

Cruiser.

Prologue

In writing this piece I have put my personal ideas. These ideas have come from sailing several different sizes of yachts in all the oceans of the world. 60% solo and 40% with crew as a delivery skipper and on my own yachts. My experience in boating comes from 40 years as both a boat builder and running a marine consultancy which I do now FREE to encourage both the young and old to go to sea and enjoy it safely.

I do not profess to know it all and am the first to admit my failings, I continually ask for help in my search to learn more. If you don't agree with my opinions please be kind in your response and guide me in the right direction with the help of your knowledge and experiences.

The Sadler 29 deep fin keel is in my opinion the perfect yacht of its size for 1 or 2 people. It is built with an inner molding which has all the lockers in it and attached to the hull. The void between the hull and inner molding is then filled with a closed cell foam. This makes the yacht both ridged and strong, it also makes the inside condensation free and very quiet when under way. A bonus for the off watch crew when trying to sleep.

The Sadler 29 also with the Sadler 26 and 34 are because of the twin hull and foam insulation unsinkable even if holed. This was borne out by a test when a Sadler 26 was flooded by removing the hoses from the through hull fittings and then sailed with 3 people aboard. This safety factor in a cruising yacht will surely give the crew peace of mind in the fact that should it be damaged they will still be on a yacht and not in a life raft.

The Sadler 29 as in all yachts have points that need to be addressed by the owner if he is to have a yacht that he is perfectly happy with. These are not many and not insurmountable if addressed in a sound boat building approach and with the best materials available. Hereafter I will make suggestions that in my

view and based on the experience I have put in the prologue would make the Sadler 29 a first class ocean cruiser. None of these suggestions are intended to be derogatory to the Sadler brand or their builders but my opinions based on my personal knowledge and experience.

THE MAST

Remove the mast and boom, also all running and standing rigging. I would beef up the goose neck as this in my opinion is a little lightly built for offshore sailing. Fit all new standing rigging in dyform7mm using swagged terminals at the top and Sta-lok at the bottom. The reason behind this is that in my research I have found that of all rigging failures it is predominantly the bottom swagged terminal that fails because of water ingress causing it to fail. With the Sta-lok terminal this is not the case because of the way they fit the cable and allow the water to pass through the fitting and cause no harm. Also I would carry a few spares of the Sta-lok fittings and a length of dyform so as to be able to effect any repairs that might come up. These repairs with the Sta-lok fittings would be a permanent repair and not just temporary. All you need are some simple hand tools to carry out the repair.

Head sail furling systems today are varied in quality and complexity and are fitted on thousands of yachts with no problems arising but I have personally seen on a few yacht in strong winds what happens when the foresail decides to come out from the furler at a high speed. The furling line gets knotted up on the drum and is impossible to remove without a person on the foredeck in bad weather and a knife trying to cut it all off and reeve another line. I have experience with a single line system supplied from Sailspars Ltd and have used this system in really bad weather and have been happy that at ALL times I was in control of it and it NEVER jammed or faltered.

SAILS

As to sails I prefer a 140% Genoa with a foam luff and a fully

battened mainsail with 3 reef points. The mainsail of the Sadler 29 is already quite small but with the third reef you can still sail in the higher winds which means that you stay in control rather than be controlled. The mainsail reefing should be kept outside of the boom where any repairs can be achieved simply and with the minimum of trouble. All lines led aft to jammers. Topping lifts are nice as a spare halyard but I have seen too many wear through in bad weather and are more trouble than you need. I would keep it as a spare halyard but fit a boom strut from Barton's P/N BK 1250 (44035) thus preventing a falling boom at the wrong moment.

Anchor

Points

All anchor points for the rig should be very carefully checked as the rig security is so important to the safety of the yacht. If any show signs of wear or failing these should be backed up with 6mm aluminum plates and bonded to the yacht. As none of us like to have leaks of any sort I would suggest going all over the boat with a pressure washer to find any lurking drips and address them with the appropriate cure. As the fore hatch is normally fitted with self tapping screws I would change them for through bolts backed with penny washers, therefore making it a lot safer. The cockpit locker is a really handy place to keep the dinghy but has one failing and that is that it isn't fixed down. I have heard of suggestions to screw it down when at sea. I have tried another approach which I have had good success. I have made two flat bars of 6mm x 50mm stainless steel and used them as hold downs on the cockpit locker top. After we had fitted a rubber seal on the locker edges we found that we could fill the cockpit with water and none found its way below. They are also easier to remove when you want the dinghy.

Another point in the cockpit is the drains which are two outlets 1-1/2" in diameter thus giving a total area of 3.07" square to drain a large cockpit of water. I would suggest cutting a rectangle in the transom of 2" x 12" and finishing with GRP. thus giving a total area of 24" square to drain the cockpit 8 times as fast. In

this case you would be safer if you were ever pooped as it would eliminate the quantity of water in the cockpit before another wave did the same.

