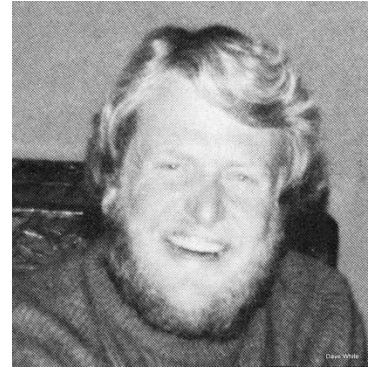


West sail the World...



West sails as seen through the eyes of an OFF SHORE RACER....

*One of only 75 men in the world to finish the Single handed Transatlantic Race in 1976 and fifth place contestant in the Single handed Transpacific Race, Dave White completed both times in his Westsail 32 **Catapha**.*

There is a bit of “go fast” in almost every sailor from week-end racer to hardened cruiser, and one cannot discount the appeal of performance in a cruising sailboat. However, in perspective, the cruising sailboat should first be safe and comfortable, with enough room for the clothes, stores, spares, and luxuries that make for true living (not just existing) aboard. Modern IOR racing boats have proven themselves safe in many offshore races but may take more work to obtain the speed potential. The room and comfort are not well renowned features of modern racers.

Cruising speed is a completely different, basically off the wind, type of sailing and although it is possible to sail around the world “against the grain,” most people don’t choose to do it that way. In cruising, my objective is maximum performance with minimum sails for ease on the pocketbook and room in the sail locker. Also, basic stability for wind vane operation must be considered. Even though most cruising is comfortable off the wind sailing, some proportion of windward ability is certainly very desirable. The wind does not always blow from “abaft the beam.”

Any boat is a compromise, but to sacrifice the other values for maybe 10 degrees of windward ability does not seem realistic. When windward ability is very important is when one is, as the old adage says, “clawing off a lee shore”. It is easily possible to sail 100,000 miles without being caught in this situation, but if it should happen, one is then talking about windward ability in the force 6 to force 8 or greater area.

In light area, often the heavier, full keel cruising boat is able to carry massive amounts of sail and maintain momentum in light variable winds. As the wind freshens the “cruising” boat can carry the larger sail area longer, relieving the crew from tedious sail changes. A good cruising boat can be sailed fast, comfortably, and easily, and yet still have all the advantages of seagoing ability. I was able to sail **Catapha** from San Francisco to Japan in a “cruising” situation (mostly downwind in the Pacific Trades) at an average speed of 125 miles per day and yet cross the Atlantic against the prevailing southwesterlies, an average of over 100 miles per day.

Catapha is not a racer; she is home.

Dave White – Singlehander