## Harken Self-Tailing and Powered Winches <br> Why Ungrade?


colini / Azzura Marine Photo


## SELF-TAILING WINCHES

Self-tailing winches free your tailing hand and allow a single person to trim or raise the sails. Either manage light loads with one hand, or use both hands to deliver more power to a Speedgrip handle.

## POWERED WINCHES

The touch of a button allows you to sit back while a powered Harken winch does all the work. Upgrading to oowered winches lets you perform high-load jobs effortlessly and sail larger boats shorthanded. In marginal
conditions a single electric winch can make the difference between sailing and motoring.

## ELECTRIC WINCH

 CONVERSION Harken winches made after 1999 can be converted to electric power (size 44 and up).

INNOVATIVE SAILING SOLUTIONS


Still winning at 90 years young

Ernie Rideout went to work the other day with his Santana 22, and came back with another Nationals sailing trophy. That's not unusual for Rideout-after all, he won another Nationals competition just two years ago. What's unusual is that Rideout is 90 years old.

Rideout still occasionally sails his boat from its home in the Santa Cruz, California, yacht harbor up to his old haunts in the San Francisco Bay. He doesn't have trouble finding his way: he began sailing there before there was a Golden Gate Bridge or a Treasure Island. He discovered that competitive sailing was "it," when at an early age he was watching the San Francisco Perpetual Trophy Race.
"It was a foggy day," Rideout said. "Art Rousseau was racing his 6-Meter Maybe against the Southern Californian 6-Meter Caprice. They split short tacks close to shore up the city front to avoid the flood current. It was so exciting to watch Rousseau's tactics, I was swept up in the excitement and I knew I wanted to do what he was doing."

Rideout was born in Willow Glen, near San Jose, California, in 1917. He comes from a family of boat enthusiasts and sailors, including among his mentors his father, Ransom Rideout, and noted sailor Lino Nicoli, both ear-ly-day members of the Santa Cruz Yacht Club. Ernie's grandfather, E.V. Rideout, operated steamboats on the San Francisco Bay and its tributaries. His grandfather
was noted for taking one of his steamboats up the Yukon River to Dawson during the Gold Rush.

Rideout was an elementary school teacher and principal, sailing competitively when he wasn't teaching. In those days, he raced a number of one-design classic boats, the first of which was a 19-foot Acorn named the Tunami (for those who delight in back-ward-spelling, check the name).
"My dad taught me that if there are two boats on the water, one of them is racing," Rideout said. "Competitive sailing compels you to make the boat perform at its best. You pay close attention to sail trim. Never sail sloppy."

Rideout lives with his wife Nancy across the street from the Santa Cruz Y.C. He started as a junior member of the club in 1930 when it was located on the Santa Cruz Municipal Wharf. He has since served as commodore and historian. After retiring from education he taught sailing for 25 years at Jack O'Neill's (the inventor of the modern wetsuit) school in Santa Cruz, introducing more than 3,000 students to the experience. When the school closed, he returned to racing.

Rideout loves to spend time at the tiller. "The more time at the helm, the better. You develop a touch. Great sailing ability might be born in a person, but most of the time, you work to perfect it. I know not to steer white-knuckled," he said. "Let the boat take you-if you have a light touch on the tiller, and sensitivity to the boat, it will take care of you."

Despite his numerous trophies and endless hours on the water, Rideout still believes in the value of practice. He modestly attributes his success to his "old guys" crew of Ray Pingree and Phil Worthen.

He and his crew spend time before races maneuvering around marks and anticipating how to deal with the possible situations that might arise during a race. Pingree and Worthen also worked at O'Neill's sailing school.
"The best thing is having a brilliant, dedicated crew, a sturdy foredeck crew and a tactician who thinks the same way you do," he said. "We've sailed together five years, and the crew has confidence in me, and that's big. Bigger yet is that we have lots of fun!"
probably work their way back down again, he said.
"If you don't have a lot of money, find a tried-and-true seaworthy boat. Fiberglass boats from the 1960s were built very strong. Fiberglass was new, and they were still working out how much to use, and they used a lot. These boats are now classics, but still inexpensive."

Rideout named his Santana Maybe, saying that the name was that of Art Rousseau's racing boat, which first inspired him.
"My boat is a good, strong little boat for cruising or racing. These Santana 22s are so inexpensive you can't believe it, and the one-design trophies you can win are the same as if you required a large crew."


Rideout says that he comes away from every race thinking about what he's learned, and how he might do things differently next time. But he's not about to outfit his boat with new electronics. "I don't use a GPS or depthsounder. I trust my compass and my dead-reckoning ability-it's got me this far," he said. He said one of the most magical things he's ever seen occurred in 1931 when Lester Stone's famous 60-foot ketch Marilyn emerged from the dense fog off the Santa Cruz wharf on its way south from San Francisco. The boat had no motor and its instrumentation consisted of a compass and lead line. "He could dock that boat under sail, and never crush an egg," Rideout said.

Rideout's Santana Hull No. 19 was made in 1964. The design, one of the smaller keel boats and one of the least expensive racing boats, is one Rideout recommends that young sailors start in and work their way up. They'll

Rideout's calendar will soon move to birthday 91 . He has a simple explanation for his longevity. "It's just the luck of the draw. My mom and dad had good health and I do too, and my mind has stayed clear. I just happen to be lucky," he said.

When asked how he knows so much about boating history, Rideout says that he just makes it up. However, during the course of the interview, he pulled facts, figures and dates out of his memory with easy precision. But if he's challenged, he's ready with history at his fingertips: He may be the only person to own a complete set of Pacific Interclub Yacht Association Yearbooks from 1922 to date.

On a recent vacation to Alaska, Rideout saw a T-shirt displayed in a shop window. He couldn't resist buying it because in bold, black letters it read "If Things Get Better With Age, I'm Approaching Magnificent."
--Tom Bentley

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