



messing about in BOATS

Twice a Month!

Volume 8 - Number 2

June 1, 1990





messing about in BOATS

PUBLISHED TWICE A MONTH, 24
ISSUES A YEAR. SUBSCRIPTION
PRICE IS \$20 FOR 24 ISSUES.

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WENHAM, MA 01984
TEL. (508) 774-0906
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Our Next Issue...

Will focus some on the Maine Island Trail with summer imminent, backed up with the beginning of a short serial on an 1880 canoe trip from Andover, Massachusetts to Bar Harbor, Maine, right up that trail 110 years ago! Chip Chandler's report on paddling in Newfoundland and our own coverage of the Essex River Race for human powered boats should round out the on-the-water coverage. Then we'll look at Jim Heter's "Pak-Yak" backpack kayak; Joe Pallazola's "Pick Up Pram"; Marc Barto's classic "Melonseed"; Platt Monfort's "Classic 14"; John Thomson's electric powered "Political Tool"; Chip Chandler's "Baby Loon" and "Sectional Loon"; and Diana Russell's Wing System "One Boat Fleet".

On the Cover...

ON THE COVER

Whitwater racing returned to urban eastern Massachusetts in April at "Thoreau's Portage" on the Concord River in greater downtown Lowell. Story and photos in this issue.

Commentary

BOB
HICKS

Judging from your letters and stories about your messing about in boats, most of you, if not all, have to plan your boating dreams to fit your available play money. Perhaps the level available may range from a few hundred dollars into even the tens of thousands, but the cost of realizing your dreams bears heavily on the scope of them. I have about two or three thousand dollars tied up myself in my "fleet" after 15 years of messing about in boats.

This is my perspective from which to view how serious dreamers go about trying to achieve their dreams. People who want to build or restore big ships for historical reasons, with commercial overtones usually, don't let their own personal pocketbooks get in the way. They go out chasing money from whoever they can persuade to give them some. Our maritime museums do this, a whole panoply of "non-profit" organizations pursue this "fund raising". And they often employ professional people who are skilled in the begging arts needed to extract the big money needed for some of these dreams.

We all get these "opportunities" to contribute to worthy causes of all sorts in our mail, and I'm not denigrating the concept. It's a way of life for an amazing number of people and organizations today. I have some trouble when it gets around to ascertaining the degree of "worthiness" involved in some of these. The dreams for maritime projects don't always impress me, I see them at times as rather personal objectives for individuals or limited groups of people, with ultimately not quite clear benefits for our society as a whole.

I just received an expensive tri-fold elegantly phrased and illustrated brochure measuring 11"x 25-1/2" unfolded entitled "Opportunities for Discovery". There's that word again. This is a buzzword that tends to obscure the reality of the request for a handout in a costume suggesting it really is a golden chance for one to take part in something magnificent. "Discovery" is to be "The American Tall Ship", a 215' steel hulled square rigger to be built in Maine as a tall ship with an aura of a "Downeaster" about it. It's going to be a \$10 million dreamboat for its promoters.

As a member of the "Business/Marketing Press" (that's who it is addressed to) I am asked to run a freebie ad for fund raising. This plea is phrased as follows:

"Attached is an advertisement for membership in the American Tall Ship Syndicate. It would be a tremendous help to us if you would

consider running this ad as often as possible on a public service basis." They then go on to suggest I do a story for them too:

"We invite you to investigate the opportunities for a marketing article on "Discovery" -- the 215 foot steel hulled ship that will make her sailing debut among the Tall Ships from around the world at the 1992 Christopher Columbus Quincentennial Celebration in New York Harbor."

The ad solicits your \$25 memberships, as well as those \$2,500 life memberships so fondly desired by all good causes. But, the big league aspect is the "multi-tiered" program for corporate sponsorship, gifts-in-kind and private funding acquisition for "Discovery." Among the "gifts-in-kind" desired are \$450,000 worth of steel, \$300,000 worth of diesel engines, \$100,000 worth of electronics, and coatings for the whole vessel." And then there's the money. The \$10 million includes about \$6 million to build and equip the ship, and \$4 million for an endowment to be invested for income to keep it sailing.

They'll never get all this in \$25 memberships or even \$2,500 memberships. So it's off to corporate America for the really big money. The brochure invites a big corporate sponsor to underwrite \$3.5 million and there's a whole long list of public relations opportunities associated with the ship that will accrue to the firm that chooses to go for this. "Corporate entertainment/press opportunities will be available at the keel laying ceremony, the launch and christening, the hull transport to the Interpretive Center, the commissioning and maiden voyage, the New York debut in 1992, and subsequent debuts in other U.S. ports."

Well, I wondered how this identification of the ship with its corporate sponsor would be achieved and a line in the brochure gave me a clue. "Name identification: Ship's name is negotiable to facilitate stronger corporate identification." There it is. Who will seize this opportunity to be identified with the "Discovery"? My mind wandered to the fame of the "Exxon Valdez", the wrong sort of fame of course, but still certainly name recognition.

Back here on Burley Street my fleet awaits a modest infusion of money itself. I can't afford to spend any of it on a brochure to fund it with contributions, and there's no significant worthiness to my cause other than to my own personal dreams, so I'll not be offering any opportunities I'm afraid.

Welcoming the Cree and Inuit

After reading Denny Alsop's article in the March 15 issue of "Boats" about the canoe journey being undertaken by Cree and Inuit people from Hudson Bay to dramatize their opposition to proposed hydro power plants in their homelands, I called Denny to find out their schedule. We wanted to meet them enroute and cheer them on. I found that a group was to gather at Rouses Point, NY, at the north end of Lake Champlain to greet them, so we decided to go there.

A rainy, foggy day, and I'm glad I'm not out in the canoes. A small group of about 20 people are there when we arrive and soon a bus arrives, followed by a few more cars. The TV people show. The rain comes down and a couple of canoes paddle out to greet the growing dots on the horizon. Groups of people stand around waiting. As the Cree and Inuit draw closer, we can hear them chanting. The canoes take shape and I see the wildlife paintings on one of the hulls, and a lot of soggy, wet people paddling and chanting as they near shore. A child says, "Hi mom!" to one of the paddlers. In spite of the weather, or maybe partly because of it, I feel an immense outpouring of love for these people on their wonderful, almost hopeless, journey.

The groups on shore clap and cheer as the TV people assemble for the necessary interviews. A representative from the Sierra Club gives a welcoming speech. Next, a man in back yells, "We have Vermont cider for our guests on the table in back, squeezed in Vermont from Vermont apples!" The chief from the Abnaki tribe presents baseball hats and beaded objects to the paddlers. A lady next to me says to a photographer, "Would you move so I can see? I'm an American too." The spokesmen for the Cree and Inuit tell the TV cameras of their homeland's destruction. I want to listen, but all the observers are talking to each other, and I strain to hear. Two guys with cameras on the Route 2 bridge above are yelling back and forth about their jobs. A tractor trailer passes over us, laying on the horn. One of the young Cree from the bus throws a rock against the painted canoe, then turns with a proud smile. No one else seems to notice.

As the TV crew packs it in and the speeches dwindle, I decide to have a closer look at the boats. One is a wide canvas canoe with a covered stern cockpit for the rear paddler. They named this "Ode-yak". "Ode" is Cree for canoe and

"yak", of course, is from kayak. Painted pictures of Hudson Bay wildlife cover the hull. Caribou, beaver, moose, Canadian geese and others. The hull and ribs are probably cedar, while the seats are of 2x6 lumber with 2x4 back braces. The other canoe appears more traditional with the high rounded ends associated with birch bark canoes. It's tied up with a piece of frayed, knotted yellow nylon rope. I like the boats. I wander around a little longer and then decide it's time to go.

The TV spot will be brief and won't truly express that magic moment when these unique people arrived on our shore. As their boats continue on down the Caniaderi-guarunte*, Cahohatatea* and into the area of Ganono*, I wish the best for them, their lands, our lands and all of us in these precarious times.

Jeff Brown, St. Regis Falls, NY.

(* Iroquoian for Lake Champlain, mouth of the river; the Hudson River, great river; and New York City, fresh water basin.)



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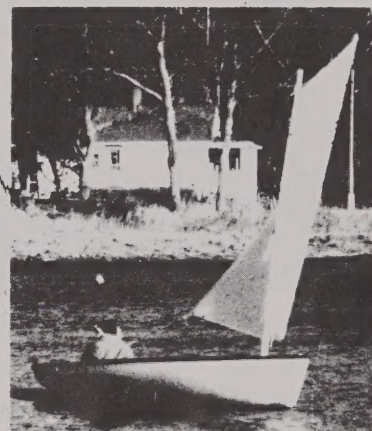
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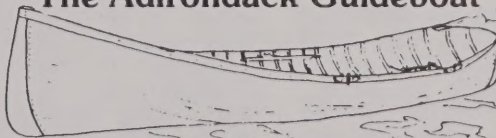
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WHERE DEM INCREDIBLES AT?

I awoke the other night with a severe pain in my right foot. It wasn't a cramp but seemed for all the world like broken bones. Evidently the bed had been run over by a truck or something of the sort. However, my wife, a notoriously light sleeper, was unperturbed and, in fact, when I brought the matter up next morn, only looked at me strangely.

What with the pain and the mental calculations of medical costs, time in a cast, and even perhaps life in a wheelchair, there was no hope for sleep, so I crawled, literally, downstairs, snuggled next to the stove, "Reggie", and propped up the foot. "Reggie" wanted some wood but it was out of the question.

There fell immediately to hand a stack of "Messing About in boats" which had accumulated whilst we spent the winter in Colorado. "Boats" is always sorted to the top of the pile when I get back from the ranch. I always scan through them first to see who I might know and what they are up to. Something caught my eye, which normally wouldn't have, except that it differed so markedly from its previous embodiment. Surely you have noticed it too. The "Incredible Beach Hauler" is no more; replaced by another gal, a comely lass to be sure and, judging from the effortless way she hauls that boat, not one to be trifled with, but still not, to my mind, "Incredible".

Pity. Something should be done. By Jove, we need an organization. How does "Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Incredible Beach Haulers" strike you? SPEIBH. As a catchy acronym is all-important, let me know if you come up with something niftier.

As tardy Apollo loitered somewhere in the east, the idea continued to rattle around in the mind, giving off chips and splinters. Why not preserve all sorts of "incredibles"? For a starter we could all use, I'm sure, an "Incredible Sheet Hauler". And a nice "Incredible Halliard Hauler" would be handy, as well as an "Incredible Anchor Hauler" to decorate the foredeck. The possibilities boggle the eye, er, mind.

I was so fired up that I could scarcely await a decent hour to consult with my courteous capable confidant and colleague, Dr. Bob Booth. Being a keen observer of natural beauty, his enthusiasm knew no bounds. Dr. Booth, with his courtly manner and Middleburg address, will be our "eminence gris" and give cachet to an outfit that might be thought a bit sophomoric in some circles.



Your Commentary

Perhaps the first order of business is to make up some neat membership certificates featuring, I would suggest, the original "Incredible Beach Hauler". Do, by all means, send an SASE along with your comments and suggestions to:

SPEIBH National Headquarters, c/o Thayer & Co., 2106 Atlee Rd., Mechanicsville, VA 23111.

"ZUZU'S PETAL"

I have a gaff rigged Cornish Crabber Cormorant very similar in dimensions to a Beetle Cat. It is named "Zuzu's Petal", referring to a scene in the film, "It's a Wonderful Life" when George Bailey reaches into his pocket and finds his daughter's flower petals, confirming that he really is alive again.

