



## DID YOU GET HIT BY HURRICANE BOB?

IF YOU DID, OUR READERS WOULD LIKE TO KNOW  
OF YOUR PERSONAL EXPERIENCES AND HOW  
YOUR BOAT MADE OUT.

\*\*\*\*\*

### Editorial -

Our prime purpose of existence has always been to help each other through the exchange of information. To that extent, we have been rather successful. Last month Art Levin of Coral Gables, FL was given belated recognition of his contributions to our predecessor organization VODCA, over a period of fifteen years. At this time I would like everyone to know that a few of our members have also been distinguishing themselves above and beyond the norm. To that extent your editor would like everyone to know who they are:

- Nick & Jenny Coghlan, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada
- Jim Sheldon, Grapevine, Tx
- Karen & Bill Sides, Key Largo, FL

These members have given their "all out", through their contributions to our newsletter and/or by responding to the many requests for help or information. Please continue your great work!

Our many thanks! You're doing a fine job!

## A new stanchion for Harold Cohon - (Sassy #3027)

August 4, 1991

Dear Sid:

Thank you very much for the Vega Marin catalog. I would have written sooner, but I wanted to see how things worked out before I wrote.

Fortunately for me, I have a friend in Sweden; so I explained the problem and asked him to contact Vega Marin for me. I sent him a copy of the catalog page and had an arrow at the stanchion I wanted.

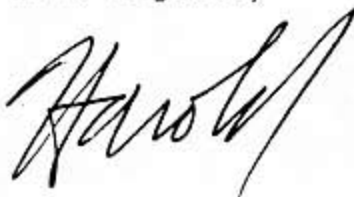
My friend had the stanchion sent to him and then had his company send it to me. I got it about a week later via DHL.

The stanchion was the correct size but made slightly different than the original. Also the tapped hole was not provided. I drilled and tapped for 10-32 and then used a stainless steel screw. It worked out fine. However, if anyone else needs a stanchion, I'd suggest they try to find one here first and avoid the overseas journey.

Regarding the price, it was SEK299.00 which did not include freight from Sweden to the US. My friend said the SEK299.00 converts to about US45.00. The balance of the invoice is made up of freight and tax.

I asked for a new catalog but they won't be out until fall. If and when I get it, I'll send it on to you.

Best regards,



★ **Editors comment:**

Since a Swedish friend bought the stanchion for Harold, it is very possible that he paid a national "Value Added Tax" (VAT) which most Scandinavian countries levy on their citizens plus a local sales tax. If the merchandise was shipped by the vendor (Vega Marin) I believe that these taxes would not apply. But then would Harold have gotten the item as expeditiously?

**SMALL & COMPANY**  
Yacht Brokerage  
**GREAT ISLAND BOAT YARD**  
RFD 2, Box 2074, Great Island, Brunswick, Maine 04011

27' '68 ALBIN VEGA.....16,500

If you know of any possible new members,  
Please send their names & addresses to  
the editor, Sid Rosen.

# The Albin Vega

*A 27-footer that is lightweight but designed for offshore*

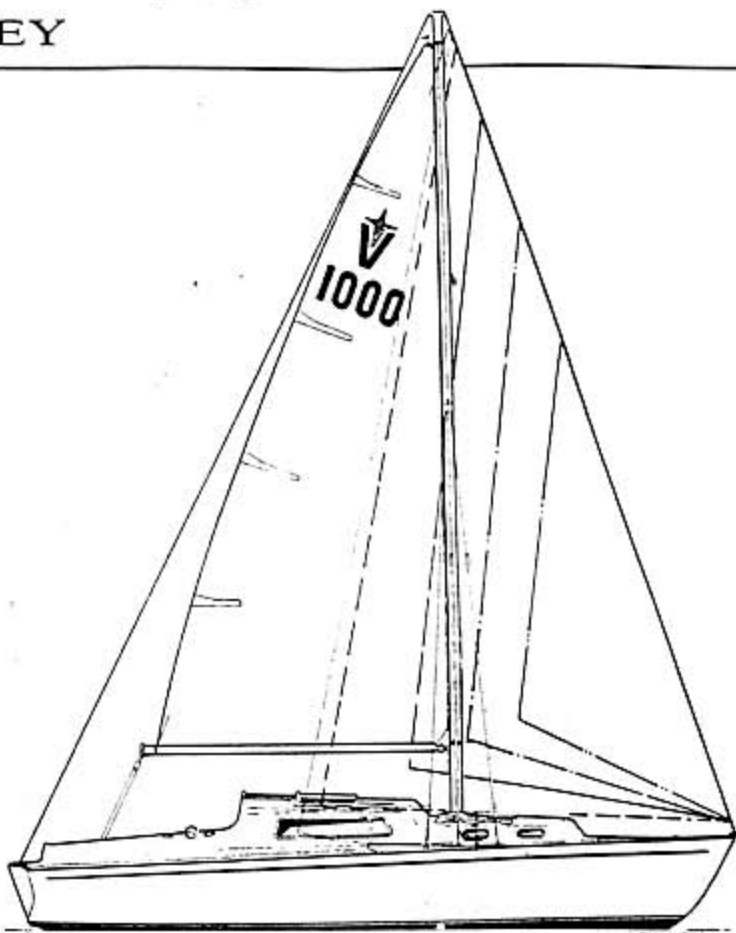
**L**ike a lot of people, our first recollection of the Albin Vega was an advertisement in the sailing magazines. In the early 1970s, a time when California production coastal cruisers dominated the American market, this little Swedish import was hyped as a serious offshore cruiser. Our reaction was, "What has this boat got that the others don't?"

