

Shiny Bright – Again; Second Farecla Topside Restoration Workshop

By Keith Thatcher (SOA Technical Web Sec) (First published in The Shrimper, Spring 2011)

Readers might recall mention in the Spring 2010 issue of a topside polishing workshop held in February 2010 at the Royal Motor Yacht Club, Poole in conjunction with Farécla Ltd, the leading UK manufacturer of surface finishing materials. Topside bloom and discolouration is the bane of many an owner's life and Farécla's experts explained why it occurs and how the gel coat surface can easily be restored using their *Profile* range of products. Despite sub-zero temperatures in the demonstration shed, owners were obviously impressed by the results and uptake of the *Shrimper Hull Polishing Kit* was brisk. With so many gleaming Shrimpers hitting the water for the 2010 season, Farécla was keen to ensure they stayed that way, so decided to monitor the demonstration boats and particularly *Black Swan* (434)), throughout the season.

The first inspection of *Black Swan* in mid May revealed a few areas of discolouration on the topsides, attributed to water and sunlight attacking the wax polish. So, early in June, *Black Swan* was hauled out, the old polish cleaned off and four new wax formulations applied to different areas of her topsides. These were inspected regularly for the remainder of the season and by lift-out time (late October) everyone was delighted to see all four test areas still performing well with little, if any, deterioration.

The February 2010 workshop had concentrated on surface and colour restoration, these being the main areas of concern. With the 2010 season drawing to a close, owners now needed information on how to maintain their shiny topsides, so Farécla agreed to hold a second workshop, mainly concentrating on over-winter procedures but also including an update on the new wax formulation trials on *Black Swan*. This second workshop, again a mix of theory and practical demonstration, was held at the Royal Motor Yacht Club, Poole, on November 6, 2010 and attracted crews from over 40 Shrimpers, some from as far away as West Wales.

As before, Farécla's team of experts explained how all polyester gel coats are susceptible to discolouration and bloom when exposed to sea water and ultraviolet light. Luckily, this deterioration only occurs in the outer 0.001 mm of the surface, so can be cleaned off many times without significant damage to the hull. Once cleaned, the gel coat must be protected to prevent re-occurrence using specialist marine waxes containing UV blockers.

Although Farécla remains confident that *Profile UV Wax* still provides the best general protection, experience with *Black Swan* shows that it is not ideal for Shrimper topsides, which appear to react more rapidly to UV than those of other craft. For many owners this ultra sensitivity might not come as a great revelation, but does perhaps explain why our little craft lose their showroom shine so quickly. So far the new wax formulations appear to be working well, but with the aim of providing protection for a full season, trials will be continuing into 2011. For this Farécla is to be applauded - how many other manufacturers with a world-wide supplier network and turnover exceeding £30m would take time to resolve a topside discolouration problem in a fleet of small sailing cruisers. But, as David Taylor, Farécla Marine Division Business Manager, said, "Shrimpers are Special".

Down in RMYC's Boat Shed three Shrimpers were on display, each showing a different aspect of the topside problem. *Black Swan* (434); her black hull still resplendent despite only recently having been taken off the water and testament to the effectiveness of the new polishes. *Porthilly Dreamer*; (851); Now nine years old and, at first glance still looking good, but on closer inspection revealing areas of bloom on her mid blue hull. Perhaps proof that the discolouration problem is less obvious on lighter coloured boats. *Solstice* (538); with topsides looking more like flat denim than their original Oxford Blue and requiring the full Farécla treatment. By the end of the day all were shiny and clean, leaving onlookers again impressed by the ease with which years of deterioration could be removed.



Before Refurbishment



Top Strake Cleaned & Polished

Farécla has yet to release any of the new waxes onto the market, but has, since November 2010, made the best performing formulation, provisionally named *Shrimper Polymer Wax*, available to SOA members as part of their hull refurbishment kits. The *Shrimper Hull Polishing Kit* is designed for cleaning and restoring badly faded, matt and discoloured gel coats, the process taking between one and two half days depending on how bad the topsides are. The new *Over-Winter Kit* is intended for maintenance of already restored topsides or to remove light areas of discolouration, which should take about half a day.

The full contents and prices of each kit are shown below. Prices correct as of February 2011 and include VAT but do not include postage and packing.

Shrimper Polymer Wax is currently only available to new users as part of the maintenance kits, but to ensure that existing users are not left out, Farécla has agreed that anyone who purchased kits containing *Profile UV Wax* will be able to buy the new polish separately. Richard Pottinger (*Black Swan* (434)) has agreed to be the SOA distributor for Farécla products and all enquiries for the polish and new kits should be addressed to him as indicated below.

Shrimper Refurbishment Kits & Contents:

Shrimper Hull Polishing Kit			Shrimper Over-Wintering Kit	
Item		Quantity	Item	Quantity
Profile 200 Coarse Cut Compound		1 ltr	Profile 300 Rapid Cut Compound	1 ltr
Profile 300 Rapid Cut Compound		1 ltr	Shrimper Polymer Wax	1 ltr
Shrimper Polymer Wax		1 ltr	Prep Wipes Surface Cleaning Cloth	40
Quick Change 8" wool compound pad		1	Advanced G Mop Finishing Cloth	3
Quick Change 14mm adaptor		1	Instruction Sheet	1
Spurring Brush		1		
Advanced G Mop Finishing Cloth		3		
Prep Wipes Surface Cleaning Cloth		40		
Farécla Heavy Duty Industrial Polishing Machine		1		
Instruction Sheet		1		
SOA Price	Inc polishing machine	£395.00 + P&P	SOA Price	£ 80.00 + P&P
	Ex polishing machine	£179.00 + P&P		

All SOA enquiries for Farécla products and kits should be directed to Richard Pottinger (*Black Swan* (434)): Tel: 01202 880121; Email: richard@repakp.co.uk