

Wind-driven rain, sizable portions of hail, winds varying from 0 to 25 knots and poor visibility do not normally make good ingredients for a sail. But cruising in those conditions proved to be enjoyable and comfortable during our two-day test of the Contest 32, a Holland-built boat with a wheel shelter that certainly came in handy.

Before we cast off, my wife Ellen and I had the opportunity, while the weather was still nice of course, to study the new Dutch import, appropriately named *Dutch Treat*. Ed Gove, of Gove's Cove (Seattle, Washington), the U.S. distributor for the builder, Conyplex, proudly handed us the keys. "She's built by a builder with 25 years' experience located in

Medemblik, Holland. She's designed by Dick Zaai and built to cruise the North Atlantic," he said, then added, "Enjoy!"

As Ed left we packed our gear below. While Ellen began sorting and stowing, I went topside to get a good look at the exterior. The Contest 32 gives a feeling of substance with a superb finish to the hull, rigging and



CONTEST 32 *By Bob Vollmer*

Even driving rain, hail and 25 knots of wind can be turned into sailing fun while aboard a well-constructed vessel—especially one with a pilothouse.

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fittings. With a relatively high freeboard, but not abnormal by today's contemporary designs, her stem raked forward and a traditional transom, it's immediately apparent there is ample space aboard for a boat of her length.

The all-white hull and house is trimmed with a blue boot top and hull stripe with the overlap hull-to-

of the cabin forward of the cockpit with an additional fixed port light on either side of the aft cabin which has its own large opening hatch.

A pilothouse, or wheel shelter as referred to in the option list, constructed with an aluminum frame and safety glass is trimmed with teak and has two smoked overhead lights providing viewing for sail trim. Hand

single lever, fore and aft engine control by Volvo. A handy cockpit chart reference space is available on top of the companionway hatch, covered with heavy plexiglass.

The bright, cheerful interior is visually warmed by varnished teak and soft cushions. To starboard is an L-shaped galley with a stainless steel sink, pressure and manual water system, refrigeration, a three-burner propane stove with covering board and ample stowage. Natural light is available and 12-volt light is provided with a 110 AC duplex outlet. Opposite, to port, is the head with shower, shower pan with teak grate and a fiberglass sink.

The salon provides comfortable dining space for four and features a teak bulkhead, teak and holly sole, port and starboard settee berths, and a centerline teak table secured to the mast stanchion. Stowage is ample in the salon, outboard of the settees as well as above in lockers and shelf space. The light fiberglass headliner and overhead opening hatch add light and ventilation.

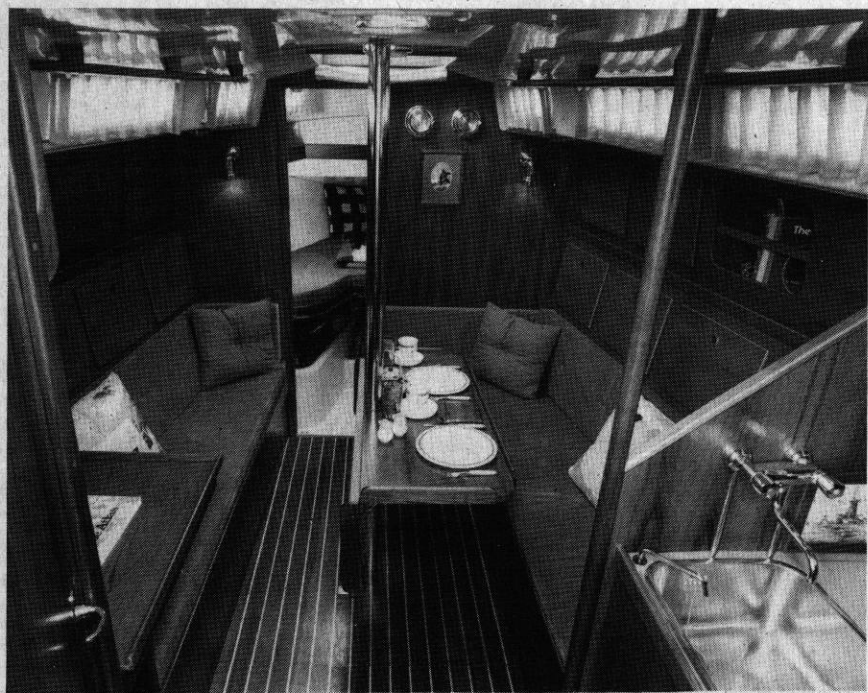
The navigation station, just forward of the port side head, is designed with a large chart table with its own drawer. When not in use, the entire unit can be raised and secured to the bulkhead that also provides recessed space for the electrical panel and electronic instrumentation.