The ad photo showed the Vega backlit by a late afternoon sun, sailing out to sea. The copy touted it as a "...four berth diesel cruiser built of reinforced fiberglass..." that "...sails in her own class and holds the record for the fastest Atlantic crossing." Other noteworthy gear mentioned was the single lever, variable pitch prop, dodger and stainless steel sink with fresh and sea water foot pumps. One surmised from the above that the Vega was light, fast, seaworthy and cruisable. Fifteen years later, it's much easier to put the Vega in perspective. The boat comes close to its billing in many areas, but it's not without its flaws.

## Design and Construction

We were not able to confirm the exact dates of production, but we do know that the boat was designed in 1966. Responses to our Boat Owner's Questionnaire range from hull #249, built in 1968, to hull #3361 built in 1979. Sailed as a one-design in Europe, the Vega made inroads into the American sailing scene as well. They are still commonly sighted. By any standard, the Vega was a successful design.

Designed by Per Brohall, the Vega has a narrow, easily driven hull. Beam is just eight feet, a foot or more narrower than similarly sized boats of the late 1980s.



## Specifications

LOA ..... 27' 1"  
LWL ..... 23' 0"  
Beam ..... 8' 0"

Draft ..... 3' 10"  
Displacement ..... 5,070 lbs.  
Ballast ..... 2,017 lbs.  
Sail area ..... 341 sq. ft.

The hull is shallow, with a large cutaway forward of the so-called "full keel." The rudder is attached but there is no aperture for the propeller. The shaft exits the deadwood just above the rudder, under the counter. More on this later.

In profile, the sheer is reversed. This gives the boat an odd look, though certainly not an unpleasant one. Reverse sheer is used mainly on smaller boats to increase interior space. Also, the tumblehome of the topsides (the middle of the hull above the waterline is wider than at the toerail) causes the hull, rather than the stronger hull-deck joint and rail, to take the brunt of bumpings with pilings. A teak rubrail could be through-bolted along the most exposed area, which would protect a new paint job but which might be difficult to make aesthetically pleasing. A rubrail should follow, to some extent, the line of the sheer, and on a boat with reverse sheer, this would produce a

very strange looking rubrail! Some experimentation on paper would be wise.

The hull and deck are built of fiberglass—chopped strand mat and woven roving bonded with polyester resin—with coring in the deck and coachroof. Company literature asserted that the hulls are 3/8" thick at the toerail, increasing to 1" at the base of the keel. There is ample evidence, however, that some panels, such as the cabin sides, are too thin. On one boat we sailed, they oilcanned easily by pressing the hands against them. Also, the deck did not feel as solid as the advertisements would have us believe—perhaps we were witnessing deck delamination.

Excessive gel coat cracking is the only obvious result, but it is not comforting to feel a panel give. The boat has proven itself offshore, but this does not necessarily mean the structure is well-engineered. One reader wrote: "Hull

suspiciously thin. The Vega is ocean rated (but) my only question is how much can it take."

John Neal, who sailed 14,000 miles throughout the South Pacific on a Vega in the mid-1970s and wrote about his adventures in a book titled *Log of the Mahina*, called the Vega sound, noting that his had survived collisions with coral heads.

Neal, however, also mentioned a problem we noticed, that of deck compression from the deck-stepped mast. Toward the end of his cruise, the main load-bearing bulkhead was actually warping. He wrote: "Upon close inspection, I found that one of the two supports on the main bulkhead had sheared its glue bond, breaking a three-eighths-inch stainless steel bolt, and had been forced through the fiberglass cabin sole. Also, the main port bulkhead had started to warp seriously at the top."

This problem, fortunately, is less common than it was in early fiberglass boats. So often we hear that older fiberglass boats were built much more strongly that today's. Well, it ain't necessarily so. The buyer of a Vega wishing to sail it hard should give some thought to solving this problem. Gluing and screwing plywood to the bulkhead for double thickness would help, as would replacing the overhead beams with larger ones. Of equal importance is transmitting the load from the sole to the hull. This would mean fiberglassing a support between the sole and hull—not an easy job, but a necessary one. Care should be taken not to create hard spots in the hull. The procedure for fitting bulkheads is covered in many books and involves cutting foam wedges to fit between the wood and hull, the joint amply covered with successively larger widths of fiberglass tape.

The hull-to-deck joint is an internal flange with pliant caulking ("2 pack rubber"), fastened with 5/16" stainless steel bolts every five inches. None of our readers have reported leaking as a problem.

Some owners noted the weakness of the rudder. Neal lost his while hove to. After making repairs, he then hove to with slack in the tiller lashings, which worked.