The companion way wash boards do not totally seal the entrance but with a little work could be rectified.

On anchor points I like to have many in all sort of places and strong but more of this a little later.

Spray

hood

You either love them or hate them. In reality they do not slow down the yacht to any degree and afford the crew a safe haven when things really start to get wet and windy. I once saw a spray hood hit by a big wave collapse onto a member of the crew going below and was surprised at the injuries he sustained he was lucky we were within range of a helicopter so he could be medivaced. This is why even though it could be costly I would go for either a GRP or aluminium one.

Below

decks

If you have ever been knocked down or done a 360 in a yacht this section will be of particular interest to you.

I use the principal that if it can move, lift, slide, fall or hurt when coming in contact with you the best thing to do is make sure that none of that happens. All lockers, floor traps and under bunk lockers should have a system that holds them down even if they are full should the boat go over. This would achieve two important things.

Firstly everything will stay where you put it and secondly below decks stays a dry warm and safe place to be in. Cushions should be held in place with velcro so as they stay out as well.

In the sea berth lee cloths should be used not only to keep the occupant in his or her berth but it also makes you feel really cozy. I use a simple system. A piece of 3 strand rope with a Wichard clip at each end to these I attach a piece of 4mm 3 strand with a

monkeys fist so that they can be released very quick if the need arrises.

As to the cooker pan holders on a fine day are ok but when things get really hairy they are useless. You need a system to hold down anything on the cooker which goes over the pan or kettle.

Imagine a full 6 Lt pressure cooker flying at you at speed and you can imagine the damage it would cause.

Water

The food of live. We can go without food for a long time but not without water. This is a very complicated subject as we all have different needs. Some of us like our daily shower, some of us like 2 a day and wash and rinse the dishes with fresh water. Then there is the laundry. First let me just tell you from where I get the following information from. I was in the Royal Marines for 10 years and spent 3 years as a survival instructor so I have had some experience with this subject. To stay in good health we need to drink a minimum of 2 Lt's of water a day and twice as much in hotter climes. This being said I would allow 5 Lt's a day per person for drinking and personal hygiene. this would allow you the necessary to drink and a little to brush your teeth and wash with. The truth is we can wash with salt water and rinse with just a flannel soaked in fresh water and therefore save about 2 Lt's a day. Therefore we could get by on 3 Lt's a day. Taking this as the bare minimum for 2 crew aboard 220 Lt's would effectively give you 36 days supply of water. On a yacht of the size of the Sadler 29 220 Lt's of water would be like carrying around another 2 crew and slow down the yacht therefore making passage times longer so needing more water. As you can see this is a situation that can only get worse. My suggestion would be to carry 100 Lt's of water and a PURSURVIVOR 35 Manual water maker with spares.

At £1350 with spares it may sound expensive but think about it for a second. For 1 hrs exercise you get 5 Lt's of drinking quality water and in the event that you should find yourselves in a distress situation you have the means to make water that will keep you alive. As to washing yourselves, the dishes or the

laundry. I wash dishes and myself in salt water and rinse with just a little fresh. The laundry I usually keep for wet days and catch rain or if necessary wash in salt water with liquid soap and then rinse with fresh.

All faucets should be either hand or foot pumped. Not only does this alleviate the necessity for more electric but saves on water. A charcoal silver impregnated water filter is a must for health protection and there are many on the market. A sea water faucet in the galley goes without saying.

Electricity

I will try to keep this section brief but still do it justice:

To get electricity is very expensive. To store electricity is very expensive. To buy electrical equipment is very expensive and when any of it goes wrong.....Well we have all heard the electrician suck in his breath and say, this is going to be expensive. Why does he say that, because he knows that you can't repair it yourself so therefore you are at his mercy.

The expression that copper wire and salt water makes green gunge, well remember that. I sail because I like the atmosphere, the quiet and the peace that it brings me so why make it more expensive than necessary. Save the money for that romantic dinner or that new sail you want.

We all like to see exactly where we are going when entering a new port or anchorage on our new chart plotter but do we really need one that would look good on the bridge of a warship. No! The Garmin Oregon 550 is a hand held chart plotter GPS that you can read in the cockpit where you need it when entering a new spot and it will run for about 20 hrs on the new high powered batteries.

