Boating Tip #14: Course Made Good

Your course made good is your actual track, or your direction from your point of departure to point of arrival. Always plot your true course, not your magnetic course or compass course, on the chart.

Start by plotting your starting and ending points on the chart. Draw a line between the two points. Determine the direction from the starting point toward the ending point, either easterly or westerly. Use your plotter and triangle (or compass rose) to find your true course in degrees. Course made good is always a true bearing.

Example: Course Made Good

You depart from a position 3 miles directly west of Batiquitos Lagoon at a speed of 6 knots. Forty-five minutes later, you are at position 33° 09.5' N, 117° 25.9' W and stop to fish. What was the course made good?

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You don’t need to know speed, time, distance or heading in order to find the course made good. This was just extraneous information.