### Performance Under Sail

The Vega is a fine little sailer whose greatest virtue is managability in a wide range of conditions. Nearly all owners remark how well the boat is balanced.

## At A Glance...

### Strengths

- Balances well under sail
- A keel that can take the bottom
- Quality fittings
- Volvo gas or diesel engine
- Variable pitch propeller

### Weaknesses

- 5' 10" headroom
- Mast compression problems
- Some fiberglass panels too thin
- Maintenance-intense Combi drive

**Conclusion:** A tried and true small cruiser that has circumnavigated several times. Volvo diesel a big plus. Full of innovative features. With the mentioned shortcomings upgraded, this is an easily handled boat nicely suited to the singlehander, average-size couple or small family. Good value.

We, too, noticed this trait immediately, admiring the light helm and good tracking.

Light air performance is criticized by numerous owners. When the wind blows over about 15 knots, they say, the boat really comes alive. We did not think the boat we sailed suffered terribly in lower wind speeds, but compared to a more contemporary coastal design with fin keel and larger rig, the Vega would undoubt-

edly come up short. This is an acceptable compromise for an offshore boat. Many owners say they can keep sailing when others are heading in, adding that the boat remains dry even in rough conditions.

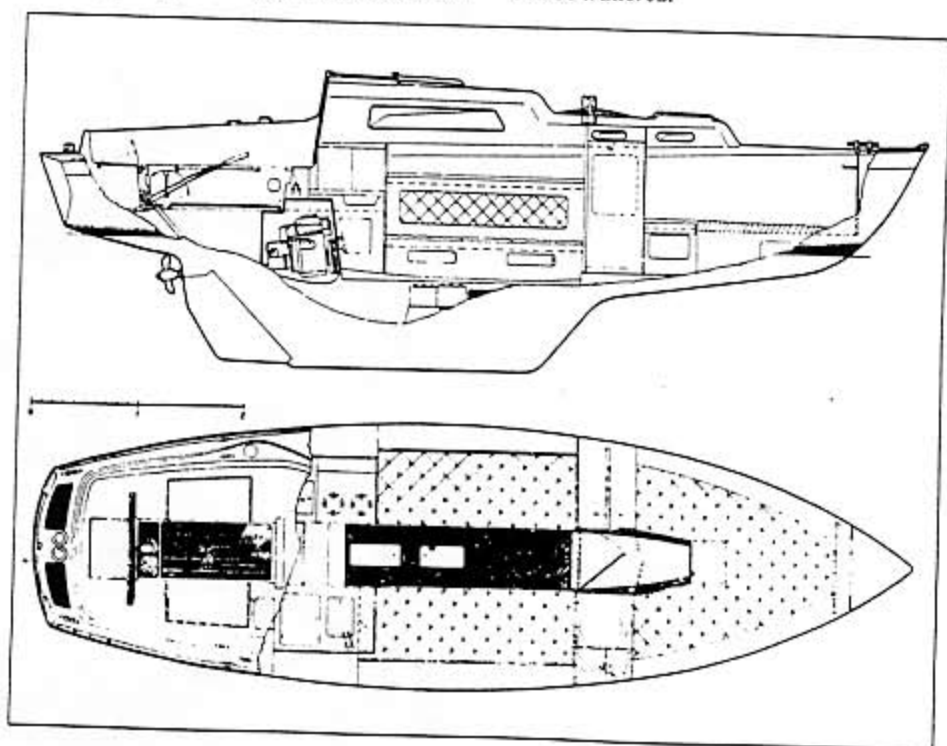
As one would expect from her round bilges and relatively shallow keel, the Vega is initially a mite tender, heeling easily to about 15 degrees. Thereafter, with her shoulder buried, she becomes quite stiff. Again, this is not an undesirable trait for an offshore cruiser.

All in all, the Vega is a pleasure to steer. Unlike modern boats with spade rudders, that tend to stall when overcanvassed, the Vega remains under control at all times. We find that a most comforting characteristic—indeed, a prerequisite for safe, comfortable cruising.

### Performance Under Power

The early Vegas were equipped with Albin 022 13-hp. or Volvo MB10A 15-hp. gas engines, later replaced with Volvo diesels, including the 10-hp. MD6A and 13-hp. MD7A. Some early Vegas did not have transmissions, using the Combi variable pitch prop instead. An owner of a 1976 model wrote that by the time Albin built his boat, a transmission had been added. The variable pitch prop was re-

*While its eight-foot beam is narrow by today's standards, the Vega has an easily driven hull form with four good berths, semi-private head and split galley. It also can be trailered.*



## PS USED BOAT SURVEY

tained, using a single lever control without clutch. "This is an interesting piece of engineering," he wrote, "but hell to repair."

The variable pitch system is far superior to conventional propellers in terms of efficiency. However, it does have drawbacks, principally the grease seals that may leak. A number of readers wrote that parts for the Combi unit, as well as mechanics familiar with it, are hard to find.

Most owners report forward power as good, most saying she'll cruise at six

knots. A few owners of the 10-hp. diesel said the boat was slightly underpowered, which probably explains why later boats were fitted with the 13-hp. model.

