



Chesapeake Tartan 30 Association

REPOWERING

Dave Alexander, T-30 #201, *Aja*, August 1997

Aja came my way in the winter of 1993. The child of a broken family, (i.e. two partners that couldn't agree on anything), she languished in a yard in Mattapoisett, MA for two or three years until they agreed to sell her (lucky for me!). They had been trying for some time, and by the time I came along the price had dropped considerably. She wasn't in bad shape — just not kept up the way a T-30 should be. She did come with a great sail inventory — four jibs, two spinnakers, and a main — along with everything else you need. I guess fate brought us together, because I was able to talk them into selling her to me for what I could afford (not much).

Part of the reason was the engine, a ~20 year old Atomic 4, which hadn't been turned over during most of the time she'd been out of the water. The partner I dealt with didn't do the engine stuff (the other guy did) and was pretty vague about how it had been maintained. From looking at the rest of the boat, my guess was that they had done what was necessary to keep it going but didn't pamper it. There were a couple of new-looking bolts holding the cover down, (did the others rust through or strip?) and the valve cover had rust in all the right spots — I'd been warned to look for this. Could I have made her run? Probably, but after having been trapped in Woods Hole after an engine conked out and having to sail against a 5-7 knot current, I decided repowering was in my future.

What to choose? I ruled out rebuilding and decided on a diesel. I went to a couple of boat shows that winter, and made lots of calls. What I discovered was that there were lots of other boat owners with ~20 year old Atomic 4s that were also shopping, but not too many that had actually repowered. My first stop was Universal/Westerbeke. They claimed to have two drop-in replacements for the Atomic 4, but I got a lot of conflicting info from different people. The two suggested replacements were the Westerbeke 20B, \$4,400 and the Universal M320, \$4,800, each plus \$1,200 in misc. parts and about \$2,400 in labor. Both required modification to the beds and engine mounts, *and* the engine box. Not what I would call a drop-in. Plus, a number of independent mechanics cited occasional difficulty in getting parts for both, as both engines have other manufacturers' parts on them.

A number of yards recommended looking at Yanmar, and as luck would have it at a boat show here in Boston, Old Port Marine of Newport, RI was staffing the Yanmar booth. It turns out they had done a number of Tartans, including two T-30s and a T-37. They had photos of the job they did on one T-30 which looked great — no changes to the engine box at all for the 2GM20 they installed. Which engine to choose? While the 2GM20 would have been fine, I opted for the 3GM30F for a couple of reasons. I planned to be sailing through Buzzards Bay (home of the 3-5 ft. square wave) and Woods' Hole frequently, and wanted the extra horsepower, plus the three-cylinder was supposedly smoother and quieter. I also opted for the fresh water cooled version, which places a heat exchanger on top of the engine. The down side of this is that the extra height requires adding on to the bottom of the engine box, so the settee is no longer level, but the box is only raised about three inches. They cut out the old beds, laid in new ones, (a bit lower) capped the old exhaust port under the head (the position of the exhaust manifold makes it impossible to use the old muffler set up) and ran the exhaust straight under the port quarterberth. The exhaust port was mounted through the lower port side of the transom. Another plus is that they recommended and fit a three bladed prop (13" x 15" pitch, I think), so *Aja* is great in both forward and reverse. The entire job cost about \$8,400 (\$5,544 for the engine, \$1,642 for labor, and \$1,216 misc. parts) and took a bit over a week. She'll do 6.5 knots at 3,000 rpm (red line is 3,600 rpm) all day, and uses under two-thirds of a gallon an hour at that speed. The engine is simple to maintain, and after three seasons, I have nothing but praise for both the engine and the installation.