

Lightning Strike:

Chance 323 1977 hull 10 which I have owned for 39 years was hit by lightning on the mooring. This was on Lake Michigan, Milwaukee WI in 1995. Another boater who was staying with their grandchildren on a boat nearby saw the strike that night.

While racing a 25 mile race the next day, not knowing she was hit, the boat seemed extremely slow. All the instruments did not work, as well as the radios; the AM/FM one, and the VHF one, the GPS and backup Loran.

After hauling the boat for a look, I found the copper bottom paint all flaked up. From the lightning strike the charge dissipated through all the seacock, prop shaft, rudder shaft, keel, and any place Pearson bonded their green #8 or #6 wire to, which came from all the shrouds on the spar. I took the bottom down to the gelcoat and the boatyard ground out all the grazing cracks and repaired any fiberglass. I then coated the bottom with Interlux Protector coatings 1&2 at that time. When all repairs were done, the bill for the insurance company was \$11,000!

The boat never took on water and no holes blew through the hull, or seacock. Thank God for the solid boat construction and the bonding to dissipate the charges. At this time I carry a lightning grounding wire normally used on roof tops, made of multiple aluminum wires, clamped to the backstay, held off the boat into the water. This is only used during lightning storms while cruising or racing, then removed.

I believe Pearson has done a great job bonding shrouds to place where charge dissipates out, without blowing holes in the fiberglass, sinking the boat! I was lucky I guess.

Bob K *Chance 323 Hull #10 Owner.*