

# Boating

## In Bahamian Waters

By Donald Walsh

### The Abaco's – A Special Sailing Area

*This article begins the new boating department in GOOMBAY Magazine. In this new section I will focus on the new developments in boating, particularly the bareboat industry in the Abaco's, resulting from the recent changes in duty on yachts. In future articles I will attempt to keep the reader informed about boating related events in The Bahamas, a unique cruising area of the world.*

—Donald Walsh

There are some faithful guidelines kept in mind by sailors looking for a special sailing area. Among them are ease of passage from one island to the other, safe harbour once there, and the facilities to accommodate their needs and excite their fantasies. The waters of The Bahamas incorporate many such areas, however the Abaco's in the Northern Bahamas have been uniquely created by a power greater than man, to meet this criteria. They will beguile any yachtsman.



Donald Walsh

*Don Walsh, GOOMBAY's new Boating Editor, lives in Plantation, Florida. He has written on boating for chartering magazines, published a Yachting Services Newsletter and is a private consultant for the marine and charter industry worldwide.*

*Donald Walsh and Amy Rosens aboard Seawolf 30 enroute to Man-O-War Cay.*



*Robert Sweeting and guests aboard CS40 off the coast of Marsh Harbour.*

### Abaco's Are A Special Combination

It takes a very special combination of ingredients to define a great charter cruising area and the Abaco's meet that definition. While geography and weather are very important in creating this uniqueness, the serendipitous elements in the success of the Abaco's are the graciousness and cordiality of the people.

The Abaco's, long known as a paradise for sailors, have been blessed with a magnificent inland sea blanketed by balmy breezes and calm water that are now being rediscovered. Charming harbour, protected anchorages, superb snorkeling, and excellent fishing are trademarks of this cruising ground that are attracting new charter companies now that formidable duties on yachts have been reduced to an affordable level.

### New Legislation Attracts Charter Companies To Bahamas

The recent enactment of legislation modifying the duties on charter yachts has led to a surge in interest in the Abaco's by a number of sailing organizations. These new regulations remove the duty from charter yachts and replace them with a moderate annual fee based on the size of the yacht. This innovative structure is competitive with other Caribbean charter destinations and now makes it possible for these firms to move


forward with plans to open new facilities in The Bahamas.

### The Companies Make Expansion Move To Bahamas

This movement is highlighted by the recent announcement of The Moorings, a large world wide charter organization, of their intent to be operational from Boat Harbour on Great Abaco by November 1st, 1992 and the entry of Jet Sea, another large charter company, who have already commenced charter operations for the Conch Inn in Marsh Harbour.

The addition of The Moorings and Jet Sea to the existing bareboat charter fleets, Sunsail (formerly Bahamas Yachting Services) in Marsh Harbour and Abaco Bahamas Charters in Hopetown, will significantly increase tourist traffic to this area, particularly from the sailing community. Eleuthera and Exuma are also being considered as additional areas for the establishment of new charter operations.

The Moorings, headquartered in Clearwater, Florida, have 24 other bases world wide. The Abaco base is the 25th. The Moorings will be accepting reservations for their fleet beginning on June 1st and will be operational with the first charter leaving Boat Harbour on November 1st, 1992.

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## Agreements Concluded For Marina Bases

An agreement has been concluded with Boat Harbour for space in the N.E. corner of the basin and includes an addition to the existing building for their shore based charter facilities. The Moorings' plans call for an initial fleet of 10 boats with two of them being catamarans that are ideally suited to the shallow water cruising of the Sea of Abaco.

Jet Sea, with a major base in Guadalupe, has leased the hotel and dock facilities of the Conch Inn in Marsh Harbour for their charter operation. As of the end of April, 15 boats are reported to have arrived on site and are available for charter. The Conch Inn underwent a facelift with the paving of walks, painting of the hotel, remodeling of a part of the restaurant, the addition of 25 slips and a charter office facility built dockside.

## New Charter Season To See Increases

The 1993 charter season should see the addition of about 30 boats to the Abaco cruising area with the arrival of the Moorings and Jet Sea. This will bring existing availabilities to about 60 bareboats. In the early 1980's the bareboat charter fleets in the Abaco's approached 100 yachts before declining under the pressure of high tariffs and other factors. The introduction of the new duty and fee schedules for yachts marks the beginning of the rebirth of the charter industry in this magnificent cruising area and throughout The Bahamas.

## More Information?

For further information on any of these charter companies you may call the toll free numbers that they provide for their U.S. booking offices or get in touch with the nearest Bahamas Tourist Office where more information on the Abaco's and other Bahamian cruising areas is available.

THE MOORINGS: 1-800-535-7289

JET SEA: 1-800-262-5382

SUNSAIL: 1-800-327-2276

ABACO BAHAMAS CHARTERS:  
1-800-626-5690

Readers with recent news, changes in facilities or new developments in the boating scene in The Bahamas are encouraged to send their updates to me in Ft. Lauderdale:

Donald Walsh—Boating Editor  
4831 N.W. 5th St.  
Plantation, FL 33317



CS40 undersail in Sea of Abaco enroute to Man-O-War Cay.

## Ships Log

**\*\* The Yacht Club** of New Mexico received official permission to use the Bahamian Government Crest on its Bahamas Captains Assoc. Certificates.

**\*\* Pleasure Yachts** can now stay up to a year, duty free, in the waters of The Bahamas. This can be extended for a 2nd year, and even a 3rd, for \$500 per year, before becoming liable for the duty under the new lower tariffs.

**\*\* The Proposed Reduction** in duty on marine parts to five percent (5%) was omitted from the recent changes in regulations for charter yachts. This technical error is now being remedied, according to government officials, and should become law by September, 1992.

**\*\* The Moorings** announced their intention to open a charter base in Boat Harbour in the Abaco's. This facility will be operational by November 1st of this year.

**\*\* Jet Sea** is in the process of building up their charter fleet from their new base at the Conch Inn in Marsh Harbour Abaco.

**\*\* A New Chart** covering Little Harbour in the South to a point somewhere North of Green Turtle Cay is in the works by Steve Dodge, the publisher of the Cruising Guide to Abaco. This chart will supplement his guide and meet the needs of charter companies, and others, in

the area who need a current version of this scale of chart.

**\*\* The 9th Annual Treasure Cay Billfish Tournament Results:** The "High Cotton," a 41 Hatteras, captained by owner Robert Reid from Savannah, Ga., came from behind to win the Ninth Annual Treasure Cay Billfish Tournament in Abaco Bahamas. John McLane and his boat, the "Mama Jo," finished 2nd, repeating their performance from last year. Hank Dow, from Dallas, Tx, on the "Night Hawk," took 3rd place. Joe Sadler from Savannah, Ga., fishing off the High Cotton, finished as the Top Angler with three blue marlin releases. Joyce McLane on the Mama Jo won the Top Lady Angler award. The Treasure Cay Billfish event is a tag & release tournament with a 300 pound minimum for blue marlin.

**\*\* John Spencer Eleuthera Bahamas Charters** reports strong summer activity from their yacht charter facility in Hatchet Bay.

**\*\* The Yacht Club of New Mexico** is filling up berths for their planned 3rd annual Yacht Club cruise of the Abaco's in October. The Lt. Governor of New Mexico, Mr. Casey Luna and his wife will be cruising with Commodore Reabuck from October 11th to 18th and plans are afoot for a special event, involving the Lt. Governor and other Bahamian dignitaries on the 17th. ☐