

Special Feature This Issue
Several Ways to Rig a Lugger



messing about in BOATS

Volume 11 - Number 19

February 15, 1994





messaging about in **BOATS**

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Our Next Issue...

Will tilt rather heavily towards design features, contemporary and bygone. The heavy hitter will be Ann Marie Plane's scholarly review of four centuries of watercraft in "New England Logboats", reprinted from the "Bulletin of the Massachusetts Archeological Society". We'll also have a bygone discussion (1970) by Weston Farmer on "How the Tahiti Got Her Name". Moving up to today, Sharon Brown brings us her views on Jim Thayer's "Wee Punkin"; Alan Hamlet reports as the owner of a "Black Skimmer"; Joe Reisner describes his "Kayeau" a 16' kayak/bateau; and Phil Bolger presents a classic 23' fantail launch.

On the project theme, Jim Thayer returns under his own byline with the first installment of his "Saga of Sow's Ear" (a "prequel" appeared in the February 1st issue), "Can This Boat Be Saved?" And Hans Waecker describes rerigging his Bolger "Windsprint" while Tom Shaw talks about topping lifts.

Barry Donahue's "And Then There Were Two" rowing outing report and Michael Briggs "Sequake in Long Beach" both missed the cut in this issue and will try again in the March 1st issue. Rob Pittaway brings more on "Fog" and Bunny Fernald combines his impressions of boating in Russia with some nostalgia on a lifetime of boating on his native Parker River in Newbury, Massachusetts.

On the Cover...

Mason Smith squeezes in the last sail of the season in light snow on Long Lake in the Adirondacks mid-December in one of his Adirondack Goodboats before it was shipped off to Germany. More on this in this issue.

Commentary...

The announcement of the 1994 Snow Row arrived here too late to go into the February 1st issue "Happenings". The date is March 5th and I mention it here for all of you who wish to make the scene afloat or ashore. The March 1st issue "Happenings" listing will be too late to appraise you of the event's scheduling.

Why give this particular event this special treatment? Well, it does have quite a mystique about it, for a rowing race on the ocean in February, its usual month, is an aberration in the annual calendar of on-the-water activities. In 1993, the "Boston Globe" presented its "Toughest Athletes" award to all those who rowed in the previous February's event in 20 knot winds and snow squalls. It strives to be one of those "when the going gets tough, the tough get going" sort of events and succeeds simply by its timing.

In late February, or in the case of 1994, early March, there's not much happening recreationally on the water, certainly not in small boats. So Ed McCabe and the Hull Lifesaving Museum Rowing Club can continue to promote their hard-case rower image. This is not a matter entirely of ego massage, for this group really does get out on the water in their various multi-oared gigs and barges year round in some really tough conditions. When the summer rowing season's highlight arrives in July, the "Blackburn Challenge" race, 20 miles around Cap Ann on the Massachusetts north shore, that Hull outfit has been rowing already seven months!

Of course the Snow Row attracts others unaffiliated with the Hull group, and actually this "off-season" event draws a larger entry than most of the milder season events during the rest of the year. There's is something about facing the winter sea and gales in small boats that is irresistible to some people. The entry has been mostly traditional open rowing boats. A few sliding seat shells participate and the occasional sea kayak, but it's overwhelmingly classic rowboats. Most of these have good seakeeping abilities and thus are quite safe even in those short, steep little seas whipped up in Hingham Bay.

The Snow Row is not entirely unique, those stalwarts of the Cape Cod Vikings Rowing Club have an annual New Year's Day Row in the Barnstable area but it's not a race. The Cape Cod Frosties race all winter in their diminutive 6' sailing dinghies in Cape Cod harbors, as do many sailors in "frostbite racing" along the winter coast. And a group of kayakers affiliated with the Rhode Island Canoe Association do winter

beach surfing in their boats whenever big storms come along to build up the surf.

Small boat people are not unique either in this penchant for off-season "recreation". In bygone times my friends and I always went out for our "New Year's Day Ride" on our dirt bikes, regardless of snow, rain, ice, or temperature. Macho posturing. And recently I find that people who I ride mountain bicycles with indulge in a similar New Year's Day Hangover Buster" or whatever.

Buried within some of us is this yearning to "do battle" with nature. Not only is there the urge to overcome natural obstacles but also the vagaries of the weather. Most sailors tell their tales of being out in big winds with a lot more enthusiasm than they would express for a sunny summer cruise in benign breezes. The "war stories" somehow make those of us who have indulged in any of this feel like we're taking life by the horns or something.

I've never been one of the leading risk takers in the activities in which I have taken part, but was never satisfied to be just an onlooker, so over 30 years or so I did get to tell my share of "war stories", mainly about motorcycling experiences. That sport offers plenty of chances to expose oneself to big time risk of life and limb, as they say, but it could be participated in just a wee bit back from the ragged edge without overwhelming statistical probability of serious injury or death. Now that I am retired from all that and fool around with innocuous small boats, the level of risk is easily manageable as I am not impelled to show that I can still "take it". I no longer care to compete, that's all out of my system, so I just pick and choose my outings to suit my fancy of the moment for "challenges".

I confess that when I see the Snow Rowers head out into that wind whipped bay a vestige of the old macho tweaks at me and I indulge in a moment of wistfulness about being younger and more aggressive again and joining the fray. And in a non-racing situation, I have found still that the excitement of sailing twice in the past year with reader Paul Schwartz in 20-30 knot winds in late fall in his 19' Typhoon was strongly appealing, and I like to think that I will get to want to do some of that in my own Typhoon when I have leaned how to sail it. But, I confess it is much easier to meet this sort of small boat challenge when someone you have faith in is the skipper, and it doesn't all fall on you to deal with what happens.



Yes, it was in an article in "Messing about in Boats" many years ago that Bob detailed his home built boat shelter which he described under the title of "Cheap Shelter." Originally, he suggested that if enough interest were evidenced, he would consider printing plans and detailed instructions for those who might want to duplicate his structure. When such plans faded in ensuing months, I wrote to Bob and asked if he thought further of making the plans available. This reply was a second, more explicit article in "Messing About in Boats". That item has been tacked to my workshop bulletin board ever since and my interest in having such a backyard structure slowly developed.

In the winter of 1990, I ripped many old boards into 1"x3" strips which I intended to double into 2"x3's such as Bob had used, the only difference would be that mine would be cost-free of recycled lumber. During the summer, I drew plans and spent hours in thinking of what I would need, but the pile of 1x3's lingered under their tarp awaiting a start of the action.

Somewhere along the line, my thoughts turned to another form of construction. In teaching kids and helping others in sailing, I had been acquiring all sorts of spare parts for Sunfish, including many broken or bent booms and gaffs. They became the basis of my own version of "Cheap Shelter." New plans were drawn while I canvassed acquaintances for more discarded spars and got an additional half dozen from local Fish racers. My first plan was to design jointing fixtures to use the spars throughout a framework, but even that plan underwent considerable change.

A beachcombing friend had acquired quite a supply of electrical conduit piping which he had salvaged from abandoned boat cover frames in a local shipyard. Not able to see this piping go to waste, he had brought it to our club and stored it in the supply area, encouraging me to help myself to all that I could use. Upon examination, I found that this conduit included many pieces bent in the middle to form the top of a boat's winter cover. Some years earlier, I had salvaged a conduit bending tool at a former building site.

This inspired my experimentation with the further bending which could be

Cheap Shelter

My Version of Bob Hicks' Idea

By Ward Bell

adapted to the structural method which had been developing in my imagination. Basically, it resulted in a framework of Sunfish spars and electrical conduit fastened together with recycled bolts and reinforced with a web of old sailboat staywire to give rigidity to the structure which I crowded into a corner of my suburban backyard. This could house my bright red O'Day Javelin, "Breezy 3."

I laid out the base lines 18' x 8' with old 2x4's made rot-resistant by being soaked in used crankcase oil. Into these, I drilled holes the correct size through which the frame would be anchored into place by driving 3' lengths of conduit. On the frame ends, the pipe was driven in flush with the top of the 2x4's, but on the sides, only to half the length leaving 18" exposed. Six-foot lengths of the spars were set over the five vertical pipes on each side with each pipe topped by a conduit connector fitting to match the diameter to make a tighter fit into the spars.

I took my pre-bent arches of conduit and bent six-inch outer edge turn-down lengths to fit the vertical spars. These conduit pieces were also made more snug with connector fittings into the tops of the spars. Some rigidity was gained by making 18' horizontals of spars, the pieces being joined together with closet pole inserts into the shorter lengths. The horizontals were mounted halfway up each inside and one under the ridge. Re-using some old bolts, these horizontals were fastened into place. Then, running tightly fitted diagonals of the old staywire, the resulting framework proved to be quite stable. I taped many of the joints to prevent damaging wear.

My single cash expense was for one of those blue tarps that cost less than \$24, the only major cost for the project. By

careful refolding and with numerous pull ropes fitted into grommets, I was easily able to draw the tarp over the entire frame and fasten down the sides to the 2x4 base and fasten the ends around the framework.

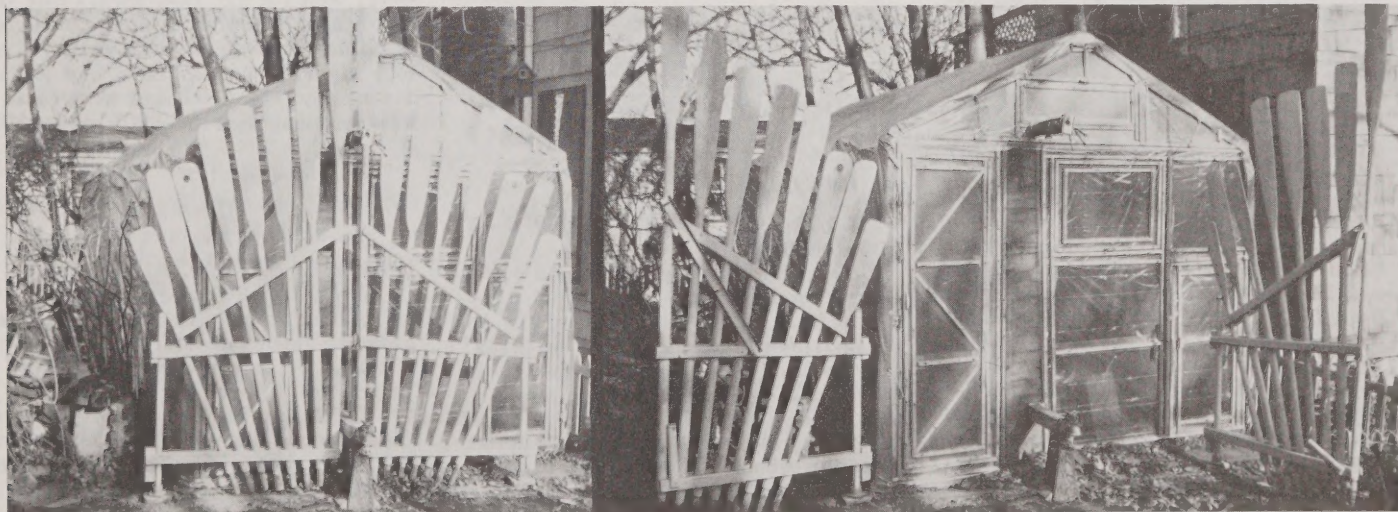
Along with a supply of crate lumber that my friend Peter brought up from Connecticut, I finally found a use for the 1x3's that I had cut. They were put to work as frames for plastic-covered panels for the two ends of the shelter. To make things easier to handle and for summer dismantling, each end consisted of three 6' high base panels and three small frames to fill in the gable ends. I made a full door in each end, as well as half-height scuttle door, a ventilating window, and a peak vent, each one hinged with salvaged cabinet hinges. The center panel of the south end was especially shaped to permit the boat to be stored on its trailer at times allowing its towing shaft to stick out through the wall. When bottom painting is scheduled in the spring, the front panels will be lifted out, the boat lifted on my home made jacks and the trailer removed while the paint job takes place.

Removing the panels is very easy because I realized that if these parts had to be unbolted, I would need at least two hands on the inside and another two outside. Not being so equipped, I substituted heavy wooden fittings that I called toggles on the turn-buttons which clamp the panels onto the spars and pipes. By turning these on each panel, removal becomes an easy task that takes only one hand on the inside of the shelter. Tie down ropes, home made wooden cleats and toggles snug down the tarp over the end panels.

My "Cheap Shelter" is set behind gates which I had made using eight pairs of old oars in varying lengths. Coming home from school one day, my nine year old grandson provided a prized remark when he announced to his parents that he had heard, "Grandpa working behind closed oars!" Read that aloud and see how it sounds!

I am sure that my structure was more complex to build than Bob's, but it fits into my restricted area and cost little to complete. With all the special problems and considerations that I had to solve, I am pleased with what I have built and enjoyed the work immensely.

South end, "Behind closed oars." Gates open to reveal my cheap shelter.



"SELAH'S" SEASON

'93 saw "Selah" on the water more times than in past years with Mom and Dad, my wife Blair, and children Craig (17) and Cameron (14), sister Beverly, her son Tyler, and several friends with time, aboard.

In June Blair suggested, when I inquired about her preferences for celebrating our 20th anniversary, that we pass up Sea Island for a cruise on "Selah". It was three glorious sunny days and two starry nights on the St. Mary's River in Maryland. West-southwest winds of 10-15 knots carried us on explorations of the St. Mary's from its mouth at St. George's Island to Tippetty Whicity Island where the water turns brackish. We rediscovered the history of St. Mary's City, Maryland's oldest settlement.

We are hoping that '94 will allow us even more time to mess about in our Dovekie.

John Chewning, Richmond, VA.

WORKSHOP ON THE WATER PROJECT

We love your publication down here at the Philadelphia Maritime Museum, and look forward to each issue. We are just beginning construction on a 25'6" Cat boat which will be a working replica of an 1889 boat in our collection named the "Myth". She was built at Morton/Johnson, and until 5 years ago sailed on Barnegat Bay out of Bay Head. We plan to have her launched by the spring of '95 to coincide with the opening of our new Museum on the waterfront at Penns Landing on the Delaware River. If you think it is appropriate I would love to write something for your readers about the process.

Timothy White, Director, Workshop-on-the-Water, Philadelphia Maritime Museum, Philadelphia, PA.

SAVORING "BIVALVE ON THE HUDSON"

At the moment I write I'm deeply engrossed in Rich SantaColoma's "Bivalve on the Hudson" in the December 15th issue and savoring every word and idea. Like brandy by the fireplace it has a special feeling when you take it in on a snowy evening, lost in December.

The Hudson is such a marvelous river; deep, strong, tidal, and only a few miles away. The old river towns, the railroad along its banks, the tugs, tankers, commerce. Manhattan is a river town, so are Sleepy Hollow and Irvington. Wildlife; I've seen osprey and eagles, heron, ducks, striped bass and carp as big as my Evinrude.

