On the Topic of Ports and Hatches



C350 Association Technical Editor Bill Templeton

As we age we may become weak, begin to creak and even leak….. no I'm not talking about our bodies (although it may be true there also) but our beloved C350s. Two issues ago I asked for any experiences with the opening ports leaking….Pete Travers was having some and I too had an occasional drip portside forward cabin. I suggested, at that time, the problem may be the "seal" between the lexan lens and its gasket… possibly dirty or having shrunk. This Summer on our cruise to Martha's Vineyard we had exceptional weather with only one or two rainy days, unfortunately that was all it took to soak the Admiral's favorite digital camera (on top of the hanging locker, starboard side forward). I finally followed my own advice and we cleaned the lexan and the gasket of all the opening ports. Thoroughly testing with a hose, no water came in! this may not solve all leak problems, I would strongly suggest not waiting until you have a leak but make cleaning the lexan and gasket of all opening ports part of routine maintenance. By the way, the camera seems to be "healing" after drying it, opening it and blowing it out with compressed air.

On the topic of ports and hatches, Nevile Edinborough has offered a repair and upgrade of the overhead hatch in the head.



Please see the following article.

Lastly, take a look at my repair of the anchor well cover on Makani Kai as completed this past off-season.

As always, please send me any and all "things 350" to share with our brothers and sisters out there. **–Bill Templeton**, pbtemp6816@verizon.net

Repair and Upgrade of the Overhead Hatch in the Head



During a recent sail we had the hatch covers on Irish Lady (C350 #413) open. When my friend closed the small hatch in the Head the handle came off in his hand. When I was able to get a good look at the cover it became obvious that the handle was simply glued to the acrylic. The other hatches have handles that attach with a solid screw. Not so for the small Lewmar hatch.

This appears to me to be very dangerous. A glue joint can fail. In fact, I am surprised that it held for the 10 years or so since manufacture. But, if the joint had failed during a severe storm the boat could take on an incredible amount of water.

I elected to re-do the handle using a through screw. Figure 1 shows the parts used. From left to right is the lever arm, the handle base, a 3" stainless #8 screw, an end nut and washer. The critical feature I was able to use was that the handle base is threaded. Normally a short screw attaches the lever to the base.

I drilled a 3/16" hole in the acrylic and inserted the #8 screw through and into the base. There was enough thread left that I could use the end cap to hold the lever arm to the assembly. The assembly is shown in Figures 2 and 3.

It is important to realize that the screw can be added without removing the base. So, you don't have to wait until the joint fails. I recommend that everyone should consider an update. **–Neville Edenborough**, C350 #413 *Irish Lady*





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Voids and Delamination in the Anchor Well Hatch

A few years after purchasing our 350 *Makani Kai* I noticed some crazing in the gelcoat of the hatch cover the anchor well. (see before photo) Along with the crazing was a flexing of the hatch cover itself. Suffering terminally with human nature I kept saying each Winter I would bring the hatch home and see if I could reinforce it from underneath…. perhaps add plies of cloth and resin. Finally, I brought the hatch home this last winter when I laid the boat up and covered her for the season. I discovered there were significant voids and separation of the surface laminate from the core primarily on the starboard side. Having relaminated sections of an Airex cored deck on my old LeComte Medalist I felt confident I could restructure the hatch. Using a mini "Dremel-like" tool I opened the cracks (crazes) and exposed the voids. Since I had a combination of voids and delamination to address from the exterior I opted to drill holes through the exterior laminate for injection of a polyester resin/fiber mix. If I did not have the voids I would have attempted to drill from underneath and eliminate the later step of re-contouring the affected areas of non-skid on the hatch cover. (see sepair photo) I mixed a slurry of polyester resin and West System 403 Microfibers to fill the voids and inject into all the holes…. placed weights on the non-skid surface and when my slurry was oozing up out of the holes I let it sit and cure. After curing, I used the same mini tool with a small cone shaped wheel to grind away extra resin and best-as-I-could recreate the non-skid pattern. A phone call to Catalina parts and I had some gray gelcoat on its way (do they still call it Butler Gray?). The gelcoat does not match what's on the boat…. don't know if it is a question of age or batch. (see after photo) Stomping around on the foredeck for a month in the Chesapeake and a couple of weeks up to Martha's Vineyard, my repair is solid and no longer flexes. **–Bill Templeton**