A year ago I bought a 9'6"x3'6" sailing/rowing dinghy from the Ensign Co. At 75 pounds it really is cartoppable and launchable almost anywhere. As a former rower at Harvard and owner of an Alden Ocean Shell, I'm amazed at how nicely this little dinghy rows and how much power can be obtained without a sliding seat. I have rowed and sailed it with much enjoyment in Great Salt Pond on Block Island, Point Judith Pond (a delightfully varied place) and on Plum Island Sound from the beach at Little Neck.

I think this sort of messing about must be what you had in mind when you started your publication. I appreciate your efforts as, I'm sure, do many of your other readers. If you ever should wonder why you keep on doing this, as did George Bailey, please accept this "petal" to go along with all the others I hope you have received.

Randy Slaughter, Cambridge, MA.

WHAT BOATS SHOULD HE BUILD?

In the April 15th issue David Blanchard asks what kind of traditional boats should he build in his new 20'x25' workshop. My suggestion is that he consider building replicas of the Thames River Skiff which I think is the ideal rowing boat for recreational rowers.

In previous issues of "Boats" I have commented on the need I perceive for a rowing double capable of carrying a passenger or passengers and camping and picnicking gear. Ideally it should be outfitted with sliding seat rigs for those experienced rowers who want the feel of the racing shell and more speed while not sacrificing the potential for traditional fixed seat rowing.

The May/June issue of "Wooden Boat" carries a marvelous article by Lois Darling about the model she built of "Ratty's Boat" from "The Wind in the Willows", which is a Thames River Skiff. The model is now on display at Mystic Seaport Museum.

My enthusiasm for this boat developed from my experiences with the U.S. Rowing Association's recreational rowing committee in conducting the international rowing tour on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers for 30 foreign rowers and 15 U.S. participants last year. My brother Chuck organized this "first" for the U.S.A. The tour illustrated the need for proper boats for such touring, and if we had these available, this form of rowing sport could explode into the popularity it enjoys in Europe where they have such craft.

Tom Colgan, Arden, DE.

LIKES SOLO TRIPS

I especially like the accounts of solo trips in canoes or kayaks. If they include the life encountered above or below the water, the weather, and interesting sights, so much the better.

Merrill White, Phoenix, AZ.

STRANGEST BOAT OF THE YEAR?

If not all, do most of the nuts find their way to California? While touring the storage area where I keep my boat I saw this peculiar boat shown in the accompanying photo. The tarp that covered it much of the winter had pretty much shredded so I got a pretty good look at it. A boat owner nearby told me that the weird all-metal craft's owner/builder was in his 40's, that the boat was a sailboat, and that the baby pontoons folded up on the sides of the larger pontoons fold down to give the craft more stability. He explained further that the craft floats with the lower pontoons half awash. In addition to the sideways facing prop between the pontoons there is another facing aft in back.

The only way I could imagine this craft doing something novel and potentially useful would be if those lower pontoons could be filled with water in windy weather and submerged so that the craft would be almost uncapsizable. Or maybe it could eject its mast and become a submarine!

Does this craft deserve the "Strangest Boat of the Year" award?
Dick Damon, Stanford, CA.





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DESIGNED BY WILLIAM H. SHORT

Since the time of its discovery, San Francisco Bay has been a boater's dream. The early shipping business and the tremendous numbers of old sailing ships that ended their days on the mud flats of that lovely bay are a solid wall of exciting history, and writers much more talented than I have only touched the tip of that adventure which, really, is still going on.

In the early days, the Bay was as pure as waters can be. The blue of the Pacific was flowing into lower San Francisco Bay as well as the inland depths of the Sacramento River delta, which was deep before the hydraulic miners of '49 flushed the foothills of the Sierras into the delta and into lower San Francisco Bay. The resulting rise of the channel bottoms brought on the need for levees and more channels to allow for the water levels being raised.

In lower San Francisco Bay oysters and bay mussels grew in great profusion and many boatmen made good livings harvesting them, including one well known author named Jack London, who really was an oyster pirate for a short while in his teens. Many times in his shallow draft sloop, he and a youthful crew sailed from the busy Oakland docks at sundown and returned at daybreak to unload a cargo of oysters and then sleep away the day to be ready for the next night of pilferage on the oyster flats.

As the years went by and shipping increased, as well as population on the Bay's shores, pollution became an ugly but ignored monster. Finally diseases such as dysentery, diphtheria, and typhoid became so bad that measures had to be taken. It soon became evident that oysters were a common source of some of the problems and the fishery died off. Too bad the polluting continued.

The lower San Francisco Bay is very shallow and at low tide much of the bottom is exposed. This mud is so treacherous that it is impossible to walk in or on, and the danger that it poses is never apparent to boaters who daily sail the channels, and at high tide the flats themselves, of the murky lower bay. One example: Two men went out for an afternoon of boating in a new Lone Star aluminum cruiser. As they weren't planning for more than a couple of hours, they took no water or heavy clothing, and their only food was a Mounds candy bar tucked into the pocket of one's sport shirt. It was late in the fall and the nights were very cool, but days were still quite warm.

At full throttle they proceeded out the channel and for a while enjoyed cresting the small waves on a

Down in the Mud on the Bay

full plane. When the decision was made to return to the ramp the skipper turned the bow for the marker at the entrance to the slough, not realizing this course would take them directly over the mud flats on a dropping tide. A series of neap tides were just starting, and the Lone Star soon slid neatly up onto the barely covered mudflats and became a semi-permanent fixture in the mud.

Without water, blankets or food, their situation quickly became serious. Their wives notified the Coast Guard and a search was started. However, since nobody expected the boat to be so close to port, they were overlooked for five days! The skipper tried once to wade ashore and became mired in mud that gripped him tightly until his companion made a lifeline from his pants and shirt tied together and pulled him back into the boat. During the afternoon of the fifth day a Navy plane taking off from Moffett Field reported them as possibly the missing boat as they had seen them parked there on the same spot four days before. A helicopter took them off and then returned to tow the boat to harbor. The men were nearly dead, and the boat was sold as soon as the owner was able to get an ad into the classifieds.

Our adventure on this lower bay included grounding out in the same mud and it might have been on the same spot for all we know. However, in a shallow draft kayak, a grounding (mudding?) is not nearly so serious. In fact, it afforded a time of resting without the usual worry of drifting into a snag, a seal or some other water creature.

We launched into the slough at Alviso, which sits ingloriously on the edge of the lower bay. Its harbor is so mudded in that boats come and go only at extreme high

tides or if they are shallow draft, such as sharpies or catamarans, trimarans, or kayaks. The launching took place at, of all times, 10 p.m., as we were delayed by the preparations to launch a 57' trimaran which had just been finished. Some of the crew were envious of us being so ultra-mobile in our lightweight craft.

Our sleeping bags were tucked into the bows and our plans were to tie up in a tidal creek and sleep on the floors of the kayaks. Let me say a few words about getting into a sleeping bag while sitting upright in a kayak. First, it ain't easy! Second, it helps if you don't watch your partner and thus avoid laughing hysterically, which messes up your stability and concentration badly. I guess a fair statement would be that it resembles a one-man wrestling match with dire consequences to the loser!

The wind was rising and the tules were leaning over our creek as we finally stopped laughing and drifted off to sleep. The next thing I knew it was daylight and a red winged blackbird was blowing reveille in my ear, while at the same time proclaiming to all the world that he had captured two monsters in his own creek. He didn't use any profanity so we figured he wasn't really hostile, just proud and possessive.

After a snack of bread and peanut butter, we slipped out of the sleeping bags and paddled into the main channel and were soon in the open waters of San Francisco Bay.

At this opening into the Bay stands a series of high tension transmission line towers which are about 150' tall and are a landmark for sailors and flyers alike. Just west of these towers about three miles is the huge Naval base called Moffett Field, famous as the west coast base built to house the gigantic dirigibles of the '30's. During World War II the Navy used it as a blimp base for coastal anti-submarine patrols as well as a base of operations for the Naval Transport Service. I was stationed there for a while as I served out my hitch in the Navy.

These towers seem to attract fish as they are about the only thing around that could be construed to be cover for the huge sturgeon and big schools of striped bass that inhabit the Bay. The sturgeon are of the "white" variety and grow forever, or until they die, whichever comes first. Zillions of sand sharks, leopard sharks and dusksies live in the Bay also.

As we approached these towers a very large fish rolled and his pectoral fin rose above the surface of the murky water and several feet

of his side were momentarily exposed as he lay in the early sunlight for a few seconds. We were too far away to readily identify the specie. Knowing that sharks were numerous there, we assumed it to be a large shark. Two months later a young El Toro sailor caught an eight-and-a-half foot sturgeon in that spot. His picture was in the local paper showing the fish in the boat, with both head and tail extending over the sides. That battle lasted four hours and covered a considerable distance before the giant was brought in. He weighed in at well over three-hundred pounds. Don't ask me how he brought the monster aboard his boat, I don't know, perhaps other fishermen helped him. I only saw the picture.

Today was nearly windless and the daily smog began its buildup as the commuter traffic filled the freeways around the Bay. Our progress north was smooth and rapid riding the outgoing tide, which in the narrow lower Bay moves fairly fast. We kept to mid-channel and enjoyed the warm sun as it toasted our backs.

The harbor at Palo Alto is small, and at that time was a relatively undeveloped place half hidden in some lowlands and islands on the west side of the Bay. Just beyond the markers at the entrance to this picturesque harbor is Dunbarton Bridge, one of two bridges that cross the southern Bay. The entrance seemed to be a roundabout way to Palo Alto, so we decided to take a beeline course for the inner marker near a small island that hid the harbor itself. In a few minutes it became quite evident that the mud bottom was rising faster than our progress over the flats. However, in our kayaks we were certain that even if we were forced to ground, the tide would lift us off the bottom on its return. All we would experience would be a short delay and then we'd be on our way again.

About 11 a.m. we came to a halt, solidly aground on mud that was so soft I could push my paddle into it about four feet from my sitting position in the cockpit. The shallow water fascinated us as it kept moving toward the Golden Gate. Even as it got to be about a quarter-inch deep it continued to move slowly north.

The myriad tiny snails and minnows and miniscule shrimplike creatures which are usually unseen were very evident in the thin sheet of water. I watched them and dozed off. A few yards away my nephew restlessly tried to relax, but talked of the heat, lack of motion, his hunger for lunch, and how tired his rump was getting. I gave up my snooze and began to watch life in the now 1/8" deep water.

In life's passage, many times the really important things we should observe slip by without notice. How much we might benefit from small events which we are too busy to notice if we would but listen to what the Lord is trying to tell us. The tide goes in and out two times a day, yet we scarcely notice. This movement is extremely important to the life in the oceans as well as to our own lives, and yet we never give it a thought as it happens so often.

My attention was focussed on the tide's movement, so I was suddenly fully aware, senses turned up to full volume, that the movement of the tide had STOPPED! The water had no movement at all. The feeling I had was that everything had ceased to move and suspense coupled with excitement filled me with the knowledge that I was watching the phenomenon that affects the largest physical thing on this earth! God's clock was right on time to the very second. A tiny movement then began to the south and the momentarily immobile sheet of water started to move as though it was a solid sheet of glass. I realized that it couldn't possibly be stopped for any reason until the Almighty gave it the signal.

Within 15 minutes we were afloat again and on our way. The rest of the trip was taken up by our visit to the bird sanctuary at Palo Alto, and we caught the middle of the tide for our home bound journey.

