New Insurance Offering for US SAILING Members

By Carter Gowrie, President, Gowrie, Barden & Brett

US SAILING MEMBERS, whether they race a Transpac 52, cruise a Tartan 40, or enjoy a vintage Huckins 44, are eligible for this new insurance program managed by Gowrie Barden & Brett.

In recent years, the marine insurance industry has begun to single out racing sailboats as being undesirable risks. Claims from dismasting, race course collisions, and overland trucking have caused insurers to drastically raise rates or simply no longer provide insurance at all for certain types of race boats. Coverage for extended navigation, chartering or crew coverage for paid sailors is increasingly difficult to find.

In addition, insurance companies have become much more selective in offering insurance for older boats. Many boats more than 15 or 20 years old are no longer eligible for coverage. We think, however, that a 1982 Sabre 34 is a good risk in the hands of a knowledgeable owner, and we intend to offer a reasonable insurance solution to that type of US SAILING member.

— Carter Gowrie
A Claim Calamity

By Nancy Sprigg, Marine Dept. Mgr.

During my lifetime of boating and the twenty eight years that I have worked in marine insurance claims, I have seen all kinds of losses. There are common claims, lightning, theft, hitting submerged objects, and finding rocks that have no business being there. Then there are the unusual claims; a guest sneezes and his false teeth end up in the drink, a mother raccoon has her babies aboard your boat, or your hull smacks into a Sun Fish (not the small sailboat).

No matter the type of loss, it is important to be insured by a company that specializes in marine insurance and pays to be partnered with an agent who is knowledgeable about boats.

Years ago we had a storm come through Connecticut. Our client’s boat was moored in Stonington. He called me to report his claim, saying his boat broke away from its mooring and went up on the rocks. I told him I was sorry to hear that, I would report the loss to the company right away. He said, “Well, that’s not the worst of it”. (A phrase that now makes me cringe when I hear it.)

I asked him what happened. He told me “The boat was on the shore in Stonington and the mast had hit the power lines starting a fire below.” I told him I was sorry and I would report it to the company right away. He said, “But that’s not the worst it”.

I asked him what happened. “He said the fire burned itself out but the downed power line knocked out all the power in the Town of Stonington.” I told him I was sorry and would get this information in to the company right away. He said, “But that is not the worst of it”.

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…as the train passed, it caught the halyard and ripped the mast right out of the boat.

GBB Marine Team News... Meet Rod Clingman:

By Sarah Davidson, Marketing

Rod joined the marine team in January. He is the ‘go to’ person for the new Racing Sailboat program.

Rod lives in Old Lyme, CT in a vintage house he restored in 2003.

I sat down with Rod to ask him about his sailing background and how and why he ended up at GBB.

Tell us about your sailing background.
Without revealing my age, I have been essentially sailing my whole life. I owe my interest and passion of the sport to my parents who took me sailing at eight weeks in a Hingham 4 meter. I am told “I cried that whole summer.”

How did you spend your summers growing up?
We cruised New England in my parent’s sailboats, from a 18’ Marshall Catboat to a 30’ Luders Viking. In high school I joined the Sea Explorers Ship 84 out of Southport, CT where I continued to cruise the New England coast on The Resolution, a Hinckley Bermuda 40.

Did you race dinghies in your younger years?
No, I went straight to big boats and have been doing that for 20 years. I’ve got 4 Bermuda races, 1 Trans Atlantic and numerous offshore passages under my belt. I continue to jump at the opportunity to race when it doesn’t interfere with my day job.

What got you interested in insurance?
I started out as a yacht rigger and mechanic and spent

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I asked him what happened. He told me the next day he went out with some friends in their boat to see if he could pull her off the rocks. She was laying on her side, halyards flying in the wind. As they were assessing the situation, they heard a train whistle, (the train tracks go along the shore in Stonington) and as the train passed, it caught the halyard and ripped the mast right out of the boat. I reluctantly asked “Is that the worst of it?”

The challenge of this claim was that it was an older boat, easily a total loss, but our client wanted to keep it. Gowrie, Barden & Brett, the insurance company, the surveyor, the marina doing the repairs and the insured, worked together to keep the costs down and do the proper repairs so he could keep his boat. Happily, our insured had many more years of fine sailing on his boat.

The moral of the story is that having an agent who specializes in marine insurance, and is experienced in boating themselves, can make a difference in how your claim is handled.

**Q&A**

**Q:** How can I tell if there is a gap between my boat liability limits and my personal umbrella policy?

— Steve Andrews

**A. Know your liability limits.** Call your home, auto, & umbrella agent and verify the following:

1. Confirm the umbrella will cover over the boat. Some do not.
2. At the same time, confirm what the underlying limit is that you are required to carry on the boat policy. Most umbrellas require $300,000 or $500,000. Then check it against your boat policy. Be sure there is not a gap in coverage! If you discover your umbrella does not cover over the boat, you might want to consider increasing the liability limit on your boat policy. The difference between $300,000 and $500,000 is usually less than $50.00. That is a small price to pay for a lot more protection!

Have an insurance question?

Ask Gowrie. – insurance@gowrie.com

**Strategies for boat owners to help reduce insurance costs.**

**By Dennis Schmelzer, Home & Auto**

One way to reduce your home and auto premium is to take advantage of a company’s multi-policy discount. At Gowrie, Barden & Brett I help our clients save money by combining their home, auto and boat policies. This method has proven to be so effective that in 2004 our yacht clients saved an average of $417 on their home and auto insurance when insuring the “package” with one insurance company.
For over thirty years the specialists at Gowrie Barden & Brett have provided the best in service and protection for clients throughout the US. GBB offers programs for Businesses, Home, Auto, Marinas and Yacht Clubs, Boats and Yachts, Life, Health, and Employee Benefits. Our OneDesign, Big Boat and Burgee Programs are endorsed by the US SAILING Association for their members.

**About Gowrie, Barden & Brett**

For more details contact:
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Boston Yacht Sales
781-331-2400

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Hurricane Season is upon us. Please review your policy for any North/South restriction dates and/or applicable wind storm deductible. Don’t get caught outside your navigation limits without coverage!

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Whether you have a question about your protection or need to report a claim, our staff of professionals is ready to assist with all your insurance needs.

On January 15th GBB moved into new headquarters:

Our 70+ employees work together to provide tailored insurance solutions.

Next time you are in the shoreline, stop in!

36 Westbrook Place, Westbrook CT 06498

**Gowrie Yacht/Boat Department**

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