

THE EVEN KEEL

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Ask The Experts

by Kevin Milne

Q: *We sail off the Florida coast. Our iron keel is showing rust. Other than sanding and wire brushing, is there another method to remove the rust and scale from the keel? Should we use acid to remove the rust and scale? If so, what kind of acid? Or should we have the keel sandblasted?*

A: All metal must be brought to a bright clean abraded surface and there are a number of methods that will achieve this.

One method is sand blasting, but may be inconvenient in a boat yard environment. The other is to shroud the area and utilize a 7" angle grinder with a 36 grit resin fibre disc. This method of grinding is preferred over simply polishing with a sander, as it must produce a good anchor pattern for paint to adhere.

Immediately after sandblasting or grinding, wipe the keel to remove residue with a solvent wash or thinner. A few good products are available by International Paints - 202 solvent wash or Interlux special thinner. Apply one coat of Interprotect 2000E to bare metal within one hour of surface preparation and allow at least a four hour dry time under normal conditions.

If any fairing is required VC Watertite also is recommended by International Paint. This is a two-part Epoxy Filler, with excellent adhesive and working properties. After allowing the filler to set-up, sand then apply 3 - 4 more coats of Interprotect 2000E.

Happy Cruising.

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