After a short rest on an island of low grasses and tules where we lay watching the big Naval transports and patrol planes taking off, we began to paddle toward the towers again. The wind was rising and the sun was hurrying home to bed. The shallow waters along the south shore were driven by the wind into a short choppy froth and we were glad to enter the slough to Alviso as darkness overtook our progress. In our pull against wind and waves which were at cross purposes to our course, the tide had changed again, unnoticed by us, of course. The change made our return harder as we had the tidal flow to battle for about three miles in the Alviso slough.

At 10 p.m. exactly, we paddled up to the dock and exited the kayaks. The big trimaran had been launched and a party of gigantic proportions was in progress aboard. One celebrant stepped on deck to "pump ship" and noticed our kayaks, still afloat at the dock's edge.

"Where are you guys going at this time of night?" he asked, surprised at our nocturnal appearance.

I chuckled as I answered, "We're not going, we're coming in." He stared unbelievably and

then exclaimed, "Outstanding! Where have you been?"

We explained the trip to him and he again exclaimed, "Outstanding!"

We started to load our gear and kayaks onto our cars when he came out on deck again with several of his friends and insisted we come aboard and tell them our story. He suggested we might help empty some of the "slosh" that might possibly find its way to the bilges if not processed and carried over the side in the proper manner. We did take a beer each and then begged off any more party time as we were exhausted. Besides, the party boat was very crowded and the noise unbearable. Rock music blasted across the harbor as we were happy to say "Good-night."

The last word we heard from them was "Outstanding!". We agreed completely.

E.G. Ragsdale, Westlake, OR.

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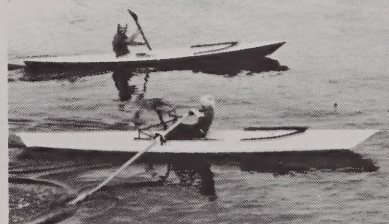
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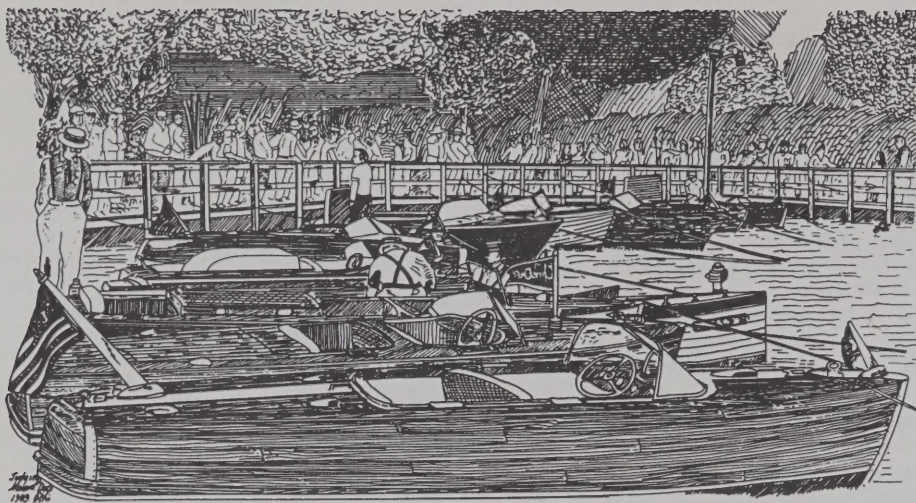
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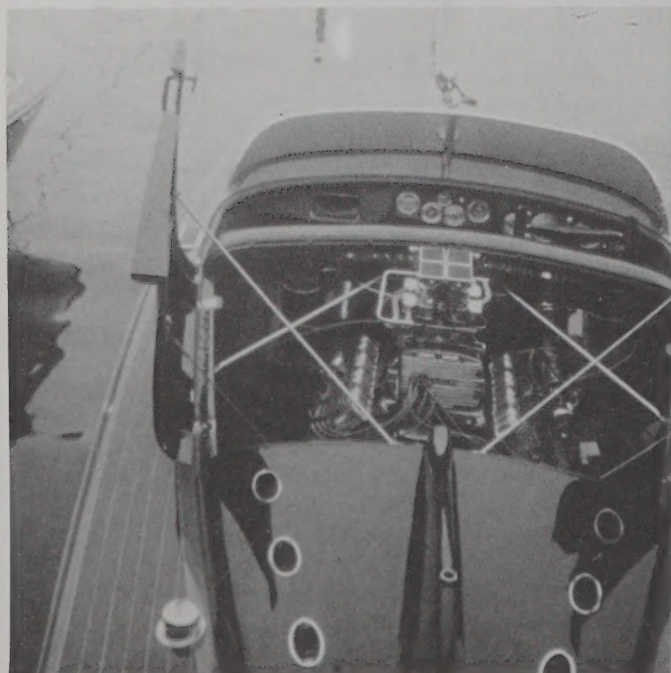
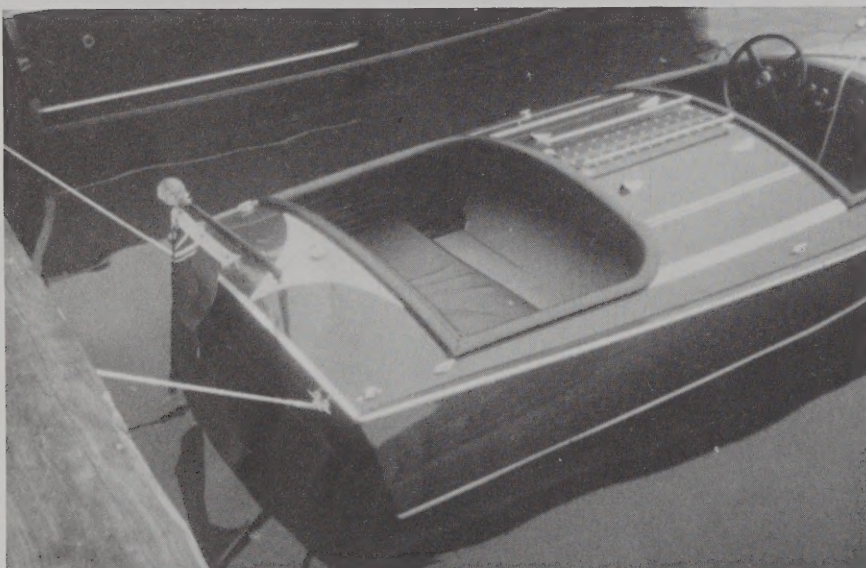


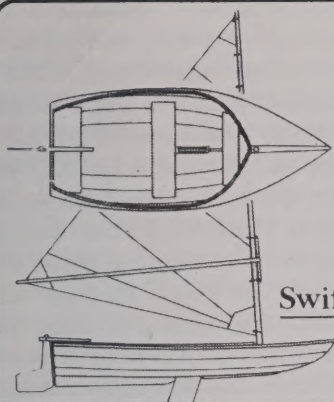
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Reader Walter Fullam reports that there were a few small boats on hand as well this year, including a restored 1943 E.M. White canoe. Walter sent a few photos of some of the power that powered these antique runabouts.

Left: A restored Mullins runabout from Canada. Below, two power plants on show; left a Chris Craft "Cobra", right a Crosley powered "Aristo Craft".





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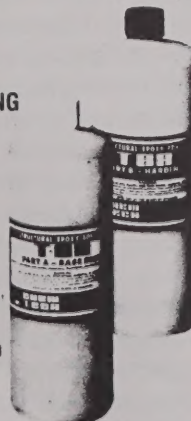
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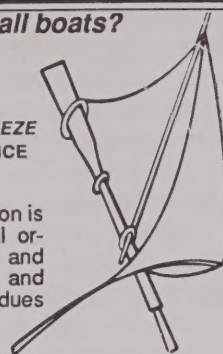
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When we made sure we were well across we turned westward toward the point and on looking at the shore found we were a mile and more out. The water was perfectly calm, there not being wind enough to disturb its oil-like surface. Our boom creaked back and forth as we rose and fell on the great ground swells. Fortunately the tide was running in and set strongly round the Cape so we moved rapidly by the shore. We felt painfully small on that limitless expanse of water, our boat being the only speck on its broad surface. We were safe enough, however, so long as it kept calm, but only a moderate breeze would raise a sea that could swamp us. The town of Cape May was a long time approaching, but at last we came opposite it. No one was in the streets and the beach was deserted. A short distance beyond Cape May is Sea Grove, built right on the point, with the bay upon one side and between them is one of those freaks in architecture--an elephant hotel--and just as we came off this, the wind died away altogether and left us lying almost helpless, and still a long distance from the point, with the tide likely to change any minute and carry us back where we came from.

But in a short time we began to feel a breeze on our faces that we could not catch with the sail. Soon it died away. Then shortly after another puff stronger than the first reached us and set our boom swinging erratically inboard and out, another calm followed and then once more a breeze, and this time we could see it coming across the water. Luck was with us at last; it was coming from the south. Faintly at first it struck us, barely starting us through the water, then brisker and brisker, till it was blowing a fresh breeze that carried us along at a good pace, and in a short time we rounded the last tip of the point with our sheet slacked all the way off and came into the bay and, as we did so, met the ebb tide running down to the sea. The south wind had come just in the nick of time.

All morning and the greater part of the afternoon the wind held the same, but about four o'clock, when we had reached the end of the Cape where the shore trends off to the west, it began to increase rapidly in strength. We had headed westward when we noticed this change and were standing for a point a number of miles away, marked by several black tree tops. The direction in which we were not sailing brought the wind abeam, a fortunate circumstance, for soon it came on to blow hard, and if we had been sailing free, our boat would have become unmanageable. We went on for an hour or so, the breeze growing stronger all the time, until it had developed into a small gale that ruffled the

ROUND CAPE MAY POINT IN A SNEAK BOX



(Conclusion)

by T. Harry Walnut

(From the June
1902 issue of *Rudder*.)

Submitted by
Roger Allen)

surface of the bay and covered it with ugly brown seas which bore down savagely on our quarter. Our stern would rise on them and we would go coasting like an avalanche down their sides with our bow nearly buried under the next. We were making remarkably fast time, and the trees ahead of us rapidly grew more distinct and soon we could see the shore itself, and then we noticed that it ran out some distance beyond where we had expected. We hoped fervently that Maurice River would be on the other side, for we were anxious to get into shelter of some kind, and quickly too.

At last we rounded the point and found that the shore fell off into a deep cover, with a steep meadow bank against which the waves were beating and splashing high in the air, but nowhere could we see anything like a river mouth, and our hearts sank. But soon they rose again, for we caught sight of an oyster sloop heading directly for the shore, and when she reached it we saw her pass through an opening invisible to us, and looking ahead of her we caught sight of a forest of masts rising out of the meadows, each with a topsail hanging from the masthead. Evidently there was a harbor there, but it was too risky to think of running for it before the wind while carrying full sail, so we stood out some distance farther from shore where we thought the waves might be less choppy and we dropped anchor. As soon as we brought up we felt the full force of the wind; it whistled past our ears and rove a shower of spray in our faces. I had to shout to make my voice carry the length of the boat. Charlie undid the halyards and down came the sail, flapping in the wind, the gaff swinging and jerking like a thing bewitched, and the boat under our feet pitching viciously at its cable's end. Our shins were driven against the sides of the cockpit till they were raw, and a dozen times the struggling boom nearly pushed us overboard.

