

Pandora International

A Yachts and Yachting test

THE Pandora International is the latest version of the 22ft Pandora, designed by E.G. van de Stadt. The International uses the same hull shape, but has a slightly deeper and heavier keel than the original design, with a re-designed interior and masthead rig. The redesign work was completed last winter and the International was introduced at this year's Boat Show. Pandora International is firmly aimed at the performance end of the so-called popular market and, with the original Pandora, has had a fair measure of success if numbers produced are anything to go by.

21ft 10in overall, Pandora is a slim hulled boat with relatively low freeboard and a fairly high coach roof and cockpit coamings, which are nevertheless unobtrusive and blend in with the lines of the hull. The foredeck is moderately cambered and the cockpit extends almost the whole way to the stern. There is no stern deck as such, but the last foot or so of the cockpit is taken up with the rather clever outboard well. The rudder is hung on the transom, and since the tiller occupies the aft end of the cockpit also, the outboard well does not detract from the usable cockpit space. We tested the fin keel version of the boat, but both a bilge keel version and a centreboard version are also available to cope with the requirements of those who sail or keep their boats in shoal waters.

Hull and deck are of glassfibre, with oiled teak trim. During the last few years there has been a definite shift in this type of boat towards the use of teak instead of mahogany, which most people welcome. While the glassfibre work could not be described as flawless, it was certainly above average, particularly for a boat in this price bracket. A little more care in the application of bonding pieces inside lockers and in way of the sink, for example, would make all the difference between a job that is merely structurally sound and one that is both strong and good looking. These, however, are faults we had to look for; the overall impression on stepping aboard is definitely one of a well finished and attractive little yacht.

The interior is lined almost completely with internal mouldings, which are easy to keep clean and which help reduce the level of condensation. Those under the deckhead and inside the cabin sides are smooth in texture, while the insides of the hull have a simulated hessian finish. The test boat was fitted with the 'de luxe' interior, with nylon fabric covers on the bunk cushions, matching curtains and carpets and turned fiddles on the shelf rail — generally comfortable and pleasing on the eye. With this particular decor, Rydgeways have achieved a nice balance between the



Lacking the exaggerated beam of the modern crop of IOR orientated boats, Pandora International heels quickly to about 15°, at which point she stiffens and becomes reluctant to heel further. Even when the boat is well heeled the helm remains light, and the boat is responsive and well balanced.

stark reality of a spartan racing boat and the plush impracticality of a floating caravan.

