

## Rafting Procedures and Etiquette

Here are some guidelines for rafting that are intended to help avoid confusion and hard feelings while entering and leaving one of Fleet 8's super raft-ups.

Always ask permission from the Anchor Boat or whoever is in charge to join the raft.

Minimum equipment needed for rafting: Two (2) breast lines at least 12' in length - one on the bow and one at the stern. One (1) spring line at least 30' (a second spring line is recommended), and two (2) or more large fenders.

After receiving permission to raft, unless otherwise directed, approach the side with the fewest boats from the anchor boat to keep the raft balanced. Have the fenders tied in place amidships on the raft side of the boat and have the 2 breast lines -one at the bow, the other at the stern ready to toss. Use your breast lines to tie up and hang your fenders on your own boat. When you are ready to leave the raft there is no question whose is whose. Plus, should you leave the raft earlier than other boats, every thing will fall into place as the outboard boat reties itself to the raft.

Make your approach from the rear of the raft at a very slow speed. Approach at about a 45 deg. angle aiming about mid-ships of the raft. After the bow line is passed, turn away from the raft to bring your boat parallel to the raft. Allow for the swing of the raft on the anchor. It is best if you can time it with the raft just starting a swing toward your side as you come alongside. Don't "chase" the raft. If current & wind foul things up, power away being careful of the anchor rode and re-approach the raft. As you come along side ready to pass your lines, reverse you engine if needed to kill **all** forward motion. Forward movement with your boat tied to the raft could break the anchor loose or foul the anchor rode.

**KEEP HAND AND FEET FROM BETWEEN THE BOATS. DON'T LET ANYONE SWIM BETWEEN THE BOATS.** Rub rails and fenders can be replaced; fingers, arms, legs and heads cannot. Make sure any children stay clear of this danger.

Your new neighbor should tie your bow and stern lines to their bow and stern cleats. The spring line is then tied from your bow to your inboard neighbor's jib sheet cleat or jib sheet winch. Adjust all lines to insure your spreader is at least one (1) foot aft of your inboard neighbor's. This will avoid spreader collision or fouling should unexpected waves cause the boats to roll. A second spring line is highly recommended from the neighbor's bow to your jib cleat. Two spring lines will prevent surging and keep your boats tightly together. The keels of the boats should be parallel and lifeline gates opened to allow foot traffic between boats. It is impolite and unwise to stand or walk on pulpits. The added unusual pressure can cause the fittings to leak or bend not to say of the damage to your body should you fall. Most books recommend travel between boats only across the bow, but on a 25 that can be difficult.

To leave the raft when you are the outermost boat is easy. Untie the spring line(s), then the bow and stern lines. **BACK OUT.** Going forward may take you over the anchor rode. Leaving the raft with boats on both sides can be done with coordination with both your neighbor boats. Again, back out undoing your spring, stern and bow lines in that order. Your outboard neighbor will then be retying to the raft in the same sequence as you leave

Always thank the Anchor Boat for the use of their anchor.

*Woody* -WoodWind