Rich's use of the trains reminds me of the cruises of the "Grayling" whose log you published a couple of years ago. I miss that one. That is a great way to venture out, keep sailing away and ride the train back for the work week. One could get quite far that way.

I like the cruises and adventures the best. Oh, by the way, I notice Spider is doing some writing over on his perch on the woodpile. We'll see what comes of it. The note from Dan Rider in the December 15th "Your Commentary" encouraged him a lot!

Andre Venables, New Paltz, NY.



Your Commentary

STILL MORE ON JUNK RIGS

"The Practical Junk Rig" is a monument to Blondie Hasler and Jock McLeod for their efforts to provide a primer on the design, rigging and use of the junk rig. It is unfortunately out of print and expensive but is not "damn near impossible to figure out," as reader Marc Pauls stated in a letter in the December 1st issue. It is a textbook on how to design and use the junk rig to its best advantages.

This is not a rig for everybody but for those few who want to embark on long single-handed or short crewed voyages. A good example would be Sir Henry Pigott, who stopped off near here in San Pedro last May. His 20' boat "Glory" is junk rigged and was designed by Hasler. Sir Henry has been around the world twice in this boat.

There are very few books on naval architecture that are as specific as this one. As you go through this one carefully you discover that it covers all aspects of the junk rig, and how and why it should be designed.

George Hume, Torrance, CA.

TUGBOAT FLEET

I own two tugs, 17' and 9', electric and outboard. Nice to see tugs in your swell mag.

William Smith, Oceanside, CA.

TUG DESIGNS

A note on tugs: Phil Bolger's designed a fine one, see "SBJ" #37 page 24. And Thomas MacNaughton has another, see "SBJ" #1, page 38. I've had many a nice dream over these two designs.

Charles Akers, Orlando, FL.

STILL NOT "SMALL BOAT JOURNAL"

I was sorry to see you had to suffer another letter berating you for not being "Small Boat Journal" in the November 1st issue. I love "Messing About in Boats" and feel that "Small Boat Journal" would have been a poor substitute had yours been the publication to succumb. I read "Small Boat Journal" but I tend to memorize "Messing About in Boats". And it comes every two weeks!

Quentin Wilson, LaMadera, NM.

FINALLY BROKE MY SPEED RECORD

I finally broke my 4.25 knot speed record in "Beach Girl" but it took me all summer. In September I averaged 5 knots for 7.75 miles and in October 5.4 knots for 30 minutes, planing some on a broad reach both times. "Beach Girl" seems to maintain a high average speed for such a small boat, probably due to her large sail plan.

My last sail was November 29th and I was cold. I covered 9 miles in 3 hours and the 9 miles doesn't include having to beat most of the way back, so I averaged over 3 knots and the wind was light, 5-6 knots at the start and never getting over 10 knots. It looks like I won't be doing any more sailing now until spring, winter has set in here. While it wouldn't seem cold to you, it is too cold for me to sail. I don't go sailing unless it is over 70 degrees. Today, December 21st, is typical, low in the mid-30's, high in the mid-50's. It is supposed to warm up tomorrow and rain, which is also typical.

David Gulley, Houston, TX.

HERE WE GO AGAIN

I love to see my name in print but not so much when someone is picking me apart. In the December 1st issue I read a letter from a reader in Cocoa, Florida, who picked apart my paddling style. He has never seen me paddle, if he had he might not have been so critical.

I see so much poor canoeing technique being taught that from time to time I must say something about alternative ways of paddling, hence my bygone articles on efficient paddling. Most folks I show my system to are quick to adopt it for themselves. This winter I plan to turn out more on efficient paddling, I know it works. I have learned that it is very easy to teach paddling to someone who has never done any, but nearly impossible to teach it to those who have learned at summer camp.

I recently read "Just Drift" again, that excellent article in the February 15, 1993 issue. This is something that all boaters should read about annually. I wanted to do some self-evaluation and "Just Drift" helped me put my house in order and I am ready to face my accusers.

I don't care how you paddle. God doesn't care how you paddle. I know what works well for me. God doesn't care if I splash a little and shout orders to myself as I paddle through a cypress swamp in my solo canoe. It works, folks, and I'll tell anyone who will listen and write about it for this magazine if the editor will publish it.

Mississippi Bob Brown, Apple Vally, MN.

ENJOYED SAFETY ARTICLES

I want to tell you how much I enjoyed the safety articles by Tom Shaw last year. I have cut them out and put them into a booklet. Let's have more of Tom Shaw in '94 and less of Tom McGrath.

I also love the little "yacht tugs" and "mini-trawlers". I would love to have one if I didn't already have more boats than I can take care of now. Sound familiar?

Ruddy Ellis, Atlanta, GA.

THAT TERM "TRADITIONAL"

Art Poole's letter expressing his concern about the use of the term "traditional" as it applies to boats certainly shows how confusing the use of this term can be these days, a can of worms, or worse. Defining this term as it relates to boats is a dangerous activity that does not enhance the goals of messing about in boats, or the magazine of that name. Defining it could be the activity of traditional boat clubby types who want to include their own boats and exclude others.

So, before these pages are further wasted with semantic wars about traditional" (long held prejudices) this or that, I would prefer to define something like the "tradition of boating", which is going forth on the water and having fun with little or no politics. If one's boat is fun, it satisfies the tradition of boating, if it isn't fun then get it the hell out of here!

Marc Paul, Riverview, MO.

EVEN SIMPLER BLOCKS

Apparently the author of that article in the January 1st issue about making 21 cent blocks is unaware that some amateur boatbuilders like me, who prefer to not buy ready-made (ugh) sheaves, do not have lathes, believe it or not, on which to make our own.

Here is my solution for the gadget-deprived blockmaker. Draw the sheave circle on a slightly oversized square of wood stock. Drill the appropriately sized hole in the center. Inscribe an octagon enclosing the circle. Saw off the corners and finish by rounding off. If you have rigorously respected the circumference line the sheave should be perfectly round and turn on its pin without wobble, although jet engine accuracy is not necessary.

The article suggested plywood but I personally like purple heart or, better still, lignum vitae, the wood preferred by Captain Bligh for the sheaves on the "Bounty". Admittedly, it is unlikely that your friendly neighborhood lumber dealer handles these two special woods, but feel free to ask.

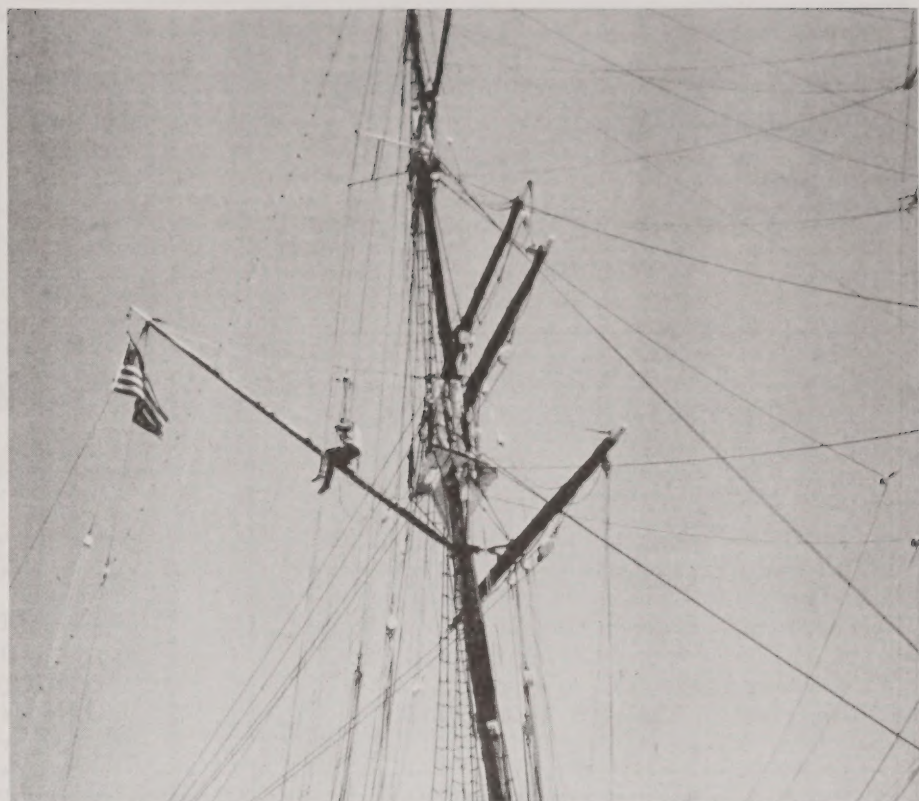
I am now putting the finishing touches on my Bolger Micro project. It was built without using one iota of electrical current, ergo, no power tools. Who really needs all that noisy, appendage threatening stuff anyway?

Lee "TNT" Kemble, 284 Danforth #402, Portland, ME 04102.

CROSS GENERATIONAL INFUSION

I would enjoy your publication even more than I do if you would give attribution of author and publication and date of the old articles you retrieve and recycle. The cross generational infusion of knowledge and experience is superb.

Pete Haviland, Cushing., ME.



WHOSE RIG IS THIS?

With your interest branching out, ala "Adventure", perhaps readers might like to guess on what tall ship and where this photo of "dressing the gaff" was taken. This is just to show that there are no real limits to reader interest in sail. A hint, the

BATTERY POWERED RUNNING LIGHTS

Apropos the letter from Jim Betts regarding battery powered running lights, I enclose a portion of a recent article from "The Practical Sailor". After reading this I am now looking for a set of small oil-powered bronze running lights of the sort that used to be made by Davey & Co. Ltd. of London.

Nicholas Trott Long, 54 Taylors Ln., Little Compton, RI 02837.

Editor's Comment: The article Nicholas supplied concludes from testing several D-cell battery powered navigation lights that, "all were dim enough to be dangerous especially after having been on for a half hour or so," and that, "the bad news is that the light output of any of the D-cell powered lights drops off drastically after even a short period of use." The "Practical Sailor" is a sort of consumers' report publication for sailors, focussing mostly on the state of the art boats and gear today's sailing consumers are interested in.

CANOE SAILING APPRECIATED

Glad to get the December 15th issue with the article about the WCHA Assembly. The Horton article on canoe sailing was long overdue. Though oft postponed, both were thoroughly enjoyed.

Robert Bliss, Hopewell Junction, NY.

ship lies about 20:50N, 156:40 W.

I still enjoy "Selah" the Dovkie shared by son John and I. We have, after 12 years, almost gotten her and her trailer into true cruising condition. One day we will offer our report on the conversion.

Bill Chewning, Richmond, VA.



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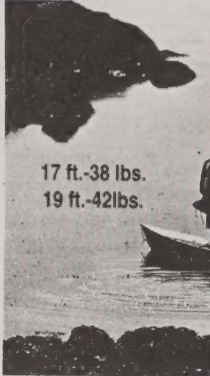
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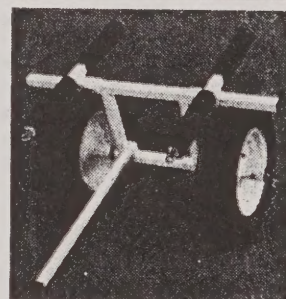
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Puget Sound Lugger

By John W. Erickson

For various reasons I have, in fifty years of "messaging about in boats", resisted the tendency of most of my contemporaries to follow current trends simply because this or that naval architect or a writer said it was the way to go. For reasons of both economy and romance, rigs of the past have attracted me. I have been continually surprised to find that rigs that attracted me by their aesthetic beauty have, in use, invariably turned out to be the right rig by practical standards for my purposes. Rigs I have selected for their vaunted efficiency and practicality have just as invariably turned out to be all wrong for what I wanted to do.

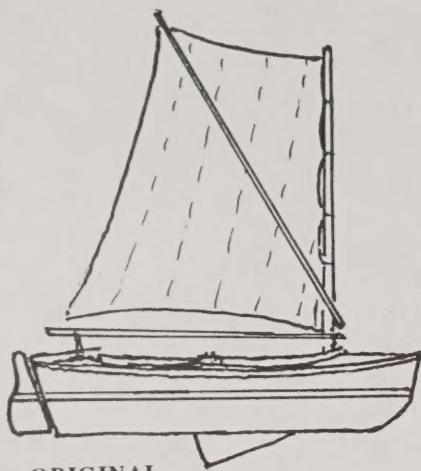
When I left the naval service and returned to the Puget Sound country with my wife and daughter, a dozen or so years ago, we came with the idea of acquiring a Bristol boat or its close ancestor, a Columbia River boat. The Bristol boats were sailing gillnetters in use on Alaska's Bristol Bay until the early fifties when the law was repealed that forbade the use of engines in that fishery and they were retired in favor of motorized craft or were fitted with engines. The Columbia River boats, familiar to me in my youth on that river, were the model for the boats used in Alaska. They had been sailing craft until the fleet was mechanized prior to the first World War. The shape of the sailing hulls of the Columbia boats was not immediately altered when the engines came and a few hulls can still be found that have the original sailing lines.

The rig of the Bristol boats and the Columbia River boats, when they sailed, was a single large sprit sail set on a short mast that was lowered by the fishermen while the nets were being worked. The shallow hull form of the boats permitted them to be sailed without ballast on the windy waters of the lower Columbia River and Alaska's Bristol Bay. This was an important consideration in a fishery of short turn arounds and large catches.

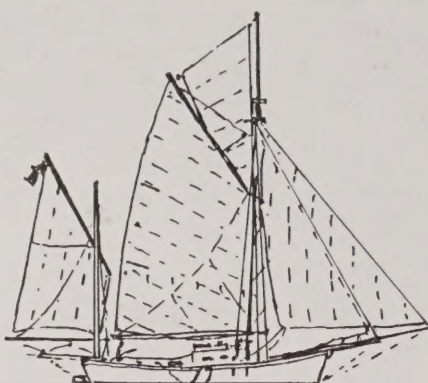
We had hoped to find an unaltered hull with the original centerboard case with which we might experiment with the original sprit rig. We did not find one and settled for a converted boat with a catboat rig, a long shallow keel made from a ten inch "I" beam to replace the centerboard and a small cabin up forward. This was "Optimist".

"Optimist" went through a variety of rigs as we sought to make her go faster and handle better. Always there is the compromise between "Go Fast" and "Handle Easily." While we sailed "Optimist", in the great Inland Sea of the Pacific Northwest, once all the way to Southeast Alaska, we changed and developed her rig. An annual Bristol boat race provided incentive to make her go fast and a yard stick by which to judge her performance.





