

THE PLAYBOY BOAT STABLE

modern living By BROCK YATES

Left: Pictured here is possibly the ultimate in cruising sailboats—the Westsail 32, a lovely wide-beamed, double-hulled 32-footer that sleeps four (six in a pinch) and includes such practical ocean-going features as a low freeboard, a small self-bailing cockpit and a full keel. Inside, the Westsail is a shipshape sanctum of rich woodwork. Fully equipped for the high seas, the Westsail runs about \$60,000.

Below: Weekend sailors itching to mess about in some type of small portable craft should check out the British-made Avon Redcrest inflatable dinghy. Don't laugh; this 9' 3" wonder will carry four persons (or a load of 700 pounds), takes up to a four-hp motor, inflates by foot pump in six minutes and—get this—is what the British army uses for landing on rough beaches. Cost: about \$600.

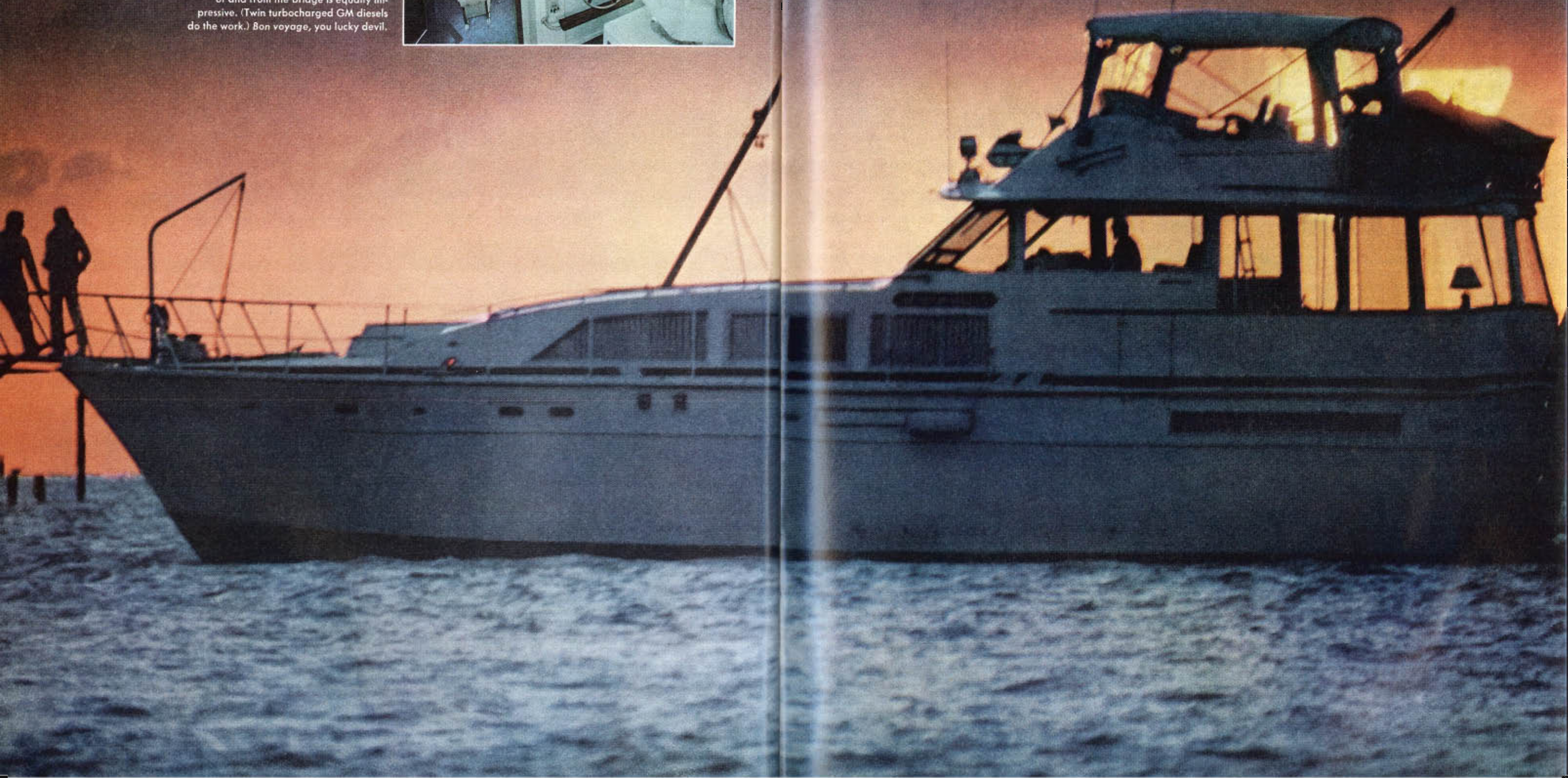


a something-for-everyone pleasure fleet guaranteed to get you in a watery groove

THERE IS NO RATIONAL justification for a boat. Oh sure, you might dredge up some legitimate excuses if you are a cod fisherman or Jacques Cousteau's second cousin, but let's face it, if God had meant for us to float around on the surface of the water, he'd have given us keels and masts and little portholes instead of eyes. And yet, damn it all, useless as they might be, boats are fun. Big ones, midget ones, kayaks, catamarans, tall ones, stubby ones, ketches, canoes; you name it and you've got a line on a brand of hedonism that dates back to Cleopatra's barge. To hell with utility; boats may be the last refuge for pure foolishness on the face of the earth. On land,

they are elbowing the crazies into tight little enclaves, sterilizing the highways and the ski slopes and the mountainsides and the great wilderness—where adventure comes only amid a barrage of regulations and cautious sanctions by the state. Yet boats remain essentially free. Once afloat, you can do about anything you please, which may be the underlying reason why recreational boating is the fastest growing sport in America. In view of this booming popularity, it may be time for you to shed your landlubber's boots in favor of a pair of Top-Siders. It is time to go down to the sea—in boats; time to take part in that vast armada of pleasure (text continued on page 138)

