

## **Keeping a Deck Log**

Keeping a deck log is a requirement for Ordinary, Able and Quartermaster. The deck logs supplied on this vessel are based on the ones in the Sea Scout Manual, but add two more columns – magnetic heading and estimated time of arrival (ETA). Based on professional navigation experience, I recommend you use the deck log as follows:

1. Start your log with “planned” data from your departure fix (Kemah Marker 2, for instance) to your turn points and final destination. Be sure to calculate the ETAs based on your planned speed.
2. As you sail your course, take fixes (3-bearing, running, GPS, other), plot them, then calculate your speed run and course made good. Depending on how far off course you are, calculate your new course, new speed, distance to go, and new ETA. This will require a new line in your log. Your progress will be much clearer this way.
3. The instructions in the Sea Scout Manual are generally good except for one thing. Calculating an ETA for when you need to take your next fix, and when you will arrive at your next turning point or destination, is critically important to keeping you from making a gross error in navigation. While perhaps not apparent in clear weather, when visibility is limited, you must have a good dead reckoning position. Always calculate an ETA for your next point.