

“WESMAR’s dual-prop bow thruster works like a champ.”

Buccaneer Marine LTD, of Ventura, California provides utility and oil spill recovery vessels to industry and research organizations.

Buccaneer’s newest vessel, the 110' utility boat, Jolly Roger, is on contract to a geophysical company in Alaska’s Cook Inlet, laying cable on the ocean floor for bottom mapping—a complex, high-tech, high-pressure job.

The project requires the Jolly Roger to hold a very tight predetermined position in the notorious tides of Cook Inlet.

How tight? “Within a foot,” says Buccaneer President, Jim Johnston. “In non-stop currents of 4-6 knots.”

The job called for a bow thruster. And quick. “The manufacturers of the big diesel thrusters had lead times of six weeks, which were too slow,” says Johnston. “Another yard recommended WESMAR’s DPC-75, 20” hydraulic thruster. I called WESMAR and they were very cooperative. I was intrigued by the idea of a counter-rotating dual prop anyway, so I fired them off a check and I had the thruster in 5 days.



Left: Buccaneer Marine's Jim Johnston.

Right: The 110' Jolly Roger has a WESMAR DPC-75, 20" hydraulic bow thruster aboard.

“I was impressed with the WESMAR right away: A simple but well-thought-out piece of equipment. The gear train felt good; the castings and machine work looked good; and it has a standard tapered shaft so off-the-shelf props can be used. We did our own custom installation, with independent controls in both the wheelhouse and aft station.”

How’s it working?

“It works like a champ. As soon as we installed it I took it out in the harbor for a test drive. I spun the boat around with very little effort, and we’re talking 260-270 tons. I could have spun that whole boat 360 degrees in three minutes - this thruster has some beans to it! It’s in Alaska now, operating 24 hours a day.

My captain says the WESMAR is doing a fine job. He’s very, very happy with it. And serviceability is good, easy.

“The Jolly Roger is one of the best, if not the best, work boats in the country. Everything is first class, exacting and spotless. You can eat off the engine room floor. I’m not going to put anything substandard aboard. I’ve seen a lot of bilges over 56 years in the marine business, and I know quality. The WESMAR’s a quality unit. It’s nice and simple and realistically priced. In fact, I bought an identical WESMAR thruster to install in another one of our boats, the Cavalier.

“I’m real happy with it.”



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