Below you see the stuff that an ocean-going hedonist's dreams are made of—the Bertram 58; when fully equipped (and in this baby, that's the only way to fly), it'll set you back 350,000 smackers. Everything on this yacht is designed to take you out to sea in a style that most people don't enjoy back home. In the captain's quarters, there's a king-sized bed with headboard console to control the lights, stereo, etc., and elsewhere, a luxe galley, a full head with shower, plus more, more, more. The view of and from the bridge is equally impressive. (Twin turbocharged GM diesels do the work.) Bon voyage, you lucky devil.



Below: If you want to haul things, buy a barge. But if you want to haul ass, buy a Cigarette 28-SS, the fastest production powerboat available anywhere. Within its low, 28' rakish hull are a head and an inviting forward berth—for two, of course. Loaded for bear—including twin 395-hp engines—a Cigarette will see 70 mph in scant, breath-taking seconds. The price? \$40,000 or so. Still breathing?



Right: Built for fun, the Hobie 16 catamaran is also one of the fastest sailing craft afloat, having been officially timed at 25.9 mph. Hobies have only a 10" draft; thus, they're adaptable to a variety of sailing conditions. When the day's outing is over, they can be run right up onto all but the roughest beaches and easily disassembled for trailer or van-rack toting. At \$2050, it's the cat's meow.



Far right: Skindiving, anyone? Water-skiing? Fishing? Or just jazzing about on a fresh-water lake or the open sea? Get yourself a fiberglass Aquasport Open Fisherman. Its 19' 6" can be equipped with a variety of outboards—including the new 185-hp behemoths. And because the Aquasport's helm is positioned at a center console, there's a clear walkway from stem to stern. Five thou will get you one sensibly equipped.



vessels sometimes referred to as plastic toys for girls and boys.