ORIGINAL



YAWL



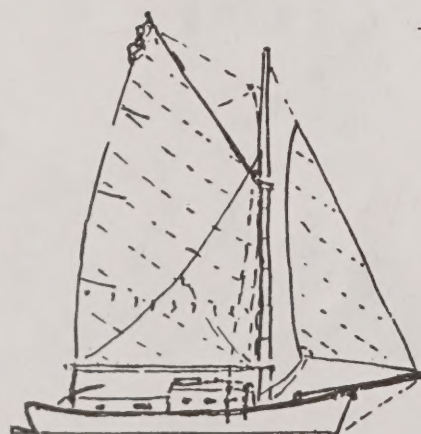
CATBOAT



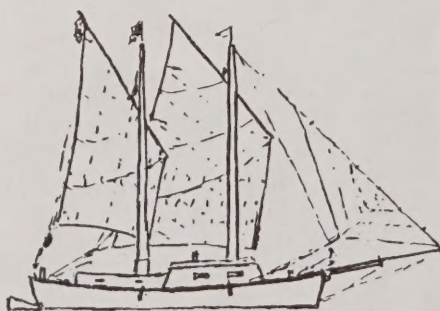
YAWL-LOOSE FOOTED



LUGGER-STANDING



SLOOP



LUGGER-DIPPING

The performance of a sailing cruiser is a hard thing to judge. You do this mostly by watching other boats that may sail in company and by comparing the time it takes you to get to various places compared to that of other boats sailing under similar circumstances. Sailors of Bristol boats and other shallops and economy cruisers quickly become stoic about the performance of their boats compared to that of high masted, high tech boats that go to windward seemingly near the wind's eye and move two lengths to your one. They run downwind faster than you by setting big jibs you can neither set nor afford. Still those high tech devils provide a useful service, for you think "Well, he didn't beat me as bad with this rig as he did with the other one. If I wanted to go fast I would get a multihull or an airplane."

An incentive both toward "go fast", or at least "go easily", and handling ease was the fact that I preferred to sail without an engine. The art of sailing, augmented by the art of rowing and sculling, is a pleasant thing to experience but one does tend to think of better ways to utilize what wind there is when heaving on an oar to move a heavy boat. The reasons for sailing sans engine are many and varied. When I attempt to list them I find the matter to be so very complex, I hardly know where to start. R.T. McMullen, in telling of his cruising about the British Islands in luggers and gaff/cutters without an engine, states the matter very well,

"There is an insatiable pleasure in the art of sailing which offers an endless variety of problems for solution so that there is always something fresh to engage the attention, as well as experience to be acquired."

The "Switch On Engine" cruiser will not be much concerned with sails to be used at low wind speeds, unless he is into racing, while at the other end of the scale ease of reefing or otherwise shortening down is not a big problem to him since he drops the sails and powers when things get tough. Racing sailors have concerns in these matters but, unless they are into singlehanded or "Jack and Jill" races, they sail with crews large enough to deal with big jibs and spinnakers.

As a short-handed, engineless sailor I was interested in sails that would make her go in light airs but that could be easily gotten in when the wind piped up. Much of my problem could be solved through the use of specialized machine age gear but that would be both expensive and place us at the mercy of the machine age system for parts and repair. I reasoned that work boats, utility boats and non-opulent pleasure boats of the past had similar problems and had devised rigs and equipment to fit the situation. I went to them for guidance and the rigs that appeared on my Bristol boat reflect this.

The boat came with a single gaff sail set on a mast in the step of the original sprit rig. The mast was ten feet higher than the original mast and the gaff sail was a bit larger than the original sprit sail. The boat footed pretty well and pointed as high as is expected of her rig. She was difficult to get through the wind.

Other Bristol boats footed faster. We added a bowsprit and jib. She footed faster

in light and moderate winds and came through the wind better. In addition the jib was useful in running off before strong winds. A jackyard topsail added about ten feet to the mast height and forty square feet of sail area high up where it made a real difference when the wind was high off the water as often happens on Puget Sound.

The next change was a multiple one. A mizzen mast was stepped right ahead of the sternpost and a standing lug mizzen was set there. A jib boom extended the bowsprit and a second headsail was set there. The jackyard topsail was replaced with a fidded topmast and a gaff topsail hanked to its own halyard. The boat now carried 540 feet of sail. She footed faster than all but the hot shot racer Bristol boats and the mizzen made sail handling and tacking easier. I replaced the double headsails with a single big jib. It was harder work to tack but she went faster.

The main boom broke in a squall and the main became loose footed. It worked better that way and I wondered why I had put up with that boom for so long. I could now brail the mainsail up to the mast, greatly facilitating the setting and furling of that sail.

One day, in a howling gale I should not have been out in, the main mast went over the side and broke into two pieces. I then did something that had been on my mind since before we acquired "Optimist" I rerigged her as a two-masted lugger. There were a number of reasons for both the lug and the two masts. Years before, while living on Cheseapeake Bay, I had become interested in lug rigs through Tom Colvin's Chinese lugs and a standing lug sail on a British dinghy that belonged to a friend of mine.

At that time I owned a twenty-five foot skipjack with the leg of mutton rig charac-

teristic of the oyster boats.

The "Colossus of Roads" built a bridge across the mouth of our harbor and I had to come up with a shorter mast for the skipjack. I replaced the leg of mutton with a standing lug of the same area as the leg of mutton but set on a mast that was five feet shorter. We would have been satisfied, and expected it to be, that the boat would sail not quite as well with the new rig. To our surprise she footed faster and pointed higher with the lug rig.

I like a two-masted rig with the masts near the same height not so much because this offers a lower center of effort for a given sail area, though that is an advantage, but because there are so many advantages in handling the boat. This had been brought home to me again a few years earlier when I made a cruise in a schooner rigged Bristol boat. The masts of that boat were short and light enough that a man could raise and lower them, if need be, singlehanded and they did not require shrouds or stays. You seldom had to reef as you could adjust the sail area by dropping and setting whole sails.

I rigged the lugger first as a real schooner with the larger sail aft. A sprit was required to sheet the mainsail. After one cruise I shifted the larger sail to the foremast where I set it as a dipping lug overlapping the now smaller mainsail. This evolution got rid of the sprit and its problems and the overlap seems to contribute greatly to the boat's ability on the wind.

Tacking with an overlapping dipping lug does, of course, require a number of operations but it goes much easier than I had anticipated and is nowhere near as difficult as tacking with a big genoa jib set. The sequence of the operation is as follows:

1. Helm down.

2. When the jib backwinds shift the sheets.

3. Pick up the foresail (the big sail) sheet and carry it around

4. Release the foresail tack line.

5. Dip the foresail yard.

6. Secure the foresail tack line on the lee side.

7. Dip the mainsail as time permits.

When short tacking she can be sailed with the foresail yard and tack to weather. Dipping the high peaked yards is not difficult. I frequently sail the boat singlehanded and, while I am busy when the boards are short, the job gets done.

The lug rig has a lot to recommend it. The boat seems to sail at least as well with the lug rig as she did with her various gaff rigs. Dipping the lug requires time and effort when you tack but not so much as to make its use prohibitive even when singlehanded. Lug rigs in general require a little more attention than do the sails that have their luff attached to the mast in some fashion but in return they offer a sail that stands clear of mast burlles when on the wind and that can become a squaresail when off the wind providing a balanced helm and no danger of a gybe.

The extension of mast height provided by a high peaked lug permits the use of shorter masts without loss of aspect ratio. The shorter masts may be unstayed, reducing windage and thereby improving windward performance.

Conversion to the squaresail mode, when coming off the wind, is simply done by leading the tack line across the boat. Returning to a fore and aft rig, when coming on the wind again is as simple. Both the gybe nemesis of the "fore and after" and the taken aback nemesis of the "square rigger" can be avoided. It is all far simpler than the handling of big jibs.



An Epitaph for Larry's Boat

By Mississippi Bob

I was working at the local sailboat shop one day when the boss said, "Salvage any hardware and cut up the rest small enough to fit in the dumpster." I was looking at a small generic Sunfish type. The boat had no bottom. It looked like it had been towed down the highway for several miles. The name plate said that the boat had been built in Waxahachie, Texas. Some Texans had put some TLC into this boat.

I didn't have long to think about it, within a half hour it was stuffed neatly in a dumpster.

This incident got me thinking back to Larry's Boat. Larry's boat died also, over at the St Paul Yacht Club. Larry's Boat was a fixture for many years on the St. Paul waterfront, it was a large house boat that tied up at the Yacht Club for some twenty years. The boat had no engines and had to be towed any time it got moved. It was the home of Larry Crosby for most of the time that it tied up at St. Paul.

Larry was a bartender, he was also Irish, and the interior of his boat showed it. Step inside his boat and you felt like you were at a St. Patty's Day party. Larry welcomed people to drop in and this boat became a hangout for many boat people. As a yardbird at the club I spent much time inside this Irish Haven. We often had our coffee breaks there especially on cold winter days. Larry was a cigar smoker. Many of his guests burned up tobacco too, so when in his home you had to cut your way through the haze and wade through the

B.S. to make yourself at home.

Times change. One spring day Larry's boat started taking on water. The boat got hauled. The fifteen ton warning horn was protesting loudly as the boat cleared the water. The eighteen ton boat was more than the unit was designed for. The boat got set on the hydraulic trailer and it bowed badly. We moved the boat to a bare spot in the yard and blocked it there. We began an examination of the bottom. Water was still leaking out of many places. Several knowledgeable people studied the bottom and the word came down that the boat needed new skin. The decision was make not to return the boat to the water unless it was fixed right.

Larry lived on this boat because it was a cheap place to live. He didn't have the funds to make this kind of repair so he gave the boat to the club and walked away. The club tried in vain for several weeks to find a new owner for this hull. Sometimes you just can't even give things away. The word that finally came down the line was that the local scrapyard would buy it but we had to deliver it to them.

We began removing any parts that had value. We also began dumping twenty years worth of Larry's treasures. We probably lightened the boat about a half-ton in this operation. The boat was still a couple of tons heavier than our hydraulic trailer was rated for. The permits were obtained from the state to move an overwidth vehicle over the highways. I was asked to work late as the moving time was not to be 'til after nine PM.

The club bought our supper that evening and about eight we began lining up our parade. The permits required a car in advance of the boat with flashers to lead the column. We had a forklift to pull the trailer and another truck following with more flashers going. After we were set up to leave we had a few minutes to spare before our 9 PM departure and I began noticing many of the "liveaboards" began showing up. St. Paul Yacht Club had about fifteen boats with liveaboards, most of them showed up within minutes of our departure. I noticed a few cameras in the group but I also noticed a few wet cheeks. I suddenly realized that I was at a wake.

Other folks began showing up to help with the move. By the time we were ready to roll we had people walking along by each corner almost like pallbearers. The parade began to move. It got fifty yards came to a hill and stopped. The forklift wasn't powerful enough to pull this load up onto the levee. A second forklift came into play and the caravan began moving again. The liveaboards waved their last goodbyes and the pallbearers began dropping away as the speed got faster than a good walk. Three miles later we pulled into the salvage yard, blocked the boat where they wanted it and pulled our trailer home with one blown tire.

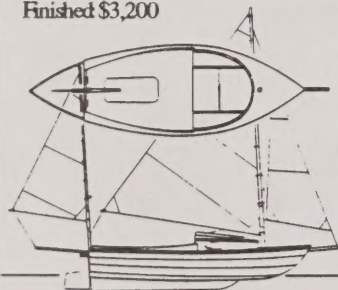
A week later the boss sent me back to the salvage yard to get our blocking. The workers at the yard steered me to the pile of blocking. There was no sign the Larry's boat had ever existed, only memories.

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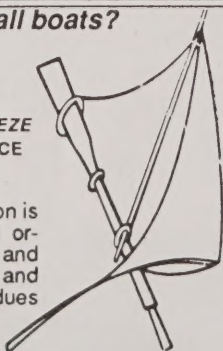
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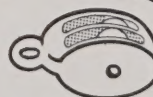
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Making the mast for my twenty-four foot sailboat turned out to be a pretty straightforward business, once I found the right design!

As an amateur I find that each project I undertake is constrained not only by the need it will serve but also by its constructability using my skills, facilities and tools. Any large work I do is done out of doors on the ground, or at best on a seawall or a combination of saw horses and wooden keel blocks. I have no workbench or covered areas, no power tools save those which are hand held. My skills as carpenter and cabinet maker do not approach those of the Down East types whose projects are featured in the various boat magazines.

I wanted a round mast suitable for an unstayed Chinese Junk Rig but the problem would have been the same had I needed a stayed spar for a sloop or a cutter. Building a hollow mast from planks generally requires that the pieces be cut to very close tolerances indeed if unacceptable gaps are to be avoided in the critical glued areas. If this were not bad enough, a thirty-plus foot length means joining planks end to end and a twelve to one scarf joint, with perfect fit across the width of a plank, is well beyond my capabilities.

The solution appeared in the form of the Noble System. Using Barry Noble's method the eight individual planks, staves they are called, do not merely fit edge to edge but are each given a 90 degree groove along one edge so that they lock together mechanically as well. As a bonus they also present nearly 50% more surface area for the glue to get a grip on. These advantages meant that a mast built of pieces cut by coarse and imperfect hand work could still provide the strength and integrity required.

As the illustration shows, the grooved staves position themselves in a sort of self-assembling bundle which needs only to be slathered with epoxy resin, put together, and pulled up tight with a Spanish windlass.

According to Hasler & McLeod ("Practical Junk Rig", International Marine Publishing, Camden, Maine, 1988) the interlocking construction permits two-part staves to be butted together without even needing scarfs. The only difficult part seemed to be the cutting of the longitudinal grooves without the use of a workbench or a table saw.

Cutting a 90 degree groove down the edge of a two-by plank (two inches nominal thickness, one and a half inches actual thickness) would have been even more difficult than making a simple straight cut did not the clever interlocking design remove the necessity for thirty-second of an inch precision. As it was, I could get by with a job relatively crude by expert standards.

I needed just over thirty feet of spar. Being unstayed it must have a taper from butt to tip. This is easily done by tapering the individual staves. The only stipulation is that the butt joints, necessary because I could only get twenty-foot planks, be staggered along the length of the mast.

The old point-slope methods of high school algebra let me calculate the widths of the staves for ends and intervening points. I laid out two sets of staves, upper and lower, each twenty feet long, up from

A Noble Spar

By W.S. White



Raising the finished spar.

the bottom and down from the top of a thirty-two foot mast. This gave me eight feet of overlap and let me cut each upper/lower pair so that their joints are all separated by a foot of mast height. In a burst of enthusiasm for tradition I cut the butt ends at a 45 degree angle instead of leaving them flat, forming rudimentary scarfs.

Cutting the grooves was simplicity itself once the proper method came to me. I made a "car" of two crossed pairs of 2x4's with the space on top sized to hold a hand held circular saw and the bottom slot a close fit over the edge of the fir planking.

The circular saw in its "car".



With the saw tilted 45 degrees and carefully centered, this contraption cut one leg of my 90 degree groove as it slid down the plank and completed the cut when I turned it around and ran it back the other way.

