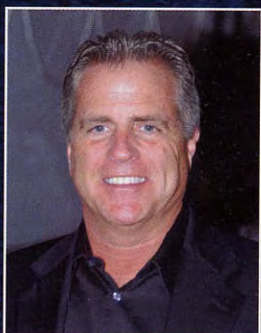


# THE UPS AND DOWNS OF CHARTERING

## A BROKER'S VIEW

BY STEVE ELARIO



**T**HE INTRODUCTION OF 'ZERO SPEED', ALSO known as 'at anchor' stabilisers, to the yachting industry has arguably been one of the most important advances to influence charter purchase during the past two decades. It is now possible to sit offshore in the most exotic and desirable locations in the world whilst being steadied by this new generation of fin.

Let me begin by sharing with you the added bonus of stabilisers to the charter market. The Charter industry, as we all know, has grown to become a large and thriving business over the past fifteen years. Each year clients look for the latest improvements and amenities in the yachts featured in their broker's catalogue. It can be from the latest electronics, internet capabilities, water toys and general overall layout of the yachts, but comfort is

## STABILISERS

probably the most important priority and requested feature.

When it comes to the clients' comforts at sea, being stable at anchor leads the way. As brokers, we want to look out for our clients' well being and relaxation throughout their stay on the yacht. There may be some guests of the charter party that are susceptible to sea-sickness, and for them, this is the route to giving them an enjoyable time. We all know that even in the most beautiful of anchorages the seas can sometimes become uncomfortable or unpredictable. Very often there are a lack of marina berths available, and the yacht will have to anchor outside of the port, therefore being exposed to the open seas. With at anchor stabilisation charter clients are assured of the highest standard of comfort that offers a smooth environment for dining, entertaining, and relaxing during their on-water experience. There are no unwelcome surprises or changes in weather when chartering a yacht that delivers a predictable forecast provided by this revolutionary form of stabiliser.

As far as adding value to the charter, without a doubt it does, but it may also add to the pricing of the charter yacht in the marketplace. I still, and will continue to prefer chartering yachts to my clients that are equipped with an 'at anchor' stabilising system that I know will definitely add a most welcome dimension to their vacation.

There are several types of 'zero speed' stabilisation systems from manufacturers such as Quantum, Naiad,

Arcturus, some even using spinning gyroscopes such as the system from Mitsubishi. The most popular, and the most tried and tested though, are the active fin systems. The fin system basically works through using a combination of two fins, one on each side of the hull (sometimes four on larger yachts). These fins counter the roll of the yacht when at anchor, similar to using a paddle to steady a canoe. Pressure detectors sense the approaching wave and through the use



of sophisticated software and a hydraulic system to provide the power, the fins move in an up and down motion to counter the wave.

The other great advantage with these 'fin' type stabilisers is that they serve a dual purpose since they also work when the yacht is moving or underway even at speeds of 20 knots or more. The folks at Quantum Hydraulics of Florida came out with a great system in 2006 called the 'XT fin' which increases its footprint (and therefore its efficiency) by using an ingenious fin expander that retracts when underway. This fin system is stated as taking out as much as 90% of the roll when at anchor under most conditions.

All of the Captains and crews I have spoken to really like the 'zero speed' system. They boast with a smile when they tell me their experiences of being anchored in a cove, and they are the ones sitting still while others are rolling a bit! It makes for a win-win situation for all (including the Owner), when charter clients are able to enjoy their vacations and Captains and their crew are able to perform their duties without interruption. From my perspective happy clients make for repeat and referral clients, and stable work conditions make for a healthy and loyal crew.

Another important benefit of using one of the above systems at anchor is when deploying a tender, jet ski, or any type of water toy. The yacht becomes a much more stable platform, allowing for an easier launch. This is also of great benefit to the guests, whether they are on a swim platform and entering and exiting the water or power floating in their on board water feature. The superyacht experience with this equipment onboard is almost comparable to living and vacationing on dry land as you effortlessly sit at anchor and plan for smooth sailing throughout the duration of your stay on board.

When approached by a client looking to build a yacht, I always recommend putting this system onboard. They are becoming more common now as most new projects are having



these stabilisers featured in the initial build specifications. If a client buys an existing yacht we often have to explore the feasibility and cost of retro fitting the system to that vessel, proving just how relevant these stabilisers have become to today's superyacht industry.

So whether working or playing aboard, wining or dining, relaxing in the spa, or participating in water sports, you and your guests will be safe and secure in the knowledge that your charter yacht experience will be greeted with calm seas made possible by 'zero speed' stabilisers...where 'moor is more'. >||

*Steven Elario was born in the coastal town of Newburyport, Massachusetts. In 1979, at the age of 19, he moved to Fort Lauderdale, Florida and began his yachting career as a deckhand onboard a 168 ft yacht based in the Bahamas. His extensive cruising aboard some of the world's most fabulous yachts made him a 'natural selection' to become Charter Director with the International Yacht Collection in Fort Lauderdale. Steve's knowledge of boats, crew and cruising are put into play daily, as he assists his clients in planning the perfect yachting holiday.*

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