If you fancy yourself as a high roller, you will take pleasure in learning that we have selected a complete fleet for your delectation—six boats, ranging in length from nine feet to 58 feet—which should fill every water-borne need except victories in selected sail- and powerboat races. (The America's Cup, etc., costs extra.) Moreover, we have shown concern for the allowances of your trust fund in these difficult times by trying to keep costs at a reasonable level. This has prompted us to feature only boats available on the general market, as opposed to custom-built vessels that would boost the over-all price well beyond our arbitrary limit of \$500,000. Yes, thanks to prudence and good sense, we are able to present for your approval the Playboy Boat Stable for under a half-million dollars, delivered to your dock. Now, it may be that market setbacks, some reluctance on the part of your estate's trustees, other investment requirements, etc., prevent you from buying the full package. After all, not everyone has \$500,000 in ready cash. Crafty devils that we are, we have made provisions for individual purchases, so that your fleet can be accumulated over a period of time, thus causing less strain on your bank account. In fact, our first offering can be yours for under \$1000, which means that you can own one sixth of our pleasure fleet for less than 1/500th of the total cost.

Should any of you suspect that we included the Avon Redcrest inflatable dinghy as a sop to latent rubber fetishists in the crowd, forget it. This tiny, totally portable 9'3" British-made wonder is one of the most versatile seacraft available, hence its inclusion in the boat stable. In fact, if all British-manufactured goods embodied the kind of creative quality found in the Avon line, the Empire might still be intact. When one considers that the Redcrest will carry four persons—or a load of 700 pounds—yet weighs a mere 43 pounds and can be transported in a small duffel bag, the wide range of its utility begins to come into focus. Its primary application is a combination tender/life raft for larger yachts, but the Redcrest can serve as a perfect weekend mess-about craft, especially for the cramped apartment dweller with no space to store a full-sized boat.

The Redcrest can be inflated with its ingenious foot pump in about six minutes, although optional CO₂ bottles are available for the weakhearted. It comes with a pair of stout wooden oars (collapsible for storage) and provisions for mounting an outboard motor up to four hp. Now, you can trundle down to your local discount store and buy an inflatable dinghy for less than one quarter the price of an Avon Redcrest (which will run you about \$600), but let the buyer beware, especially the first time he

runs it onto a beach covered with sharp stones or hits some rough water. The Redcrest is used by the British army, which means that its reputation for ruggedness and stability is not without foundation. This little vessel with the sooty-gray hull is about as tough as a Brontosaurus and considerably more buoyant, especially with its three individually inflatable compartments. It isn't exactly J. P. Morgan's Corsair, but if you happen to be looking for low price, durability, compactness, versatility and a maximum of laughs per dollar, there are a lot sillier ways to start your fleet. Of course, you have other options: an even smaller, cheaper two-man Avon Redstart (8'2", \$510) and a whole line of really elaborate, more expensive versions, including a 17-footer that will carry up to eight people and, with an 80-hp motor hung on the transom, will run over 40 mph.

Hobie Alter may be the most laid-back tycoon in the history of the Dow-Jones Industrials. Here is this old surfer and Southern California beach bum who has America superjazzed about that water-borne hot-dogging known as catamaran sailing. Yes, he is the creator of the sensational Hobie Cats and, perhaps more important, cool and relaxed about sailing and competition. Whereas most sailboat racing is bound up in the tight-ass world of yacht clubs, race committees, arcane rules, classes and stiffly fanatical competitors, Hobie Cat racing is decidedly relaxed and open-ended (which has caused it to become the largest single class of sailboat racing, although it is largely ignored by the establishment). Hobie has been quoted as saying, "We run a lot of regattas all over the place—usually anywhere except a yacht club." He isn't kidding. Among the nearly 215 "Hobie Fleets" presently operating, one can find Hobie Cat freaks in such unsalty spots as Valparaiso, Indiana, and Wichita, Kansas, and as far away as Fortaleza, Brazil, and Quiberon, France. These thousands of world-wide Hobie freaks are part of a fraternity that has its own publication (*Hobie Hot Line*) and hundreds of parties and regattas that lead to world-championship competition in two Hobie classes. Heavy-duty marketing types consider this all an act of genius on Hobie Alter's part—but to him it's the logical outcome of having a lot of laughs. A good thing is bound to get better, if you are cool, is the way people think along the California beaches, and Hobie is the embodiment of that mentality.

