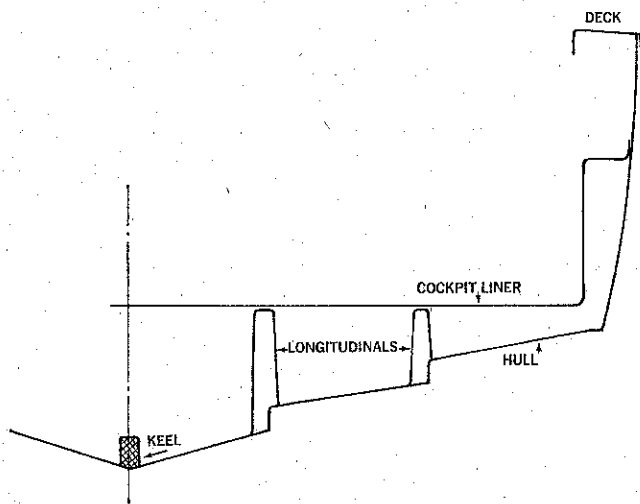


20' SEACRAFT

continued

of the spacious cockpit have huge stowage lockers for fishing gear or skis, although they were faced with a rather crumby-looking wood-finish Masonite. These sub-standard panels wouldn't have been so obvious on some boats, but on the otherwise neatly detailed Seafari they stood out like sore thumbs. (A week or so later, at the Chicago Trade Show, intent on having a look at the outboard version of the Seafari we ambled by the SeaCraft booth and found the Masonite panels had been replaced by good-looking waterproof plywood panels.)



The 20' SeaCraft Seafari is built on the modular principle—five basic components are involved—hull, deck, sole, and stringers.

The helmsman's seat swivels 360°, is comfortable, and adjusts readily to individual helmsman proportions. Access to instruments, switches, and controls is good, both manual and visual. And for summertime in Florida, the opening aluminum-framed safety glass windshield is a blessing. Its \$31 wiper is less of a blessing: On one heading, when switched on, it produced 15° E deviation on the \$70 Danforth Corsair compass. Owners will have either to prepare a pretty far-out deviation card, or remember to keep the wiper switched off while following a compass course.

The swiveling companion seat is mounted on a large fiberglass box. When the forward edge is lifted the seat swings aft and down to the cockpit sole, revealing a teak-finished counter, molded sink with fresh water pump, and space for the alcohol stove. The stove stows underneath when not in use, sharing the space with the plastic jerry can that supplies fresh water to the pump. The whole affair is ingeniously designed and well executed, and we wondered why no one had thought of it before.

Below, green olefin fabric-upholstered 2½" foam V-bunks, each 6' 6" long and 23" wide, provide comfortable stretch-out facilities for two. A cushioned panel drops in between the bunks to unify the whole affair, covering up the head. Standard sanitary equipment is an overboard-discharging Raritan head, but the test boat was fitted with a Porta Potty with self-contained holding tank, an \$82 extra. Ample stowage for bedrolls is provided by lockers under each bunk and forward of the head. By day, illumination comes from fixed aluminum-framed cabin windows; by

night a 12 v fixture on the port bulkhead does the trick. The overhead is voluptuously upholstered in beige imitation llama fur.

A molded fiberglass hatch in the curved cabin top gives access to the foredeck and, in good weather, sends plenty of air below. Anyone doing any serious cruising in the rainy season, however, will want to install a waterproof ventilator. The teak cabin doors are fitted with full-length screens, giving even more air, and a pair of translucent Lucite panels is supplied to fit into the screened openings, for protection against cold air and Peeping Toms.

Seafari's deck hardware—all top quality, and all through-bolted—includes a pair of 5¾" bow cleats, a similar pair of stern cleats, rod holders port and starboard in the side decks (\$27 extra), and International Rule running lights: combination in bow, anchor and 20 point bow lights on windshield staff, and 12 point stern light in transom.

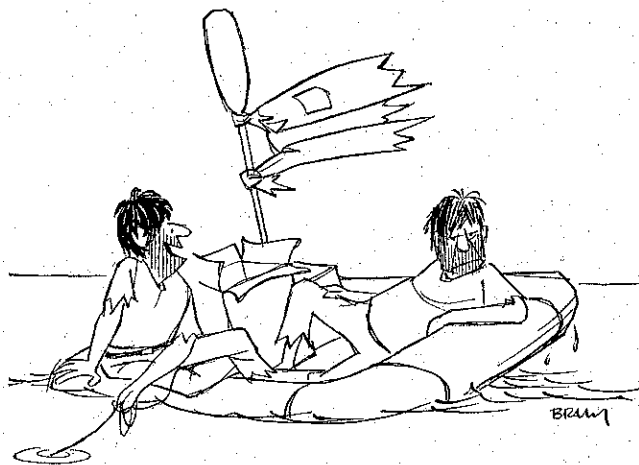
Ventilation for the engine compartment and for the below-the-sole fuel tank compartment is through intake and exhaust cowls on the stern, ducted appropriately. The exhaust blower is \$26 extra; the automatic bilge pump \$77.

With the Seafari back on her trailer, looking as pristine as ever, we closed up for the night with the good feeling that comes from spending a long day with a good boat.

Early next morning we set out to have a look at SeaCraft's Miami plant. We had visited the plant in the spring of 1966 when we tested Carl's 19' Bowrider (BOATING, June 1966) and we remembered the lone concrete block building surrounded by South Florida boondocks. Today the area is a burgeoning industrial section and the only remnants of boondock days is a small farm where, rumor has it, certain individuals of Cuban ancestry raise fighting cocks.

In Moesly's upper deck office/drafting room we discussed with him SeaCraft's boatbuilding philosophy. Our first question concerned their general constructional approach. "The 20-footer is built by the hand lay-up system, using a wet-out gun to distribute the polyester resin," said Carl. "It's a rather complex material lay-in so as to place the material where the high stress points are. The object is to build as strong a hull as possible by design and by material distribution without gaining too much weight. Weight hurts performance so drastically that we see no point in adding any where it is not needed."

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"Think of it! We're pre-dating Heyerdahl on this route."