Reverse is another story. The value of the variable pitch Combi drive with 1.42:1 reduction gear, which provides greater power backing down, is mitigated by the fact that the propeller is situated aft of the rudder. This makes the boat a devil to steer in reverse. Almost every owner reported difficulty with the boat in reverse, noting that maneuvering in tight quarters requires extra vigilance.

On the plus side, the Volvo engines rate high in reliability. Accessibility is better than average. The real problems with the power train lie in maintaining the Combi drive, which is an asset if working properly and a liability if allowed to deteriorate.

### The Interior

The Vega is not a large 27-footer by today's standards, yet its layout is quite serviceable for a couple despite the fact that headroom is just 5' 10" (actually 5' 7" in the boat we measured) in the main cabin. As the British designer Uffa Fox once said, "If you want to stand up, go on deck."

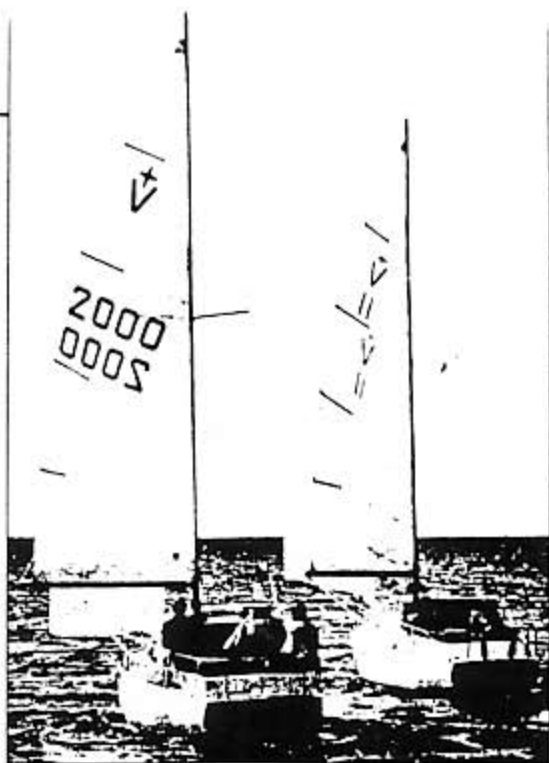
The straightforward layout includes V-berths forward (6' 0" starboard, 6' 6" port), a partially enclosed head compartment forward of the main bulkhead, 6' 1" and 6' 6" settees in the main cabin, and a galley split port and starboard by the companionway. There is ample stowage behind the seatbacks, under the settees and in various galley bins.

The dinette table removes for stowing, or for mounting in the cockpit; the two legs set in sockets sunk into the cabin sole and cockpit floor.

The main shortcoming of the plan is that the toilet is open to the V-berths, which is why this boat is best suited to a couple or small family, or at the least those of intimate relations!

Woodwork is hand-rubbed mahogany, which is quite attractive if maintained properly. The overhead has a fiberglass liner but the cabin and hull sides do not; the latter are covered with a foam-backed perforated vinyl.

The cabin sole is fiberglass, which transmits cold and noise—best to cover with a moisture-resistant carpet.



More than 3,000 Albin Vegas were built by Albin Marin AB of Kristinehamn, Sweden. Several have circumnavigated.

### Owners' Comments

"In the 10K price range, the Albin Vega makes offshore cruising relatively affordable."

1973 model in North Carolina

"Must be reefed at 12 to 14 knots of wind, but still handles well. Somewhat underpowered with Volvo Penta MD6 of 10-hp. Get a good mechanic for diesel and reversing mechanism."

1973 model in Rhode Island

"Excellent boat for two people to coastal cruise. Parts for feathering prop, stuffing box, etc. can be hard to get and are expensive."

1979 model in Massachusetts

"The chainplates are nothing more than inverted stainless steel U-bolts fastened into the hull-to-deck joint with a piece of aluminum channel as a backing plate. This may seem weak but in older boats one will not see stress cracks so this may be strong enough. The mast support structure can be aggravated by over tightened rigging."

1971 model in Virginia

"I hit the top of a large mountain at about four knots. Stopped the poor lady in her tracks, but only cosmetic damage to the keel."

1977 model in Texas

"Stem shaft bearing is metric and an oddball size. Everything else is also metric. Find someone who sells metric bronze machine screws and become his best friend."

Hull #77 in Southern California

All windows are fixed, which is typical of boats built in far northern climates. The rubber gaskets are a bit of a worry, as the material can degrade over time, permitting leaks.

An innovative ventilation system helps keep the interior dry and mildew at bay. Air is introduced through a ventilator in the forward cabin and exhausted via the mast and a cockpit ventilator.

### Conclusion

The Albin Vega is an interesting boat, one that in many respects was ahead of its time. Except for the limitations mentioned, construction was essentially sound. The design is superb. We like the variable pitch propeller despite the extra maintenance required. Placing it in an aperture in front of the rudder would help performance in reverse a great deal, but this would have required a deeper hull form and thereby change the entire concept of the boat. Considering that sailboats spend very little time going backwards, we think Per Brohall made the right decision.