I first cut the planks to the size of two staves joined edge to edge and grooved the exposed edges before separating the individual staves by cutting down the line in the middle. This gave me wider pieces to work on. The planks were held edge up for the grooving by nailing scrap wood to several large wooden keel blocks, normally used to prop up boats that have been hauled out. The bits of wood formed slots to hold the planks and could be made very tight simply by cocking the keel blocks at a slight angle when needed.

Once the grooves were cut and the staves separated I laid them out side by side in pairs, upper and lower, overlapping by eight feet, and cut each pair at a different height above the base. I now had eight pairs of staves, sixteen staves altogether, ready to be glued up into a mast.



Preliminary layout of the pieces.

To support the assembly I put a large polyethylene trash bag over each of six keel blocks. This kept the epoxy from gluing my work to the blocks. On the side of the first block where the butt end of the mast was to be I nailed two pieces of wood in a "U" shape support to hold the stave bundle as it was put together.

Before applying any glue I painted every surface of the staves with epoxy resin thinned with alcohol to the consistency of water. A couple of coats will let the resin soak into the pores of the wood, sealing it from damp and rot while giving a stronger glue bond reaching below the surface and into the wood.

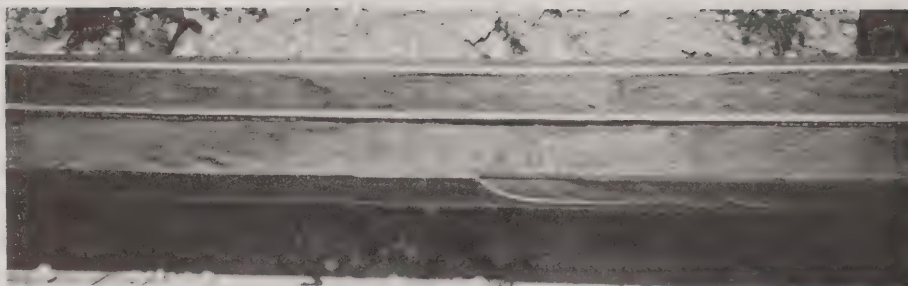
Assembly is easy enough if you work fast. The whole thing must be done at one time. The epoxy glue is smeared generously into the grooves and the staves are put into place and clamped every foot or so using a loop of one-half inch line and a stout stick to make a Spanish windlass. It is necessary to get all of the staves glued and assembled before the epoxy glue "goes off" and becomes too stiff to squeeze in the joints. Once the bottom bundle is complete and partially clamped, the upper staves can be glued and slid each into its proper slot. I used about one and a half gallons of epoxy glue and should have used two to fully fill the joints.



Butt end view after the first cut with the electric plane.

I gave the newly made mast two days to cure before cutting off the rope clamps and considering my next task. A Junk Rig wants a round mast. The sharp edged octagonal cross section formed by my staves must be trimmed round or nearly so.

Here a notable and flattering thing happened. Jerry T. insisted that I borrow his Makita electric planer to do the trimming. Usually one is considered an idiot to



First attempts at rounding with the saw didn't work.

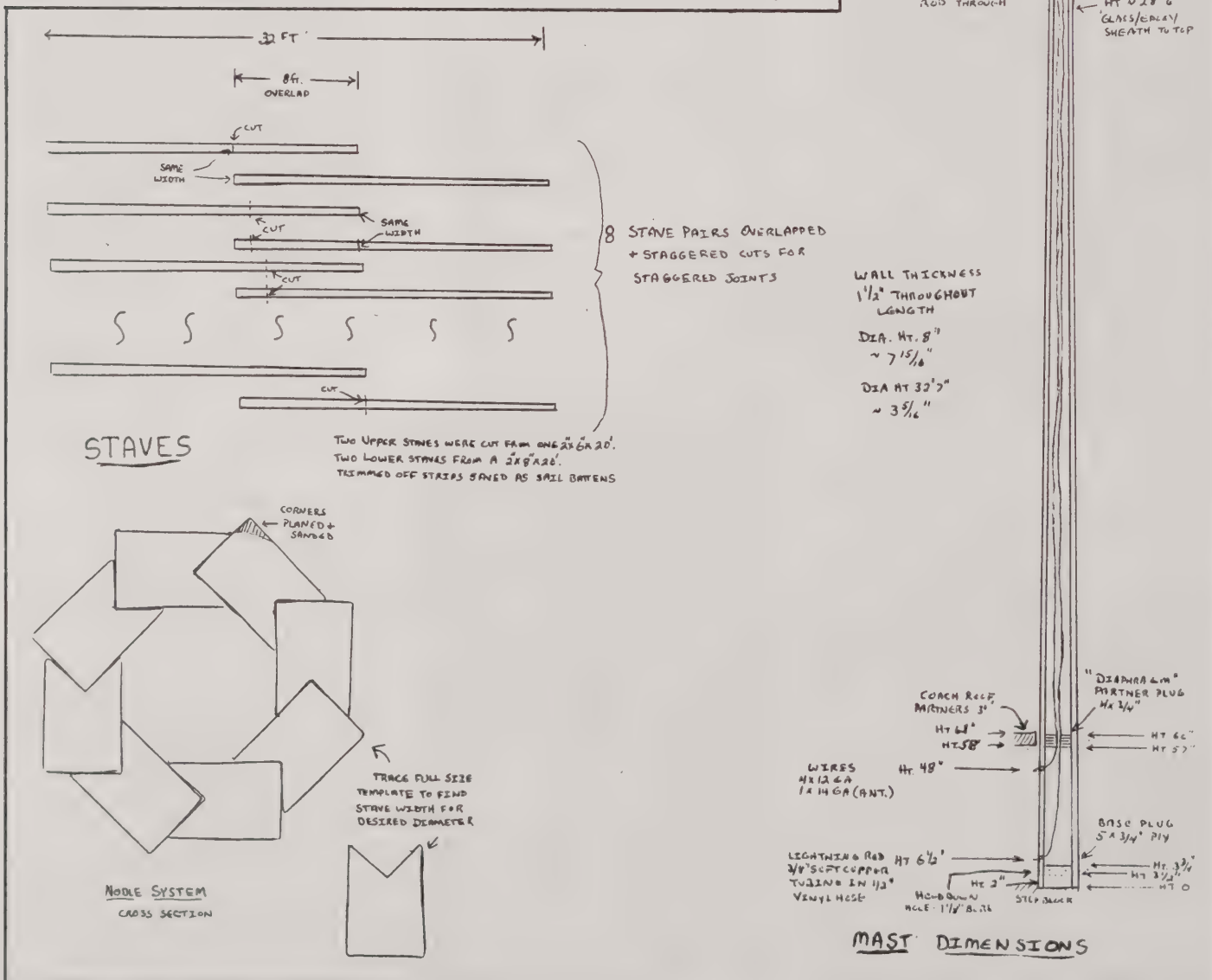
loan a tool. Courtesy forbids asking. Borrowing a good tool is a weighty responsibility and when I "planed" the cord of Jerry's expensive planer I felt obligated to return it in "as new" condition rather than just tape it together as I would have had it been my own.

The planer worked very well indeed, although with eight of the thirty-two foot edges to take off, I finally called it quits with heavily radiused corners instead of continuing until it was perfectly round. I tell myself that the wood furthest from the center line contributes most to the strength of the mast and should not be removed beyond reasonable necessity.

I expect that the corners could have been trimmed by my original plan with the circular saw set at an angle followed by a

few passes of the grinder but the saw, when first tried on this task, showed such a distressing tendency to dive into the wood that I was much relieved to be using the much more controllable electric planer.

From this point there were two types of jobs to be done. The first involved things which any spar would need. The second consisted of repairs of defects caused by errors of calculation and by crude methods.



The mast must contain a diaphragm, an internal plug made of layers of three-quarter inch plywood, cut to a template and shoved, covered with epoxy glue, into place inside the mast at the height of the partners. This supports the hollow mast against side loads. The diaphragm has a hole in the middle to pass various wires and a lightning rod made of three-eighths inch copper tubing. I cut a one and a half inch hole in each of the four pieces of plywood before they were installed. A similar plug without a hole strengthens the very bottom of the spar.

I drilled six one inch holes through the mast wall, 120 degrees apart, three of them just above the base plug and three at a height of four feet. These pass the wires into the cabin and the lower ones also drain the mast should, God forbid, any water find it's way to the inside.

Perhaps I should have wrapped the entire mast with epoxy impregnated fiberglass. It is not a bad idea. As it was I wrapped the top forty inches and two fifteen inch bands at the partners and the mast lift with six wraps for extra strength and as chafe protection for the wood. The final coating on the entire mast is "Steelflex", a highly abrasion resistant epoxy coating applied over a primer coat of thinned epoxy resin.



Fiberglass wrapping the top forty inches.

At the tip of the mast I bolted on a six inch square of one-half inch thick fiberglass material to seal it and to provide a pre-drilled base for attaching lights, etc.

I did not wish to have a masthead fitting made for attaching rigging. Instead I through-bolted three massive (one-half

Top of the mast platform for lights etc.



inch stock) galvanized eye bolts at a height of just over thirty-one feet above the base. These gave me six attachment points and the projections would let me loop line around the masthead and support tackle at intermediate points on the circumference. I was not sure that the mast did not have a slight bend and wished to be able to rotate it without being too concerned with exact orientation. As it happened the mast came out nice and straight but it could have been a minor problem.

The Noble system is damned clever. It is forgiving of imprecision and very strong. I would use it even if I wanted a square or rectangular mast. One can vary the cross sectional shape by making some of the staves wider than the others. Had I to do it over there are three errors which I would avoid.

First I would take more care in cutting the staves and their edge grooves. The gaps in the glue joints varied from zero to three-sixteenths of an inch in width. I would also put even more glue in these joints when assembling the pieces. I spent the better part of a week turning the mast and pouring epoxy resin into the gaps to fill them all flush. The finished product seems as strong as might be but a little closer fit would do no harm and would have saved considerable time and material.

Second, I would work much faster in gluing and assembling the stave bundle. The first groove glued, at the base, got pretty stiff before the clamps were twisted down. This left several feet of one quarter-inch gap which I filled and which seems sound, but I would have preferred to have avoided the problem.

My third error was one of calculation. In using the point-slope method to calculate the varying widths of the staves I neglected the fact that the depth of the edge

grooves is constant. This led to the tip diameter being less than the .41 times the base diameter recommended by Hasler & McLeod. It came out only about one-half inch smaller than desired (just three and three-quarters inches instead of four and one-quarter) and I fancy that the six wraps of fiberglass and epoxy on the top forty inches of the mast makes up for the loss. Still I suspend the rig about fourteen inches down from the top, sacrificing a little over a foot of useful height.

The hollow core of the mast at the tip had an internal diameter of only about three-quarters of an inch, too small for all my wires, so I drilled it out to one and a half inches and inserted a seventeen inch piece of thick wall stainless steel pipe in the core. Sealed in with 3M 5200 and epoxy, it has an internal diameter of one and a quarter inches, just enough for the wiring, and it's one-eighth inch wall thickness strengthens the mast where the rigging load bears.

Before letting the crane lift and install the mast I made careful note of all measurements and dimensions, using them to draw an "as built" diagram of the spar for future reference.

The whole mast weighs between one hundred and seventy and a hundred and ninety pounds and behaves as a single unit. It vibrates in the wind at a frequency of about twenty hertz. I have been to the top on my PVC and shroud wire ladder (hauled aloft initially by line left threaded through the rigging eyes) to install hal-yard, topping lift, etc., and my one hundred and sixty pounds seemed not to affect it at all.

It is my opinion that Mr. Barry Noble is a very clever fellow and that a spar made with his system will fully live up to his name!

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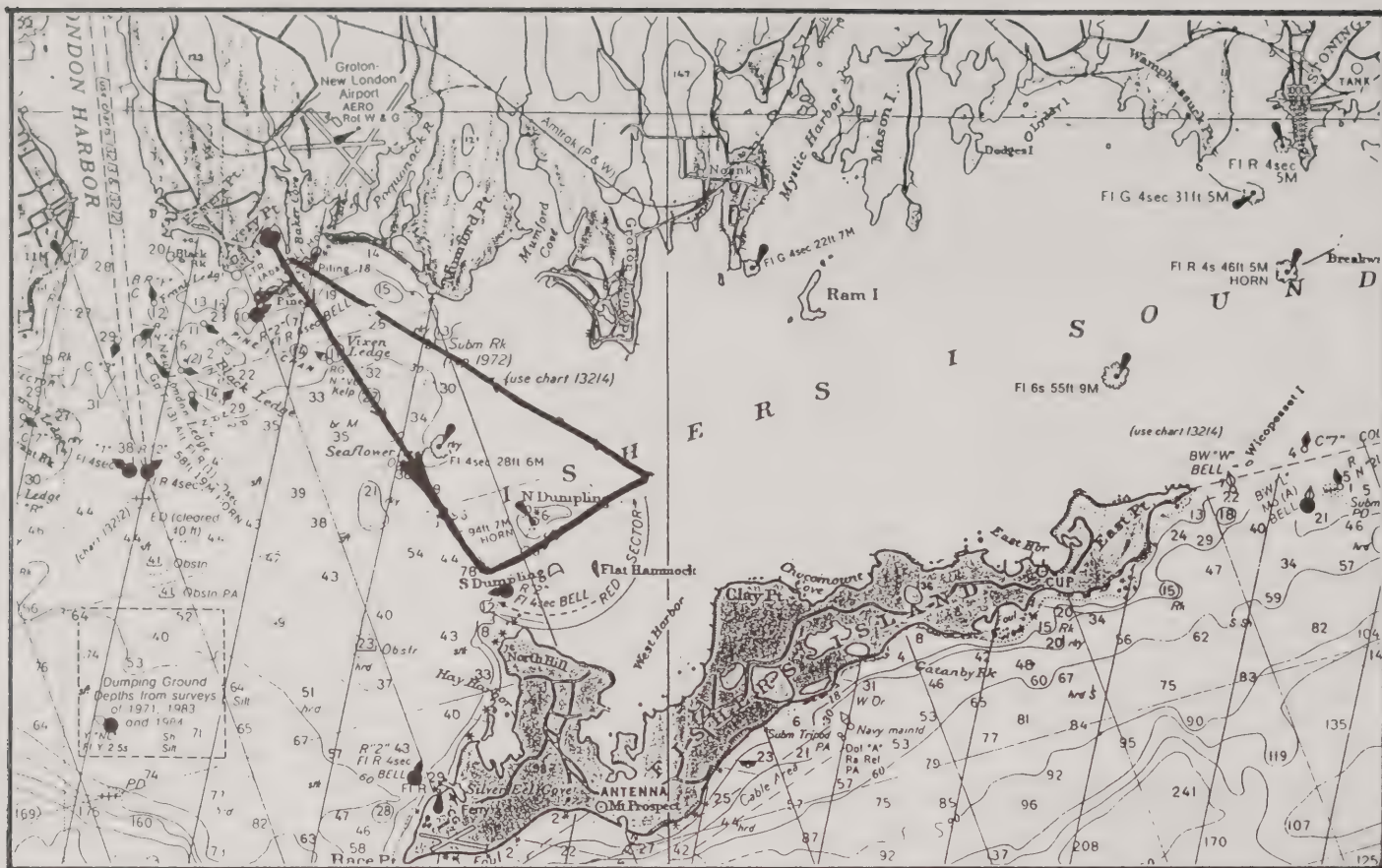
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Daysailing on Fisher's Island Sound

by Jim Lacey

Different sailors enjoy very different styles of messing about, as I learned years ago, before I had a boat of my own, while eagerly serving as crew aboard a Kells 23 with a friend, call him Captain Caution, who introduced me to sailing on Long Island Sound. His boat was moored off Noank at the foot of the Mystic River, and after rowing out in an absurdly tiny dinghy, Captain Caution and I would spend about twenty minutes bending on the jib and trying to start his Johnson outboard, which he kept locked in the cabin of his boat, for fear of thieves.

