

## Chapter 15 : STANCHION CHANGE

My 323 is bow-in, in a 30-foot slip. The slip is maybe a foot wider than the boat. Bumping the outer pilings somewhere upon re-entry is almost a given. Unfortunately, the four lifeline stanchions and stanchion gates get the bumping. The stanchions are straight, but the deck is curved, and that means the top of the stanchions- and the lifelines- are outside the toe rail. So if you lean on the lifeline, you are already "off" the boat. I do a lot of raft-ups with my sailing club, and the stanchions were a concern. My stanchion on the starboard beam got bent outwards, and I think it was when beam-to at the pump-out dock, but I'm not sure. I noticed it when in the slip one day. I got a new stanchion from Beneteau. I replaced the bent one then got to thinking...

I moved the bent one to the port side, having removed that one. I didn't know then what I know now- that though the stanchion has a hole on one side the base for a set-screw, the hole in the "stub" that the stanchion slides onto is drilled and tapped all the way through. I could have just rotated the bent one and left it on the starboard. It was bent too much to leave in service anyway. I like the idea of the stanchion bending in and being inside the toe rail. I took all four stanchions off and took them to Kato Marine. I left two with them, to move the top over two inches. The bend had to be close to the base so the whole stanchion would be inside the toe rail. I held on to the other two, to see if the 2 inches was enough or too much bend. As it turned out, 2 inches was enough- and too much! I had the 3<sup>rd</sup> bent 1.75 inches, the other 2.5 inches. It seems the deck is not equally aligned. The starboard bow is 2, the beam 2.5, the port bow 1.75, the beam 2.0.

I believe on the original boat one of the lower lifelines was inside one of the shrouds, the other three outside. Now, all four are between the upper and lower shrouds, which I see would give some support if someone goes heavily against a lifeline.

Soon after I bought the boat I made new lifelines from the pulpit to the stanchion gates. I needed bow openings so I could get on/off from the bow finger pier. I used bare 3/16 wire and bought the big tool to hand-crimp the fittings. I have not yet tightened up the lifelines since bending the stanchions, but I can foresee having to redo at least one of the adjustable lifeline end fittings.

This bending cost \$150 for the 4. I have the original lifelines if anyone is interested. 2-11-2009 REP