Base price of the Vega in 1973 was about \$17,000, with a good list of standard gear and fittings. That boat today, according to BUC Research, sells for about \$10,000. Depending on condition and age, you could buy one for less. Any way you cut it, the Vega represents a good value—an ocean-going vessel for minimal investment. ■

166 Maple St.  
Guelph, Ontario  
Canada N1G 2G7

July 26, 1991

Mr. Sid Rosen  
10615 Whitman Circle  
Orlando, Florida 32821  
U.S.A.

Dear Sid

Probably you received this article from several people but if so, here is another one.

I subscribe to "Practical Sailor" and when I saw a notice about the upcoming article on Vega, I sent the editor a fax on May 5, telling him ...

- (1) He should talk to Sid Rosen about the Vega Association, gave him your address and phone, and a brief description of the benefits of belonging.
- (2) Parts could still be purchased from Sweden, and sent copies of a couple of pages of the catalogue showing mechanical parts for the rear end.
- (3) The Coghlan's had just finished a world tour, and highlights could be obtained from you.

I see that none of these things made it into the article. Maybe the article was already printed or ready for printing.

Incidentally, many Vega owners would find that "Practical Sailor" is well worth subscribing to. It tests and describes all sorts of boating gear and services, from radios to rigging to rubber boots, and obviously, used boats. It accepts no advertising! Might be worth publishing the address and subscription rate in the newsletter, so I enclose a paste-up from the first couple of pages of one issue — *the issue that had the Vega article*

If you need a better-quality copy of this article, let me know and I can send the original.

By the way, I still have, as in the newsletter in 1989, a complete propeller and a reversing mechanism to fit MD6A. In 1989 it appeared that someone in New York might need them, but apparently not

Best wishes

  
John B. Sprague

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• Albin 0-21/22 engine parts:

Your editor was recently called by a new member who was incensed by the "high cost" of Albin 0-21/22 parts. The following prices were quoted:

Gasket kit \$133.  
Impeller 37.

Does anyone know of a source of Albin engine parts other than Auto-Marine in Miami?

**Practical  
Sailor** 

Editorial Offices: Box 819, Newport, RI 02840  
Subscription Dept: Box 420235, Palm Coast, FL 32142-0235



# Modifications to "Walk About", #707

The Vega Newsletter  
c/o Sidney Rosen  
10615 Whitman Circle  
Orlando, FL 32821

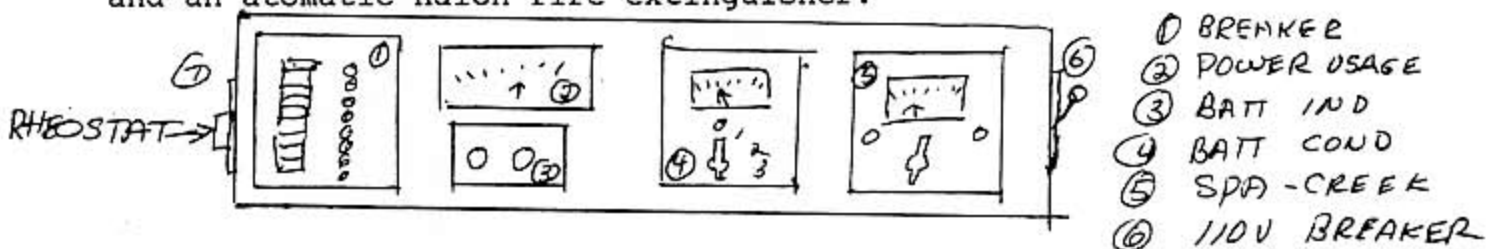
May 6, 1991



Dear Sidney,

Thank you for your prompt reply. I just got your package and I was delighted with all the information and the burgee. Perhaps if I fill you in on my boat, some other members may want to get in touch with me and and share additional information.

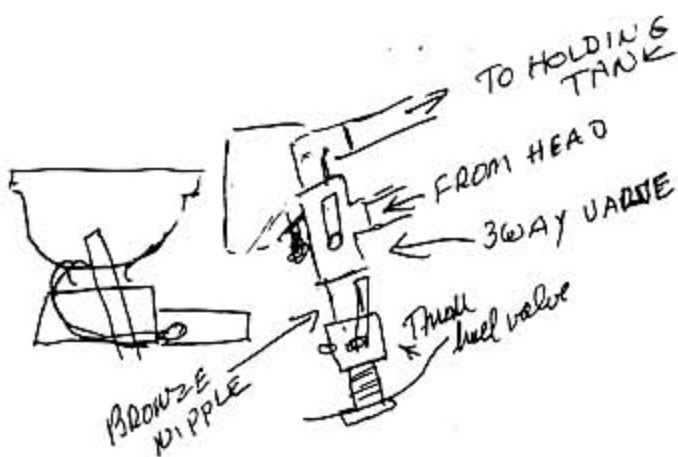
My Vega had a yanmar 1MG (9 hp) with a 2 blade 12x12 propeller installed before I purchased it. At best I could only get no more than 5 knots in calm water, I later purchased a 12x12 3 blade prop and it drives the boat at over 6.5 knots and has been a godsend in the few times I really needed it. I have an 8 gallon aluminum tank in the forward starboard locker and two 105 amp batteries in a similar position in the port locker. I've installed an 8 amp Newmar charger and a battery switch just behind the batteries and since there was shore power aboard when I bought the vessel, it was an easy installation. Like some of the other VEGA owners, I too removed the ceramic fuse set and replaced them with a Newmar switch board to which I added red LED lights (from Newmar, just a few blocks from my house) to each breaker so as let me know at a glance which is active, on the panel above the steps. On that same panel I've installed an ampmeter to let me know how much juice I'm using as well as a battery on/off indication lights, a battery condition meter, a rheostat to dim cabin lights, (cuts electrical consumption) and last but not least a Spar Creek AutoMac for fast battery charges off the engine. I have also installed leaded foam to the engine compartment to quiet engine noise and an automatic Halon fire extinguisher.



