

Topside Restoration using the Farécla/SOA Procedures

By Keith Thatcher, SOA Technical Web Sec (Shrimper 144, *Winkle*)

The Autumn 2012 issue of *The Shrimper* contained details of changes to the Farécla topside restoration and protection process aimed at maintaining topside shine over a full season. These changes were evaluated during the 2012 season on four test boats, each having a slightly different combination of procedure, compounds and polishes. A further two boats were owner-prepared to confirm that the improved processes were applicable to DIY use. Each boat was inspected during the season by the SOA/Farécla team of David Taylor, (then Farécla Marine Business Manager), Richard Pottinger and Keith Thatcher. The trials confirmed that the new processes did offer significantly greater longevity of topside shine and, with no further development work planned for the foreseeable future, the SOA/Farécla Team has decided to make the latest process information available to Shrimper owners. The report published in Autumn 2012, which contains details of which processes and materials were applied to which boat, can be found elsewhere in this section.

The 2012 trials showed that the current Farécla system can produce very good results, but only if appropriate materials are used and applied correctly. The key to a good colour restoration and a lasting shine is the removal of all damaged gel coat surface and the latest processes, which include more aggressive compounds to provide a deeper surface cut back, make this easier to achieve. As UV radiation is the main culprit, the worst blooming will always be on the sides most exposed to the sun. Flatter, more vertical surfaces near the bow are particularly prone to discolouration, especially if your boat sits in a marina berth always facing the same way. Reflected UV affects the underside of the blank lands and it is special care must be taken to work the compound well into these areas to ensure they have been adequately cleaned.

Once the damage has been removed it is important to provide good UV protection to prevent it recurring. Current thinking is to apply two Farécla wax polishes. First is a coat of Profile UV Wax, as this provides the better barrier, followed by a coat of Profile Polymer Wax, which has slightly better adhesion and is not so easily washed off. For sailing areas where sun is stronger or has more sunny days, consider applying two coats of UV Wax before the Polymer Wax to provide enhanced protection.

Profile UV Wax may be used as an indicator that all gel coat oxidation has been removed. On buffing off the first coat of wax any oxidation still present will be visible as a slightly dull patch below the shine. These areas must be re-treated from the beginning, (i.e. using the full range of compounds appropriate to the procedure, in order, starting with the most aggressive) and the check repeated until all signs of oxidation have been removed.

It is recognised that not all boats require the same depth of cut, so the latest Farécla system contains three hull cleaning procedures, each aimed at a different level of topside deterioration. **Deep Cut** is for a badly bloomed or oxidised surface – essentially a matt hull. A hull with **Moderate Blooming** would be patchy, say 50% dull but with some shine still remaining. The **Light Weathering** process is for owners whose boat still has most of its shine intact and who want to keep it that way – essentially a preventative process. Illustrations of each deterioration level are shown below so that owners may identify into which category their boat falls and use the appropriate procedure and materials. If in doubt, always go for the next more aggressive process as experience has shown that removing too little of the oxidised surface inevitably results in the bloom returning, often in a matter of weeks. Once a **Deep Cut** has restored the topsides, it should be possible to maintain the shine using the **Moderate Blooming** or **Light Weathering** procedure as appropriate.

Although Farécla waxes are some of the best available, even these will break down in time, especially if the season is hot or wet. It is therefore recommended that the topsides are given a mid-season wash and polish top-up. The top-up process may also be used to provide over-winter protection and minimise work at next season's fit-out when laying-up.



Hulls requiring Deep Cut



Hull with Moderate Blooming



Hull with Light Weathering

Each process has a dedicated materials and procedure sheet that may be found by following these links:

[Deep Cut Process Sheet](#)

[Moderate Bloom Process Sheet](#)

[Light Weathering Process Sheet](#)

[Mid/End Season Process Sheet](#)

Farécla products listed on each process sheet may be obtained from the SOA approve supplier, **East Coast Fibreglass Supplies**. The following link provides access to a dedicated SOA order page:

<http://www.ecfibreglasssupplies.co.uk/c-1067-shrimpers-owners-association.aspx>. Please note that prices shown do not include VAT and carriage.

All Farécla processes are intended for DIY (owner) application, but over the past three years it has become evident that not all owners wish to or have the confidence to do it themselves, particularly when faced with one of the more intensive cut backs. For those not wishing to process their own boat, Aquasheen, a Farécla associate company, offers a topside restoration service employing Shrimper trained technicians. The price list for each level of restoration can be found here ([Aquasheen Price List](#)) and may also be accessed via a link on the intro page of this section. The prices quoted are special to the SOA and the Association receives a small donation for each boat processed. Use the contact number shown to find out more.

The SOA wishes to thank Farécla for their continued support and enthusiasm in helping to resolve an obviously very complex problem. Richard Pottinger (*Black Swan*, 434) and Keith Thatcher, Technical Web Sec (*Winkle*, 144) will continue to provide technical support where needed. Richard may be contacted at richard@repakp.co.uk or Tel: 01202 880121 and Keith at the email address shown on the SOA website.