But we conquered at last and got our handkerchief sail up. Then Charlie, waiting his chance, jumped to the bow and, holding on by the mast, pulled up on the cable. I though surely we would run through the next

sea and my heart almost stood still as a big wave, looking higher than Charlie and as perpendicular as a wall, rushed at us. I took hold of something, gripping it like grim death, and stopped breathing with my eyes glued on that wave. But in a moment the bow had lifted--Charlie and anchor both--and we were freed from bottom and driving rapidly backward. I jammed the tiller hard-a-port and, as the bow swung off, hauled the sail amidships. The wind struck it and we spun around like a top and were off before the seas too quickly for them to catch us broadside.

We heaved two large sighs of relief as we felt ourselves safe once more, and taking a sloop for a guide, followed it through the narrow, deep slit in the bank into Maurice River, where, after viewing the great fleet of oyster craft we put up for the night in a cozy little niche in the bank sheltered by grass as high as our mast, which kept off the wind so well that a candle on the deck would scarcely have flickered.

When we awoke in the morning the sun was barely up and hidden behind heavy gray clouds. The wind had shifted to the north, as we discovered upon leaving our shelter. It was nearly seven o'clock when we came out into the bay and saw ahead of us a boundless expanse of rough, dreary-looking water. On the left was the point we had rounded the night before, and to the right was another point that stretched as far as we could see out into the bay, and along this we stood close-hauled. Once beyond it and we felt sure we would be in the river and able to see the other shore, which was what we were particularly anxious for, since now we felt almost as a man would, crawling along the edge of a precipice--nothingness upon one side of him.

The wind was only moderate and gradually decreasing, but there was considerable sea running and we pounded too much to make rapid progress. For a long time we sailed and at last a black streak on the end of the point took the shape of a small light-house, and finally we came opposite it, and then stood far out into the bay before going about, from which position we could look around the end of the point, and to our great disappointment found that we could trace a continuous shore line connecting with another tree-marked point away off to the westward. We tacked to the shore, passing not far astern of a two-masted coasting schooner lying at anchor. As we were out of water, we ran alongside of her and called to one of the crew who good-naturedly filled our bucket for us. When I followed him onto the deck the schooner, though only a small one, seemed as large as a church; its sides were half as high as our mast and made our little

craft look like the merest cockle-shell. the sailor soon came back with our water and as he pushed us off gave us a handsome complement, "You have a boat there as'll stand by ye," he said. This just touched a tender spot, for while we knew our boat wasn't beautiful we were proud of her seaworthiness. From here we stood across the cove and sailed till the shore behind us faded to indistinctness and yet the shore ahead seemed no closer, while the land connecting the two was merely an indefinite line. there was little wind and the water was smooth; apparently we were not advancing at all. It was the perfection of tediousness. There was nothing stationary to gauge our speed by, so that we felt as though we were idly rocking back and forth in the lap of the sea and gaining not so much as an inch. And how insignificant we felt, all alone on the bay with shore so far off as scarcely to make a boundary to the horizon. Everywhere we looked was the same monotonous, placid gray water, not a log or a stick to vary its appearance. We read Stevenson's "Suicide Club" and told stories and talked and dreamed to while away the time, and once were interested by a tortoise as large round as a table which we almost ran over as it was sunning itself on the surface. But with all our ingenuity at contriving pastimes we were ready to conclude the sail intermingle, when our destination began to grow appreciably larger and the shore became visible jutting out a long ways beyond the trees we had pointed for, so that when finally we arrived at the land we had a tiresome spell of beating against the tide before reaching the extremity of the point. And for all our striving we were destined to disappointment, for now we could see that the shore in front of us made a deep loop and then again projected out into the bay. This discovery nearly threw us into despair, and we began to think the Delaware was a mirage we were doomed to keep following the rest of our days round an endless succession of points.

It was late in the afternoon before we had crossed the cove, and meanwhile the sun had broken through the clouds and the blue sky came into view all overhead. There was just breeze enough to make the water crisp and it sparkled at every ripple. All around, it was too bright for us to feel doleful long and we began to be cheerful, and lo and behold as we passed the point we caught sight of a streak along the western horizon which, as far as we could trace it, extended parallel to the Jersey shore. It was Delaware without a doubt, and at last we were actually in the river with the other shore in sight, and as if nothing could bear to mar our good fortune

the wind conveniently worked round a little, and we hauled our sheet and stood directly up the river, with our spirits at the top notch of jubilation.

Halfway down in the sea off to the left was a lonely lighthouse, the only stationary thing in the expanse of moving waters. A big steamer when past it on its way to sea with a long thin trail of black smoke streaking the sky behind it.

We had not gone far when a large buck-eye came into sight astern. It overhauled and passed us before we had gone more than a few miles and later put into a snug little harbor, where we had half a mind to follow her, but as the weather looked settled we decided to push on and sail by night. But when the sun went down and the chilly night air came across the water we gave up the idea and standing in close to shore, cast anchor and put up for the night.

We turned out bright and early, in time to see the finest sunrise anyone could imagine and also to catch the flood tide. We were set upon making home before another day should pass, and this determination completely destroyed the charms of sleeping in a boat. There was a gentle breeze from the north to carry us along and we slipped rapidly by the bank. For a time the view up river was obstructed by a point, on passing which we caught sight of grim, square Fort Delaware upon the opposite shore, with the United States flag flying over it. The distance between us and it did not look very great, and we were surprised at the time it took us to cover it, but at last we came opposite the fort and then it faded into the distance as quickly as it had been slow in approaching.

The wind had been growing stronger all this time, and when we reached the fort was blowing fiercely and stirring up a sea that kept our decks continually flooded, but for all that we were going upstream at a remarkable pace, when the breeze died away as quickly as it had risen and left us lying becalmed off Newcastle. Once in awhile barely perceptible puffs from all quarters came across the water, but they did us little good, and we stewed and fretted and complained about our luck. We had plenty of comrades in misery, however, for boats, large and small, drifted along with us, and for awhile we lay alongside of a schooner-rigged hay scow whose crew were having a great loaf in the soft hay.

Later the wind came in faintly from the same quarter as earlier in the morning, and by taking advantage of it we soon left our cumbersome companions far behind. Some miles beyond Newcastle we overtook a heavy Dutch schooner with broad bows and bulg-

ing sides slowly beating up river: we passed her almost as if she were standing still.

At Pensgrove we landed and bought a few provisions, and on putting out again we discovered to our great satisfaction that the wind had veered round and was coming in from the south and all the boats in sight down river were coming up with their sheets slacked way off and the schooners wing and wing. The old Dutchman was in plain sight, and not far behind him we could see the lofty sides of the hay scow..

We sailed along near to the marshy Jersey shore till we had left Wilmington behind, which we had a good view of lying across the stream in the midst of purple mountains. In the channel along the western bank were a small fleet of vessels racing up stream; one fast schooner soon took the lead and other craft lined out according to their individual qualities. The Dutchman and the hay scow brought up the rear in a spirited contest for last place, with the odds as we finally decided slightly in favor of the hay scow. They remained in sight all the way up past Chester and Chester Island, and it was not till we were as far up as the navy yard that their spreading sails were lost to view astern.

For eleven good hours we had had a strong tide under us and we were not unprincipled enough to grumble when we met the ebb a little below the mouth of the Schuylkill, though it did make a big difference in our prospects and put home a long ways farther off.

As we drew near the heart of the city the river became more crowded and we had to cross the lines of ferryboats, where we were tossed about in a startling fashion by the swells from the lumbering craft. Night had come on in earnest before we were much more than halfway past the city, but the wind continued brisk, and we glide don in darkness, keeping a sharp lookout for steamers; every moving light was given a wide berth and, if the truth must be told, we even shied at some that were not moving.

Several times we had rapid maneuvering to do, but always escaped accident and finally, to our great relief, drew away from the danger point and passed on up river, and by midnight were safely home and in bed sleeping off the somewhat exhausting effects of an eight days' cruise in a sneak box.

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My friend Douglas Coffin and I share an annual catboat race challenge between his ancient beautiful Beetle Cat and my 14.5' catboat built in Mattapoisett, MA, years ago, a boat I've had many experiences in since 1945. We do this each year in the Harpswell/Bailey

Island area of Casco Bay. The rivalry over who is fastest revolves around the fact that my boat has NEVER exceeded 4 knots but I am considered the better sailor.

Thinking of this year's race, Douglas, who is a professional illustrator and cartoonist, drew up

the enclosed which he kindly has offered for sharing with your readers if you choose to accept it. I thought it was appropriate to the whole tone of your magazine.

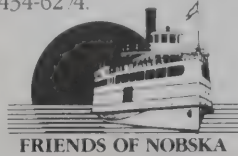
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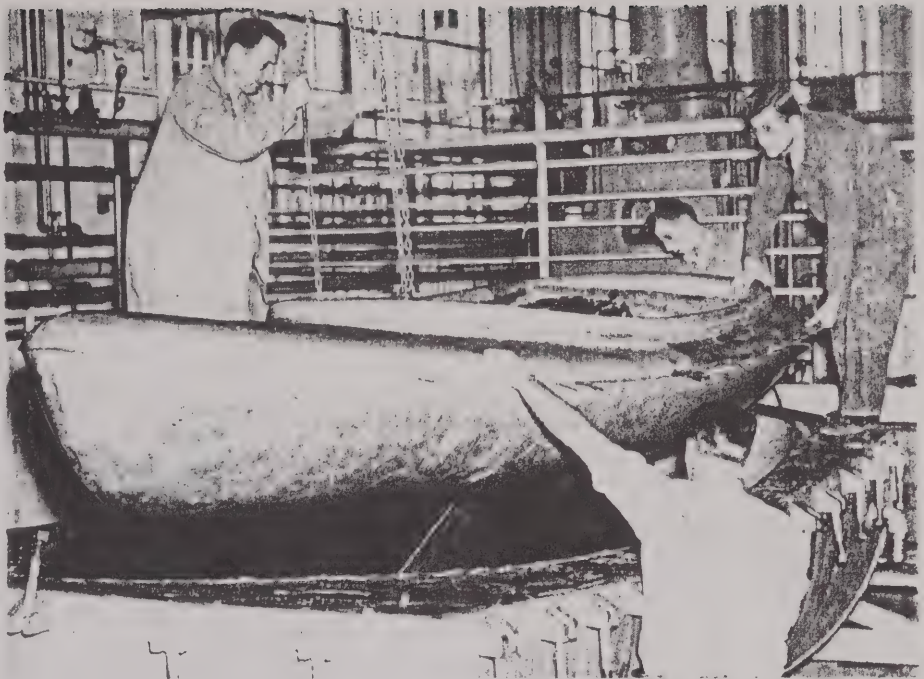
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My "BB Cat"

I have owned my antique fiberglass "BB Cat" since 1973 when I bought it in Cohasset, Massachusetts. The previous owner referred to it as a "Beetle Cat" but I later found under many layers of paint the original tag identifying it as a "BB Cat", one molded for the builder Carl Beetle of New Bedford, Massachusetts, by General Electric Company's plastic molding division in Pittsfield, Massachusetts. These earliest fiberglass hulls had to be molded under steam heat and pressure in a complex metal mold and pressure tank. I have been unable to learn anything from G.E. about this subject through contacts in that firm.