So that covers 20 new places. A Garmin 72 GPS at the chart table also runs for about 6 months when used for the daily position fix. They can of course both be run from the ship's battery supply as they burn Milli amps no big deal here. Rather than radar I use a system called C.A.R.D, Collision Avoidance Radar Detection. and have never been hit by a ship or other yacht (yet). This system again uses Milli amps. these 3 items would cost you in the region

of £700 and cost very little to run. On the other hand we get into the solar panel or panels each at about £400 or more and the the wind turbine an item that makes you more enemies than Friends in either an anchorage or marina about £1000 then all the batteries and if you go for the best about £350 each for the small ones. We use LED nav light and anchor light have a 100 amp Lifeline battery and oil lamps below decks. We run the batteries about 1 hr every week and save a fortune. The Nav equipment has never given problems, the LED's last longer than I expect to live and we can start the 2 cylinder engine by hand, Simple I can fix most and cheap. The savings allow me to have wine every day and I don't annoy anyone in the anchorages or marinas we visit.

Cooking

On the side of safety I hate gas. We use an Origo 3000 Meths or alcohol cooker. Total cost 40 Lt's a year at £55. This allows for evaporation as well. We cook twice a day and use the pressure cooker alot. But this depends of course on the supply of the type of fuel available to you in the area you cruise.

Hull

maintenance

No anti fouling. Instead apply Copper coat. 14 years weed free and at the cost of 3 years anti fouling. More saving. We polish the hull with Starbrite Teflon polish 3 coats applied with a week between each coat and it lasts about 4 years.

Steering

Gear

The only self steering gear worth entertaining is a servo pendulum system. After many years of research and talking to many many offshore cruisers This is without doubt the best system.

All the people that I have spoken to said that this system is the

best for the following reasons.

Doesn't eat. Doesn't use electric. Doesn't moan when working none stop for weeks on end in all weathers. But most of all the harder it blows the harder it works. I have used a few namely the Navic, atoms, Neptune, a Hydro-vane and a Wind pilot pacific light. Of all of them I would go for the Wind pilot because I have found it to be very easy to set up build quality is second to none and the price is right.

Personal

security

My Maxim is NEVER fall overboard! Once in the water its very hard to get you back on the yacht and if you are sailing solo you have had it. My approach to this is, anchor points, anchor points every where. Fore and aft in the cockpit with an anchor point that allows me to be attached even when I go below and attached before I get into the cockpit. I don't like the basic idea that all yacht builders have in as much fitting 2 life lines on the deck. For one they put you at risk of falling overboard and being dragged by the boat with the possibility of drowning in the bow wave. I have anchor points that are fitted in the coach roof as near to the centre of the yacht as possible. My harness has 2 strops with Gibb locking hooks and they are just long enough for me to be able to work on the sails or deck gear but not long enough for me to fall over the stanchion wires. After 50 years of sailing in all weathers I have never gone overboard nor has any of my crew, a fact I am proud of.

Emergency

Equipment

As in all things preparation is the best way to go. As the old saying goes, Prepare for the worst and pray for the best. A big safety point for the Sadler 29 is its insensibility but you might face fire or other perils. As to fire my rule is NOBODY smokes below and we have fire extinguisher both manual and automatic in all the cabins.

In the event you find yourself in the position of calling for help I have researched the equipment available with a few thoughts I would like to share. First are the E.P.I.R.B's. A wonderful invention that has saved many many lives. For those of us that sail either solo or with crew they have one short coming. They will notify the rescue people but the people that love you ashore will know nothing of your plight of condition. I have recently come across a piece of equipment called SPOT. I know little of this as yet but do know that it has the capability to send a message that you are in distress also what the distress is and send a message to your shore contacts they you are ok and help is on the way.

I am sure I have simplified this too much but you get the idea. If anyone knows of this equipment I would be very interested to hear from you.

Personal Comfort

& Protection

I determine comfort in three areas.

First is feeling safe. Second Well fed. Third Warm and dry.

In the first feeling safe I believe that the Sadler 29 if prepared as I have described before is possibly one of the safest yachts of its size in the world. In my opinion she meets all the main points for a cruising yacht for 1 or 2 people. Namely she is, unsinkable,dry,warm,fast and comfortable.

Second well fed. In this we all have our own choices. The Sadler 29 has a good galley and is easily at sea in almost all weathers. As to storage of food. If the cool box is made into a fridge it can carry fresh food enough for about 2 weeks. Obviously depending on what fresh food you lie to carry. Overall the storage areas in the Sadler 29 are sufficient to carry food for 2 people for 90 days. Third Warm and Dry.Because of the Sadler 29's double hull and insulation I have never had a problem with condensation and have found that the interior stays cool in summer and takes little heat in the winter to be comfortable.

As to personal warmth and safety. I must point out that we sail in the northern climes and it is never very hot but there again the

winters are not very cold. I recommend a one piece flotation suit the the Royal Lifeboat Institution use it is a proper flotation suit that is very comfortable to wear either on its own with just shorts and a T shirt under or with a thermal layer in the winter. This with a 250N life jacket and harness will give you the best protection and safety you can get.