When the engine would start, which was about half the time, we would motor out to the center of Fishers Island Sound, and then sail in a straight line either east toward Latimer Light or west toward Seaflower Reef, depending on the tide and the wind. Every lobster pot was a potential menace, and the rocks of the "clumps" were as terrifying as Scylla and Charybdis, even though they were a mile or so in the offing. After about a forty-five minute passage, we'd come about and retrace our course to a spot half a mile outside the entrance to the Mystic River channel and then motor back in. Once we were on the mooring, Captain Caution finally relaxed, broke out the bourbon, and settled back to enjoy the kind of sailing he liked most of all. When the engine wouldn't start or if there were whitecaps on the water or a dark cloud in the sky, we got right to this serious business without having to endure the preliminary terrors.

How different it was aboard an O'Day 22 with Captain Casual. On went the jib, up went the main, and off his mooring in West Cove we sailed with me at the helm. Captain Casual liked poking about the shallows and gunkholing, and we spent much of the day in Mumford Cove, tacking about, jibing, working our way up the channel and into recesses, anchoring for a swim and then lunch. When we hit something, presumably a rock, sailing over Horshoe Reef, Captain Casual said, "Well, now we know where it is." On several occasions we went aground, which Captain Casual remedied by heeling the boat and once, when that didn't work, by jumping into the water and giving it a shove.

It occurred to me that sailing, even in the same waters and in similar boats, could refer to very different experiences. The fellow who sold me my Nimble 20, for example, drove down from Massachusetts to Spicer's in Noank, and ordinarily went out for three or four days, usually alone, while I am primarily a day sailor. Many of these differences reflect the temperament of the sailor, but some surely are related to experience or lack of it. I am always curious to know what other readers of "Messing About in Boats" do out on the water, to add a bit of variety to my own routines.

Fortunately, I have to spend only a couple of mornings a week in my office throughout much of the sailing season, which leaves me, after other commitments and with the weather cooperating, two or three days at the shore. I sail my little

yawl "Chatterwug", a Ted Brewer-designed Nimble 20, out of Spicer's Marina in Groton, about a fifty minute drive from my home in Willimantic. I generally get up a little before 8:00 a.m., brew a pot of coffee, and listen to the NOAA marine forecast after breakfast on my hand-held VHF. My impression, which may reside some distance from the truth, is that there has been a change in these reports recently.

Last year, it seems, NOAA broadcast more or less the same report every day, wind from the southwest at ten to fifteen, seas one to two feet, partly cloudy, with a chance of afternoon showers or thunder storms. The 10-15 mph winds might turn out to be anything from a dead calm to half a gale, and the accuracy of the rest of the prediction was chancy, the odds favoring dry weather over rain and thunder. This year the predictions have been more varied, with winds of ten to fifteen, twelve to eighteen, and fifteen or less, and ten to twenty announced seemingly at random. During periods of light airs, the forecasts have generally exaggerated the wind by about 10 mph, and when it began to blow, they occasionally underestimated it but more often got it about right.

While listening to the NOAA report, I record on a 3"x5" index card the day, date, the high and low tides at New London, and my estimation of the tidal current in Fishers Island Sound, which turns about two hours after the tide, the velocity and direction of the wind, and finally the height of the seas. I then look out the window. If I'm in the mood for a sail, I head for

the shore unless it's raining pretty hard or small craft advisories are in effect. With my beat-up, oversized oars permanently residing in the bed of my Ranger pickup, all the equipment I require is a yellow PFD vest and a small duffle, much the worse for wear, which houses equally forlorn "layers" of clothing, sunscreen, a 35 mm rangefinder camera, which is in working condition about half the time, and my hand-held marine radio, which I unplug from its battery charger and retrieve from my desk for the occasion.

Though I am ordinarily gregarious, when it comes to sailing I prefer to go solo, unless I can entice my wife or my daughter, both busy people, to come along. As Thoreau once said about traveling, he who wants company must wait for his companion while he who goes alone, can leave immediately, and I generally decide to go sailing on the spur of the moment.

One way I pass the time during the drive to Groton is to look for indications of how the wind will be on Fishers Island Sound. As every sailor of small boats knows, there are ordinarily only two wind conditions, either not enough or too much. I check out the trees along the roads and highways, a few flags, such as the huge one flying over the Coast Guard Academy in New London, and the smoke and steam spewing out of Pfizers in Groton. These indications often clue me in on which of the two wind conditions will be in effect that day, but this is not always the case. I have seen a limp flag at the Coast Guard Academy when there were whitecaps on the water, and also the same flag flying vigorously and even audibly slapping when there was a dead calm on the Sound.

The reason for checking out all these indications, I suspect, has less to do with anticipating the weather than with my determination to include the trip to the shore as well as the row out in the dinghy as part of sail itself and not merely bothersome preliminaries. This portal-to-portal definition of a "sail" enables me to enjoy much more of the experience than I did when I thought of it only as the time between raising and lowering the mains'l. I am not convinced that all of this is as whimsical as it sounds, for there is a considerable difference between impatiently rushing through some activity, rigging the boat, for instance, and doing it with alert deliberation and pleasure. It is only recently that I have come to appreciate the picture-postcard view of the Sound from the turn in the road at Avery Point and the exotic view of a salt marsh to the left a few rods further along, which became the habitat last summer of four or five egrets and a great blue heron.

On weekdays I have Spicer's mainly to myself. I generally pull in to a parking space past the tackle shop and close to the dinghy dock. On the day I am recalling, a Wednesday in late July, there were just a couple of old cars and pickups in the lot, the property of lobstermen and dayboat renters, none of the fancy vehicles of the weekend crowd. Though there is a launch, I long ago, under the tutelage of my daughter Beth, learned to do without it. Any sailor worth his salt, I have decided, should be independent enough to row out

to his boat. I find it irksome to have to rely on a launch to get me back to the dock. It is also easier, when sailing solo, to run down a windward dinghy than to pick up a mooring pennant!

There are a number of things related to boats that are easier or at least appear to be less of a trial once you get the hang of them. Dragging a hefty Pilot dinghy out of its berth and into the water is one of them; unstepping "Chatterwug's" mizzenmast to remove the sail cover, or rigging and unrigging the spritboom jigger in a blow is another. I hesitate to sing the praises of experience, since I am something of a skeptic in that regard. Whenever someone tells me they have had ten years' experience at the helm, I wonder, thinking of Captain Caution, if they may not really have had only one year's experience ten times. My own well-intentioned resolution to learn something new, such as the location of a rock or a buoy, each time I venture out in "Chatterwug", like most resolutions, left for points unknown after a few weeks of earnest endeavor. But whether it is due to experience or the almost unconscious facility developed through mechanical repetition, getting underway in "Chatterwug" is quick and relatively effortless.

After parking the pickup, I head for the dinghy dock with my PFD, duffle, and oars. At the dock, where dinghies are stacked three high, I free the painter and try to slide the dinghy out of its bottom berth without getting it hung up by the traveller or whatever on the widely-spaced planks of the dock. I then flip it over, breaking the dinghy's fall with my foot on the gunnel, load it up and slip it into the water, trying to avoid scraping off any more gelcoat on the nailheads edging the dock. Once aboard, I row fisherman style and take in a panoramic view of the marina and environs on the way out to my mooring. Once there, the trip takes about five minutes, I toss my duffle into the boat and climb aboard from the starboard, secure the dinghy, and begin my rigging routine.

I unlock the companionway hatch to the cabin, stow the boards in the cockpit locker, and put my wallet and keys in a cabin drawer. After applying sunscreen, I unstep the mizzen mast to remove the sail cover, re-step it and set the sprit boom in place, sheeting in the jigger so that it will weathervane. I then go forward with the dinghy, tie its painter to the mooring pennant, and bend the jib, retrieved from the anchor locker through the forward hatch, onto the forestay. While returning to the cockpit, I remove the mains'l cover and sail ties, and once there, start the engine, a 7.5 Honda, with two or three pulls. Unless the wind is coming directly from the south, the direction I will be heading initially, I haul up the sails, and go forward once more to release the mooring pennant.

Once "Chatterwug" has drifted a sufficient distance from the mooring, I shift the engine into forward and make my way to the Sound via the gap between Pine Island and Bushy Point. This route is quicker than the channel but requires shallow draft and some local knowledge, since there is a considerable rock visible only at low tide right in the middle of the passage, and quite a few more thereabouts awaiting

the unwary.

On the day I am recalling, there was a fresh breeze out of the southwest and the exceptionally clear, vibrant air associated with a Bermuda high. As soon as I passed the mid-passage rock, I lowered the centerboard and killed the engine, as "Chatterwug" was already heeled in the twelve-knot breeze. My first task was to run the gauntlet of lobster buoys and the two small craft anchored to fish in the unofficial channel. By the time I left Vixen Ledge to starboard, it was clear, unobstructed sailing, and I took a moment to retrieve the VHF from my duffle bag, and set it up in one of the beverage holders Ted Brewer had built into the bridge deck. The Nimble 20 is a rebuttal to another salty acquaintance of mine, call him Captain Runabout, who refuses to go sailing because "there's no safe place to put your beer."

I choose a heading that will bring me 50 degrees or so off the apparent wind and sheet in the jigger to balance the helm, as "Chatterwug", with a bone in her teeth, begins to drive toward Seaflower, a marker on a pile of rocks right in the middle of Fishers Island Sound. Despite the strong tidal current setting me to the east, I hope to leave Seaflower to port. The wind is steady and begins to throw up occasional whitecaps. It becomes clear, after about five minutes on this course, that I'll be able to pass to the right of Seaflower if the wind holds.

In my mind's eye I can now envision the entire passage to be made that day. Once past Seaflower, I will head for the bell buoy that guards Fishers Island's North Hill, a course I will hold until I leave North Dumpling to port. Then with the wind abeam, I will swing left into the passage between the Dumplings and run wing on-wing before the wind, a maneuver I would liken to a cock strutting about in a barnyard. Once safely past the Dumplings, I will jibe, and make the westerly passage back to Spicer's close hauled. Once about a hundred yards inside Vixen Ledge, I will head up, strike the main and jib, and motor back in, my usual routine when sailing alone. If I had Barbara or Beth aboard, with a stiff breeze out of the southwest, we would fetch the Pine Island bell, hang a right, and then barrel down the official channel wing-on-wing, to show off or just for the fun of it. In sailing, I have learned, the best way, the most satisfying way of doing things, isn't always the simplest, the quickest, or the easiest way.

The wind has taken a firm and steady grip on "Chatterwug's" sails, and with the helm nicely balanced I can easily adjust course toward the Dumplings with my left hand atop the tiller's stock. I become aware that this is the experience daysailors treasure, when they are for the moment alert and unconcerned, free yet bound to the necessities of wind and water, daring and venturesome in safe, familiar waters, which are somehow strange and new at every surge of the hull. All thoughts of the landsman's life evaporate, details to be remembered, things to be done, arrangements to be made, all of them fade into unreality. The only reality now is water, wind and light-winged boat suddenly come alive like some fabled sea-creature.

The following events took place in the mid 1980's in Stonington, Connecticut. They show that you should always have the equipment aboard you know you should even when it looks unlikely you will use it, and trust your instincts and, don't count on the U.S. Coast Guard.

It happened like this: At this point I was sailing (or learning to sail) a Thistle. I had agreed to meet my partner Tom down at the harbor at 5:00 pm. We had intended to practice for a race the next day.

Right away we came to our first snag which was that the sail wouldn't go up due to something jamming the halyard. We tried various unjamming techniques at the mooring and finally resorted to hauling the boat far enough ashore until it could be tipped over and the sheave at the top of the mast reached. This meant that we left a good deal later in the day than we had planned.

On tacking out of the harbor I noticed fog coming in over Fisher's Island and decided to simply go out and tack along the breakwater and tack back in. This seemed sensible at the time, although a little hairy in hindsight. Now our real troubles began. On our first tack the tiller came out of the rudder head and the forestay let go. Needless to say we were somewhat confused for the moment and turned our attention to righting those wrongs. While we had our attention thus diverted the fog must have either come in very fast or been a lot closer than I at first thought, because when we were again able to concentrate, I looked around and the breakwater had disappeared.

This started us off on a series of tacks to find it. The first of the three points I mentioned comes up here. If we had had a compass on board none of this would have happened. At one point I reasoned (correctly) that, since the wind had been blowing from the S.E., by simply running downwind we would at least run into some familiar landmark. So, we started running. With the wind dead aft we jibed and jibed again being that it was difficult to see just where the wind was. At this point Tom spoke up and said that the wind must have shifted. I did not think so but the fog destroyed my confidence. This is where the second point is made; one's instincts come in and need to be trusted. I agreed and we started off into the fog again. At one point a pole appeared which I recognized as marking a rock but could not place it.

Soon I heard a foghorn which I recognized and thought it was at the end of the breakwater so I headed for it. Or so I thought until all of a sudden through the fog appeared Latimer's Reef Lighthouse which is on a small cluster of rocks in Fisher's Island Sound. Although I did not know it at the time the Coast Guard had managed to put two horns with the same pitch within one mile of each other: the one on the breakwater in the harbor and the one on the lighthouse. This little mistake of the duplicate foghorns was corrected in a couple of weeks due to local complaints.

We were well to the west of where I thought we were but by then the light was going out of the fog and "any port in a storm." I suggested that we stop and spend 16

Fog on Fisher's Island Sound

By Rob Pittaway

the night right there and Tom agreed. There is a space in the stone at the base of the lighthouse which was used for the lightkeeper to tie his boat. Although damaged by hurricanes it still can serve the same purpose.

We both were wearing jackets which were waterproof and I had on long pants but Tom only had on shorts. Fortunately it was summer. We had only the sails and a couple of boat cushions with which to make ourselves comfortable on the almost too narrow circular concrete walkway at the base of the light. The next thing I thought of was that the horn would sound all night. But it was high above us and relatively soft.