Once a top surfer and surfboard manufacturer (he pioneered the lightweight balsa-and-foam fiberglass boards that replaced the traditional redwood versions that were about as maneuverable as barn doors), Alter first got stoked on big Polynesian catamarans in Hawaii in the mid-Fifties. Then surfing superstar Phil

Edwards built a 20-footer and Hobie and his buddies were under way. A 12-footer using a pair of reject foam surfboards was created, which set the pattern for the Hobie Cat—a high-performance, fiberglass catamaran that would handle surf and could be beached with ease. "A Hobie is a grown-up surfboard," says one beach type, "superperfect for us who are too old for surfing but not old enough for sailing."

Since Hobie started to market his original 14-footer in 1968, business has boomed. He has no formal office at Coast Catamaran's splendid 15-acre complex near Irvine, California. Hobie runs plenty loose, surrounded by his buddies, dirt bikes, cold beer, gliders and Cats—and never far from the water. His company sells five different types of sailboats (as well as the Hobie Hawk—a radio-controlled glider—surfboards, skate boards and a vast range of accessory items), of which all but the largest, the 16-footer, are essentially one-man boats. But the Hobie 16 is perhaps the most versatile and broadly appealing of the lot. It is also one of the fastest sailing craft in the world (officially timed at 25.9 mph) and is the epitome of quick handling and maneuverability in all but the meanest weather. With a ten-inch draft, the Hobie 16 can be sailed anywhere, including a municipal wading pool, and can be run up on almost any beach. The craft is easy to sail in almost all wind conditions and, once hiked up in a steady breeze, flying on one hull, it produces some of the most superjazzed, pumped, stoked, totally freaked fun on the water imaginable. Like all Hobies, its fabrication and over-all quality are excellent; it is easily portable, either by trailer or by vantage rack, and quickly disassembles for storage. And all this for about \$2050, complete with sails and rigging. Should you be a racer, over 700 "family-style" regattas (totally loose beach scenes: beer, open fires, kids, wives, girlfriends and lots of good-natured competition) are run each year in every part of the nation. Either way—racing or just catching some wind and sun—the Hobie 16 is built for grins, which is exactly the way that old surfer who started the whole thing wants it.

Fun is also the theme of a boat like the Aquasport 19'6" Open Fisherman, although its purpose is a trifle more utilitarian than that of the Hobie Cat. Here is a strong, stable outboard boat perfectly suited to fishing, in both fresh water and the open sea, skindiving, water-skiing and weekend camping/cruising. Unlike most old outboard boats, which placed the helmsman either at the stern, steering the motor tiller fashion, or in a cramped forward seat, new open fishermen like the Aquasport position the helm at a center console, where it is most efficient in terms of space and function.

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This leaves an open cavity from stern to stern, where fishing, skindiving, sunbathing, etc., can be carried on with a minimum of crowding.

A strong, self-bailing fiberglass hull with a modified deep-V design permits the Aquasport to run in blue water, where, equipped with outriggers and other deep-sea fishing gear, it can seek salt-water game fish. An optional bait well and other extras are available for the serious fisherman, while a wide list of other accessories can be had if the primary mission of the boat is short cruising and general recreation. A 50-gallon fuel tank, large storage compartments and fishing-rod racks are standard with the Aquasport 19'6", which can be equipped with a variety of large outboard motors, including the new 150-plus-hp monsters, producing a top speed in excess of 40 mph.

