


The pilot 192 (David Reeder) made contact with the tug (George M.) to put up a line center lead forward. A few moments later I turned on the deck lights and winch and stood-by in the middle of the channel. There was no traffic at any point during this incident. I buzzed out AB Tristan and started moving astern. As the ship (MSC Aquarius) approached, running stern first, I matched speed and made visual contact with the centerline chock. I began to slow down and ease up centerline on the bow so the deck crew of the ship could pass the messenger. AB Tristan tied off the messenger and I began to send the tugs hawser up. The eye of our hawser was almost to the centerline chock when the bow of tug began to swing to my port side, which is normal and can be corrected by small power and angle adjustments. I powered up to pull out further ahead of the ship and eased my drives to starboard. It sluggishly responded and I kept having to maneuver to maintain centerline to continue sending up my hawser. The vessel felt like it needed more power and more angle than it should have. The tug once again started to get pushed to the starboard side of the ship and lose ground. I was not getting what I needed to hold position so I powered up even more and angled my drives back to (Continued)

centerline, that's when the tug grabbed. The extra power and angle of the drives sent my starboard bow into the starboard bow of the ship. It bumped us pretty hard but did not catch our bow, it dragged across to the port side of the ship. I have completely crossed over to the port side of the ship. I angled the drives back to my port quarter to get back on centerline and catch myself. Almost immediately, I was falling off again, so I went full on the power and turned my drives to my starboard quarter away from the ship to keep out from falling into the bow. I did not anticipate the slow angle and throttle response and the bulbous bow hit the port z-drive unit below the water line. The tug folded alongside the ships port bow and at full astern I slid forward about 20-30 feet before the mast caught the arc of the ships bow and caught the tug. I am now full astern, caught under the bow and being dragged backwards with the ship. At some point during me trying to stabilize the tug I must have started heaving the hawser back in, I do not recall doing it, but the winch was hauling in and the tugs messenger had made several wraps around the drum. I immediately set the brake. The master arrives on the bridge at this time. His first response is "how fast are you going". The Aldebaran had me at 9.5kts. We were able to disconnect from the ships messenger while stuck under the bow. The master stepped out to assess how he was going to back out from under the anchor, at the time we thought we were hung on the anchor. Luis the engineer begins sounding tanks. The master takes the con. The ship begins to bleed speed and the master was able to back out without further damage. The tug was able to make it back to a company facility on its own power. Further investigation showed the z-drive unit took damage leaking oil into the water. The crew used its SOPEP gear to do its best to boom the vessel in at the dock. Company Operations is notified at this time.

  
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