Anti-chafing Gear

This important item can be as temporary as an old towel wrapped around the anchor line where it passes through the bow chock, or as permanent as a length of plastic hose left on the line and held in place by rolling hitches to allow its location to be fully adjustable. Whatever you come up with is fine, as long as it keeps the anchor line protected from damaging chafe.

This kind of wear can severely reduce the holding capacity of the anchor line: a night of sawing in 15 or 20 knots of wind can cause serious fray and require a splice, thus decreasing holding power by 10% - a chafed anchor line left unrepaired can ultimately ruin your cruise and more.

If you use the hose trick, be sure it comes out of the chain locker deck fitting cleanly, and does not impede the quick distribution of the anchor line. Set the anchor and then secure the anti-chafing gear in place.
Minimum Approach Depth: 5 ft.
Depth in Anchorage: 6 ft.

Lat 27°17.2’N / Lon 82°33.0’W.
Use Chart 11425 for navigation

Off mile 70.8 on the ICW: 12.8 statute miles from Venice/Higel Park, 4.0 statute miles to Big Pass/Otter Key, 3.3 statute miles to Sarasota/Island Park.

The charted spoil west of marker 78 on the Intracoastal Waterway is actually a well-wooded island.

To reach it, cut almost due west from marker 78 and point toward the center of the island dead ahead. Depths of 5 feet are shown completely around the island, so anchoring for various wind conditions should be possible.

This anchorage has developed some potential crowding. It has become a valued spot for water skiers as well as a general "water sports" area, including personal watercraft. Multiple signs designating the boundaries of the recreation area hamper the way in.

The anchorage is still quite usable, especially for shelter from easterlies and westerlies. In heavy weather, there will probably be few skiers or personal watercraft to bother you, but at other times be prepared for a little rock'n'roll. There is no development on the island, while a few private homes peek out from the Siesta Key shoreline to the west.

Vessels drawing a full 5 feet might want to bypass this anchorage and go on to Island Park, since heavy winds could reduce the amount of water available.
Approximate distances
from pass to pass in the Gulf of Mexico
(in nautical miles)

Cape Romano Red #16 to
Capri Pass sea buoy .............................................. 18.8 nm

Capri Pass sea buoy to
Gordon Pass sea buoy ........................................... 7.75 nm

Gordon Pass sea buoy to
Doctors Pass sea buoy ........................................... 4.85 nm

Doctors Pass sea buoy to
San Carlos Fl Green #1 ........................................... 23.5 nm

San Carlos Fl Green #1 to
Captiva Pass - Lat 26°36.5'N / Lon 82°14.3'W
(along the territorial sea curve line) ............................. 25.2 nm

Captiva Pass to
Boca Grande Pass sea buoy ..................................... 5.8 nm

Boca Grande Pass sea buoy to
Stump Pass - Lat 26°53.2'N / Lon 82°21.6'W .................. 13.5 nm

Stump Pass to
Venice Inlet - Lat 27°06.3'N / Lon 82°28.8'W ............... 14.3 nm

Venice Inlet to
Sarasota Big Pass sea buoy ..................................... 10.6 nm

Sarasota Big Pass sea buoy to
New Pass sea buoy .................................................. 3.7 nm

New Pass sea buoy to
Longboat Pass sea buoy .......................................... 8.9 nm

Longboat Pass sea buoy to Tampa Bay
Southwest Channel - Green #1 2.5 sec Bell .................... 8.2 nm
Section IV

From Sarasota northward, a charming mix of bay, dredged channels and the lovely Manatee River awaits. Only three bridges bar your course, and there are 12 anchorages offering lots of variety for the cruising boater.

Be aware that both Big Pass and New Pass have been unreliable in spite of occasional dredging. The channels shift; there is frequent shoaling. Best to inquire on Channel 16; someone is usually monitoring and willing to provide the latest local information.

Sarasota / Bayfront Park is a roadstead, and in southwesters not to be relied upon. Use Otter Key or Sands Point instead. A few miles north, Longboat Pass and Longbeach are two of the better anchorages on the entire southwest coast, and except for some heavy tidal currents, good in nearly all weathers. Bradenton / Palmetto must also rate high as to facilities and shelter.

Note: For pass-to-pass distances on the outside see...
Approximately 1 mile southwest of ICW green 7, near marker 15A in Big Sarasota Pass, a broad channel breaks off to the north/northwest between Bird Key to the east and the shoals outlining Otter, St. Armand’s and Lido keys to the west.

While fairly well marked, this channel and its offshoot into the Otter Key anchorage require caution.

For best depths, cut north some 100 yards southwest of marker 16 on the Big Sarasota Pass channel and point to come abeam of the first aid on the Sarasota Yacht Club channel, marker 2, by about 20 yards to its west/southwestern side. Once abeam of 2, stay about 25 yards to port of subsequent marks.

About halfway between markers 4 and 6, a small 6 foot deep channel with shallow sea grass beds on both sides makes off to the west just south of Otter Key, then opens out into a deep pool.

Turn into this channel, keeping the manatee sign and small piling to starboard. Head
Minimum Approach Depth: 6 ft.  
Depth In Anchorage: 9-13 ft.  

Lat 27°18.8'N / Lon 82°34.3'W  
Use Chart 11425 for navigation

4.0 statute miles from Roberts Bay,  
3.3 statute miles to Sarasota/Bayfront Park.

