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APRIL 2019

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WIND WHISPERER



The SailTimer RB is a self-contained unit that features wind cups designed especially for sailboats and a compass.

Typically speaking, software development usually follows hardware innovations or unfolds in tandem with new equipment releases. Interestingly, the distinctive-looking SailTimer anemometer was created *because* of SailTimer Inc.'s already-existing SailTimer app, which calculates optimal tacks and tacking times to destinations. In 2011, they created their original SailTimer wireless anemometer, which features an innovative cup-style design that presents itself to the wind as a propeller when heeled over, allowing the device to accurately report wind information from all inclination angles. Now, SailTimer Inc. has released the SailTimer RB. Like the original, the SailTimer RB (\$350) transmits its data over Bluetooth directly to smartphone- and tablet-based Android- and iOS-friendly apps. However, the RB version features a few significant hardware upgrades.

For starters, a rechargeable lithium LFP battery has usurped the brass counterweight on the original unit's nose and is supported by a lightweight-but-sturdy carbon-fiber pointer arm. A new sealed, injection-molded cover protects the unit's tail-mounted solar panel and onboard smarts, which cleverly double as its wind-vane tail, and allows the SailTimer RB to be submerged, facilitating use aboard capsized-prone dinghies. The RB version also delivers greater Bluetooth range, with line-of-sight service up to 280 feet (100 feet with standard obstructions).

For owners of bigger boats who already own instruments or chart plotters,

SailTimer Inc.'s new SailTimer Air Link (\$300) serves as a gateway that can receive wireless data from the SailTimer RB and output it over a networked NMEA 0183 backbone to connected chart plotters, PCs and other instrumentation. Conversely, the Air Link can retransmit all NMEA 0183 data over Wi-Fi, potentially delivering a trove of networked vessel data to your wireless device(s).

SailTimer RB also allows users to share their real-time wind data with SailTimer's community of users, with access to crowd-sourced, real-time wind maps.

Finally, on the software side, SailTimer Inc. has released new "post-screen-era" audio navigation features on their app — imagine a nautical version of Google Maps and you're getting close — which deliver germane information (e.g., course or boatspeed) as spoken word over a paired smart speaker, allowing you to keep your wireless device stowed and your attention on sail trim or situational awareness. Best yet, this data is shared in an open format, allowing a wide variety of different apps to display and leverage this information.

— David Schmidt

Hello Ultrasonic Speed Goodbye Paddlewheel

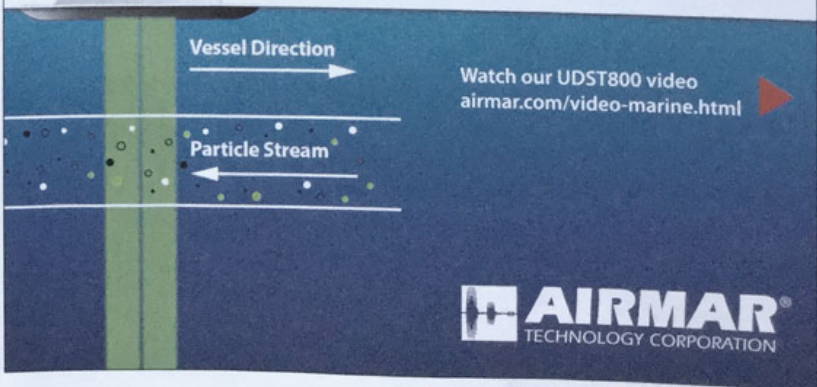


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