The Aquasport is one of a new generation of open fishermen also being manufactured by SeaCraft, Mako, Robalo and others. They represent thinking whereby traditional concepts such as the large outboard motorboat have been modified in favor of direct utility. The Aquasport 19'6" may not contain the aesthetics of an old Penn Yan or a Lyman, with its polished-mahogany decking and brightwork, but in terms of function and performance, there is no comparison. Aquasports, like their competitors, are available in sizes from 15 feet to a maximum of 26 feet. They can be purchased with a variety of engine options, varying from medium-sized outboard motors, operating singly or in tandem, to a pair of 225-hp V8s. Prices range from about \$2500 for a bare boat to nearly \$20,000 for a loaded, oh-my-God, twin-V8 sport fisherman. The Aquasport 19'6", sensibly equipped, will run about \$5000.

There is very little that can be described as sensible about the Cigarette 28-SS, an incredible floating Ferrari designed for pure, hell-raising blasts across the waves. This you can do, maintaining a serenity (despite your white knuckles) based on the knowledge that you are in partial control of the fastest production powerboat available anywhere. All of this is the contrivance of Don Aronow, a ballsy Miami sportsman who has dominated the offshore powerboat scene for the past decade. Shortly after deep-V hulls revolutionized the high-performance boat business in the early Sixties, Aronow arrived with a combination of brashness and bravery that left the competition far behind. His Formula boats, piloted by himself, began to rule the fast, punishing sport of offshore powerboat racing. But more important, Aronow recognized the potential for sales of expensive, high-quality, ultrafast

production speedboats based on racing designs. In a memorable display of business bravura, Aronow established Formula as a booming business, then sold out to form Donzi boats, which operated as a direct competitor. Donzi then gave way to Magnum, which was also sold. Aronow finally created the Cigarette Racing Team, a firm specializing in the fabrication of the finest and fastest offshore racers and production boats. Named after a legendary rumrunner that worked along the New Jersey coast during Prohibition, Aronow's Cigarettes have become legends: six consecutive world championships, 1969-1974 (Aronow designs have won a total of nine world titles), and victories in nearly 150 major races. Much of this dazzling record is personally Aronow's; he is a superb offshore racer (when he retired from racing, he had more victories than any other driver).

Perhaps the most rakish of his production boats is his 28-SS (Super-Sleek), a 28-foot beauty capable of over 70 mph. With simple modifications, the boat is eligible for participation in the production class of offshore racing, but a vast percentage of those sold are employed for pleasure—that of bashing around protected bays, lakes and channels, running impromptu races with other hot-boat fanciers and short weekend jaunts in the company of a suitable companion. With accommodations for two (head and a lush forward berth), the Cigarette 28-SS may be the greatest development in mobile lovemaking since they invented back seats for automobiles. In fact, the rakish lines of Cigarettes have been known to be such intense turn-ons for women that certain bold lads have gotten laid smack in the middle of boat shows, right there in the freaking main hall, surrounded by Mr. and Mrs. America and their kids hauling around bags of free promotional literature! "If you

can't get laid in a Cigarette, you'd probably strike out with a Times Square hooker, too," is the way one veteran observer of the boat scene puts it.

No, the Cigarette 28-SS isn't good for much besides basic hedonism. It is, in a sense, a motorized Hobie Cat; the quickest, most glamorous boat of its kind, with an image as powerful as its performance capabilities. While it is usable for water-skiing, it almost flaunts its lack of utilitarianism. It goes fast, and that is all that is necessary. If you want to haul things, buy a barge. If you want to haul ass, buy a Cigarette. This particular boat, with a pair of 280-hp MerCruiser V8s hooked up to stern drives, will cost you about \$32,000. Loaded with all the goodies, including the optional 395-hp engines (necessary if you want that 70-plus top speed), it will cost closer to \$40,000. But then, who ever said good sex, on the land or on the sea, was cheap?