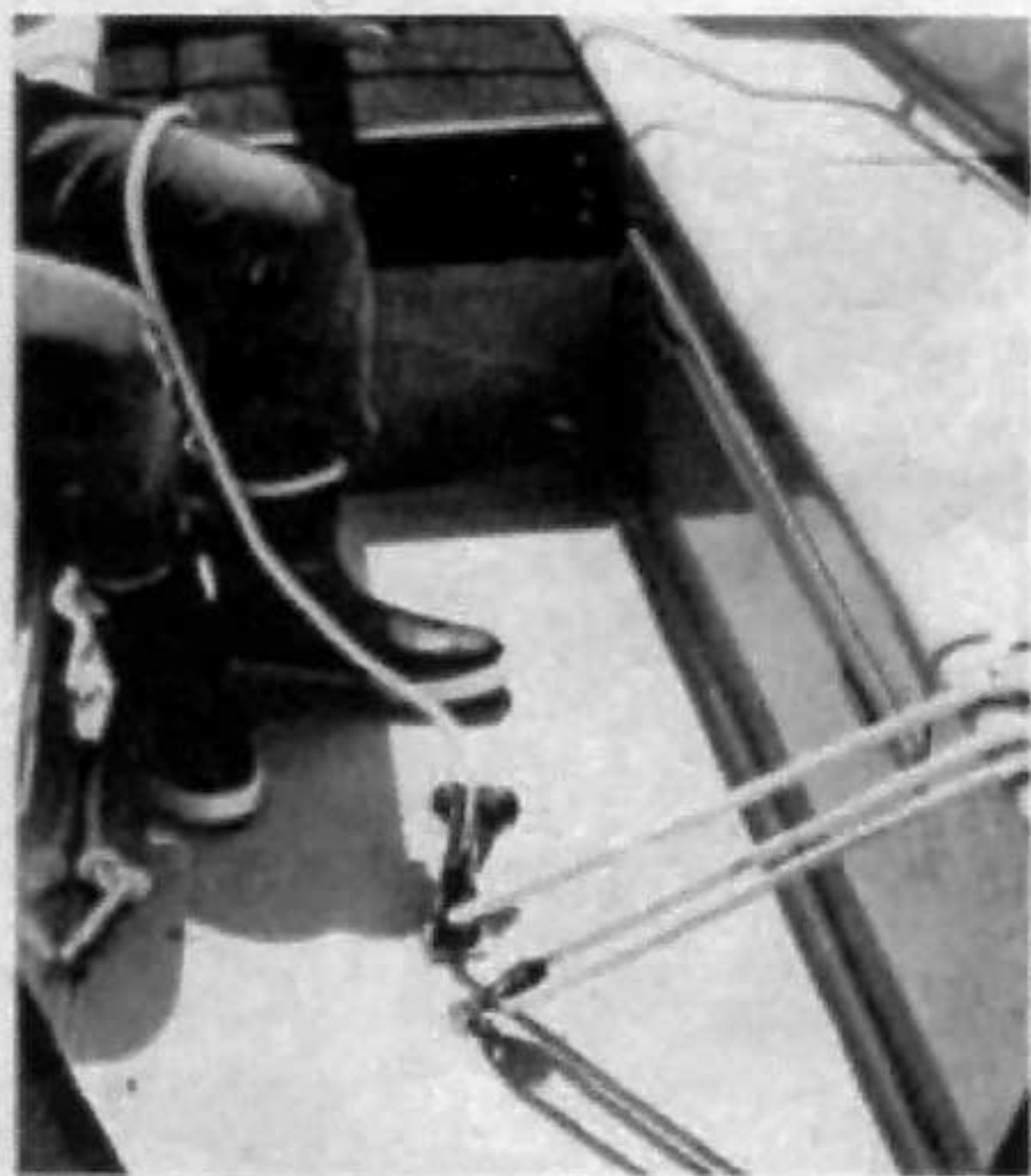
The layout of the interior is clean and functional, and Rydgeways have completely abandoned the traditional British preoccupation with the two cabin layout, though there is a gesture to convention with the provision of a curtain rail moulded into the deckhead just forward of the galley area. Right forward there is a chain locker, somewhat redundant now that the optional moulded-in foredeck anchor well is to become standard. Just aft of this are the two forepeak berths, wide enough to lie in comfortably and long enough for two normal length adults to spend the night without playing footsie. Between

the two berths there is provision for a toilet (the SL 400 is the option provided) and there is adequate headroom under the forehatch for its use. A pair of half-bulkheads is all that remains of the vestigial two-cabin layout.

To port is the galley area and on the test boat it was fitted with the optional moulded-in sink, with Whale pump and sliding work top. The pump is fed from a watertank under the forepeak berths. The tank must be filled either from containers or by a hosepipe led below. A two-burner spirit stove is fitted under the sliding top, which runs on a moulded recess on the edge of the shelf, and which can be slid back to land on the cabin aft bulkhead, thus providing a galley and work top which runs the



(above) Pandora's interior (the 'de luxe' version is shown here) is bright and airy, and rather more practical than this studio shot suggests. (below left) The mainsheet attachment is direct to the cockpit sole, and we tend to agree with the builders that a slide would be more trouble than it would be worth. (below right) Deck layout is uncluttered, with plenty of handholds and room to move around.



whole length of the port side of the saloon.

