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Sports & Recreation

It's Your Boat Too: A Woman's Guide to Greater Enjoyment on the Water
Suzanne Giesemann
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“There’s no denying,” writes the author, “that there are jobs aboard a boat that are traditionally ‘pink jobs’ and those that are ‘blue jobs.’” This book sets that tradition aside and encourages, even demands, that women should be fully qualified and capable sailors aboard their own watercraft. Whether women sailors are simply along for the ride, active but neophyte participants, or deliberately marginalized by their male counterparts, Giesemann guides them through the steps necessary to adjust their outlook, increase their skill, and earn the respect of the sailing community.

The book is divided into twenty chapters and several appendices. Introductory topics include developing a decisive mental attitude, establishing a positive shipboard role, and mastering personal fear. The book then moves into chapters devoted to general overviews on specific technical topics, including navigation, piloting, communication, boat handling, anchoring, and mooring. All aspects of sailing and power boating are briefly discussed with a concise summary of the primary skills needed for success. The book concludes with advice on further methods to gain experience and confidence.

Giesemann is clearly an expert on the subject, having spent thirty years on the water, twenty of them in the Navy as a commanding officer. She is also a U.S. Coast Guard licensed captain, and a well-known sailing instructor who presents motivational seminars. Her experience and passion are clearly evident in the authoritative tone she uses throughout. For example, the section on knots does away with all but the five essential marine knots and presents each knot’s capabilities and shortcomings along with some personal anecdotes illustrating their proper use. The section on engine maintenance is equally informative and brief, covering only the vital basics and dispensing with technical jargon and advanced topics.

The book is written in a professional but somewhat disengaged style, and does not contain much material that is superfluous to the task at hand. Although this makes for a concise

and accessible read, it does give the volume some of the feel of a textbook. Her no-nonsense style allows Giesemann to present a large amount of detail in a quickly readable format. Although most of the information included is widely available in other beginning sailing books, it is here uniquely presented to women in a comprehensible and friendly manner that encourages women to tackle both the “pink” and the “blue” jobs while aboard any boat—particularly their own.