For easy access the batteries are secured in fiberglass boxes just forward of the companionway ladder under the sole.

The forecabin, with V-berth, is designed for practical use with a fiberglass sole, and large open fiberglass bins for stowage under the berths. Shelf space is available above the berths and a large opening hatch provides light, ventilation and access. The overhead as well as the hull sides are covered with a fiberglass liner.

Forward engine access is available by removing the companionway ladder which contains its own locker under the aft side. Additional access to the engine compartment is gained from the starboard side passage leading from the galley to the aft cabin. Maintenance space in the compartment is ample for servicing the engine and the optional diesel heater.

The aft cabin, with limited standing headroom, contains a starboard single berth with a three-quarter or small double berth to port. On the centerline there is a counter with sink and stowage below. Access to the steering gear and rudder post is behind this easily removed stowage locker. Another unique feature here



Ample use of varnished teak and attractive teak-and-holly sole are evident in this main salon photograph, facing forward.

deck joint protected by a teak and stainless steel rub strake. The design of the hull-to-deck joint forms a secure bulwark at the bow, decreasing as it goes aft into an effective toe rail while the sheer line rises slightly as it meets the stem. Double lifelines run from the stern pulpit to a solid bow pulpit secured with through-bolted stanchions. A most impressive stainless steel stem fitting is designed with a large bow roller. The headstay is secured to a double set of turnbuckles forming a T-connection, permitting the roller to be mounted directly on the centerline. This is well engineered, providing good lateral support for the anchor rode.

The bow navigation light is mounted just under the top of the bow pulpit for good visibility, and the foredeck mooring cleats are secured far enough aft to avoid cluttering the stem area, windlass and foredeck stowage locker. This scuppered locker is large enough to be practical.

The trunk cabin is raked aft with two opening hatches forward of the mast and a sea hood protecting the sliding companionway hatch. There are five fixed port lights on each side

grabs are installed on the outboard edges and at the aft end of the pilothouse.

I found the side decks to be adequate for safe fore and aft passage with sufficient room to pass inboard of the shrouds. Light gray molded nonskid on the deck provides sure-footedness and reduces glare considerably. The foredeck locker is well secured with ample room for sail and line stowage.

The Selden anodized mast and boom is deck stepped; with halyard winches and all of the necessary fittings for reefing and sail handling well engineered. The four mast light wires, leaving the base of the mast to on-deck connections, could be hazardous due to their exposed position.

In the center cockpit, the coaming is deep and canted for good back support. The cockpit seats are fiberglass with teak-slatted grates which should contribute greatly to dry posteriors. The engine instruments are located to port and clearly visible. Stowage for anchors, sails, life jackets and more is available in a large port side settee locker. The wheel steering is by Whitlock Marine of England with

