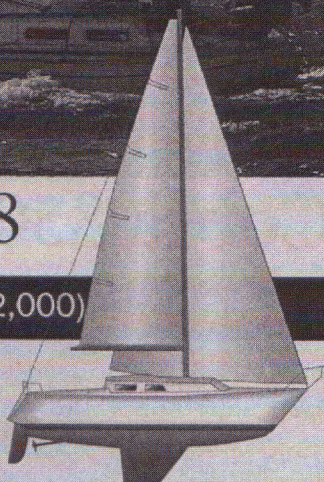




Contessa 28

PRICE £18,000 (+£2,000)

A great all-rounder
that's responsive,
fast and fun to sail



Although launched more than a decade after the Arpege, the Contessa 28 is certainly worthy of mention because it sets out to offer much the same as the French boat but with a more modern design interpretation. By this time a beam of 9ft 5in on a 28ft overall length boat was not at all unusual, but the boat was still intended to be fast, easy to handle, with good sailing characteristics.

The Contessa 28 presented a much more modern concept than the Contessa 32 with proportionately more accommodation space. The accommodation and fit out are good and the boat performs well.

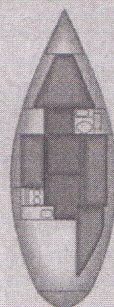
In common with other Jeremy Rogers built yachts, the standard of workmanship is high and materials aren't skimped on. For instance, the fin keel is fully encapsulated lead. The finish is simple but well executed and has stood the test of time well despite being lower maintenance than some.

The accommodation is well thought out, with everything to hand where you need it, and incorporates excellent use of space. A large chart table slides out over the head of the quarter berth. The galley, although not large, has good stowage and adequate worktop space. There are two settee berths in the saloon with a central table. The heads compartment is across the boat and separated from the forecabin with a curtain.

This boat is responsive, fast, fun to sail, seaworthy and a great all-rounder. You may find boats in this price range that offer better accommodation but few will have this combination of factors.

Specifications

LOA	8.4m	27ft 8in
LWL	6.7m	22ft 0in
Beam	2.9m	9ft 5in
Draught	1.5m	4ft 10in
Displacement	3,160kg	6970lb
Ballast	1,270kg	2,800lb
Sail area	32m ²	356ft ²



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(based on an asking price of £18,000)

Contessa 28



A groundbreaking cruiser-racer of the 1970s, the Contessa 28 is now an affordable cruiser. How has she stood the test of time? Dick Durham finds out

USED BOATS TRIED & TESTED

After his success with the Contessa 26 and then the evergreen Contessa 32, boatbuilder Jeremy Rogers changed tack and worked on adaptations of ground-breaking racing craft with designer Doug Peterson. This involved a lot less boat beneath the water and one of the most popular cruiser-racers in the stable was the Contessa 28, launched at Southampton Boat Show in 1977.

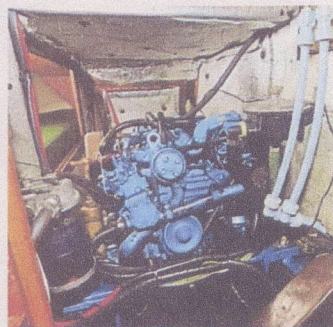
Before Rogers moved on to concentrate on the OOD 34, he built 130 Contessa 28s. One of them is *Conker*, launched in 1979 and owned by the RNLI's fundraising director David Brann, 58, who sails the boat with his

actress wife, Barbara. I joined them at the boat's pontoon berth at Poole Yacht Club.

Performance

With 12-15 knots of apparent wind from the north-east, we beam reached down the harbour towards Brownsea Island at 6.2 knots. Close-hauled, sailing at 45° to the breeze, she made between 4.4 and 5 knots, but was over on her ear very quickly. She has

'She made 5 knots close-hauled but was over on her ear very quickly'



Access to the back of the engine is through a panel in the quarterberth

plenty of freeboard and we did not put the lee rail under water. She will sail closer to the wind than that, but speed is compromised. She clocked up 5.9 knots on a broad reach and goosewinged downwind at 5 knots.

She heaves-to smartly and has good directional stability: the helm can be left once she's balanced up.

David went for a test sail in an easterly Force 6 before he bought her. They blew out the sprayhood, filled the cockpit with sea and lost the masthead wind transducer overboard, but David, said: 'We never once felt the boat couldn't take it and I realised she was a good enough sea-boat for

Channel cruising.' He and Barbara have gone on to cruise her in the Channel Islands and Brittany.

