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## [Yacht “Baden” \(Blood Baron\) Northern Marine Launch Disaster](#)

On May 19, 2014, in [Uncategorized](#), by Aaron



May 19, 2014

It is with great sadness and heartbreak that I write today about the tragedy that occurred in Anacortes, Washington while launching the motoryacht, project (Blood Baron) Baden. My best wishes and thoughts go out to all those involved and injured in this accident.

This open letter/post is much more personal than any I have written before as I am still deeply emotionally involved with this project. In fact helping to create this vessel my DNA is firmly spliced into almost every aspect of this beautiful ship's build.

Let me explain.

Several years ago working with Josh Gulbranson of Fraser Yachts, he introduced me to Northern Marine.

We were commissioned with building an exceptional yacht for an exceptional man with the sole, ambitious purpose of a complete global circumnavigation.

As project lead my mandate was to build the best possible yacht, breaking new ground in every step, this

project would redefine innovation, ingenuity and design in the yachting industry. For several years I put my absolute best into this build, I challenged conventions, re-wrote rule books and infused my very heart and soul into this project.

Although at the time my approach was met with criticism and I was accused of “possibly over engineering” this vessel, my axiom from the get go was “if something will fail, it will”. I strove to make this yacht as efficient, reliable and as bullet-proof as possible especially in light of her purpose of circumnavigating the globe. My reasoning, which I believe to be sound, was to engineer this boat past any possible failures and ensure the complete comfort and safety of both passengers and crew alike. I will admit to a vested interest here because you see, I was the Captain who was going to lead this inspired cruise around the world. I needed to make absolutely certain that this vessel had no Achilles heel or any weak points whatsoever.

It was to my utmost dismay that this came crashing down on Dec 15th 2013 when I was removed from control of this project. I was asked by the owner to step aside and allow Josh Gulbranson and Clive McCartney to finish the almost completed project.

Before this transition occurred I had RODDAN ENGINEERING complete a stability study in 2013. This is attached to his post and I encourage you to read it.

In fact, on September 16, 2013 I informed the shipyard manager that I had some grave concerns about the dolly system used to move the ship. I conveyed that I firmly believed another system or method of transport would be needed to safely launch (Blood Baron) Baden.

To the accident that occurred yesterday while launching (Blood Baron) Baden, I can only speculate on why this seemingly senseless accident occurred. Were my recommendations noted or considered before launch? Why did this happen? Why didn't the new project management team heed my warning or the stability study and my concerns? What could have been done to prevent this terrible mess? In the pictures of this accident that I have seen, why are the wheels on the dolly compressed so much that the tires are flat? Did someone not notice this? Why didn't any one stop the launch if there were warning signs with the dolly?

Many questions linger, especially in light of the injuries yesterday's events caused.

I can say without ego or hubris that I feel if I had been still involved with this project in a leadership capacity, this launch accident would never have happened.

I hope everything works out for all parties involved and that the injured have a speedy recovery, may the US Coast Guard investigation provide some answers and closure for everyone affected by yesterday's events.

*Roddan Engineering Ltd.*

*July 19, 2013*

*Owners Rep – Northern Marine 8501 – “Blood Baron”*

*Attn: Aaron Pufal, Owners Representative*

*Re: Northern Marine 85 Weight Tracking and Stability Estimates-Letter Report*

*Roddan Engineering has been engaged to review build progress, track weight and prepare an Intact Stability analysis for the Northern Marine hull 8501. This hull is similar to a number of other successful Northern Marine vessels in the 85 foot range, but with a unique new look and extended pilothouse skylounge.*

*Since this new vessel has a somewhat different structural arrangement and superstructure to the other vessels of its size, it was necessary to monitor the weight and distribution through the build process. Part-way through construction the vessel was weighed and compared to a paper weight study. These results are shown in Appendices 1 and 2. The weighing confirmed that the paper weight study was within 10% of the actual weigh results.*

*The Full Load paper weight study is shown in Appendix 3. This shows that with the installation of about 17*

*L.T. of additional ballast, the full load weight of the vessel would be about 130 L.T. at a 6.5 foot draft. Light ship (no fluids) weight is in the range 110 L.T with the same ballast. See Appendix 6 for Hydrostatic Tables. The results indicate that the vessel is lighter than other Northern Marine builds of similar length (based on the results of the weighing), thus requiring more ballast to sit on a desired waterline. It is recommended that partial ballasting be done currently, with final ballasting for trim and desired waterline to be performed at launch.*

*Values from the weight study for both full load and lightship are used as input to an Intact Stability Program. Based on the Intact Stability analysis, shown in Appendices 4 and 5, the vessel complies with the USCG criteria for intact stability, USCG – 46 CFR 170.173, for all load conditions. This criteria ensures that the vessel will be seaworthy and safe with respect to intact stability issues.*

*It is recommended that an Inclining Experiment, supervised by Roddan Engineering Ltd., be performed at launch (and after final ballasting) to confirm the stability estimates and determine exact VCG (vertical Center of Gravity) and LCG (Longitudinal Center of Gravity).*

*If there are questions concerning the above analysis, please do not hesitate to contact Roddan Engineering Ltd.*

*Roddan Engineering Ltd.*

12657 24th Ave  
Surrey, BC V4A 2E7  
Tel (604) 250-6132

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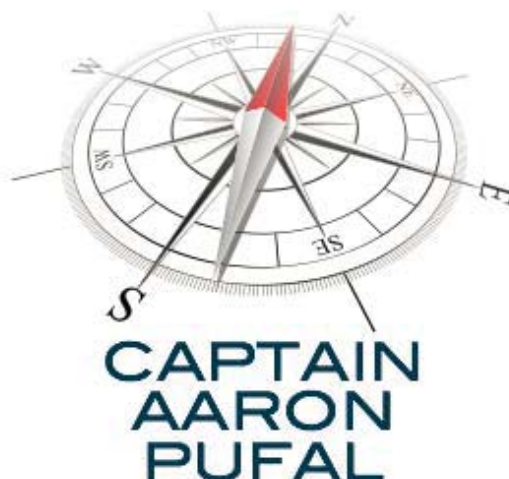
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## YACHT CAPTAIN

On January 13, 2014, in [Uncategorized](#), by Aaron

Florida Based Yacht Captain



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