

Product Testimonial

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Let me first introduce myself, I'm Steven Dinger. My wife and I currently own a Catana 472 Catamaran. As with many catamaran owners we have owned our share of mono-hulls. I started with a 25' sloop progressed to a 32' Garden design and did 14 years of serious cruising with our Norseman 447 and 10 of the 14 years with the 535 cutter rigged. Both were heavy displacement hulls.

What I am about to tell you is a story about night and day when it comes to owning the right anchor.

My wife and I started out in June of 2006 on a beautiful cruise from Canet en Roussillon, France that would include Corsica, Sardinia, Italy, Croatia, Greece and finally Turkey. The trip was beautifully planned, however, the anchoring situation made it unbearable and at times very dangerous. Our catamaran because of the high bridge-deck clearance, therefore, high free-board caused our cat Tivoli to sail on her anchor. We noted that our Delta 25 Kg. anchor (standard anchor for the 47' Catana) had a tendency to drag once the anchor was set. This is what I call, "false security" when it comes to anchoring (you believe your anchor is set and then you begin to drag a half hour later). I knew that I had to work with what I had since I was not finding larger anchors available at the chandleries at the ports we visited along the way. So, each anchorage I would lay out 50-60 meters of chain and pray that the anchorage would not be crowded. That worked in France but not in Corsica or Sardinia where the anchorages were crowded. So, I would attempt to remove our boat as far away as possible and set my watch for 90 minute anchor watches. Not that pleasant

When we finally got to Croatia, our problems really became magnified. The anchorages were often much deeper and the Bora winds at 35 knots would come out of the mountains and swoop down on the anchorages with vengeance nearly every night. Now the drill was to layout the chain on the deep side of a shelf, set the chain-watch on my GPS and sleep out in the cockpit from 11 pm to 5 am when the Bora would leave and the anchorage would go back to being serene. After a week of this I was physically stressed out from being up throughout the night. Re-setting anchors in the early AM with 35 knot winds is no picnic. I knew changes were needed and as quickly as possible to save the rest of the extended cruise.

I met up with Jurgen who seemed to know his anchors and really did know Croatia since he had been cruising extensively in these waters for over 10 years. I listened carefully to him as he explained that the 25 Kg. Delta was a bad combination for our catamaran. He said that 45 Kg. should be a minimum for our boats characteristics. He also suggested at least another 20 meters of 10mm chain. I agreed with him, but Dubrovnik area did not have this size anchor or 80 meters of 10mm chain. So, Jurgen contacted his Charter friend in Pula and they made arrangements to have a 45 Kg. Britany anchor delivered from Germany to Split. Split became our destination, while we experienced many more anchor watches along the way. Some so dangerous I dread even thinking about the situation. Since we had guests aboard, I would put on my happy face in the morning after not sleeping and cruise to the next destination never really feeling comfortable getting off the boat to tour. By the time we reached Split I was myopic, one-track, get the anchor and get the longer chain. While in Split, I met Jurgen's friend who had a custom 51 mono-hull, who preached that there was only one anchor, the Wasi. When he attempted to anchor next to Jurgen and I, we noticed that the anchor caught immediately. Therefore, he placed his snubber and bridle on and smiled back to us. Approximately 30 minutes later he was dragging, again I call this "false security". I noted that the Wasi blades are sharp and they dig-in right away. But, their blades are also narrow and can pull out and get loaded with grass/weeds easily. I also noted that the shank was long and straight. This is also not good since the shank will hit the tramp net on the way in and again when retrieving the anchor (the same with the Britany) Not a good anchor for our cat.

Now with my 80 meters of chain and 45 Kg. Britany I felt as though I had solved the riddle of too small and too little chain. On the way back to Dubrovnik I had an opportunity to try out our new purchases. It seemed to be a good combination. I was holding, so I began to sleep again.

After one day in Dubrovnik we sailed throughout the night and arrived late the next day in Greek waters. I dropped the Britany and paid out 50 meters in Tranquil Bay. The anchor didn't catch. I tried again, in surprise, it didn't catch again. The Britany was sliding across the tall grass, of all places, Tranquil Bay. I was confused until a near-by Brit said, "we're in bloody grass" you need to lock the anchor in hard. The third time seemed to work (keep in mind no wind and in less than 12 meters of water). The problem repeated itself a couple more times and now I had some question as to whether, after all, I had purchased the right anchor. Not a good feeling after spending a lot and having people tell me how wonderful the Britany worked on their boats.. While attempting to anchor 3 times in Porto Rafti, with a good Meltemi blowing, I knew I had the wrong anchor. And the final straw was the Island of Simi, when at a Taverna having lunch, I noticed Tivoli was drifting away in a light wind. I had to run a ½ mile, untie my dinghy, and take off after our cat heading for the rocks inside the bay. Not a enjoyable experience at 58 years of age (I never ran a half a mile even in school). The rest of the cruise was uneventful, arriving at Marmaris Yacht Marine, where the attendants come out to meet you and escort you to your slip. No more anchoring for the rest of the year. Thank God!