Your ultimate destination in a Cigarette may be no farther away than the forward berth, but there is no navigable place in the world beyond the range of the Westsail 32. This wonderfully sturdy sailboat embodies within its wide, stubby hull all of the wanderlust fantasies harbored by each of us: that marvelous dream of shucking the niggling demands of daily life and simply taking off, boosted by wind and sea, to probe the corners of the earth. This is the central theme of the Westsail 32—it is a world cruiser, designed with honest devotion to the lessons learned by blue-water mariners over the centuries. While most sailing yachts of this size are compromise racers, intended for competition as well as for cruising, the Westsail, with its beamy, deep-keeled hull and its sailing rig, is designed purely for long-range travel with maximum safety and efficiency. It is the direct descendant of a Norwegian pilot boat designed around the turn of the century by naval architect Colin Archer. Those original *rednings-skaites* were 46 feet long and intended



"Knock it off, Melvin! I told you I'd let you know the minute my divorce came through!"

for the roughest weather. Moreover, they were rigged for operation by one man after the pilot had been transferred to the waiting freighter.

The *redningskoite* was scaled down to 36 feet in the Thirties, triggering its employment in a number of global circumnavigations. In 1942-1943, Argentine Vito Dumas braved the elements' isolation, and harassment from a variety of combatants ("Don't you know there's a war on, Dumas?"), to singlehandedly circle the planet in 13 months. Others followed in Archer-inspired hulls.

In 1969, this famous design was produced in fiberglass and the Westsail success story was begun. Since that time, a small cult of blue-water cruising freaks has grown up around the boat and demand has increased to the point where a second factory, in North Carolina, was opened to augment production in the original Costa Mesa, California, plant. What is there about a Westsail 32 that sets it aside from other sailboats of similar size? It is elemental, really, traceable to traditional hard truths of the sea, as opposed to fads that place priorities on speed, pretty lines and superficial luxury at the expense of simplicity and strength. Mariners know that cruising sailboats are more stable if they have a moderately heavy displacement (9.75 tons in the Westsail's case), wide beam and full keel. They also know that a benefit of this design provides maximum cabin space (the Westsail 32 will sleep four with ease, six if necessary). They understand that a double-ended-hull design is best for high, following seas and that things such as a low freeboard, a small, self-bailing cockpit and a simple, ultrastrong sailing rig can mean the difference between life and death in a relentless ocean storm. And, knowing how they can break, old salts understand the limitations of the so-called conveniences and luxury trimming that adorn so many yachts. To quote a Westsail spokesman, "After a few days at sea, a luxury becomes any device that can be manually operated and easily repaired." So it is with the Westsail, whose message of sturdiness and almost puritan utility has a special eloquence in this frivolous age. This is not to imply that the Westsail is a mere machine, a stark hulk intended for a kind of ascetic functionalism at the expense of aesthetics. Quite to the contrary, the cabin of the 32 is a cavern of rich woodwork, testimony in behalf of that much-used contention, form follows function.

The Westsail is, in a sense, a more serious boat than some of the other members of our fleet. She is a capable, no-nonsense craft, overbuilt for the casual kind of sailing most owners will subject her to, but lying within her is a certain aura of fantasy. As the owner of the Cigarette runs his imaginary Miami-to-Nassau race

each time he punches the throttles, a Westsail skipper turns each cruise into a long reach to Pago Pago. Therein lies a hidden, ancillary benefit of boats: enough movement, enough flexibility, enough breadth of experience to dream the wildest dreams.

Equipped without compromise for world cruising, a Westsail 32 will cost you the better part of \$60,000, delivered, although it can be purchased in a variety of semifinished forms, including the bare hull for \$6550 and one requiring interior joinerwork and exterior detailing for \$23,500. In all cases, however, this sailboat—less rakish and chic than many of its contemporaries—embodies that clear demand for truth of purpose when dealing with the most powerful elements of the sea. In this sense, it may be the most honest of all the boats in our little fleet.