According to an article in the 1985 "National Fisherman Yearbook", Carl Beetle was a pioneer in building small boats in the new fiberglass, right after World War II he began to build the family's "Beetle Cat" in the revolutionary new material just about nobody in boatbuilding even knew of. In another article on the subject of my rather unique boat, Waldo Howland of Concordia tells in the "Catboat Book" of how he came to own the original "Beetle Cat" design when Carl Beetle declined to resume building the famed little cats after the War and instead sold the design to Howland, stipulating that they be sold as "Wooden Beetles". Carl went on to produce his fiberglass version, somewhat changed in detail for the molding process, and called it a "BB Cat". Beetle was ahead of his times and met public apathy and even resentment for his plastic boats, and in 1951 sold out his boatbuilding business, financially exhausted and discouraged. He died in 1953, never witnessing the way his pioneering so completely swept away the old order of wooden boatbuilding.



A "BB Cat" hull emerges from the mold at the General Electric plant in Pittsfield, Massachusetts.

My boat is hull #38, but I have no idea as to how many were built during the production life of the boat. It is a capable daysailer holding four adults easily. The centerboard is enclosed in a fiberglass housing and is controlled by a lever mounted forward on the right side. The spars are aluminum and the sail is marconi. There is a mast step in the bottom of the boat and the mast is dropped into it through a hole in the deck and is unstayed. The rudder is a typical barn door type no deeper in the water than the shallow skeg molded into the bottom of the hull. The cockpit is surrounded by a mahogany coaming and has a plywood deck. All the fittings are heavy cast bronze. The centerboard and rudder are made of 3/4" plywood, although the original rudder, which broke on my first outing, was mahogany.

The boat tends to be wet in a

chop unless most of the weight is moved well aft. It will sail close to flat in the water up to about 15 knots of wind, when it will assume a slight heel. Over 20 knots it becomes more of a handful than I care to deal with. The most amazing feature I have found is its stability. At the mooring or underway I can stand on the bow in front of the mast and rock back and forth with no loss of stability.

I have been sailing my "BB Cat" for 16 years now summers in Biddeford Pool, Maine, where I keep it with family. I would very much like to hear from anyone who owns another "BB Cat". I have seen only one other in 16 years, at Kennebunkport, Maine, in 1980. It had been converted to the "Beetle Cat" gaff rig. I was unable to locate its owner at that time.

Jonathan Hedman, 634 Turnpike St., Stoughton, MA 02072.

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Yachting Nostalgia

The theme of the Third Annual Mystic Seaport Yachting History Symposium, held at the Seamen's Inne March 16-18, was "Yachting Before and After the War", World War II as it turned out, not the Great War as one might have suspected from the venerable aspect of some outspoken members of the audience. Judging by the enthusiastic comments the following day, Elizabeth Meyer's Friday evening slide lecture on her extraordinary, expensive, and successful six-year restoration of the 1934 J-Boat "Endeavour", which was completed last May and for which she was given this year's W.P. Stevens Award, caused even this tony crowd to sit up and take notice.

The papers read on Saturday dealt with changes in the yachting scene and developments in yachting magazines. Photographer Stanley Rosenfeld established the theme and set the stage for much of the day when he noted that the flagships of the New York Yacht Club averaged about 120' before 1940 and were reduced to half that size after the War. Lleweland Holland III turned up the volume of amiable irony with anecdotes about Commodore Vanderbilt, Junius Morgan and oth-

er worthies of the New York Yacht Club, including Richard Whitney, who raised a few eyebrows when it was discovered that he had plundered the Club's treasury of all its considerable funds. On a more serious note, Howland described the often forgotten role played by the some two hundred yachts that were on antisubmarine patrol during World War II.

As Jonathan Wilson, publisher of "Wooden Boat" and Symposium moderator noted, all the invited speakers were associated with yachting publications. John Rousmaniere talked about the early history of American boating magazines, illustrating his remarks with slides of the extravagant and romantic paintings that were used as cover illustrations for "Yachting" magazine. His remarks suggested that the most noteworthy of the first generation of magazines for those of us who like to mess about in boats rather than yachts was Thomas F. Day's "Rudder". Robert N. Bavier, who became publisher of "Yachting" after World War II discussed the boom in ocean racing and cruising following the War and the not always happy changes in design that accompanied

it. And Bruce Kirby, the first editor of the magazine that has become "Sailing World", illustrated the changes that have taken place in various one-design classes in recent years. One telling contrast in his presentation was a photograph of Uffa Fox sitting leisurely in his beloved "Avenger" followed by an action shot of her modern counterpart, an International 14, with its ornately caparisoned crew riding outboard on a trapeze.

Throughout the day, until Kirby's talk on one-designs, nostalgia for a bygone age of yachting hung in the air. Though there were some salts and skeptics scattered here and there, much of the company seemed to fondly recall or imagine the time when the men who counted had proper yachts and belonged to the right clubs. This impression may have come from the plethora of striking photographs and videos of beautiful yachts, both power and sail. At these yachting symposiums, as in some boating magazines, the image seems to have almost vanquished the word.

Jim Lacey, Willimantic, CT.

Return of the 12-1/2

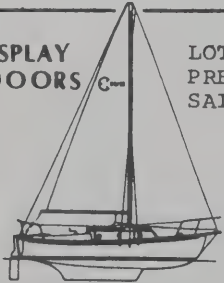
A year ago, Michael Pesare of the Herreshoff Museum in Bristol, RI, who owns a classic wooden Herreshoff 12-1/2 day sailer, called together all interested owners of the famed little boat and founded the Narragansett Bay Herreshoff 12-1/2 Footer Association. Thirteen persons joined up and the Museum sponsored a 75th Anniversary Regatta for nine of the boats in August.

The 1990 season finds membership grown to 41 with 19 boats now in the fleet. Events planned for this summer include a day sail and picnic at Prudence Island, the Herreshoff Rendezvous in Bristol and a revival of the Wind Mill Regatta, a race around Prudence.

Several more 12-1/2's are currently undergoing restoration by boatbuilder George Zachorne of Wickford. Members fondly refer to

George as "The Magician of Wickford" for the wonders he works in renewing these classics.

Three issues of an Association newsletter, "Downwind" have been published to date, sent to all members and other interested persons. If you wish to learn more about this group, write to Michael Pesare, P.O. Box 1102, Bristol, RI 02809, or call (401)253-5001.



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Thoreau Portaged Here

Some serious whitewater paddlers returned to the unlikely locale of "Thoreau's Portage" on the Concord River in greater downtown Lowell, Massachusetts in early April for another try at this unique piece of fast moving water where the Concord River drops in less than a mile into the Merrimack River over a series of drops through granite lined embankments from Lowell's long ago industrial days. Two years ago this whitewater gem was discovered and a race was held. Last year there was no water, but this spring much rain had the river topped out.

After watching a couple of competitors wash out in the worst of the going down around gates 16-20 I mentioned to friend Bart Hawthaway that the novices certainly were "in over their heads" in this level of whitewater. Spoken right from the heart of ignorance. Bart looked at me in a rather disappointed way and replied, "There are no novices in this race, Bob." Those washouts were the less expert of the experts, it seems.

We viewed the proceedings for a couple of hours, men in C-1 canoes and women in K-1 kayaks. A C-1 canoe looks much like the whitewater kayak to me, but the paddler kneels in the boat, which is decked, on sort of a saddle with a strap over his thighs to hold him in, and, of course, a spray skirt to keep the water out. Much of the progress through the roaring foam is semi-submerged, often fully submerged. And the C-1 is paddled with a single blade paddle.

The course of about a half-mile included about 24 "gates", sets of poles suspended over the water from lines stretched across the river. The requirement

is to pass through all the gates in the correct direction. Unlike downhill ski slalom, some of the gates in this game are "uphill", that is the paddler comes hurtling down past the gate, then must turn and paddle back through it. The gates are arranged by knowledgeable top level paddlers to suit the natural course of the river, its rapids, overfalls, eddies and hydraulics. Missed gates, or gates run the wrong way, are charged off as time penalties, with best time being the winning objective.

Spectating is superb here, one can get right next to the torrent safely and be within a few feet of the competitors as they come by. An old abandoned railway bed runs along one side of the river providing the spectator access and participant parking and "pit area". About 45 paddlers turned out, paddling C-1 and C-2 canoes and K-1 kayaks, no open canoes. I heard that some top names were there and the local paper reported that the competitors came from five different countries. It was serious stuff, not your regular weekend whitewater outing for the local canoe club.

This is a game for the young, of course. I suppose there were veterans in their 30's in there somewhere, but just about every face I watched reflecting the demands of the challenge as they swept by me was that of a youth, young men and young women. Notable amongst the grimaces was one young woman who had an intense smile set in place, she appeared to be really relishing this and to me seemed to run the gates where I was rather well. Again, ignorance of what was going on. "She was awful", I was told by a more informed aficionado standing nearby

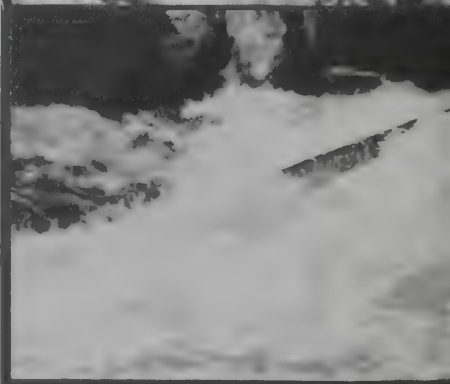
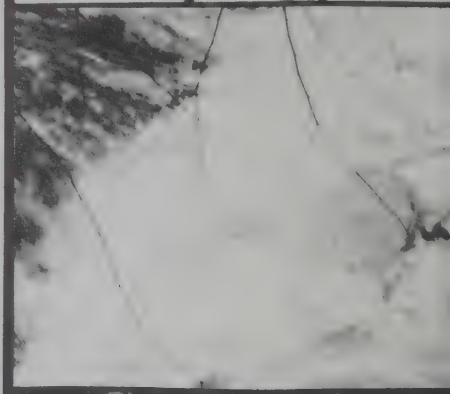
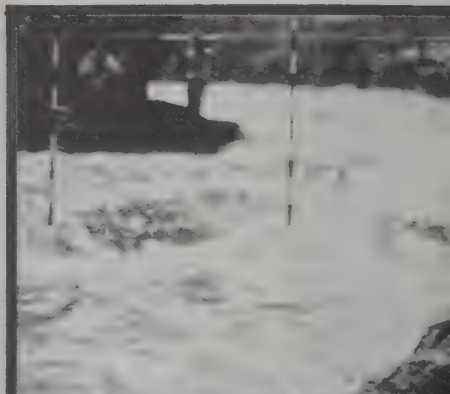
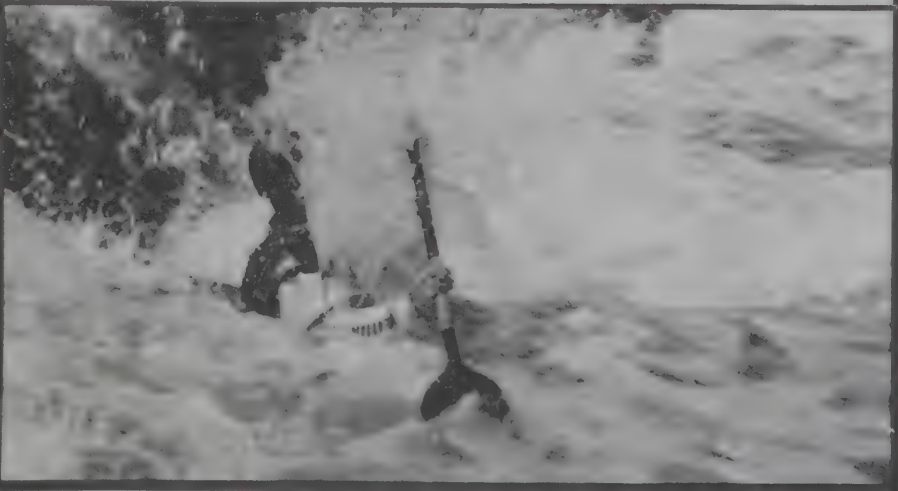
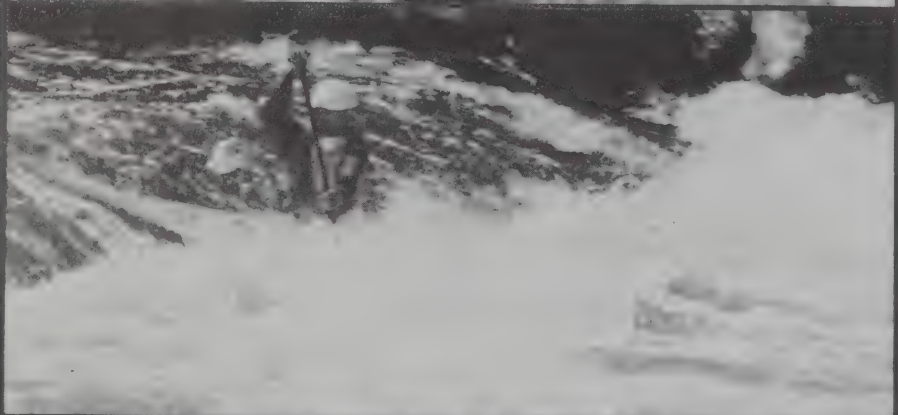
when I ventured my appreciative comment. But everyone liked her smile.