Bob D'Olivo

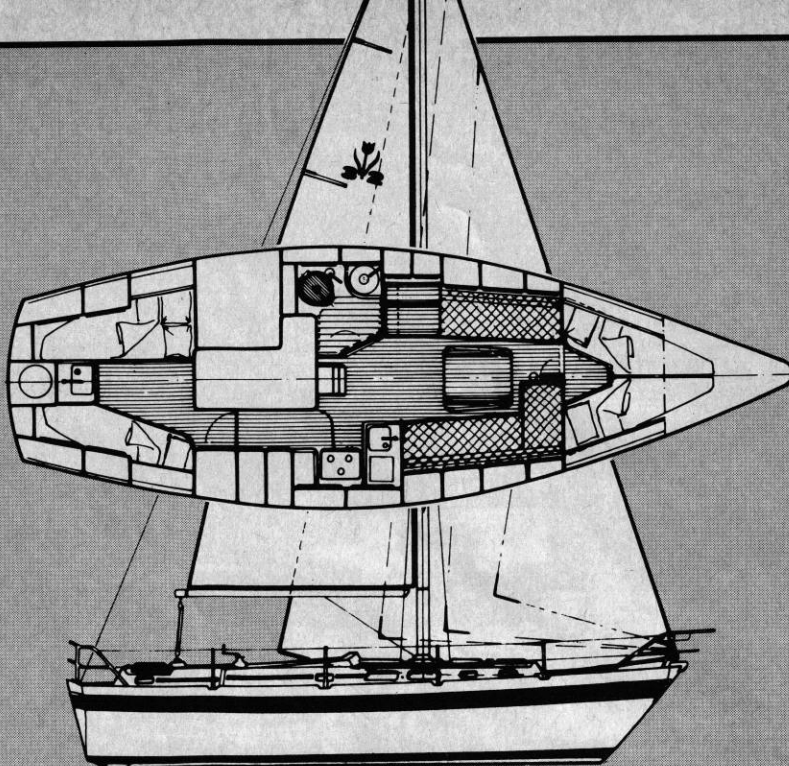
CONTEST 32

Specifications:

Length, overall..... 31 ft. 10 in.
 Length, waterline..... 25 ft. 8 in.
 Beam..... 10 ft. 11 in.
 Draft..... 5 ft. 3 in.
 Freeboard, stem..... 4 ft. 8 in.
 Freeboard, stern..... 4 ft. 1 in.
 Mast height above DWL. 46 ft. 3 in.
 Freshwater capacity
 (2 tanks)..... 92 gal.
 Displacement..... 13,860 lb.
 Ballast..... 5,940 lb.
 Sail area: Total..... 494 sq.ft.
 Fuel capacity: 58 gal. (1 tank)
 Engine: Volvo Penta MD 11C, 25-hp
 diesel
 (Commissioned Seattle, WA) sloop
 rig: \$75,826; ketch rig: \$77,739

Builder:

Conyplex,
 Overleek 7
 Medemblik, Holland



is the position of the soap dish. Located in the counter directly over the rudder post, it can be removed permitting the emergency tiller extension to pass through the counter to the rudder post head. Additional stowage is under the berths. An opening in the sole provides easy access to the stuffing box.

When it was time to get underway, we cast off under the quiet chugging of the Volvo, but were soon under sail in 15 to 20 knots of wind. With a light chop on Puget Sound we were pleased with the windward performance of about 35 degrees apparent. In some of the shallow areas, where the chop was more severe, we experienced some hobby-horsing but continued to move along about 4½ knots.

Under increasingly gusty conditions, with full main and jib, we never dipped the lee rail. At all times directional control was excellent which was probably due to the very large rudder. The Contest 32 was also well balanced as I was able to sail her for long periods without manning the helm.

During our maneuvers we proceeded through a series of small rain showers. Soon, wind, rain and hail reduced visibility to zero as we strained our battered eyelids to find the fuel dock. It was the pilothouse that certainly aided my spotting the dock first. We checked in with the harbor-master and soon we were in a nearby guest berth secured for the evening. Ellen prepared an excellent dinner



Something different in a sailboat cockpit: teak slatted grates over fiberglass seats, with more on the sole.

and we all enjoyed the usual tall tales that are a must after a day at sea.

The next morning, Janice McNab, a friend of Rich Johnson, came aboard for our return sail. Maneuvering out of our tight guest berth, in reverse, was surprisingly easy. Soon we were under full sail again but this time on a brilliantly sunlit morning with a following current and a 10-knot breeze off our starboard quarter.

The experience aboard was delightful and exciting. The accommodations are well developed with good space utilization and all surfaces professionally finished. The teak joinery is excellent with all of the mechani-

cal and electrical fittings thoughtfully installed. Our night aboard had been pleasant although the continued rain showers required keeping the vessel well buttoned up. This contributed to condensation which might have been avoided with a few more opening ports or ventilators.

To cruise aboard a sailboat through a wide variety of weather conditions may not always be pleasant, especially with the thermometer running up and down like a yo-yo. But cold winds, rain and hail had very little negative effect on our sea trial due to the quality construction and conveniences aboard the Contest 32. **LB**

Bob D'Olivio