As we settled down to wait for the next thing to happen in this saga I wondered what my wife was doing now that it was dark. It seems strange but I could not dwell on that. Perhaps for the same reason I was not hungry. There was absolutely nothing we could do about our situation at the moment. It was strange to be so isolated in the middle of the fog. We weren't constrained in any physical way yet we could not really go anywhere. Besides the wind had died. It was best to stay right there. At least we were safe, although nobody knew it.

So we tried to sleep. Later, we heard a strange sound out there on the water and I identified it as rain approaching. Sure enough in a few minutes we were getting water falling on us really hard. It only lasted a few minutes and then moved on. Sail cloth does not make a waterproof covering but provided enough protection that we did not get completely soaked.

The next noise that woke us was the sound of an engine. It was obviously a boat but we couldn't see it. Why didn't they have any lights showing? It was coming quite close. We waited until it was apparently stopped and both of us yelled as loud as we could. Nothing. We yelled again. Still nothing. It moved off deeper into the fog. It was in fact the Coast Guard searching for us, but with their engines running how did they expect to hear anything? My wife later said she asked them about just this situation and was told that they could hear. Don't worry. This was the last time I will ever count on the Coast Guard, the third point.

After that little incident, I started thinking: Was it really someone looking for us or was it perhaps someone doing something illegal? In which case they would not want any witnesses. I admit that sounds a little overdramatic but stranger things have happened. We talked about it and agreed not to call out to anyone unless they identified themselves first. Another possible argument for the Coast Guard to identify themselves.

I slept reasonably well and I remember the night as being not too uncomfortable either from hunger, cold or from the hardness of the concrete.

Eventually, morning came and it grew lighter and finally it was a bright, sunny summer's day somewhere, although foggy right around us. But there was no wind. Then, finally just as the wind came up enough to sail, a fishing boat went by. Being that he had his throttle wide open, he would not have heard us if we had yelled, and he didn't see us. I don't know why, but I assumed he was headed in and not out. The fog was so thick that I wasn't sure where the sun was. I just assumed that he was headed for Stonington, so we got into our boat and headed in the same direction. Pretty soon we heard an engine ahead of us. I said: "Hey, that's not a boat, that's a lawnmower. Then Tom said, "I hear waves" and the next moment we were on a beach.

Above the beach was a golf course where a guy who was cutting the grass was just disappearing over a rise. The length of time it took to reach this land was not much more than it takes to tell it. But where were we? If you look at a chart of Fisher's Island Sound, you will see that we wound up on Fisher's Island! We had taken off from the lighthouse headed south, not north as I thought. I was completely turned around and the fishing boat was headed in. It was going to Fisher's Island.

From here on the story is all very anticlimactic. Tom talked to the groundskeepers and got us a ride to the western end of the island. There he called up his employer and she called my wife. Next, fortunately, Tom had some money with which we bought coffee and a grinder. Feeling fit again, we got a ride back east. The driver of the car was very kind and said to us:

"Just wait it out (the fog). Don't do anything stupid like trying to leave before it lifts." We promised we wouldn't and walked to the boat to wait it out. Then the last incredible thing happened. We had just sat down and were planning our next move when the wind shifted into the north and the fog disappeared and there was the bright sunny summer's day. We got up sail and, in what seemed like a few minutes, were pulling up our mooring pennant in Stonington harbor.

Well, what was the final conclusion from all this? Were we scared? I can only speak for myself. No. As long as the boat floated or we were on some sort of solid ground we were O.K. Were we concerned? You bet. I knew that at some point my wife would worry about where we were and start a process of looking for us.

What did we learn from it all? The first thing was about the fog. Even in this part of the world it is more confusing than one can imagine. One should have at least a compass on board. In fact, right after that we put one permanently on the boat. At least my instincts in this case were right and should have been followed. Lastly, the point about the Coast Guard has been already well illustrated.

This whole episode was something of a mystery to me. I kept thinking that it should have happened years ago. That somehow I must be living in the past. Having been to Fisher's Island without ever having seen where I was going. With all the fog swirling around us and keeping us from seeing what was right in front of us: that was what made it so mysterious.

The Storm

Submitted by E.G. Ragsdale

(This event happened during the big storm which struck the peninsula of Baja and the mainland of Mexico April 24-25, 1993. Joyce wrote the story of the events just as they happened and sent it to her mother, who happens to be my sister-in-law. The story begins):

We left La Paz and spent three days getting to the tip of Baja. This is because, #1, we were in no hurry, #2, we had limited fuel and were not going to be able to get more, and #3, the wind never blew in more than 6 of any 24 hours. So, we could sail and sit and bob some and motor some if there was no wind, but still in rough seas so I didn't become seasick.

On April 24th at 11:00 pm I went to bed because it was Wally's shift. We were just coming to the tip of Baja and had the full main up and a 130% jib. As is our standard practice, safety lines were run down both sides and Wally was wearing his safety harness clipped on. About 11:30 pm., I was awakened by being slammed hard against the ceiling and the boat was really smashing hard. I quickly dressed and put on my harness and went out on deck to see what was going on. The wind was hitting about 30 knots and we had green water coming over the bow!

Wally said it hit the second he rounded the point and he couldn't do anything yet as, "Tilly", our old automatic steering, couldn't hold it, forcing him to steer. I grabbed the tiller and he went forward to the mast and double reefed. Green water was coming over all the way to the mast now and, although he could hang on, I was worried he'd hit his head against the mast. I was getting totally drenched now too.

Wally returned to the cockpit and we talked about why we had a pocket still in the main and we couldn't figure out what to do to flatten it. We'd pulled the jib really tight also, but were still smashing very hard and taking on lots of green water. We knew should go to the bow and hank on the storm jib, but neither of us wanted to go up there as the bow was under water most of the time.

We sailed this way about three hours, figuring we would sail out of it soon. Then the main went! We reacted quickly because we had blown a jib once and knew that if the sail wasn't dropped immediately it would start to shred and be lost beyond repair.

Wally ran to the mast and dropped the main, I turned the boat around and ran on the jib while Wally lashed the main to the boom. Although the wind was still only 30 knots, the waves were huge and the tops were breaking. Although it was still scary, Wally and I had both had experience surfing big waves in our kayaking days. We did not, though, want to do an "endo", or roll this boat over! ("This boat", is a Cal 40).

The boat was not pounding now that we running, but we'd started the engine because we did not like relying totally on that one jib. Suddenly, there was a terrible racket coming from the engine

compartment! We didn't want to shut the engine off, although we knew we should, but looking back and up at those huge waves scared us. The engine probably wasn't doing us any good at all because we were really screaming down the waves, but it was a much needed security blanket!

We watched the gauges, the oil pressure only dropped slightly, the temperature remained constant and the racket stopped. Wally steered about an hour because I was seasick. Then about 3:00 am or thereabouts, he went to bed and I steered about 2-3 hrs. It was difficult to surf the waves only because my concentration could not waver as the consequences would be devastating.

Surfing waves on the Oregon coast was fun, but we never had to concentrate for more than 10 minutes at a time to surf a wave. Also the consequences of having a wave break over you could hurt, but we'd just roll back up and go to shore when we were finished.

Around 6:00 am when Wally came back on deck, the wind and waves were dying and I could tell the engine was not moving the boat.

We tried it in neutral and reverse. No, the engine was not moving the boat. So, we shut it down and I kept steering while Wally took a look in the engine compartment. We have a V-drive and the shaft had slid back. Luckily, we have a safety clamp on the shaft or the shaft would have dropped overboard leaving a 1-1/2" hole open to the sea. We would have sunk within a few minutes!

We could see Baja still, as we had run back toward Cabo, but were still about 8-10 miles offshore. "Tilly" wasn't working so one of us had to continue to hand steer to keep on the most comfortable heading. Wally could not fix the shaft and the wind barely gave us steerage. Wally then tried to lash the dinghy alongside the boat in an attempt to tow with outboard motor, but the waves were much too large and the chop too great. He finally managed to tie the dinghy, but it would have never made shore as the outboard wouldn't have been strong enough against the swells and the lower unit would have been out of the water so much it would have burned up.

We were now both very tired, bruised, and seasick. We were being forced further from shore. The decision was made to call in as a vessel in distress. A sailboat responded immediately from Cabo San Lucas. We gave our coordinates and left our jib up so he could spot us easier. He was there within the hour. It was a big trimaran and he towed us to some mooring buoys at Cabo. He was a real nice guy and the seas were still pretty rough. He lost a big fender, refused any payment, however we gave him one of our big fenders. We paid the keeper of moorings, Juan, for a week on the moorings when he motored out to help us tie up. We then fell into our bunks.

The next day we found out that another boat had tried to round the "corner" that night also, he was coming

from the other direction down the coast, and had hit the rocks. The boat was lost. One crewman was lost, his body never found, and the other was found later alive. He survived to sail again.

We are thankful to be safe and have decided to increase our sailing and boat maintenance experience one more year before trying to tackle an extensive crossing. We made a lot of mistakes, but as the saying goes, "I learn from that which does not kill me"

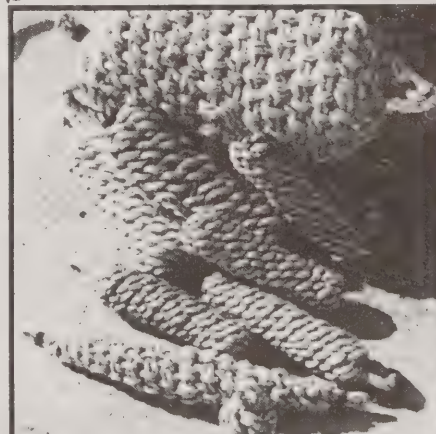
We will spend at least one more season in Mexlco. In the interim we will spend July and August in Oregon if we can find a safe place to leave the boat for the hurricane season.

(Sept. 6th. Wally and Joyce are back in Mexico aboard, "Just Do It" and are in the process of adding new equipment and repairing the damage done in April. They are living aboard, happily fishing and diving and renewing their acquaintances in Baja).



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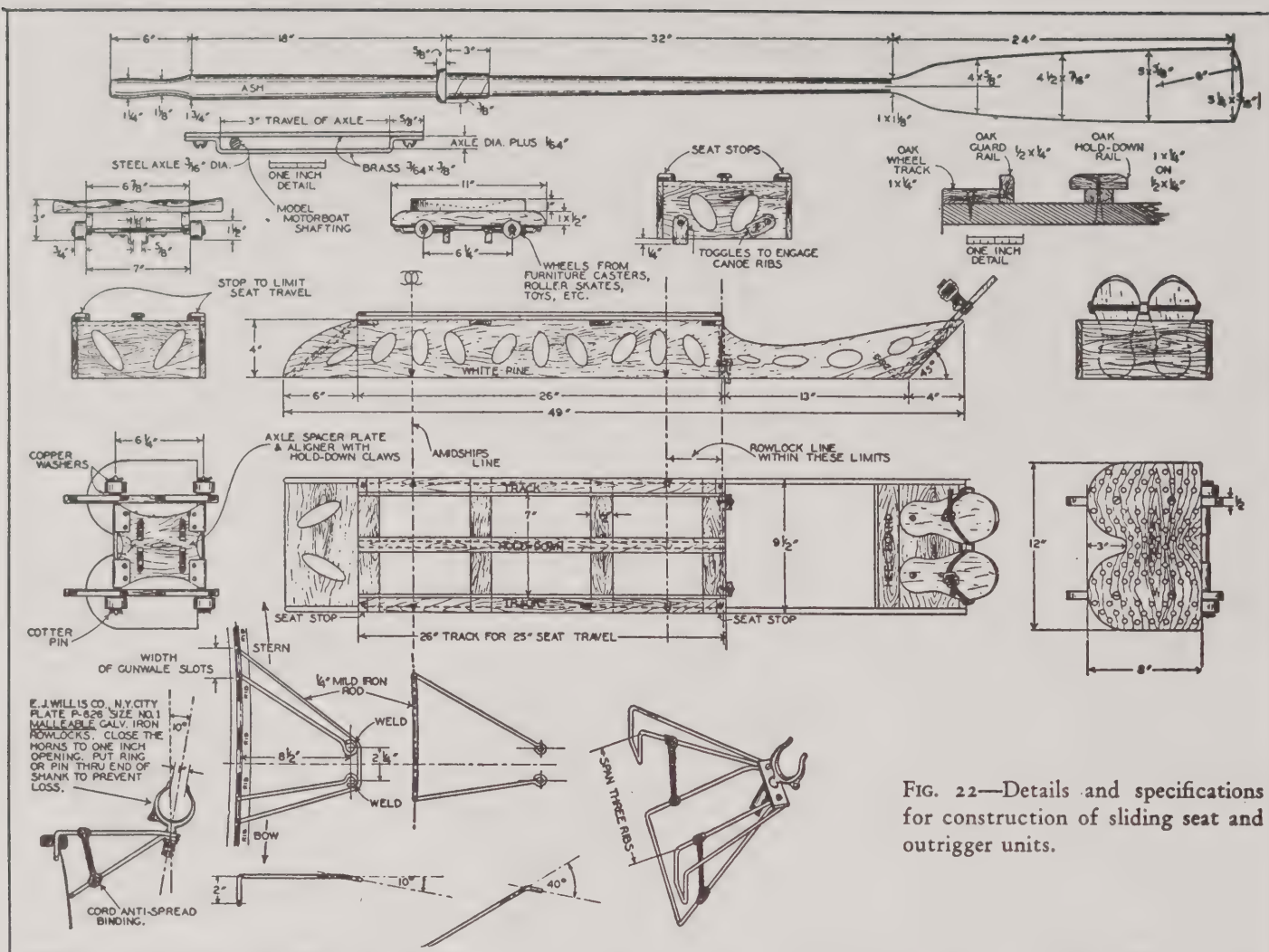


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A Canoe Makes an Excellent Rowing Craft

From the 1956 American National Red Cross Manual

A canoe makes an excellent rowing craft when equipped with detachable outriggers and sliding seat rowing equipment (Figs. 23 and 23A). It has more maneuverability and some of the carrying capacity of the typical rowboat and some of the speed of a racing shell. Rigging a canoe in this manner is a measure of economy in so far as it permits one craft to perform the function of two interchangeably.

The equipment under discussion was designed and built by Waldemar Van Brunt Claussen several years before his retirement from the position of Assistant Director of the Water Safety Service, American National Red Cross. The drawings (Fig. 22) of this equipment were done by him. Mr. Claussen's article that appeared in the January-February, 1947 issue of "The Reporter" (former publication of the First Aid and Water Safety Service) has been adapted here to explain how to make this equipment.

The drawing (Fig. 22) shows a sliding seat unit that can be readily placed in a canoe; outriggers that can be easily clipped into the slots of the open gunwale without the use of bolts, screws, or other permanent fastenings; and a pair of well balanced, light oars that can be made from a pair of larger ones.