See "photomap" on Page 113 for additional information.

for the corner of the bulkheaded shoreline, then, when about 50 feet from the corner, turn northwest into correctly charted 9-13 foot waters and drop the hook. This anchorage appears to provide excellent shelter from all winds, but the holding is tenuous on a dredged bottom of mud and silt.

There is plenty of swing room for even the largest pleasure craft, but the narrow entrance channel could be difficult for boats exceeding 45 feet.

The banks of Otter Key are undeveloped, but the shore of Lido Key is lined with sumptuous homes, private docks and sensitive residents. Best behavior is advised.

Shoals prevent further passage around the northern tip of Otter Key, and a 7 foot fixed bridge blocks the channel to the west. The way out is the way in.
SARASOTA / BAYFRONT PARK

Northeast of marker 8A on the Intracoastal Waterway, a deep channel leads to a large marina and restaurant right in front of downtown Sarasota.

The marina is protected by a hook shaped peninsula to the southeast, recently renamed Bayfront Park. Outside the hook is a broad basin with 8-11 foot depths that contains many private moorings and regularly plays host to dozens of anchored vessels. To enter, veer to the right about 100 yards southwest of the peninsula as you approach the marina.

As we go to press, the City of Sarasota is engaged in on-again off-again plans to manage this anchorage. Since the previous edition of this Guide, the City has forbidden landing dinghies anywhere in the park except at the snack bar/boat rental concession located at the northeastern-most point of the anchorage. There you will also find public rest rooms and telephones. The concessionaire may charge a nominal fee for dinghy landing.

Sarasota is the only city that has not, when asked, signed an agreement with the Regional Harbor Board. There is a city ordinance limiting anchoring or mooring to 72 hours, but it has not been enforced. The ordinance also calls for the establishment of an anchorage here for longer stays, but this has not been done. It is possible that, by the time you call here, there will be an established anchorage and a mooring field, controlled by a harbormaster. Meanwhile, the bottom is owned by the State, not the City.

There is plenty of swing room for almost any craft to drop anchor, with good protection from easterly breezes and some
Minimum Approach Depth: 8 ft.
Depth In Anchorage: 8-11 ft.

Lat 27°19.8'N / Lon 82°32.8'W
Use Chart 11425 for Navigation

Shelter from northerly or southerly winds. The anchorage is open to winds blowing across the ICW from the west and is exposed to storms coming onshore through Big Sarasota Pass to the southwest. Soft mud on the bottom results in only fair holding, so set the anchor firmly and use plenty of scope.

The shores of Bayfront Park are backed by Sarasota’s high-rise downtown skyline. Most groceries and a ship’s store require motorized transportation, but the marina inside the hook offers gasoline, fuel, ice, and a pump-out station.

Downtown Sarasota offers a host of outstanding restaurants and watering holes just a short walk from the anchorage, as well as art galleries, antique shops, live theater, opera and ballet.

Bayfront Park itself is the site of many events throughout the year, including Fourth of July fireworks and a Christmas boat parade.

Just south of the anchorage, a short walk along the bay front, is a botanical garden; just north along US 41 is Van Wezel Performing Arts Center, a 2,000 seat auditorium. On the way to Van Wezel is Sarasota Quay, also reachable by water through a narrow channel east of marker 12 (northwest of the Ringling Causeway Bridge), featuring retail shops and half a dozen restaurants.

Off mile 73.8 on the ICW:
3.3 statute miles from Big Pass/Otter Key, 3.0 statute miles to New Pass/Sands Point, 11.6 statute miles to Longboat Pass/Longbeach.

See "photomap" on Page 114 for additional information.
Kedging Off

You've gone aground. It'll be hours before the tide comes up, and it's getting dark, or you have to get home and can't wait: Try kedging off.

If you have a shallow draft vessel and no dinghy, you can jump in and push yourself off, with the crew rocking the boat to help you break free. If you're in a deeper draft vessel, take your anchor and all the line you can spare off in your dinghy, put it down where you think the deepest water is and take a strain on the line.

Put the line on a sheet winch or anchor winch and take in as much as you can (get yourself and your crew under cover in case of a line failure, since a line, snapping back from a break, is like a whip). Keep the strain on and you'll have every chance of getting free.
The deep cove on the northwestern bank of New Pass Inlet, just west of the bascule bridge, with its shallow entrances, is a tricky but rewarding anchorage.

From the east, once through the bridge, hug the northern shore in a 5-7 foot channel. Or head further toward the pass, then cut right, keeping just off the point (and new docks) in a swash channel with minimum 5 foot depths. In between, beware of a long shoal that is building out from the point. Approaching from the Gulf, be aware that New Pass has been unreliable, in spite of occasional dredging. The channel shifts; there is frequent shoaling. Best to inquire on Channel 16 - someone is usually monitoring and willing to provide the latest local information.

Once inside this sheltered basin, boaters can dinghy to a small beach on the northern shore east of the Chart House Restaurant and shops, then walk across the bascule bridge and down a road to the left that leads to a public park with a fish camp, restaurant, bird sanctuary and the Mote Marine research center and aquarium (open to the public and well worth the trip and price of admission.)

Private docks have been installed at Sands Point along the southern shore of the basin by the owners to discourage shoreside visits at this popular weekend anchorage.

5.5 statute miles from Big Pass/ Otter Key, 3.0 statute miles from Sarasota/ Bayfront Park.