There is also an element of honesty in our Bertram 58 yacht—an honest commitment to the 20th Century idiom of lavish, superstar living based on unvarnished conspicuous consumption. This incredible vessel will cost you close to \$350,000 by the time you equip it with the electronic gear considered necessary in this class. And you've got to have the right electronic props, even if you never take the boat beyond the sight of land. That is part of the high-roller mentality of big yachts: You must have the props. Radar unit, loran, direction finder, autopilot, depth indicator, hot-shot radio transmitter and receiver, etc., are all *de rigueur*, as well as monogrammed towels, linen, china and glassware and—a sneaky little wallet-busting bonus—a full-time professional captain to run your toy. It cannot be emphasized enough that there are no compromises in this area; either you go the full shot or forget it. Buying a stripped version of the Bertram 58 would be like buying an estate in Palm Beach and furnishing it with discount-plaza furniture or navigating your Learjet with a boy-scout compass.

In a sense, the Bertram 58 is atypical of boats that established the Miami firm as the Mercedes-Benz of the yacht business. Its reputation was built mainly on sport fishermen: fast, ultrarugged 31- and 38-footers that were less frilly than the competition but faster, more seaworthy, more reliable and more expensive. Only one other manufacturer (excluding small, custom builders) seriously competes with Bertram in the field of top-quality motor yachts. Hatteras, of High Point, North Carolina, is a company noted for superb sport fishermen and beautifully appointed luxury yachts, including no fewer than six different superships from 58 to 70 feet. According to most boating experts, there are powerboats and there are Bertrams and Hatterases—the separation in quality and performance is that significant.

All right, then, you have decided that

you can handle the bucks for the Bertram 58 and want to know more details. We oblige as follows: Because you are a swinger (after all, what kind of geriatric basket case would want a boat like this?), we won't bore you with mechanical details—twin turbocharged 12V-71 TI General Motors diesels, 1250-gallon fuel capacity, electrohydraulic trim tabs, automatic fire-extinguisher system, 30-kw. diesel generator, etc.—and will get on to the important stuff. Naturally, you'll want to know about the owner's stateroom, featuring a king-size, walk-around bed with a Captain Video headboard console to control the lights, stereo system (piped throughout the boat), your very own color television and a full head (oh, hell, call it a bathroom) with tub and shower, *plus* a concealed vanity with theatrical make-up mirror. Then we have the wet bar on the afterdeck, another color television, the custom furniture in the main *salon* and the fully loaded galley—freezer, electric range/oven, garbage compacter ("Mayday! Mayday! We're nine miles off Atlantic City, New Jersey, and the garbage compacter has jammed up!")—as well as a complete washer-drier setup to keep your white ducks looking spiffy.

Owning a 58-foot Bertram yacht is a lot like going to sea in your three-bedroom split-level. The Bertram's craftsmanship is, for the most part, concealed by veneers of high-buck draperies, shag rugs and decorated bulkheads. The bulletproof engineering is generally overshadowed by the plethora of gadgetry. For anyone seriously planning to spend more on a single vessel than many people earn in an entire lifetime, the Bertram 58 is an excellent choice, but it carries with it the kind of excess that old Karl Marx claimed should have done us in long ago. Purists are attracted to the leaner, more purposeful sport boats built by Bertram, but a strong demand exists at the top end of the luxury-yacht market and both Bertram and Hatteras are not shy about trying to satisfy the sybarites.

There we have it: six basic boats for your fleet. A full spectrum of seagoing delights, and all bargain priced well under our half-a-million-dollar budget (actually, by cutting corners on a few options, you might actually end up with enough surplus cash to use the boats a few times before somebody gets wise and repossesses the whole package). But it is not our place to fret over your finances other than to remind you of the basic formula for keeping America strong: Buy now, pay later. After all, where does it say you can't sign off \$500,000 on your Master Charge card?

See you at the marina. Or Leavenworth.