The seat frame (Fig. 23B), a rectangular affair 49" long, 9-1/2" wide, and 4" high, can be made from the planking of a light packing case. If you wish to keep the outfit really light, cut the lightening holes indicated. Any of the modern plastic resin glues make for excellent assembly, although screws may be used if desired. Footplates, toestraps, and heelboard are easy to devise. The seat, the footplates, usually called boots, and the tracks may be purchased from the manufacturers of racing shells, or obtained secondhand at some large rowing clubs having old shells that eventually have to be broken up. The equipment in the shell is usually saved when one is broken up. Toggles on the center partition (Fig. 23C) are to prevent longitudinal creeping of the seat frame while in use. Yet the toggles can be turned up to permit transfer of the frame to a smooth interior plywood canoe or skiff. Note also the turnbuckles (shown in Fig. 23A and 23C), which prevent lateral movement.

In ribless canoes a 1/8" galvanized or stainless-steel wire rope (cable) attached to each end of the sliding seat unit and to pad eyes on the inside stems at each end of the canoe will hold the unit securely in position. Each cable could have snap hooks

at both ends or be permanently fastened to the seat and have a snap hook at the other end. There should be a turnbuckle in the middle of one of these cables in order to take up slack and make the cables taut while the unit is in use and to slack off in order to take the unit out of the canoe. The oak tracks, guardrails, and hold-down rail present a little work in sawing and planing if no power tools are available, because these parts should be true and smooth. The commercial seat has the hold-down brackets ("fingers," or "claws") attached to the seat. They engage the outer edges of the tracks thus making the center hold-down bar unnecessary.

The sliding, or rolling, seat portion is interesting to make. The part you sit on may be flat, if a pad of some kind is used with it; but a more shipshape job calls for gouging this 12"x 8"x 1" piece of softwood into a typical saddle-seat form. The gouging job can be done with an ordinary straight 3/4-inch gouge chisel followed by rubbing with coarse and fine sandpaper on an oval shaped cork rubbing block (or a wooden block faced with felt or foam rubber). Lightening holes again are drilled (Fig. 23B), and it might even facilitate the gouging to drill them first.

Wheels are obtained by dismantling

the casters from some old article of furniture. Even the wheels from roller skates or some inexpensive toy may be adapted to the purpose. Round iron rod may be used for the axle; but for a durable rig for adult use, a mild steel axle is better. The axle may be bought in 3/16" diameter stock and 12" lengths at model shops where it is sold as shafting for model motorboat construction. The simplest manner of keeping the wheels on is to use washers and cotter pins after cutting the rod to proper length and carefully drilling the ends.

The axle-keepers and bearings are designed to provide 3" travel for the axle; these may be iron or brass. They may be attached with offset bends in the keeper, or the bends may be eliminated and washers or spacers slightly thicker than the diameter of the axle used. The spacer plate, which keeps the axles in parallel alignment, should be about as thick as the diameter of the axle. The plate is held to the axle by light brass or tin clips bent around the axle and riveted to the plate.

The "fingers" or "claws" to engage the hold-down rail, and the rail itself are not strictly necessary for use of the equipment when rowing, but they are a worthwhile convenience because they keep the seat permanently attached when the frame is lifted into or out of the canoe. One or two pairs of claws may be used; these are readily bent and then riveted to the spacer plate. They should fit the hold-down rail snugly, without binding. Each end of both tracks should be provided with "stops" to prevent the seat wheels from over-running. The two at one end may be permanently glued, but the other two should be held by screws, which will make it easy to remove the seat for repairs or refinishing.

Twenty feet of 1/4" iron rod; one pair of size No. 1 malleable, galvanized iron, U-type rowlocks; and four 3/16" flathead stove bolts, with nuts and washers, provide the equipment for the outriggers (Fig. 23D). The upper member of each outrigger is planned to span three ribs; to have rectangular claws that fit snugly into the gunwale slots; to have the pulling arm slightly longer than the thrust arm; and to have a 10 degree tilt at its outer end. An 8-1/2" extension is suggested. This may be increased if oars longer than those illustrated are used. If the problem of bending neat, round eyes, as illustrated, is beyond the capacity of your equipment, then ordinary hairpin bends around the bolts will serve amply well. For rigidity sufficient to permit the application of full adult power when rowing, it is recommended that a spot weld be made to fasten each eye to the part of the rod that passes around outside it.

The lower, or down-thrust, member of each outrigger bears against the outside of the canoe about 5" below the gunwale (Fig. 23D); it may have a piece of rubber tubing slipped over it before final attachment. Assembly of the outrigger is completed by applying fishline bindings tightly (and varnishing them) over thin wood dowel spacers (Fig. 23D) having their ends notched to fit the round rods. The dowels could be replaced by iron rods of the same length and cut from the material used for the rest of the outrigger. The advantage of the iron rods is that they can be quickly and permanently welded in place.

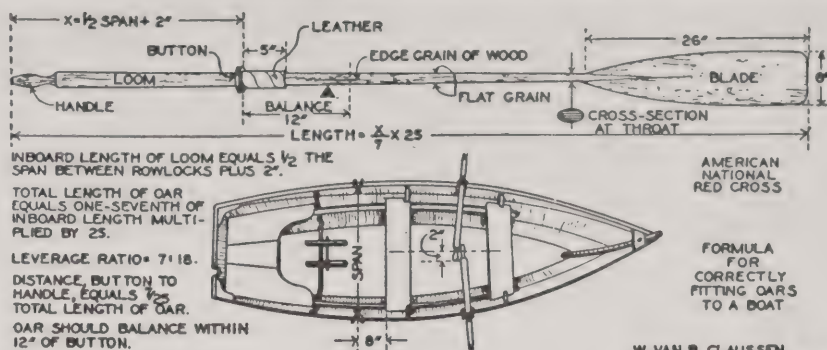


FIG. 24—This drawing was prepared after the drawing showing how to make the sliding seat and outrigger rowing equipment. Because its recommendations for locating the leather and button on an oar will contribute to more efficient rowing you may wish to incorporate them when preparing your oars and outriggers.

Horns of the open rowlock should be pressed together in a vise until the inside diameter of the lock is a close, but not a tight, fit around the leathered part of the oar loom (Fig. 23E); this will eliminate annoying loose play and also will secure the loom against any possibility of jumping out; yet the oar can be removed by drawing it inboard until the thin part of the loom will pass the narrowed horns. The 10 degree cant of the rowlocks should be adjusted, if necessary, until the "button," or leather collar, bears evenly against the face of the lock when the oar is immersed at pulling depth. To prevent accidental loss of the rowlocks, insert a pin or ring in the eye at the end of the shank.

Oars for use with this outfit should be 6' 8" long overall for this specific canoe, with leather and button applied at location shown. ARC 1065-15, "Formula for Correctly Fitting Oars to a Boat" (see Fig. 24), contains information on location of leather and button that will contribute to more efficient rowing. You may wish to incorporate this information when preparing your oars and outriggers. Flat blade oars of ash or spruce are not difficult to make by hand, even without a lathe, and it is even simpler to merely work a large heavy pair down to the dimensions shown.

If spoon blade oars (sculls) are available, or if your handicraft ability is equal to the task of producing them, you'll find that they are the finishing touch necessary to make this equipment one of the pleasant

test thrills in your aquatic experience. You may purchase sculling oars from manufacturers who make racing shells and oars. They will measure 9-1/2' and have their leathers and buttons located for sculling (rowing) with oarlocks 60" apart. If you purchase the sculls, you'll also have to purchase sculling oarlocks; no other type will be satisfactory. You will have to make the outriggers large enough to place the oarlocks 60" apart at their points of attachment to the outriggers.



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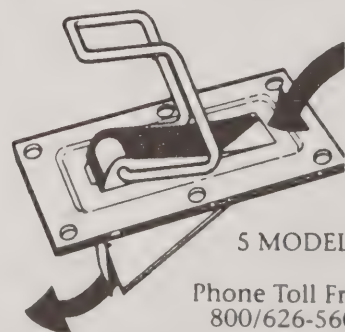
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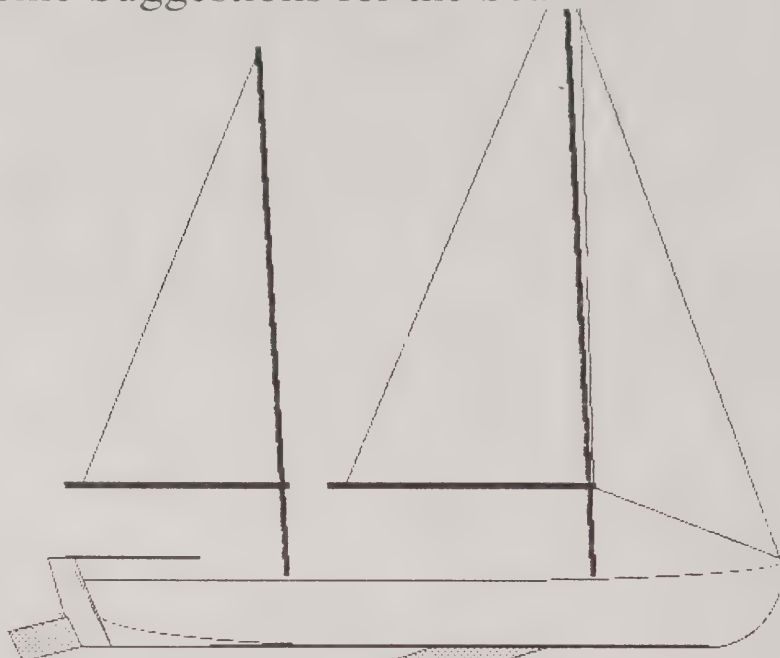


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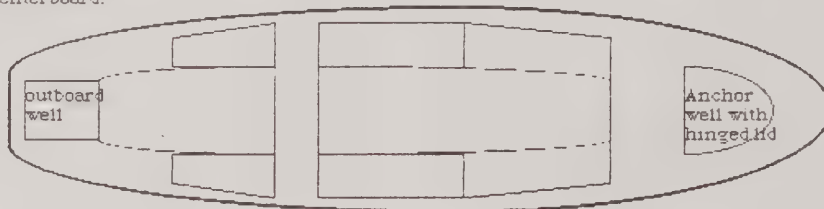
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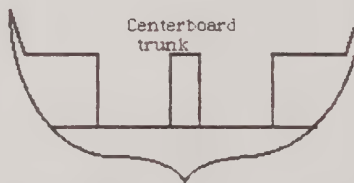
Some Suggestions for the Sea Pearl



Hinged Aluminum rudder
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when heeled. Seats are
wide enough to sleep on.



Centerboard
trunk

Sealed floor, with
compartments. With drains
in stern, boat is self-bailing.
Floor is divided into sections,
access through round
hatches. Can be used as
water ballast & storage

By Steve Axon

I read your offering of "micro" cruiser plans and nearly rushed off an order for all of them. For years, the concept of a small seaworthy sailboat has been compelling, something with sturdy construction, cozy cabin, and a high degree of seaworthiness. However, as I get older (and wiser?), and look at the sailing I really get to do, the design approach that makes more sense is that of the "beach cruiser". The pocket cruiser is usually too heavy to trailer, and too cramped to share with the family. The gunkholing I like to do requires shoal draft and I enjoy taking a gang out for a daysail, so an open boat with a big cockpit is nice to have. The places I sail (the Great Salt Lake, reservoirs, and the Sea of Cortez) all allow camping on shore, so a beachable boat that can haul a crowd would appeal to me.

The best design to meet my requirements to date is the "Sea Pearl" It is:
Easy to tow, easy to rig and launch.
Shoal draft and beachable.

Has a big cockpit and can handle a crowd well.

Is well made, a fast sailer, and easy to singlehand.

However after owning a Pearl for several years, I must note that it does have a some design limitations I would like to see corrected.

It has little design stability, and is very tender.

It is NOT self-rescuing (it cannot be sailed dry from a knockdown).

The flat bottom pounds, (and ruins the otherwise handsome lines).

The design changes I would make to a Pearl are:

Add 12 to 18 inches to its beam, giving it more form stability. The original hull was narrow so that it could be rowed (this hull predates outboard motors). No one I know of rows this boat very far, so the emphasis on oars could be dropped.

Add a full length, sealed floor (like the big daysailer in Bolger's column a few months ago). This would make the boat self rescuing, as well as allowing the use of water ballast in partitions within the floor.

Redesign the bottom, so that a more traditional rounded shape results, one that would not pound when beating to windward. This may cost 3-4 inches in draft but a boat that draws 10 inches is still acceptable.

Is there someone making a boat that fits this description? Can we get Phil Bolger to do a design? I think that a big, capable "beach cruiser" is a boat that the public might buy. The Sea Pearl has been successful.

Last Goodboats Before Winter



We great excitement and some fear we got off the shipment of four Goodboats to our German customer, Axel Schneider of Kolumbus Boote & Materialien in Munich, just before Christmas. The sail came from Douglas Fowler just in time for us to take advantage of the last little opening up of the water here at the head of Long Lake to try out this Class C rig. I'd taken the advice of Douglas to go with this Laser type sail, and of Steve Clark and Ben Fuller as to the location of the mast and leeboard and the arrangement of the lines. We went out sailing in a snowfall on Pearl Harbor Day as the photos show. The interior of the boat was snow covered by the time I



got back.

I loved the rig. We weighed all the boats and found the stiffened 4-ply 17 footer with sail rig to weigh 81 pounds, less the sail rig proper; the 3-ply 16 footer to weigh 61 pounds; and the super-light 2-ply solo 15 footer to weigh 33 pounds. The fourth boat in the shipment was a kit 16 footer. The boats just barely fit snugly inside one another, and we built an armature on temporary thwarts inside the inside boat to carry the long mast and the rail parts for the kit. Everything else went inside and all was wrapped up in blue carpet foam and stretch film with rope handles for the human, we hope, handlers.

Now we're buckling down to repair work after this order. I no sooner got back in harness restoring another Old Town sailing canoe when I tried a fall line drop from the lip of a gravel pit on my XC skis, crashed at the bottom, and banged my knee so hard it broke my hip. Am triply bolted back together very nicely, but am further behind.

Next summer I am to teach building my Goodboats from the ready-made panels at the Wooden Boat School.

Mason Smith, Adirondack Goodboat, HC01-Box 44, Long Lake, NY 12847.



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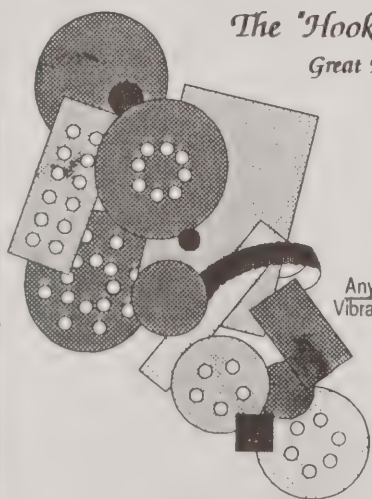
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We are also developing several videos on boat building, repair and maintenance. If this sounds like a busy year, well it will be. We feel 1994 is the year for us to get it done, now or never.