To starboard the saloon berth has a rather ingenious insert in the form of an upholstered box which can be removed to allow the table to be set up. When not in use, the table stows under the cockpit sole (it is slid up under the sole from inside the cabin) and the box forms part of the berth. When the table is to be used, the box is slid out and the table edge located against the starboard side of the cabin. The inboard end of the table is supported by an alloy tube, and the box forms a stool on which a crew member can sit at the table. The space where the box stows forms a foot well for the other two table users. Only the foot of the star-

board bunk goes under the cockpit seat, but the port saloon bunk is a proper quarter berth (it is further aft because of the galley). On the test we tried all the berths for comfort and length, and ensured that it is possible to turn over while in the quarter berth (a fairly common failing, even in bigger boats than Pandora).

The cockpit is spacious, with moulded seats and lifting locker lids. To starboard the deep locker will take fenders and an outboard motor, while to port, over the quarter berth, there is a shallow locker to hold spare shackles and the like, things which would get lost in a deep locker. Right aft the port locker has a deep well which would hold spare warps or extra fuel for the outboard.

On deck the layout is uncluttered with plenty of room to move around. Pandora has Holt-Allen spars, and therefore enjoys the benefit of the patented sail lead which that company now fits. Standard sails are also by Holt.

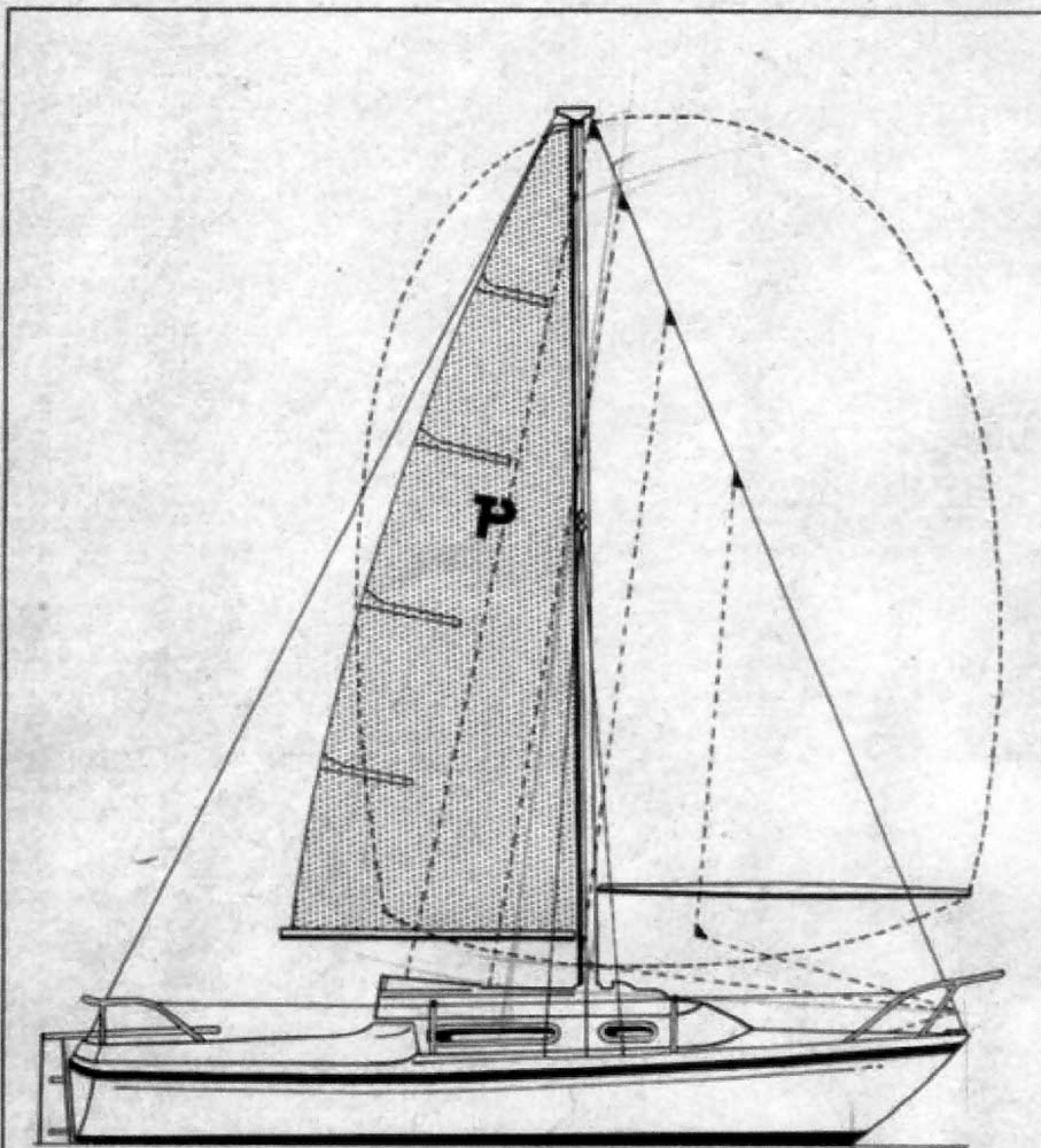
For our test sail we could not have had a better day — it was one of those days when we wonder, albeit briefly, why our employers think they need to pay us — with a brilliant sun shining out of a cloudless sky and a gentle Force 1 to 2 that gradually picked up to the top end of Force 3. The River Deben was at its spring-time loveliest, and being midweek we virtually had the place to ourselves. After hoisting the big genoa and main (a particularly easy task for one man, thanks to Mr. Holt and Mr. Allen) we set off down river against both wind and tide. Pandora accelerated rapidly even in the light breeze and it was immediately apparent that here we had a responsive and well behaved little boat. As the wind picked up she pointed high and continued to foot fast through the water, with only the least trace of a wake. Being slim, especially by comparison with a modern IOR boat, which, for the same length, would have a beam of over 8ft compared with Pandora's 6ft 11in, she was not blessed with a lot of initial form stability, but once she was heeled to about 15° or 20° she seemed reluctant to go any further. Her keel, at 960lb, is not particularly heavy, but, being relatively deep (3ft 9in) and shaped so that the c of g is kept as low as possible, it worked well once the boat heeled. She tacked quickly and sure footedly.

