

PERRY

ON DESIGN



Robert H. Perry
yacht designer

Piper

Raven Lady

Coastal Cruiser

This month we are going to have some fun looking at alternative yachting styles, i.e. approaches that divert us from the mainstream. Production boats are fine and in most cases serve our sailing needs, but they often lack personality. This month we'll focus on boats that exude personality above all else.

"Does it make sense to sacrifice pure boat speed for personality?" For cruisers I think so, providing you preserve enough upwind performance to keep the boat and yourself out of trouble. For my part I need respectable VMG to weather to make a boat fun to sail. Ideally, the clever designer can maintain today's performance targets while infusing the boat with a distinct personality.

Raven Lady is the first design I have seen from Canadian designer Mike Camp of Comox, British Columbia. The boat is designed as a cat schooner, which is not the most weatherly of rigs since both sails have big round poles at their leading edges. Considering the performance potential of this hull, however, this rig is appropriate.

The stayless rig is clean and will be cheap to build with solid fir poles. The plans call for these masts to be deck stepped, but that's a tough way to support unstayed masts. I'd prefer to see the spars go through the deck and be securely stepped on the keel. The SA/D of this rig is 16.3, and considering that there are no headsail options to increase this ratio, I think this boat will be less than a rocket in light air. An interesting aspect of this rig is that, according to the designer, it requires no winches. Both sheets are 3:1 purchases, although in a blow I think a winch located on the aft end of the cabintrunk might come in handy.

The hull is a multichine (not "chime" and while I'm at it, there is no "n" in bowsprit) type for steel construction. Steel is certainly the most durable of hull materials, but it is the least designer-friendly in terms of shape and detailing. This

hull shows a strong sheer spring and a pugnacious bow profile. There's plenty of lateral plane to the full keel, but draft is shy at 4 feet. The rudder is an outboard barn-door type with rack-and-pinion steering. The designer notes that you can add optional bilge keels to this design that will keep

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the boat upright when it "takes the mud." But bilge keels add a lot of wetted surface.

The layout is simple and comfy for a couple with two guests. I don't think there is room at the dinette for all four crew to eat at once, and that is a problem. There's plenty of available cabin sole in this layout, but I'd prefer to see a better conversation area in the main cabin. Of course if the intended crew is two people, this will work just fine.

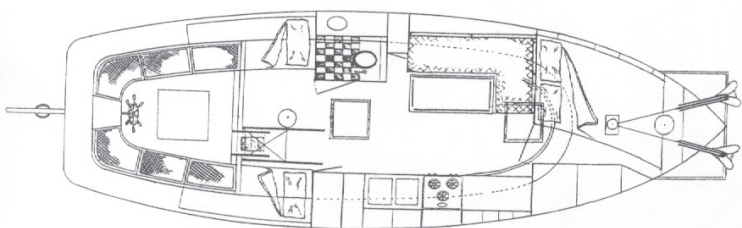
Clearly this design is aimed at the minimalist sailor who prefers simplicity and low cost over pure boat speed. A skilled and patient sailor could make this boat go to weather, but it would not be my ride of choice. Which reminds me of the scene in the "Rocky Horror Picture Show" when Dr. Frankenfurter declares, "I didn't build him for you!"

That's the beauty of custom designs. They have no need to appeal to everyone. This is a handsome vessel that would add interest and beauty to any anchorage.

OBE: \$80,000

Our Best Estimate of the sailaway price

Mike Camp Designs,
Comox, British Columbia,
Canada



A unique cat schooner for the minimalist sailor.

LOA 33'5"; LWL 32'; Beam 11'; Draft 4'; Displacement 18,000 lbs.; Ballast 5,000 lbs.; Sail Area 700 sq. ft.; SA/D 16.3; D/L 245; L/B 3.03; Auxiliary Yanmar 27-hp saildrive.