

By Ed Huckins (R.I.P.), owner #33

As J40s age (gracefully) there are a number of maintenance items and improvements that go on. For Mal de Mer III, I have recently completed (hopefully) a series of upgrades and will show some of them here. We will also include inputs from other J40 owners as they become available.

## Sails and Rigging

As part of the preparation for our trip to San Francisco in 1999, we decided to go ahead and refurbish the mast and redo the standing and running rigging. After consultation with the local Navtec distributor, we decided to go to Dyform wire and XLS Extra all rope (spectra cored) running rigging. We also replaced the sheaves to support this, and added Spartite at the partners. The Dyform allowed us to use type 316 SS with added rigging strength—a concern, since we had stranded a couple of shrouds previously and 316 is not as strong as 304.

Since the sails were getting old, we looked around for replacements when we returned. Over two seasons we bought a new main, 100% jib, and 135% furling Genoa from Quantum Sailmakers. All are Pentex laminate tri-radials, and are excellent sails. For the main, we went to a 2+2 full/partial batten configuration with Batslides on the full battens. We are quite satisfied with the new sails.

One of the big improvements was the addition of a Wavestopper hard dodger to replace our (second) regular dodger.



This dodger has a fiberglass top and removeable Lexan windows. It is entirely self-supporting with 1 1/8" SS bows, yet can be totally removed from the mounting sockets quickly by removing set screws. Good handholds at sides and back, and all the windows remove easily for ventilation. We even added a boltrope and track to mount our awning to the back of the dodger.

Next item in our plans is a Sunbrella Bimini system, with permanently mounted bimini from rear of stern pulpit to pedestal guard, insert from dodger to Bimini and shadecloth side curtain for at anchor.

## **Engine and Mechanical**

We have not had to replace our engine, and look to other owners to supply further information on that task. As far as what we have done, we added a 100 amp Balmar High Output Alternator (912-100) and ARS regulator, which makes a big difference in charging our 430 AH bank of West Marine gel cells. The installation is fairly simple You do need to file about 1/8" off the front of the mount to align the pulleys, and replace the belt with a slightly shorter version--We used a NAPA Premium XL25-08903 which seems to be holding up very well. You can also see the Speed Seal cover for the water pump, a very practical and low cost addition.



We finally refurbished the injectors as we got close to 2000 hours on the engine. We also found it to be a good idea to have the exhaust elbow and heat exchanger cleaned out every 3-4 years to prevent clogging. Other maintenance has just been regular oil and filter changes. We use solar panels and do not run the engine out of gear for charging, which seems to keep problems down.

We also managed to wear out a Maxprop. Our two blade became very noisy after ~1500 hours. Since we were on a trip, we couldn't wait for refurbishment (which

we have done), so purchased and had installed a 3 blade Maxprop. Very smooth! The two blade was sized at 19x17; the three blade seems to work best at 19x16.

One unplanned upgrade was the replacement of the old SL 520 windlass with a SL Horizon 900. The motor burned out on the old one, and SL wanted \$700 for a replacement. So we have a new one. It installs with the same connections, but the disassembly and reassembly of the forward compartment was a fair chore.

## **Interior**

After 14 seasons we decided it was definitely time to upgrade the interior. The fabric was yellowed and worn, and the foam was pretty soft. The varnish showed lots of patching and wear.

One of the first upgrades was to add an HMC firm foam mattress. This has made a huge difference in sleeping comfort, and pretty much eliminated sore backs. It folds in the center for access to the storage compartments. Highly recommended!



The second upgrade was to revarnish the interior-actually we had it done. The sanding and varnishing was a nuisance, since we couldn't use the boat, but it sure made the interior lighter and brighter. Once that was done, we replaced the cushions in the main cabin with bolstered ultrasuede with firm foam. What a difference!





## **Instrumentation**

We have not replaced our original B&G Hornet 4 and Hecta instrumentation, since they are working fine, but will probably upgrade to the Network series in the future.

One upgrade we did make was to the autopilot. The original Robertson AP100DL was not very waterproof, and failed often, with costly repairs. It also had a awkward attachment to the quadrant, which actually required rerouting of one cockpit drain to install. We went to a B&G Network Type 1, with the ram attached to the port corner of the cockpit, and have been very happy with it. We also installed a Network Wind instrument at the same time, and can now steer by compass, apparent wind, or GPS.

We were also unhappy with the radar being downstairs at the chart table. We upgraded to a Raytheon RL70CRC radar/chartplotter with the display under the dodger, and found that to be a vast improvement. You can see the layout in the dodger picture above. This allowed us to rearrange the chart table instruments a little bit, and upgrade to a Raytheon RN300 WAAS GPS, ICOM M402 VHF radio with external command mic at the helm station, and an ICOM M802 Marine/Ham SSB with separate speaker and an SCS PTC II Pro Pactor modem for email via Winlink



One of the biggest changes, of course, was our move to a new slip in San Diego in November 2001, and a new house in February 2002. It's a lot further to Catalina now, so we make up for it by staying longer.



(11/24/03) Latest upgrade is a Bimini, with matching awning and reversible shadecloth side curtain. The longer runs up to Catalina and the Channel Islands convinced me to finally get one. Since Cindy and Fuzz take up most of the space under the dodger, I was normally out in the Sun all day. Now at least I have a little shade to hide behind. The Bimini size is limited by the end boom sheeting and the radar pole, but seems to provide pretty good shade once the sun is up a little bit-when it is most



needed.

