

Using the radar, we navigated between two squalls. Without a doubt our Furuno radar helped us win that race.

Dear Furuno:

At 2300 hours our course was just north of rhumbline and lightning was filling most of the western sky. Knowing the forecast, we decided that rain and lightning was the precursor to the wind direction shift expected behind the front. Our Furuno radar was painting a picture that clearly showed a fast path through this weather event.

From the deck, the storm seemed to be a larger squall covering the fleets course to the west. On longer-range radar we could clearly see there were two distinct rain squalls in this area of lightning. Using the radar's VRM and EBL, we tracked the closer of the two storms. If we were pulled North by .5 nautical miles we were going to get wet in the Eastern Storm.

As we sailed to the SW side of the Eastern squall the wind switched to come from the direction of the squall, not unusual, but this caused us to break away and sail SW — away from the forecasted "new wind". The radar showed us a clear path between the two squalls and there was just space enough to squeeze through by tacking north. The crew continued on a fast close reach SW for a few minutes then we tacked north. Less than a mile from us, right in center of the eastern storm, a 55 footer's lights were completely gone! I thought she was struck by lightning.

I told the crew to go fast and go North right in front of the second approaching squall. My crew wanted to sail closer to the second storm — and the finish line. I tracked the two storms on screen while we sailed fast and loose, reaching north. Using the rain line on the radar screen as a guide we navigated for about 30 minutes between these two slow moving squalls, the lighting got a lot closer, but we kept up our speed and steered clear of the rain front.

It worked! We rode the squall winds close to the approaching squall watching the bearing and distance on the radar screen; but never allowed ourselves to get sucked into the windless area right under the squall. In 30 minutes we were well North of the squall line and into the clearing NW breeze! We had the only dry boat in the fleet and we were the only boat that was not becalmed in the lee of "the storm." Without a doubt our Furuno Radar helped us win that race. The radar showed us a critical gap in the rain that proved there were two distinct and slow moving squalls obviously being effected and traveling along some imaginary line down our racecourse.

Furuno radar is our secret weapon...until now that is!

Doug Petter

No matter what kind of boat you have, navigating in bad weather can make you feel uncertain. Furuno offers the best electronics on the market to help you navigate and possibly avoid it. Furuno's weather products include true color radars that show the density of the storm, weatherfax that displays satellite image maps of weather fronts and NAVTEX which receive navigation warnings. Let Furuno help take the guess work out of safe navigation.

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