

REMOTE VHF MICROPHONE

Rick Lucas: *Ping*

This was another simple project that required only one new hole in the boat. (I like to keep the number of boat holes to a minimum if I can... You understand, don't you?) The Standard RAM (remote) microphone is a great way to have access from the cockpit to the 25 watts of VHF power mounted below in the cabin. The waterproof mike also serves as a speaker and contains all the controls on the main unit. It also needs no external power source, drawing from the power in the base station. I wanted this unit for cruising, doing the Newport to Ensenada race, and for any time I'd singlehand sail the boat.



The RAM came with everything required for installation. The toughest part of the job was determining where I wanted to mount it. The optimal plan would have been to hang it off the helm somewhere, but since I had no real conduit to the helm and no NavPods installed it wasn't practical for Ping. The next best place was behind the helm on the starboard side of the cockpit, about halfway up from the sole. I'd mount the mike holder just above the connector.

Out came the drill once more and shortly I was feeding the wire through the hole and screwing the connection plate to the boat. To seal the gap, I put some white LifeSeal on the back of the mounting plate. I then ran the wire along the same route as the stern-mounted VHF antenna cable all the way to the nav cabinet where I connected it to the back of the VHF radio. Voila! I was on the air.

Since its installation, I use the RAM mike almost exclusively on the water. Not only is it a great convenience, I view it as a valuable safety device, worth every dollar it cost.

Things I'd do differently: Nothing.

Cost: US\$89.95 (on sale)

Time: ½ hour