Robert Schofield, Schofield's Boatworks, P.O. Box 352, Oak Hill, FL 32759.



EARLY STAGES

My slightly modified Glen L Rob Roy canoe is in its early stages as pictured. She is 14'5" and under 40 pounds, built stitch and glue of 4mm okume plywood. This is

the first boat I have built. I am keeping a detailed journal for future reporting on the project.

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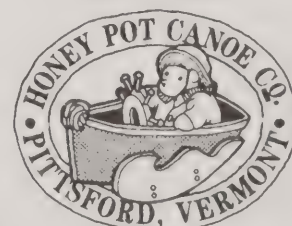


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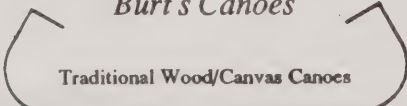


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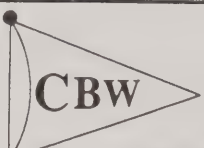
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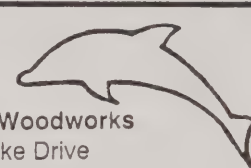


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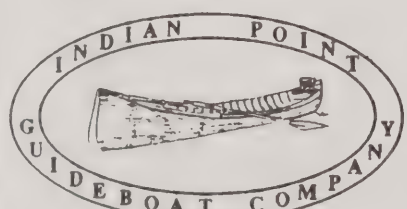
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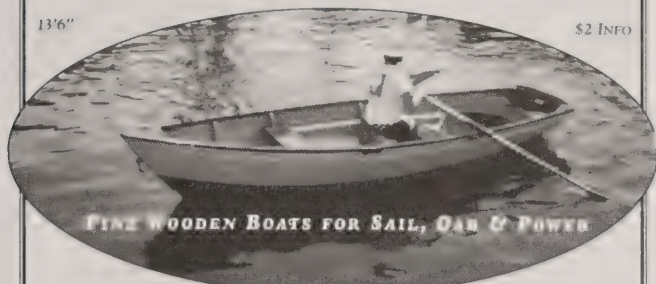
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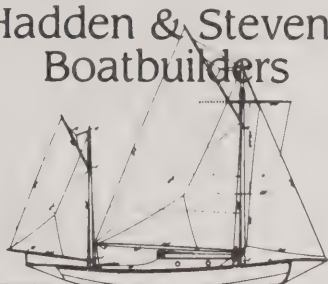
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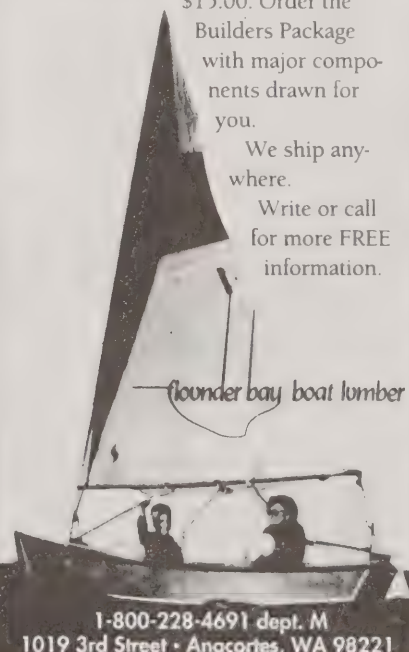
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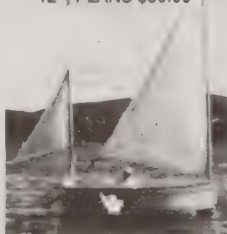
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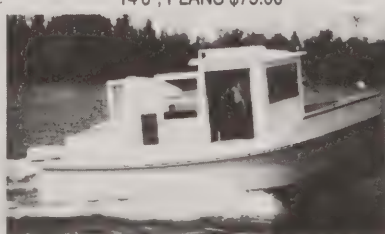
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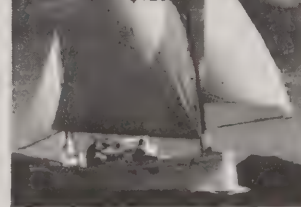
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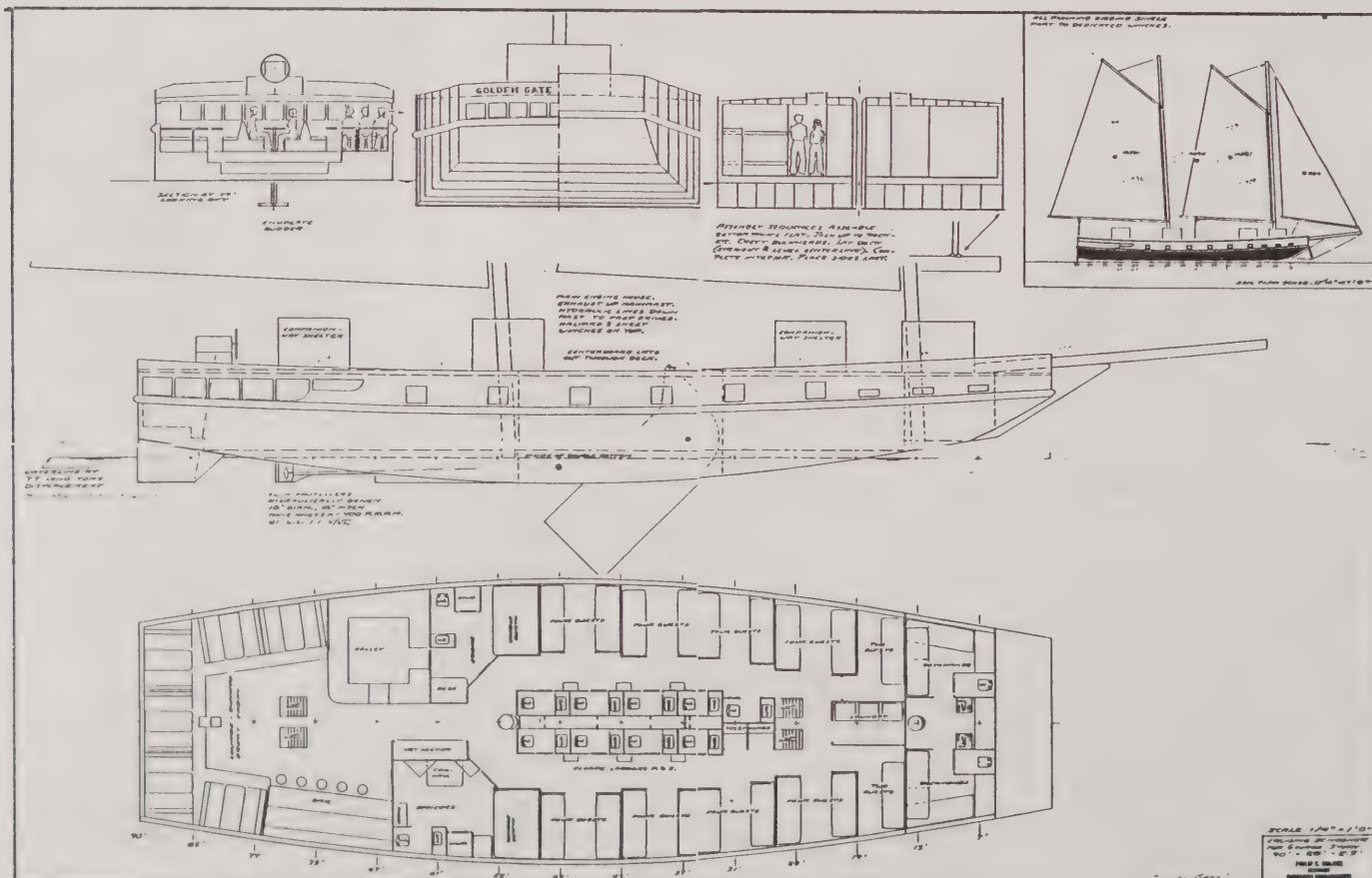
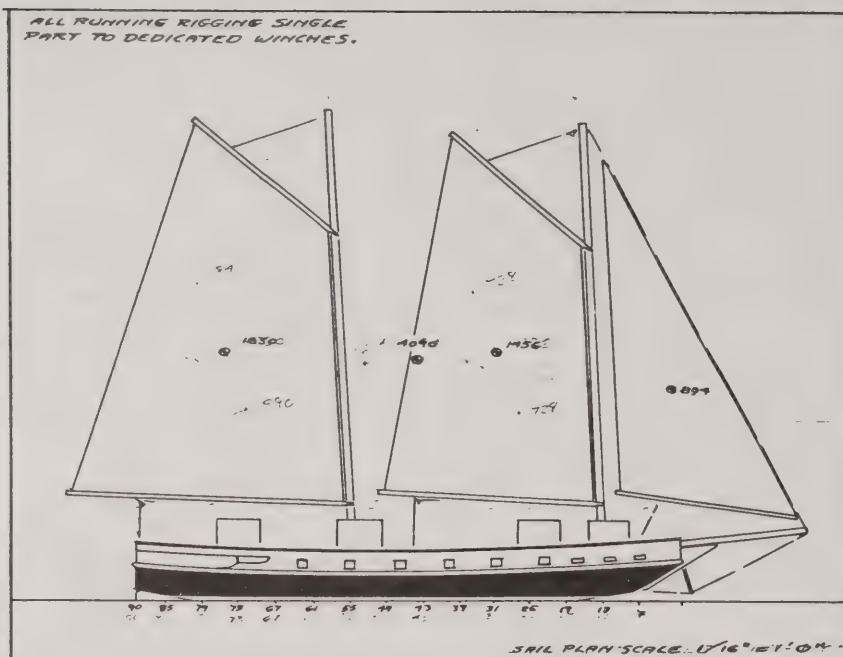
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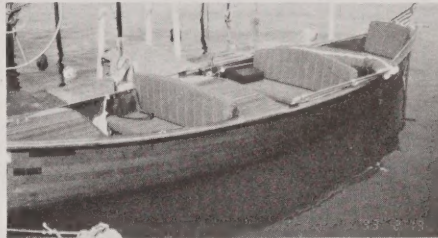
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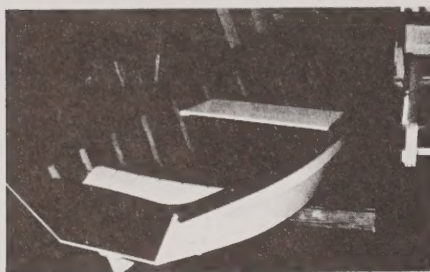
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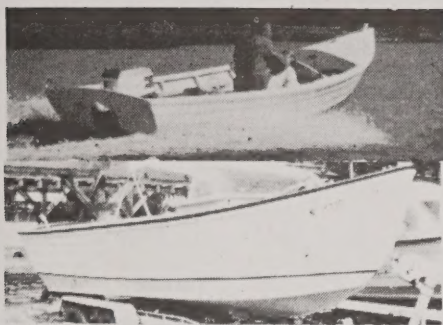
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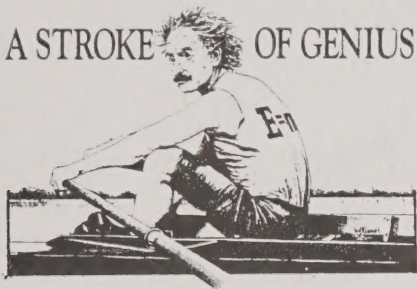
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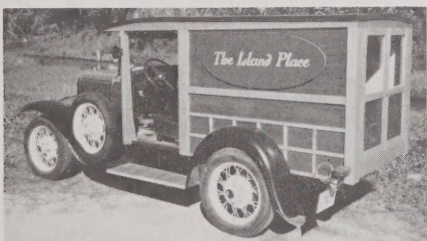


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MUDHEN or other shallow draft (12") FG cabin sharpie type hull, 17'-23'. Trade for 1930 Model A Huckster worth \$3,900.

MIKE LEINER, Cedar Key, FL, (904) 543-5307, 543-5657. (20)

"MASS BAY HUSTLER", plans or info. Daysailer reported to have last sailed in the '70's.

TOM DOANE, 9 Farley Ave., Ipswich, MA 01938, (508) 356-7689. (19)

19'-21' HULL OR LAUNCH that nds restoration. Must be able to accommodate a 5hp steam engine. RON ROSSETTI, N. Haven, CT, (203) 239-0655. (20)

ROBERT HARRIS, of Deer Island, ME. Please contact me. Holding Dyer. Two other inquiries so please confirm interest. I don't have your address/phone number.

RICHARD CHAPIN, HC 33 Box 440, Robinhood, ME, (617) 864-2522. (20)

19' MARINER PARTS, nd mast, boom, sails, rudder, etc.

MEL KALUZNY, Ipswich, MA, (508) 356-1844. (19)

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ANDY FOLLANSBEE, Lebanon, NJ, (908) 236-7329. (19)

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DOUG BROWN, Calais, ME, (506) 529-4230. (20)

BART HAUTHAWAY CANOE, prefer 10-1/2'x27" or 12'x27" Rob Roy style.

DICK RYBINSKI, 8236 Indian Hill Rd., Manlius, NY 13104, (315) 682-4852. (20)

2.5-3HP OB, long shaft, in gd shape, reasonably priced.

ANDY FOLLANSBEE, Lebanon, NJ, (908) 236-7329. (19)

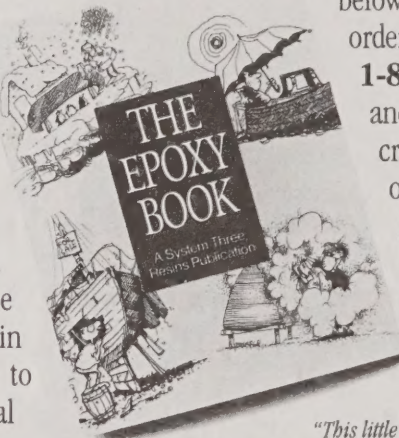
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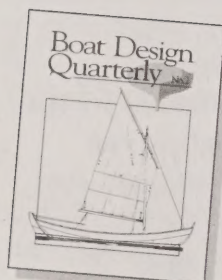
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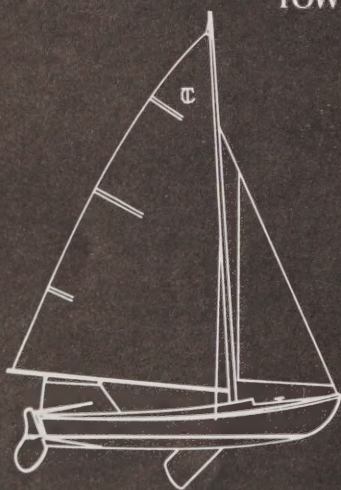
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