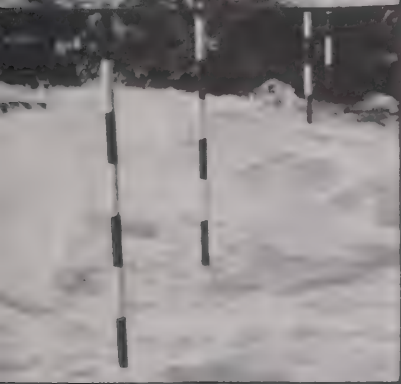
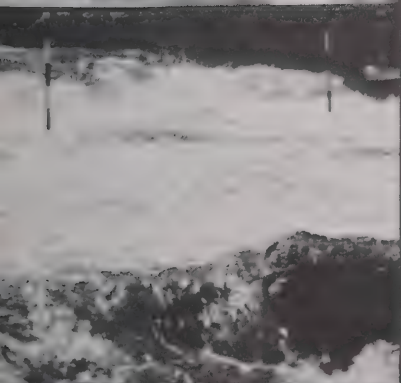
Messing about in white water has got to be out at the far edge of how we can play in boats, it's more of an athletic sport than a boating experience, with the power of the water carrying one along and the necessary skills to control one's passage most effectively being the ability to read the river and use that paddle to direct one's way. Paddling for speed is needed when ferrying across to the next gate against the power of the flow, or back upstream through a reverse gate. Bart explained to me that while I saw this whole 50 foot wide raging torrent, the paddler was looking at a 6" wide trail through it that he planned to take in order to set best time of the day. How far each strayed from that trail determined their final fate in the standings.

Dangerous for sure if you know not what you do. Hence, no novices here. But controlled danger for those sufficiently skilled, with rescue teams along the bankings at the serious spots holding throw bags of rescue line. I heard that a Friday practice mishap had found one young woman pinned in a hydraulic right next to the shore where I stood the next day. Water pouring over a drop forced her to the bottom of the river there and held her down until the rescuers got to her.

By the time you get to read this, the Concord at that point will be just trickles of water running downhill amongst all the boulders that were making it such a challenge on this high water April Saturday.

Report & Photos by Bob Hicks





PETER DUFF BUILDS HIMSELF A SCHOONER - PART FIVE

Just about a year ago there appeared in these pages the start of a series of articles describing the construction of an 18 foot schooner I was building for my own enjoyment. A new cold molded wooden deck and a new fiberglass hull were taken off a relative's old wooden Alden O-boat. The new boat is really the old boat reincarnate, so the name "Jolyon" that graced the old wooden transom will do the same on the new fiberglass one. I blithely announced that I expected to finish her by the end of the summer. After twenty years of building boats for a living you'd think I'd have learned a thing or two about forecasting. Rather typically I was grossly optimistic. Two things interfered -- an unusually rainy spring (she's outdoors, under a particularly dirty oak tree), and the need to get cracking on "Relentless" the SHEARWATER-class leeboard cruiser I was finishing simultaneously for my own use. We were to lead a DOVEKIE/SHEARWATER cruise in Ontario in mid-August, so "Relentless" had to take priority. The schooner project has not gone by the board, it's been on hold. One has to be crazy, desperate, or be very lucky and have a warm, dry winter to even think of boatbuilding outdoors here in Massachusetts. But now spring has arrived (although snow is predicted for tomorrow night!) The hold is hereby suspended. The clock is running. I'll not trap myself with wishful forecasting this time.

The task of the moment is to complete the spars. When I bought the project from my son Ian just before he left for Scotland to study naval architecture, he had completed two gaffs, the main boom, and a perfectly lovely pole bowsprit. All were varnished and ready to go. Unfortunately things had changed enough between since it was made that I couldn't use the bowsprit. This meant I had to make two masts, the bowsprit, and the fore boom. One of the gaffs was too short, so I scarfed on an extension. In addition, I've decided that a main topmast would be fun to play with, so must make one of them, too.

The bowsprit was the first spar I tackled. It is a plank bowsprit instead of a round one, which would have been more authentic for an old Alden schooner. Unfortunately to be visually correct, it would have been too small structurally. So it is made from a lovely, clear white

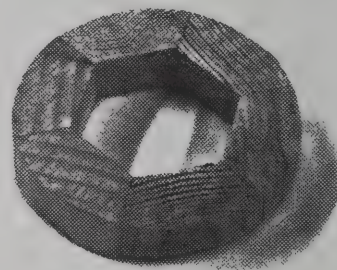
oak 2 x 8. I thinned it down to 1" thick over most of its length. It'll still carry my weight. It has enough bearing surface on the deck, and enough inherent stiffness to avoid needing shrouds.

The most unusual part of it is the aft end. When not under way, she'll lie to a mooring in Mattapoisset harbor. The mooring pendant eyesplice will need a place to be secured. The 15 pound yachtsman's anchor will be stowed, stocked and ready to be let go, on the bowsprit. The anchor warp will need a place to be cleated. A Jonesport cleat on the aft end of the bowsprit is the way I've always handled these. The white oak plank I got the bowsprit out of was big enough to let me get two Jonesport cleats from the one piece. I want to wait til it's installed to get a photo of it. Please be patient.

The masts were the next thing to tackle. I had hoped to find "Jolyon's" original mast to use as a starting point for the mainmast. No such luck. The boatyard had used it as a replacement for a busted mast, as a flagpole, or as BTUs on a cold winter day. Whatever. It meant that I'd have to build two masts from scratch. I had some 16' and 20' sitka spruce 1 x 8s. Finding, making, borrowing, or buying enough clamps to laminate these 1 x 8s together into billets big enough to make solid masts I found daunting enough to discourage me into flashing inaction. Such spars would be pretty heavy, too. Instead, I worked out a way to build hollow round spars cheaply, without needing a single store-bought clamp.

First, I went to the drawing board and drew a circle of the diameter I thought the mast should be, 3". Next I divided it into six equal staves and drew in what the cross section would be if the staves started life at 7/8" thick. Would there be enough wood at the edges of the staves? Yes there would. In fact there'd be enough even with the staves planned to 3/4". Next, I drew a circle that just kissed the outside corners of the hexagon made by gluing the staves together. This came out being just a little smaller than 3-3/4", for which a holesaw was available. I trotted right over to my friendly supplier, got one, found a couple of pieces of scrap lumber big enough to yield a couple of 6" squares, sawed 3-3/4" holes in the middle of each, and mounted them 6" apart on another piece of scrap. Then I cut six staves of a width that would just fit

together in these holes. I allowed them to be a little loose so I could line the holes with polyethylene so the staves wouldn't stick to the jig. I spread yellow glue on all faying surfaces, assembled them in the jig, and tightened the whole schmere by driving wedges made from 1/2" wide strips of cedar shingles into the crescents between the hexagon points. It worked slick! Here's what a piece cut off the trial "mast" looked like.



Before I dared to commit a valuable sitka plank to this building scheme, I tried cutting more short pieces of scrap lumber into stave sets of slightly varying widths. It turns out that staves that just fit the polyethylene lined holes work much better than do loose-fitting staves.

To build a mast, I built the jig, shown in the photo. Those are the staves for the first mast lying next to it. The hole pieces are 1/2" A-C plywood cut into 5-3/4" squares. 3-3/4" holes are cut in the middle of each. This was a minor mistake. The next time I make up a set (I've used these twice, and they'll be usable several times more.) I'll jig up to saw the holes distinctly non-symmetrical. It's almost impossible to get the holes exactly in the center, so make the skewness obvious, to simplify setting up.

The polyethylene I used was reasonably heavy. It came as a sleeve 5" wide. I slit it on one of its edges. It fit just fine, and left a gap at the top of about 2" that gave access for applying glue.

I used Gougeon WEST 105/205 epoxy glue. It's the fast cure variety, so I got a gang of six of us to slather glue on the staves for the 20' main mast, with plumbers "acid brushes". The ambient temperature was in the mid 40's. This retarded the glue enough so the army I'd assembled had no trouble staying ahead of it. There were really too many of us. Three or four would have been better. We put hexagonal shaped filler pieces of appropriate lengths in each end. We coated all faying surfaces, and brushed

the stuff over the entire interior of the mast. Once the whole thing was glued and assembled, 1/2" wide shingles wedges were inserted and driven home in every crescent. Then I cranked up the shop stove. Quite quickly the air temperature was in the high 70s. The cure proceeded normally.

The next morning, not without difficulty, and not without breaking a good number that had bonded to the sitka or to the gluing jig, I removed the wedges. Then a sharp rap with a hammer broke apart each hot glue joint that held the jig together. After trimming the flashing of glue that leaked out the bottom seams before curing, the jig rings came off easily. The first mast was light, stiff, and perfectly sound, although one seam at each end was a little wide where there had not been quite enough clamping pressure over the filler pieces. The void

filling property of the epoxy took care of that.

Now, two days later, three of us have glued together the 16' long foremast. It is the same diameter as the mainmast. We used the same jig rings, and can use them again if someone wants a 3" diameter hollow mast. The foremast is even better than its predecessor.

I made a simple V-block jig to hold the mast so the thickness planner would cut off the hexagon's corners. In three passes on each corner I was able to get twelve equal width flats. With very little hand planning the stick has become round. I did the final rounding with 2-3/8" wide x 17" long strips of 80 grit sandpaper. The top 18" of the foremast is tapered slightly. The mainmast is constant diameter to the top. It will be arranged to accept a topmast. I'm suffering through trying to figure out how to make the topmast so it

can be sent down from the deck.....without making it overly complicated, or be necessary to have to go aloft.. But that's the joy of a project like this.

My next task will be to get together the mold for the keel. The neighbor who I thought would pour the keel has been summarily put out of business by the EPA or the WCTU or some such acronym agency of big brother. Luckily a foundry in Rhode Island will do it. I'll let you know how we make out.