A couple of years ago, I Installed a Jabsco electric head pump and it has been terrific with not one whiff of head odor. I purchase the pump unit only and fit the original bowl to it using liquid teflon at all joints including the seal between the bowl and pump. At my last haul-out I replaced the gate valve under the head with a ball valve and since there was a custom(?) made holding tank behind the head, I connected same to the plumbing set up. As to it's ability not to emit odor only time will tell.

In order to go to Catalina Island, one must have a holding tank. When you arrive they put a dye in your head and should they spot a trace trailing in the water, you are automatically fined \$500 and banned from returning for at least a year.

(CONTINUED)



I have a full battened main which I much prefer to the traditional style, better drive and less flapping in light air. I've been thinking about roller furling, but as yet have not made up my mind. At present I connect a light line to the second from top sail hank and through a series of blocks to the cockpit, I'm able to haul the jib down to the deck when pointed into the wind. I am then able to scoot up and secure the sail to the bow pulpit. I've also replaced the traveler with a Harken 209 car with fixed sheaves & adjustable cam cleats on 155 track. The track was installed on a 3/8" x 1 1/2" x 4' strip of teak in the original track slot. The unique thing about this system is that when you pull on the windward track sheet, the leeward cam automatically opens to allow the car to move. I found that only a two part tackle was necessary to move the car, even in heavy wind.

I would like some help as to setting up an anchor bow roller. any suggestions would be greatly appreciated. Also if anyone knows where I might be able to secure an original bow pulpit or at least a drawing of it's shape and dimensions.

Joe Perel  
 Walk About # 707  
 874 Bear Creek  
 Costa Mesa, CA 92626-1703

*Joe Perel*

May 6, 1991

RR1 Mobrae E., C. 37,  
 Ganges, B.C.  
 Canada V0S 1E0  
 Tel: (604) 537-9747

Dear Sir:

I have recently purchased Vega #1742 "Altair" from Stephen Condy of Victoria. Under his ownership she has sailed from B.C. to Mexico and back via Hawaii. I'm happy to report the boat is in first class condition, although now nearly 20 years old.

As part of her equipment I inherited your most useful manual of helpful hints.

I am fortunate enough to live on Salt Spring Island in the lovely British Columbia Gulf islands, and would be happy to see any other Vega owners cruising this area.

Yours truly

*Dick Chudley.*







### Recalling an unforgettable day \*

"I'M SAILING TO BALTIMORE TO SEE THE TALL SHIPS - WOULD YOU LIKE TO GO WITH ME ?" RECEIVING AFFIRMATIVE ANSWERS FROM TWO OF MY SAILING FRIENDS I EXPLAINED THAT I HAD WRITTEN AWAY AND OBTAINED A PERMIT TO ANCHOR IN "AREA B" OFF OF FELLS POINT, BALTIMORE.

AT THAT TIME I KEPT MY BOAT AT MEAR'S MARINA ON BACK CREEK, ANNAPOLIS, MD. TO GET AN EARLY START, THE THREE OF US GOT TO "MEANDER" THE NIGHT BEFORE OUR DEPARTURE AND SLEPT ABOARD THE BOAT - AFTER INDULGING OURSELVES WITH A BOX OF "POPEYE'S" FRIED CHICKEN THAT WE PICKED UP ON THE WAY.

WE POWERED OUT OF THE SLIP AT 0755 HOURS. NO WIND - HAD TO USE MY MD6A. PASSED UNDER THE CHESAPEAKE BAY BRIDGE AT 0850. ENGINE OFF 0905 AFTER THE WIND PICKED UP. HOISTED THE MAIN AND WORKING JIB BUT HAD TO REEF THE MAIN WHEN A SQUALL PASSED THROUGH. ABEAM BUOY 13C AT 1050. PASSED "ENCHANTRESS" 1135 HOURS. I GUESS SHE IS ONE OF THE SMALLER "TALL SHIPS". DOUBLE JIBS FORWARD, FOUR SQUARE SAILS ON FOREMAST AND A LARGE MARCONI RIGGED MAINSAIL AFT. USING MY BINOCULARS WE COULD SEE A TALL SHIP A FEW MILES AFT OF US. WE THINK IT COULD BE THE COAST GUARD'S "EAGLE".

