats running over and fouling rear anchors since they were set into the current. This coordination worked perfectly. Everyone got off safe and arrived at port safely. A good raftout!

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

We are now in the raftout season on the Delta. When establishing a raftout, don't take any chances with your ground tackle. As you add on boats, the entire equation changes in terms of what will hold or not. Having a raftout break up in the middle of the night is a frightening experience.

Be vigilant about having every other boat (or more) put out either a stern or bow anchor, whichever is appropriate.

Be safe & happy boating.

**I can be reached at 925/890-8428 or kevo@yachtsmanmagazine.com. 🍷**