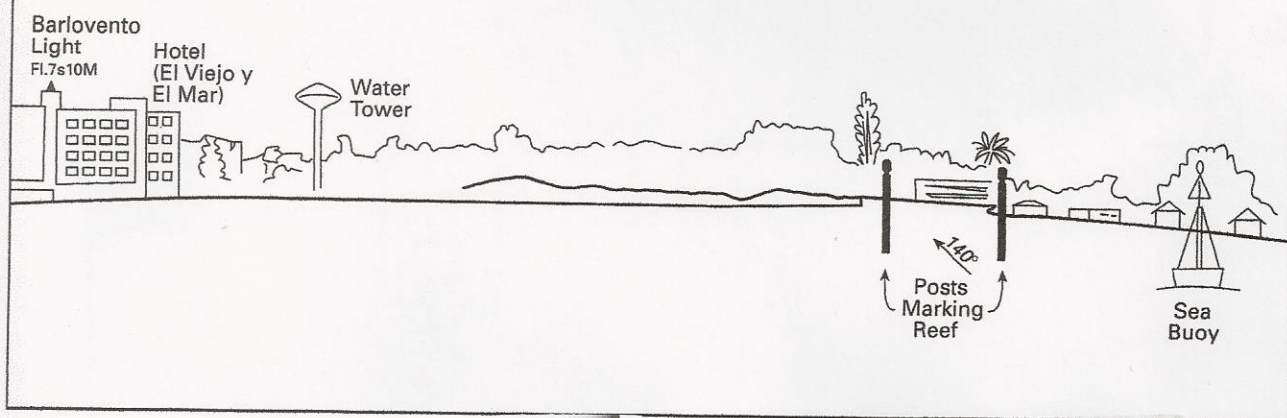


MARINA HEMINGWAY ENTRY CHANNEL FROM JUST TO SEAWARD OF THE SEA BUOY



Approaches

The coastal shelf is close to the shore along this section of the Cuban coastline, so deep water is found until almost on the beach. The initial objective is the red and white marina sea buoy (Fl.10s), located at approximately 23°05.4'N 82°30.6'W. This buoy is about ¼M offshore, but less than this from the reef, and not readily visible during the daytime until close inshore (especially if any seas are running), nor at night due to the background lights. In other words, since you will be maneuvering close to the reef and the beach, a fairly accurate landfall is needed, and a nighttime entry is not recommended, particularly if this is your first visit (as I write this, the wreck of a 43ft sailboat is grinding to pieces on the reef after attempting a night entry and missing the channel by just a few meters).

From the east, the skyscrapers of Havana will be visible from many miles out.

From the west, the coastline is relatively featureless. Immediately to the west of the marina entrance are the low houses of the town of Santa Fé. Further west (2½M west of the marina) are a series of conspicuous apartment buildings (the Cuban naval academy on the Santa Ana river) together with a conspicuous water tower.

As you get closer to the sea buoy, from any direction you will see a largish hotel (with the Dársena de Barlovento light on its roof - Fl.7s40m10M). This is The Old Man and the Sea (El Viejo y el Mar) hotel. A distinctive water tower will appear to the right of the hotel, and then a little further west, at the present time, an undistinctive band of scrubby vegetation against which will be seen the masts of the sailboats in the marina (this vegetation will give way to condominiums over the next few years). The marina entry comes next, approximately ¾M to the west of the hotel. In addition to the sea buoy, the entry channel is marked by a couple of stakes. The green is left to port, the red to starboard, on entering - see sketch.

Both stakes are lit - the green flashes every 3 seconds; the red every 4 seconds.

Entry

The sea buoy is more or less on the edge of the coastal shelf, in over 25m - it can be taken on either side. From the buoy the channel is 140° straight into the marina. The depths shoal rapidly. Within less than ¼M of the buoy the channel is down to 10m as you pass between the two stakes (which are on the reef - it is essential to stay in mid-channel from this point until inside the marina). Ahead is a large diamond, behind which is a red and white post, forming a range, but these (particularly the latter) may not be easy to pick out. In any event, keep to 140° to come in directly parallel to the dock, which houses the Guarda Frontera. At night the diamond has a white flashing range light with a very narrow sector - if you stray to either side of the channel, the light changes color (red if you are on the port side of the channel; green if on the starboard side).

The seaward corner of the Guarda dock has a light (Fl.G.3s), opposite which is a lighted pylon (Fl.R.6s); beyond the Guarda post is another light (Fl.G.5s), opposite which is another lighted pylon (Fl.R.6s).

Entering the Marina Hemingway in a norther

Since the marina channel faces to the NW, during the early stages of a norther (the NW phase associated with the passage of the front itself) large breaking seas run straight up the channel - entry can be quite hazardous. In other words, if using the favorable winds of a norther to sail to the marina, the passage should be timed so as to arrive after the wind has shifted toward the NE and moderated, at which time the breakers tend to sweep across the entry channel with less force, rather than directly into it, making entry less hazardous. Even so, to

avoid the risk of broaching and being thrown onto the reef, you will need to keep to the windward side of the channel, and to come in with sufficient speed to maintain steerageway (underpowered sailboats should be wary of entering in these conditions). When the wind is from the prevailing east the entry channel is calm.