ENTERED THE PATAPSCO RIVER AND PASSED BETHLEHEM STEEL'S "SPARROWS POINT" MILL (SPEWING CLOUDS OF BLACK SMOKE) HEADING UPRIVER, WE PASSED UNDER BALTIMORE'S "FRANCIS SCOTT KEY" BRIDGE. NEAR THE BRIDGE WAS AN UNCHARTED SHIP BUOY WHICH WAS PAINTED RED, WHITE AND BLUE WITH WHITE STARS. (WE FOUND OUT LATER THAT THE UNUSUAL BUOY MARKED THE SPOT FROM WHERE FRANCIS SCOTT KEY WATCHED THE BOMBARDMENT OF FORT MCHENRY AND WROTE THE WORDS TO THE "STAR SPANGLED BANNER".) THERE WERE BOATS, BOATS AND MORE BOATS - THE POWER BOATS CREATED AN AWFUL CHOP. NOT WANTING TO ANCHOR, WE STARTED SAILING BACK & FORTH ACROSS THE RIVER TO KILL TIME SO THAT WE COULD WATCH THE TALL SHIPS PASS US. THE "EAGLE" WENT BY ABOUT 1400 HOURS AND THE ITALIAN "AMERIGO VESPUCCI" ABOUT A HALF HOUR LATER. OVERHEAD WERE A COUPLE OF NEWS HELICOPTERS MAKING A TERRIBLE RACKET. AS TIME WENT ON, OTHER SAILING SHIPS PASSED INCLUDING THE CHILEAN SHIP "ESMERALDA" (THIS SHIP WAS LATER PICKETED SINCE IT WAS SUPPOSEDLY USED AS A PRISON SHIP IN WHICH PRISONERS WERE TORTURED). FINALLY, WE THOUGHT WE'D BETTER GET GOING OR WE WOULD NOT HAVE A PLACE TO ANCHOR. USING THE ENGINE, WE GOT UNDERWAY AND PASSED FORT MCHENRY ABOUT 1550 HOURS. WE ARRIVED AT FELLS POINT AND WITH OUR "PARKING PERMIT" DISPLAYED IN OUR CABIN WINDOW WE STARTED LOOKING FOR A PLACE TO ANCHOR.

THE BOTTOM WASN'T TOO GOOD AND AFTER SEVERAL TRY'S WE FINALLY GOT THE HOOK DOWN NEAR THE MIDDLE OF A NARROW "CHANNEL" GOING TOWARD SHORE THAT WAS MARKED BY SMALL BUOYS. THIS WAS FOR THE "LOCAL COMMERCIAL TRAFFIC". THE DEPTH WAS ABOUT 18 FEET. USING MY 22-S DANFORTH WITH 8 FEET OF CHAIN AND 175 FEET OF 3/8 NYLON RODE, THE HOOK HELD SOLIDLY WHEN I POWERED BACK AND I HAD PLENTY OF ROOM TO SWING. THE HOOK WAS DOWN IN THE CHANNEL BUT WE WERE RIDING WELL OUTSIDE OF THE CHANNEL AMONG THE OTHER BOATS. IT WAS A BEAUTIFUL DAY - THE SUN WAS SHINING BRIGHTLY SO WE PUT UP OUR SUNSHADE. ABOUT 1700 HOURS WE BROKE OUT OUR



WINE AND CHEESE. A LITTLE BIT LATER WE WATCHED A TUG WITH A HUGE BARGE ALONGSIDE COME OUT THROUGH THE CHANNEL. WE WONDERED WHAT CAUSED THE PITCH BLACK WAKE THAT FOLLOWED THE TUG & IT'S TOW. LITTLE DID I REALIZE WHAT FATE HAD IN STORE FOR MY BOAT!

ABOUT 1815 WE HAILED ONE OF THE MANY FREE "WATER TAXIS" CRUISING THE AREA THAT WERE PROVIDED TO TAKE BOATERS ASHORE. NEARBY WAS A HUGE OLD BARGE WITH A BUILDING ON IT. A LARGE SIGN SAIL PROCLAIMED "BARGE RESTAURANT" ONCE THERE, THE THREE OF US ENDURED ABOUT A 30 MINUTE WAIT FOR A TABLE. FINALLY WE WERE SEATED AND ORDERED OUR DINNERS. I HAD JUST TAKEN MY FIRST BITE OF A JUICY STEAK WHEN A BULLHORN SOUNDED OUTSIDE. "SKIPPERS - THIS IS THE BALTIMORE HARBOR POLICE. PLEASE RETURN TO YOUR BOATS AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE. 70 MILE AN HOUR WINDS ARE EXPECTED."