My invitation to come and see "Jolyon" as she comes to life, here in Mattapoisett, is still open. I enjoy visitors. Please call me at 508-758-4991 for instructions and to verify that I'll be here.

Or better yet, come and spend the night at our Bed and Breakfast. Call me at the same number for reservation.



The very simple and inexpensive, yet effective, mast clamping fixture. It is ready to glue "Jolyon's" main mast. Those are the staves for it laid out on the saw horses.



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WHISP

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LOA — 15'7"
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Weight — 70 lb.

One of the most popular designs from Steve Redmond has been his 15' "Whisp" ultralight skiff for sailing or rowing. While it has been most popular with home builders, I have been building them professionally for several years. I have heard from many who would like to build "Whisp" but feel they might not have the resources to put together the hull and do a really good job of it. The scarphing, plank fitting, bevelling, cutting gains, etc. is beyond the experience of many.

These are all the easy parts for me. I am set up with a production building jig, patterns, etc. The part that takes up many hours and runs up the cost of the finished boat is the fitting of all the other parts, sanding and finishing, all things the home builder can do taking his time and turning out a really nice craft. Given a good hull to start with, that is.

Now I have come up with a package to provide just this. It consists of a bare hull; just stem, chines, transom, planking, keel and skeg. It isn't sanded or trimmed in any way. You take it from there.

If, in addition, you want to save yourself the trouble of hunting up materials and sorting them out to make piece parts, I can supply rough blanks of these for you to finish out and install. These are made of the same woods and with the same patterns employed on all the "Whisps" I build.

Now, suppose you want a hull yet more complete than I have described so far? Suppose you feel a little skittish about fitting the breast hook and quarter knees. I can install these for an additional price over and above that for the

blanks. I will do only enough finishing of these to correctly install them, leaving the rest of the finishing to you. This installation does require that certain parts be fitted before others so you have to choose in the correct order. For instance, if you want me to install inwales, you must first have me install the outwales, breast hook, quarter knees and spacer blocks. My list of blanks you can order is arranged in the correct order of installation to assist you in your choices.

If you choose to do epoxy stabilization of the wooden parts and bottom sheathing you should realize these are expensive procedures before asking me to do them on your bare hull. And you'll still have to do the epoxy sealing on the piece parts you finish off yourself. It's not difficult and I provide information on how to do this, as well as materials if you need them.

With each bare hull and blanks package I also include a set of the plans and suggestions from me on how to install and fit each of the parts blanks you order.

It should be obvious from this that I am prepared to work with anyone interested in building a "Whisp" from any point beyond fashioning the basic bare hull. Each will tend to be a "custom" job, right on up to my building and finishing the entire boat with any of the many options I offer. To best learn more about this approach, send for my complete information packet, to me, John Wermescher, Star Rt. 1, Box 274, Crescent City, FL 32012. If you wish to call me, please do so after 8:30 in the evening at (904) 467-2996.

Easy Cruising on a Sailboard



It all started with a phone call from Kenny Okazaki out in Cypress, Calif.

"Your friend, Jim Drake, has designed a new kind of windsurfer. We need an average sailor to test sail it; could you be the one?"

Jim was the designer of the original windsurfer. I knew that he was back at the drawing board, attempting to recast not just his invention but the entire sailing sport he had created more than 20 years ago. If he really had something, I wanted to be a part of it.

I didn't wait for Kenny's explanation; I just said yes and reported to Dana Point, Calif., to give my opinion.

Kenny, it turned out, was part of the Yamaha company's marine R&D operation in California. Yamaha was impressed by Jim's idea for a new sailing craft and had funded a prototype. It was time to try it out on a sailboard cruiser.

Actually, I'm sort of an expert on one kind of windsurfing -- distance sailing, cruising. I became an expert by trying cruising on my own, using a standard sailboard. Others have tried it and given up, because if you're going to go somewhere and do things on the water, you must take some cruising gear along, and a standard board can't even carry your picnic lunch with ease.

Most who have tried cruising on a board have gone back to the standard sailboard activity -- just sailing back and forth off a beach -- or

have bought catamarans or the biggest real sailboats they could afford.

I hung in there, taught myself to strap camping gear to my biggest windsurfer and do weekenders and even week cruises near my home -- on the Chesapeake and the Outer Banks of North Carolina.

I first saw Jim's new design, named WaterSpyder, when he hauled it out of the back of a van on the Dana Point beach. It was long for a windsurfer, about 14 feet, and had two small outriggers attached to the deep, narrow hull.

Jim laid it down on the sand, and a little group of kayakers and boardsailors who haunt that beach came around and asked, "What is it?"

Jim attached a standard sailboard mast, boom and sail and said, "It's a cruising windsurfer." Blank stares.

Jim turned to me. "You're first."

I pushed the craft out into the water, waited for a very small breaking wave, hopped on the broad deck and set a beam reach out into easier waters.

"For R&D purposes," I told myself, "You're starting a 25-mile sail on this windsurfer to some hypothetical island this side of Hawaii. And when you arrive you'll be tired, hungry and thirsty, need a place to spend the night and then be ready to sail back to Dana Point in the morning."

Of course there wasn't a real island out there; I didn't even have a cruiser's peanutbutter sandwich or root

beer on board or a tent to pitch or travelers checks to buy a night's sleep.

It's good that this is merely laboratory research, I thought.

But could an average boardsailor really go 25 miles on Jim's board, carry all necessary supplies and extra sailing gear and feel comfortable about it all?

Just a few miles is a lot on a windsurfer. Sailing one takes concentration and stamina; that's one reason why average boardsailors spend their time back-and-forthing off a beach between rests on the sand.

This time, though, I was maybe a half mile off Dana Point and making good time straight ahead, and my arms, shoulders and legs felt no strain. The outriggers provided the stability in the waves and shifty wind that my contorted body otherwise would have had to furnish. I could sightsee and daydream rather than concentrate on balance.

And the 10-inch deep displacement hull cut the waves and let me hold a steady course, something that the flattish hull of a standard board did not permit.

Jim's original invention, the standard windsurfer, provided great but limited fun. His new design broke the old barriers.

But I had to go back and report my reaction. I moved my weight back on the WaterSpyder's deck, stood it on its tail and let it spin through the wind and onto a new tack



toward the beach. I rode a wave in, handed the rig over to one of the gawkers, said, "Nothing to it", and gave my report to Jim.

It's a comfortable craft, I said, but if I really had planned to sail on, how could I have carried my lunch?

You put it in a waterproof bag and strap it to the stern, Jim said.

What's inside this deep hull, I asked?

Foam, said Jim.

Why not a cargo storage space, I asked?

No problem. If that's what you cruisers want, that's what we'll give you, said Jim.

My next call from Kenny said that there were three new prototypes -- with internal storage just for me -- and did I want to try again in the Sea of Cortez?

We met on a breezy December day a few weeks later on a broad, deserted Mexican beach at the northern tip of the Sea, on the mainland side. We brought camping gear and an intent to explore a literally unexplored part of the world--the abandoned waters and islands where the Colorado River had flowed into the Sea of Cortez before the river began to be drained by farmers farther north a hundred years ago.

Jim, Toshi Yamada -- a marine engineer with Yamaha -- and I launched our WaterSpyders into the warm waters and headed northwest by our deck compasses.

We saw no islands, no beaches -- just brisk waves, lazy dolphins and hazy, distant Baha mountains. After a couple of hours, Jim shouted that he saw a thin line on the

horizon and that might be land. It was.

It was the flattest piece of land I had ever seen, an island a few miles long and maybe one wide. Bare, a few weeds along the shore, a zillion water birds, not a hill in sight but a high tide about to flood the flats we had landed on.

Jim, an engineer, surveyed the terrain and found a spot about six inches higher than the incoming tide, and we pitched out tents, had a cook-out and then explored a fascinating island in evolution.

The island had been built up by Colorado River silt over endless past years, but that silt was no longer coming. Instead, dry sand was blowing from Mexico's great northern desert, to our east, and was building a new island--a thin layer of sand now on top of thick, bottomless mud.

In some years this and the neighboring islands that we explored will be lovely sand beaches and full of tourists. Meanwhile it is marvelous exploring territory, waiting there for fun-lovers on cruising sailboards, kayaks and shallow-draft boats.

Oh, yes; I reported to Jim and Toshi that the internal storage worked; Jim's design now was a practical cruising board.

I was tempted to add that the project was completed and that Yamaha should go into production and then sell the first boards to me and my cruising friends.

What I actually said was that the outrigger support bars might need more work and of course another vigorous test sail around some other

warm-water islands.

Yes, Kenny did call again. Would I go to the Virgin Islands and try Jim's latest modifications? I would.

Four of us started at Water Bay on the eastern end of St. Thomas, island-hopped for a week to the far eastern British Virgins in pleasant 12-to-15-knot winds. Over a campfire on a small and deserted beach, Morgan Souter, our Virgin Islands guide and a truly great sailor, and I, the average sailor, had the tough job of critiquing what Toshi and Jim hoped was the final design.

The new WaterSpyders were still stable and easy to sail; the internal storage was plenty for a week's sailing and camping; we could carry spare sails (for big-wind or light-wind days) strapped to the outrigger bars--what could we usefully criticize?

Morgan tried to be helpful. He said that the board could be checked adequately only with another cruise, perhaps around the Bahamas and then through some islands he knew off Belize ... and had anyone ever taken a sailboard through the Panama Canal?

I suggested Tahiti and then Australia.

What I got was the North Carolina Outer Banks -- sailing with Kitty Hawk friends around historic Roanoke Island to critique the first actual production model -- and then a sail among the Corpus Christi, Texas, bays and islands on one of the first boards from the new California production line.

Of course I have my own WaterSpyder now. I've sailed it with Boston friends on one of New York's finger lakes -- lake Geneva -- the one with all the vineyards and wineries along the shore. Their hospitality to cruising windsurfers is even greater than our ability to cruise along, drop in, cruise along, drop in, cruise along, drop....

And I cruise with kayaking friends from Virginia Beach. Our trips are marine history's first mixed group of paddling and windsurfing explorers. We first started at the north end of the sound just below Virginia Beach and cruised and beach-camped southward for three days, then resumed a few months later and made it to the Outer Banks, near Duck, NC.

Yes, a mixed cruise is feasible. We're compatible.

Depending on the wind, either kayakers or boardsailors have a speed advantage and lead the way. On a no-wind day, the paddlers tow the windsurfers; no problem. And on a big-wind day, the windsurfers tow the kayakers. Fair's fair.

Our group of seven explorers will keep meeting and keep cruising southward. How far is it to Florida, anyhow?

Now, you may feel that all this has been just for fun. But as Kenny told me in that first phone call, it's serious R&D and serious production of the new kind of sailing vessel.

My hard work and Jim's innovations have turned the windsurfer into a craft that permits the sailor to still enjoy the sailboard's unique, intimate relationship of sailor, wind and water while actually going somewhere, doing something, exploring, nature-watching, cruising along with friends or sailing off alone.

Oceans, bays, lakes and rivers offer unlimited playgrounds now for wind and water lovers who are too poor to own yachts but can afford a windsurfer.