Later we experimented with the boat, watching her behaviour as we heeled her to the gunwales and later left her to her own devices. Even when hard pressed Pandora's helm remains light and controllable, although when heeled too much the wake begins to boil. The only niggle we had was with the rudder hangings themselves. The rudder is held on by a pintle bar, led through gudgeons at the top and bottom of the transom. The holes in the stainless steel gudgeons were a trifle oversize and were unbushed, with the result that the play between the gudgeon and the pintle bar allowed the rudder to flop about. Although the movement was slight—probably no more than $\frac{1}{4}$ in at the tip of the rudder blade — it was sufficient to dull the edge of the otherwise thoroughbred feel of the boat. Left to her own devices on the wind with sheets cleated Pandora bore away under the influence of her big genoa, then began to round up with increasing speed, so much so that she tacked herself, gybed, tacked and then lay hove-to on the opposite tack. In this

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Pandora International

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state she lay with her quarter to the wind, making leeway at an estimated 1 to 1½ knots.

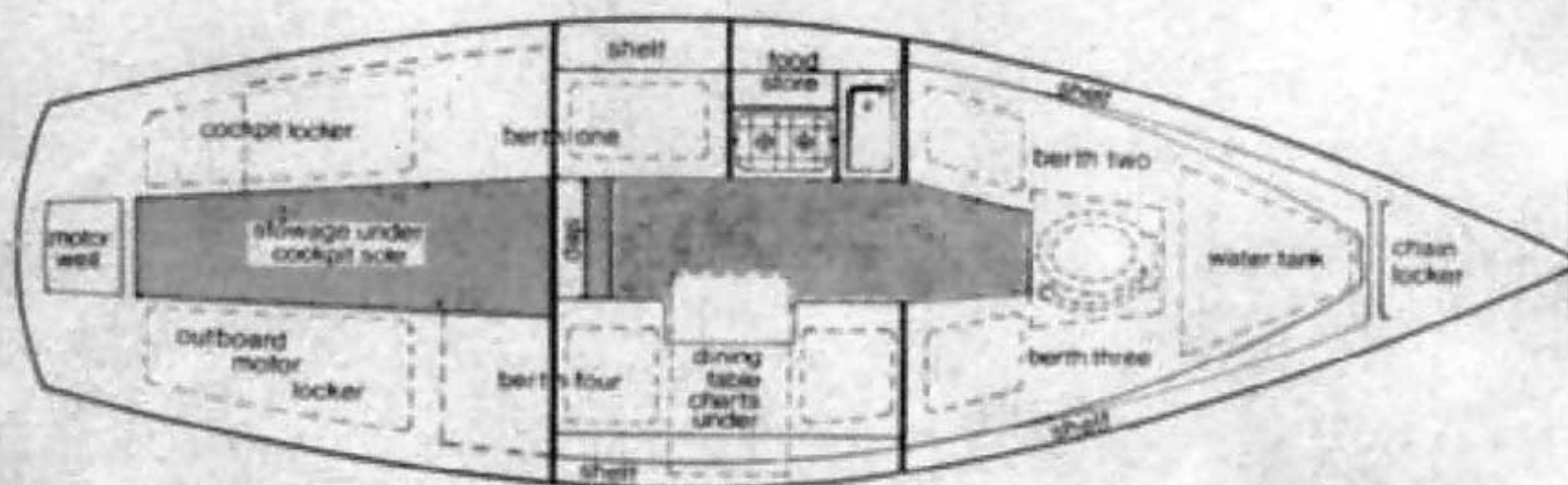
The halyards on the test boat were fitted with snap shackles. Unfortunately the wire part of the headsail halyard was a trifle short, and the head of the sail could not be brought right down to the deck with the halyard still attached. This could prove a real embarrassment changing headsails in a breeze of wind especially as the halyard will not even reach the lifelines, where it might otherwise be clipped. Brute force will pull the splice through the masthead sheave, but then brute force is needed to pull it back again and it would be better if the wire part of the halyard were long enough to reach the bottom of the forestay. We understand from Rydgeways that this is to be done in future.

As the test boat did not carry a spinnaker, we could not assess Pandora's performance under that sail. We carried out our test in smooth water but we should think that, although her low freeboard might make her wet, her undoubtedly easily driven hull should cope well in a seaway.

Delivery of a new Pandora International will depend on the agent in your particular part of the country (Rydgeways sell only through their exclusive agents, who are stocked on an allocation system), and most agents can give delivery this season. Production of the boat has just been increased to the rate of four to five a week.

In basic form, with main and working jib, sheet winches, p.v.c. mattresses and standard white hull, a new Pandora International costs £1,690, and in 'de luxe' form, with de luxe interior, galley, genoa, storm jib, spinnaker and gear, table, WC, lifelines, anchor and warp, etc — in fact all the 'extras' which we would consider essentials on a well-found cruising boat — the boat would cost around £2,300 to £2,400. (Both prices include VAT.)

In the past year or so there has been a definite shift in emphasis in the British small cruiser market, away from the so-called floating caravan type and towards boats with a greater performance potential. Pandora International is part of that trend, and we feel that Rydgeways have certainly achieved their declared aim of providing good accommodation in a boat that sails well and which will not shirk from the occasional bit of hard driving. If one has to categorise her, Pandora International would slot in somewhere between the IOR and racing orientated boats of around 22 and 23ft, and the more commodious but less performance conscious cruisers of the same length. In the words of Rydgeway Marine's managing director, 'she is a quick, popular cruiser.'



PANDORA INTERNATIONAL

Loa 21ft 10in (6.65m)
 Lwl 18ft 9in (5.71m)
 Beam 6ft 11in (2.10m)
 Draught (fin) 3ft 9in (1.14m)
 Draught (twin) 3ft (0.91m)
 Draught (C/B) 2ft/4ft 6in
 (0.65m/1.37m)

Sail area:
 Main 92sq ft
 Genoa 160sq ft
 Jib 124sq ft
 Price:- around £2,000
 incl. VAT depending
 on extras chosen.

Builder: Rydgeway Marine Limited, Church Road, Kessingland, Lowestoft, Suffolk.