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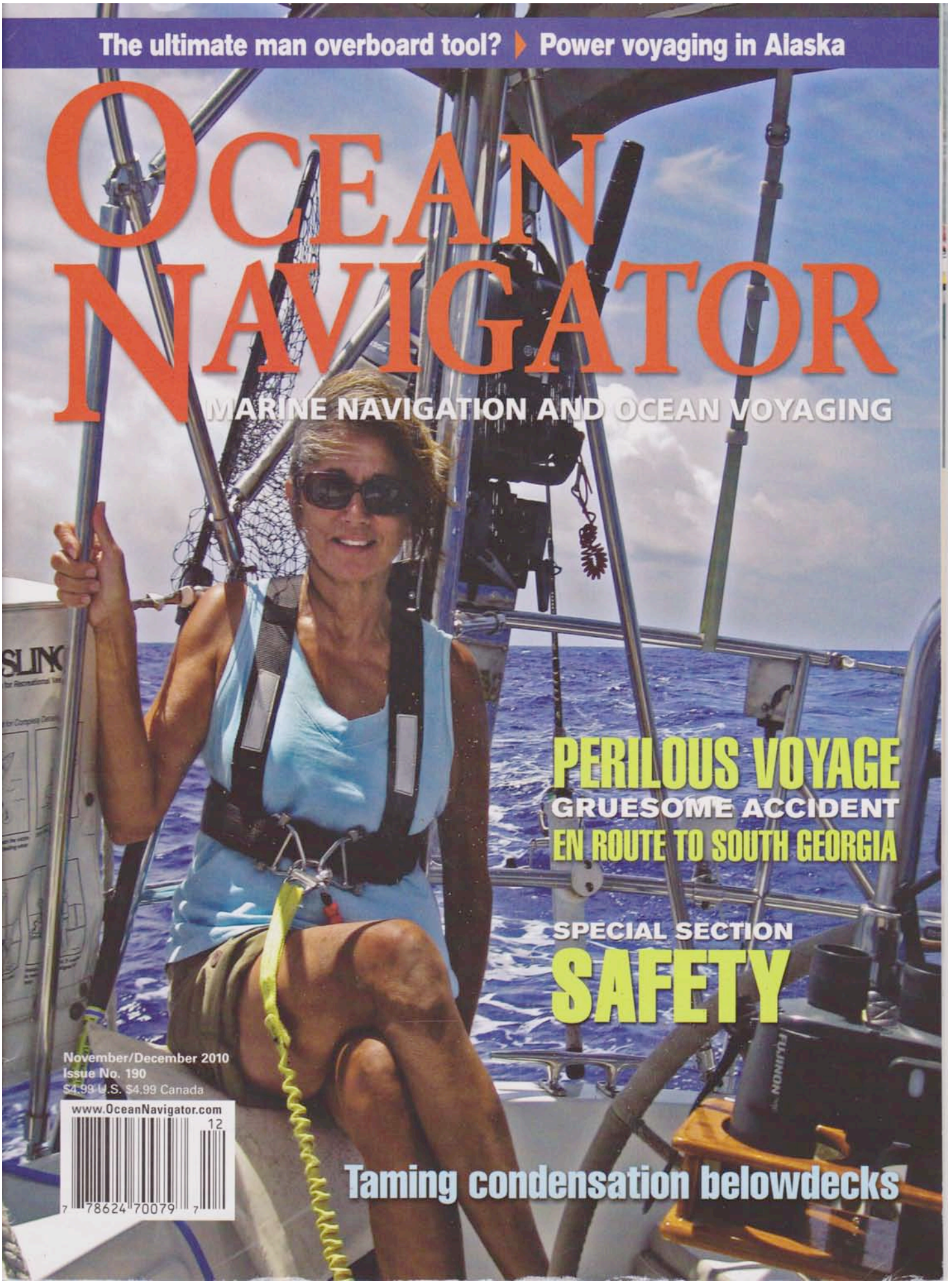

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Taming condensation belowdecks

North to Alaska

BY JOHN SNYDER

For many power voyagers, the challenges and rewards of high latitude cruising are a dream that is hard to resist. Fortunately, ocean trawlers such as those by boatbuilders like Nordhavn have made the dream of venturing into some of these remote uncharted waters a reality. But it takes more than just a solid boat with formidable range to make the trip a success. Passage making to many of these remote places without proper planning and equipment is not without serious risk. For any safe and successful voyage, meticulous attention to detail is essential — even more so if one plans to head north. Careful consideration must be given not only to route planning and weather, but also to some of the unique equipment requirements that cruising to remote high latitudes necessitates.

Josh Tofield

The Tofield's 40-foot Nordhavn Mark II, *Samba*, at anchor in a quiet cove in Prince William Sound.

Josh Tofield and his wife, Natasha, cruise extensively in Alaska aboard their 40-foot Nordhavn Mark II, *Samba*. A former sailor, Tofield now spends about half the year cruising southwest Alaska and is wintering over this year on Kodiak Island. When asked what advice he had for those planning to explore the Alaska Peninsula he quickly pointed out that the farther west you dare to venture, the more self-reliant you need to be. While the seaworthiness of the vessel is an obvious prerequisite for venturing far afield there are plenty of additional considerations.

Topping his concerns is the ability to access weather broadcasts. "In southwest Alaska VHF weather is either unavailable or unreliable, so we depend on single-sideband broadcasts," Tofield said. "When that fails, I use the Iridium satellite phone connected to our laptop computer or call weather directly. In the Gulf of Alaska and especially in the Shelikof Strait, weather is a real challenge. We have been faced with delays of as much as a week. It is very different than the southeast [where most of the yachts cruise in the summer]."