While home in San Francisco area for the winter, I had one major priority and that was to solve the anchoring problem once and for all. I studied every major anchor testing that was available. The British Admiralty test, Boats US, West Marine, Cruising World, Sail. I read them all. I Googled 'anchor testing' and found interesting sites where manufacturer's debated each other's anchors and solicited in detail the flaws of their competition This was so informative that I started to feel I was getting somewhere in understanding anchors. I had narrowed my choices down to the Spade, a larger Delta, Wasi and the new Rocna that was showing real promise as the new anchor of the future with new concepts in design.

I made several correspondences with Rocna, but they had no distributors in Turkey and the costs of shipping and customs was equal to the cost of the anchor. That left the Spade, Delta and Wasi with the same problem of getting it shipped into Marmaris, Turkey. The Catana Users-Group Website had some very love-hate feelings about the Spade. They loved how they set and stayed where ever you placed them. They hated the fact that the aluminum version of Spade were delaminating and the shanks were bending into shapes you would never imagine. The steel Spades were also bending at the shanks. I knew that was not the anchor for me since we sail on our anchor as much as 90 degrees. I still remembered our observation of the Wasi while up in Slit, Croatia and decided we have had enough of the dragging with the Britany and like the Britany the Wasi had the long straight shank that does not work well on most bow rollers, so the Wasi was also out of contention as a solution. (With the "knock-off" Wasi's being sold in Marmaris for hardly any money, it was still out.) I went back to the Rocna rep's one more time to see if we could work something out. I was running out of time, Spring was fast approaching and I would be leaving for Marmaris at the end of May.

By a fluke, we decided to attend the Oakland California Sail Expo. While making the rounds under the tents, we came across an exhibit for the Ultra Anchor. I found their sampling of all the anchors in the sand box a bit amusing. But, I did not find the Ultra Anchor amusing. Here was an anchor that had a sharp tip 'loaded with led' for penetrating all surfaces. The geometric angles of the blades, were designed to force the anchor to dig deeper. The angle of the shank was designed to penetrate the surface with minimal scope and the smooth curve of the shank allowed for easy exit and entrance onto the bow roller. The winglets at the end of the blades force the anchor to reset itself, if there is a change of tide or wind directiton. It simply resets itself easily. I noticed that it had a stainless bar to strengthen the shank which also could serve as a 'trip line' support.

I could see that a lot of thought had gone into the design of this anchor. It had my interest. Now it needed to sell itself with 'real world' application. Aaron of Sovereign BBQ had caught sight of us and had come over to say hello (we had worked together at putting one of his BBQ's on our

boat the year before). I asked where is this anchor made, he said Istanbul, Turkey. I said, you are kidding? He said no, it is Istanbul. I said our boat is in Marmaris, Turkey and I am having trouble getting an anchor shipped into Turkey. A couple days later, I looked up the manufacturer in Istanbul and we began to have a dialog in regards to the data collected on the Ultra Anchors. I did not want to make another mistake on choice of anchor. I needed proof. Not only was the representative fluent in English, he was a real delight to work with in answering questions over the next month. There was no doubt I was going to buy this Ultra Anchor, the question was which size. Should I go with the 35 Kg. or the 45 Kg.? My friend Jurgen in Pula said, "Steve we have been through this before, go with the 45 Kg. anchor and you will be safe in big blows, not just simple anchoring." He was right. I did go with the 45 Kg. The Ultra People personally saw to it that it was delivered to the Marmaris Yacht Marine two days after I had arrived. Everything is exactly as they said it would be. What a pleasure dealing with professionals with integrity.

Now the real test of the Ultra Anchor on Tivoli our 472 catamaran. We sailed from Marmaris to Fethiye Turkey. Each anchorage, I had the opportunity to anchor and then take a mask and snorkel and check the anchor set and dive again several hours later to see if there were any changes.. The Ultra Anchor sets within 1 meter. And when I say set, I mean it sets up to the shank. In one of the inlets the wind shifted 180 degrees and the anchor reset itself by turning around within its own length. I told my wife it simply is amazing to see the Ultra Anchor work so effectively. (I once had a Fortress that would do that in about 3 lengths. The problem with the Fortress is that we could never launch it from our bow anchor rollers. It was never designed to be other than hand throw in or a stern anchor.)

We went throughout Turkey without once having the anchor drag or difficulty setting. I could leave the boat and go on long tours and most importantly I could sleep at night.

In Greece, where I had had so much trouble before, my wife and I ran into a gail force Meltemi near the island of Dhenoussa. We spend two days held up in a small inlet in 35-45 knot winds. Although my bridle parted losing my thimble causing our catamaran to swing wildly, the Ultra Anchor never moved according to the GPS markers.

You cannot imagine how excited I am about this Ultra Anchor. It has won my respect over-and-over again. It is the perfect anchor for catamarans or any other boat that has a tendency to sail on their anchors. It is the perfect anchor for anyone who wants to protect their investment and wants to sleep at night. I would recommend this anchor highly to anyone who wants to match the quality of their boat with the ground tackle that keeps them from harms way.

The difference from last year to this year like I said, "is night and day." Do yourself a favor and get the anchor that has all the new technological advantages of keeping you and your family safe. It will be the last anchor you will ever need for your boat.

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S/V Tivoli—472 Catana Catamaran