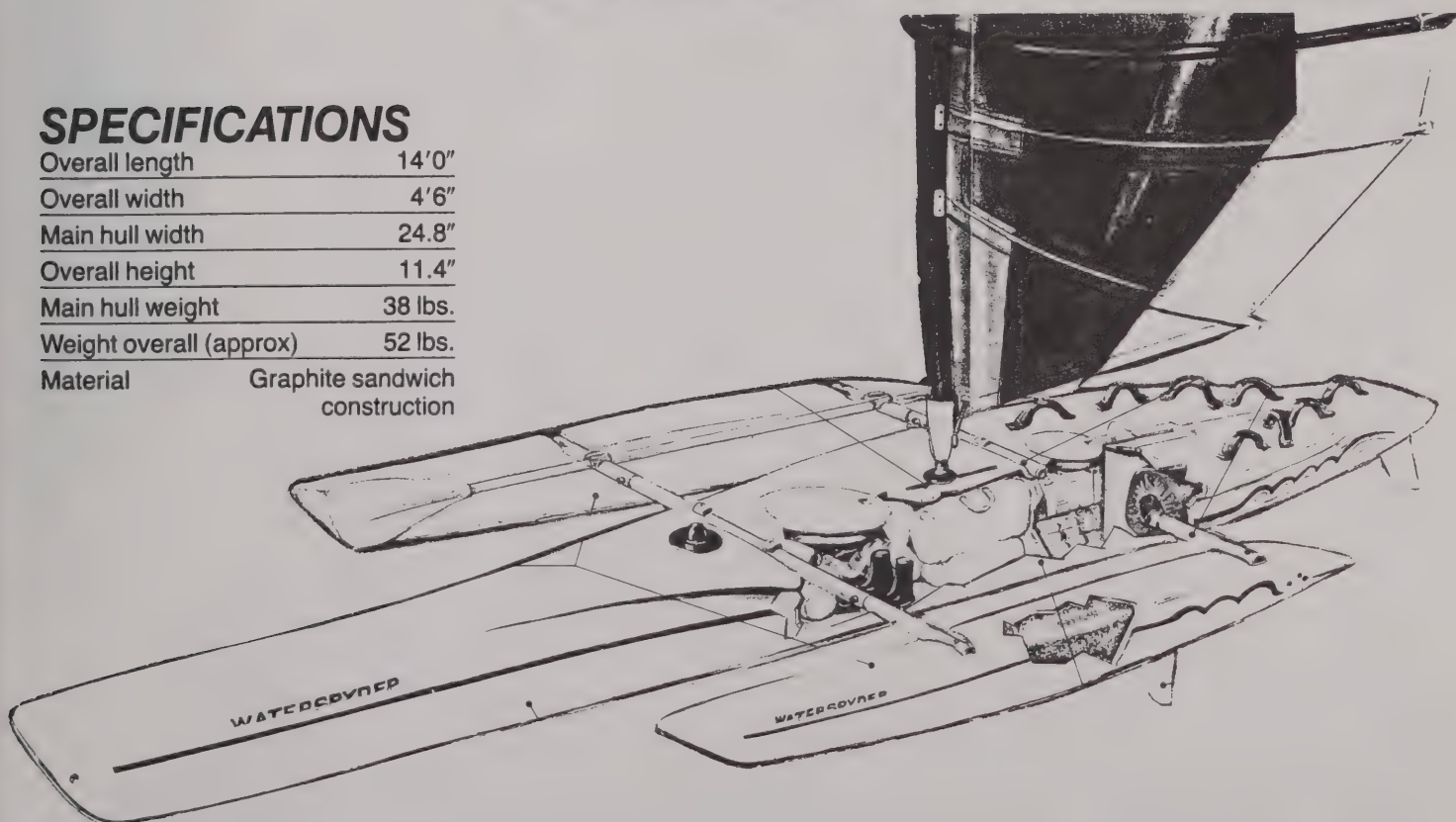
Thanks, Jim.

And of course it's okay to thank me, too.



SPECIFICATIONS

Overall length	14'0"
Overall width	4'6"
Main hull width	24.8"
Overall height	11.4"
Main hull weight	38 lbs.
Weight overall (approx)	52 lbs.
Material	Graphite sandwich construction



Good Morning. Mr. Randall. This is in response to your plaintive wail for help in the May 1 issue of "Messing..." You seem to have three problems:

1. The word "pouring" in your first sentence alerts me that you may very well have too much resin in your layup. This lets the inevitable non-uniform glass distribution float around and make bumps. It also costs more and weighs more...probably with less strength...then the optimum resin/glass ratio. You should be striving for 40% by weight of glass. Don't let it get higher than 45% glass as it'll almost surely be resin starved in places, And that's not good.

The best way to achieve this is to brush resin on the bare gelcoat before you put any glass in place. You can afford to be liberal with resin at this stage. Next lay the first ply of glass onto the wet resin. Roll (with a very short stiff bristle paint roller) the glass to saturate the first ply, and to bring excess resin to the surface. You'll find that you can move resin around fairly readily with the roller. With the brush, paint on enough resin to completely wet out the first ply. Then put on the second layer of glass. Don't add any resin yet. Use the roller, pressing hard, to squeeze the resin up through the second layer. If there are places that are obviously starved for resin, paint some on. If this is the last layer, paint on only enough resin to completely saturate the glass, and no more.

Although not necessary, it would be instructive for you to measure resin content on both old and new work. Take a small piece of scrap (a hole sawn disc would be the best) from some place not including an edge. Weigh the sample, then take it outdoors and set fire to it. If it isn't cooperative, scare hell out of it with a propane torch. Burn all the plastic out of it. Then weigh the glass that's left. Use only a small sample 'cause it'll give off quite a lot of greasy black smoke. Obviously you'll need quite sensitive scales.

Your layup, when working with polyester resin, should be alternating layers of non-woven chopped fiber mat and continuous fiber woven cloth or roving. The interlaminar bond strength between layers of polyester saturated cloth or roving is very low. You can peel two perfectly saturated and cured layers of cloth or roving apart with your bare fingers with little difficulty. But, if you put a ply of mat between them, the interlaminar bond strength (peel resistance) will be substantially increased. 3/4 and 1-1/2 ounces/square foot are readily avail-

About Grinding Fiberglass

able. The heavier weight kind will work best all around.

Another problem with laminates that are all woven goods is pinhole leaks. You can get very high glass contents in such laminates, but that means the spaces between the bundles of fibers will be starved for resin. Thus pinholes are likely. Painting and rolling on more resin is not a complete solution because the open spaces will be very rich in resin. Thus they contribute little strength. They also shrink, when cured, differently from the majority of the laminate. This is what causes the pattern of the woven goods to print through the gelcoat. Using a ply or two of mat against the gelcoat will prevent pinholes. It reduces the likelihood of printout. It also acts as a cushion into which to lay the first woven fabric ply. Alternating plies of mat and woven as you build a thicker laminate will give you the strongest and lightest product.

You've probably heard, read, or just conjectured, that high glass content is good, the higher the better. Well, sir, after 20 years of building the "Stone Horse", "Dovkie", "Doughdish" and "Shearwater" at Edey & Duff (I was the founding Duff. Mait Edey and I sold the whole schmere four years ago) I can tell you that 40-45% glass content is optimum. And you'll need to be damned diligent in your technique to achieve that.

2. If you are going to grind off the overlapping flap to get a smooth surface, then there was no sense in overlapping in the first place. Butt, don't overlap, cloth or woven roving fabrics. If you are doing anything with compound curves, you'll have to cut the second piece to fit the way the first piece lay down in the wet resin.

For working with mat, you can make a very neat joint from one piece of fabric to the next by tearing a ragged edge along each piece. Then the adjoining pieces

fit together like interlocking fingers. The tearing is easy to do. Just take hold of an edge and pull it away from the bulk of the piece. Try to pull off about 3/4". You'll soon have the technique to rapidly and accurately tear pieces of mat to just fit a given space. A good production glass man can tear mat about as fast as he can cut it with scissors.

One other comment on mat is that the selvage edges (the edges of the roll) are generally treated with starch to hold the fabric together. The starch eventually dissolves in polyester resin, but until it does, these edges will be noticeably stiffer than the rest of the roll. The starch area is 1/2"-3/4" wide. Although not necessary, it is best to tear it off.

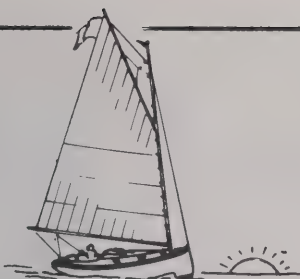
3. Your clogged or plugged sanding disc problem is the easiest to answer. Polyester resin, when exposed to air, will not completely cure. This is good when you are building a very thick laminate where you must let several layers cure before putting on subsequent layers, to keep heat buildup (and thus temperature rise) within bounds. This non-cured layer, which is only a molecule or two thick, allows a chemical bond, not just a mechanical bond, between the first day's work and the second's. But it sure do gum up sandpaper.

Since sanding situations occur more often than thick/hot laminates, the resin suppliers have found a way to exclude air from the laminate. This lets it cure hard right up to the surface. What they do is add a little wax to the resin. The wax migrates to the surface as the resin cures, excluding air. This waxed resin will wear a disc out before clogging it so, for the kind of work you appear to be doing, be sure to get a waxed resin.

If you are stuck having only unwaxed resin on hand, and just gotta do such and such a job where sanding will be necessary, cover the freshly saturated laminate with waxed paper or clear plastic cling wrap. When the resin cures you can strip either covering off quite easily. You'll find the resin completely cured. If you were careful in applying the covering you may find you have a surface that not only doesn't gum up a disc, but is smooth enough to not need sanding at all. One problem the added wax creates is that bonds made to it are poor. The few molecule thick layer of wax on the surface must be sanded to get a good bond.

I have never heard of cleaning clogged discs with ammonia. Ammonia is not a solvent for polyester, so far as I know. Besides, ammonia stinks!

Peter Duff, Mattapoisett, MA.



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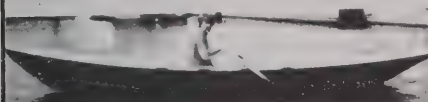
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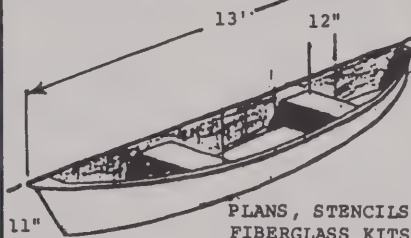
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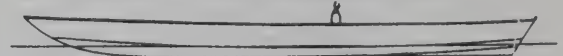


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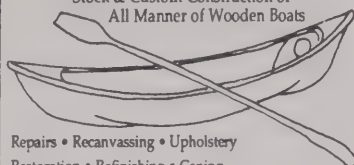
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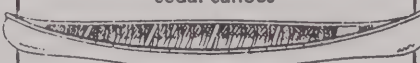


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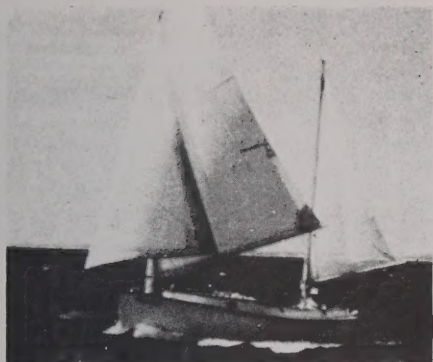
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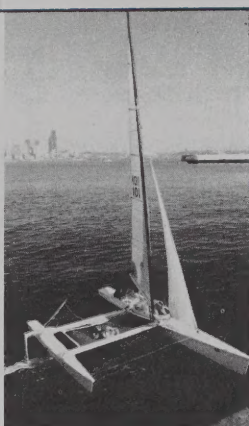
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