I JUMPED FROM MY SEAT AND RAN OUTSIDE ONTO A SECOND STORY BALCONY. THE SKY WAS BLACK AND THE WIND WAS BLOWING MUCH TOO HARD. **INSTANT PANIC!!!** I RAN TO THE STERN OF THE BARGE AND LOOKED FOR "MEANDER" BUT IT WASN'T WHERE IT SHOULD BE. EACH OF MY HEARTBEATS SOUNDED IN MY EARS LIKE A KETTLEDRUM BEING HIT! **WHERE IS THE BOAT!**

THEN I SPOTTED IT - A GOOD 1/2 MILE FROM WHERE IT HAD BEEN ANCHORED. THE BLUE AND WHITE STRIPPED SUNSHADE THAT I HAD LEFT UP HAD ACTED AS A SAIL IN THE STRONG WIND, PULLING THE ANCHOR OUT OF THE BOTTOM. I RAN DOWN TO THE DECK OF THE BARGE AND WAIVED AND SHOUTED TO THE POLICE TUG. THEY CAME ALONGSIDE AND WITH GREAT DIFFICULTY I WAS ABLE TO DROP/JUMP FROM THE BARGE ONTO THE DECK OF THE PITCHING BOAT. (I WAS IN NEED OF A TOTAL HIP REPLACEMENT AT THAT TIME AND THE SHOCK OF HITTING THE TUGS' DECK CAUSED ME INDESCRIBABLE PAIN.) THE SKIPPER THEN TOOK ME TO MY VEGA. WHILE UNDERWAY, A COUPLE OF SAILBOAT SKIPPERS CALLED TO THE TUG TO RELIEVE THEM OF YACHTS THAT HAD DRIFTED INTO THEM. THE POLICE DIDN'T WANT THE RESPONSIBILITY AND TOLD THE SKIPPERS TO HOLD ONTO THEM - IGNORING STATEMENTS THAT THE EXTRA DRAG MIGHT PULL THEIR ANCHORS LOOSE.

"MEANDER" HAD COME TO REST ALONGSIDE AN OLD PIER - THE STERN BEING ONLY ABOUT 6 FEET FROM A CONCRETE SEAWALL. THE POLICE WANTED TO PUT ME ONTO THE PIER, BUT THE PIER HAD BURNED MANY YEARS IN THE PAST AND THERE WAS LITTLE DECK TO STEP ONTO - ONLY PILINGS. WITH MY HEART IN MY MOUTH OVER THE FATE OF MY BOAT, THE POLICE TOOK ME BACK TO THE "BARGE RESTAURANT", CALLING FOR A POLICE CAR TO MEET US THERE.

WAITING FOR THE CAR TO ARRIVE I COULD ONLY THINK ABOUT THE BOAT SMASHING INTO THE SEAWALL BECAUSE OF THE DELAY. MOMENTS FELT LIKE DAYS, BUT THE POLICE CAR EVENTUALLY ARRIVED AND WE FINALLY GOT TO THE PIER. SINCE THERE WERE VERY FEW PLANKS TO WALK ON - I HAD TO JUMP FROM ONE BOARD TO ANOTHER TO GET TO THE BOAT. MY JIBSHEET, BLOWN BY THE WIND, HAD SOMEHOW CAUGHT ON A HUGE NAIL PROTRUDING FROM A PILING AND THIS KEPT THE BOAT FROM BEING SMASHED AGAINST THE SEAWALL. THE PIER HAD BURNED PERHAPS TWENTY TO THIRTY YEARS EARLIER AND THE PILINGS SEEMED AS SOFT AS Balsa WOOD. I ASKED ONE OF THE POLICEMAN WHERE IT WAS SAFE TO ANCHOR AND HE SAID. "LEAVE IT" WHERE IT IS - THE BOTTOM IN THIS AREA IS NOTHING BUT MUCK AND SLUDGE".





WE REMAINED THERE FOR TWO MORE DAYS AND HAD A GREAT TIME. I WAS VERY FORTUNATE TO GET OFF WITHOUT ANY DAMAGE TO THE BOAT. BUT I LEARNED TWO LESSONS THAT I'VE NEVER FORGOTTEN:

1. DON'T LEAVE AN AWNING UP WHEN YOU LEAVE THE BOAT.
2. DON'T PUT YOUR HOOK DOWN IN A SHALLOW AREA WHERE COMMERCIAL TRAFFIC IS PASSING OVER IT.

ALSO, MY THINKING WAS FLAWED. IF THE WIND WERE TO CHANGE 180 DEGREES, MY BOAT WOULD HAVE STILL BEEN SAFELY OUTSIDE OF THE CHANNEL TRAFFIC— ON ONE SIDE OR THE OTHER. HOWEVER, I FAILED TO CONSIDER THAT A 90 DEGREE CHANGE OF THE WIND IN EITHER DIRECTION WOULD HAVE PLACED "MEANDER" DIRECTLY IN MID-CHANNEL.

LIVE AND LEARN!

SID ROSEN



\* RECREATED FROM LOG ENTRIES, 11 JULY 1976 - MEANDER #2225

7/3/91

Sid

Enclosed, check for \$23.00 (4x5.75) for 4 Tubes of MP-24 Lubriko... hope it is still available.

Three(3) Vegas still ply the waters of Lake Michigan here at Michigan City Indiana, down from our fleet of six(6) in the early 70's. As an active member of Mich. City Yacht Club I head up a program to inspire any of the 50 sailboats to get involved in casual racing... like 12 to 18 boats out on Friday evenings... On the Great Lakes we call it the JAM (JIB & MAIN) Fleet! Lots of Fun



Warren Kirkendall  
"ALLEGRA" #130