Living below

David introduced his wife to sailing aboard an 18ft Sunstar, in which they honeymooned from Langstone to Salcombe and back. Their two daughters, Beccy, 26, and 24-year-old Milly, also sail with them aboard *Conker*, so they are also used to the Contessa's cabin, which is relatively cramped by modern standards.

Slide back the Perspex main hatch and three steps down the vertical companionway ladder puts you into a compact saloon, which is a well-thought out use of limited space. Smart bottle green upholstery set against the teak and teak-faced marine ply furniture give her a clubby appearance. There is 5ft 10 in headroom, dropping to 5ft 9in in the forward cabin.

On the port side of the saloon is a single berth with a trotter box and to starboard a single that converts to a double, both with leecloths. Between them is a drop-leaf table. The only grabrail is a stainless steel bar running along the centreline of the coachroof, added by a previous owner.

To starboard aft, a quarterberth emerges from beneath a Heath-Robinson foldaway chart table. There is no dedicated navigation area. The crew working up the course to steer has to sit on the end of the starboard bunk and

Key features

Her laminated tiller is lengthy and restricts movement of crew when tacking

The mainsheet traveller is located forward of the companionway

She has an attractive reverse transom

She has high freeboard to give headroom in the cabin

Her sheerline is quite flat



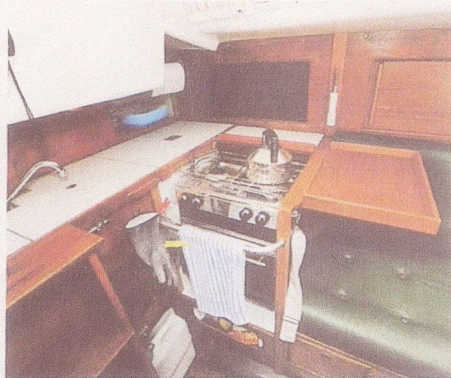


'She heaves to smartly and has good directional stability'

twist round to work on the chart table, which sits at a 45° angle when shipped and faces aft. Despite this, there is room in the hull lining to mount a GPS, a VHF radio, a compass, instruments showing log and depth, wind speed and direction, and a plotter.

The galley comprises a sink with hot and cold running water, and a top-loading fridge. The cooker, with twin burners, oven and grill, pushes the port berth further forward than the starboard one, hence the trotter box. When the cooker is not in use, a top can be slid over it for extra work surface, adding to the narrow worktop that runs athwartships, aft of the companionway top step.

The forecabin has a V-shaped double berth with stowage below the mattresses and cave lockers each side. The heads is separated from the starboard bunk only by a half bulkhead. It has a moulded glassfibre sink with hot and cold taps and cave lockers for stowage. To port, facing the loo, is the shower and hanging locker.



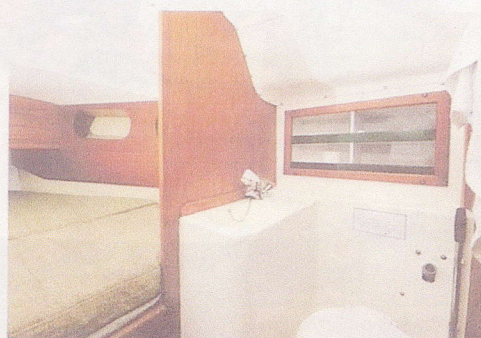
A simple, effective, if Spartan use of space



She has a 'chubby' feel, with green upholstery and teak trim



The chart 'table' is a fold-away panel like a draughtsman's drawing board. You have to sit side-saddle to use it



Don't blush: a half bulkhead makes scant allowance for modesty in the heads

ALL PHOTOS: LESTER MCCARTHY  Pilot



ABOVE: She sets a generous spread of canvas on a deck-stepped, masthead rig. LEFT: Good deck space and ample room up forward for sail changes

The cockpit is deep, safe and offers good bracing positions



Design

Her well-raked stem and reverse transom are characteristics shared with the Contessa 32, but there the comparison ends. Below the waterline she has a fine entry and the forefoot is cut away, leading to a keel with a leading edge raked at the same angle as the stem. The vertical trailing edge and foot of the keel are designed so she can be dried out alongside scrubbing posts and harbour walls. She has a straight sheerline and her decks are cambered to maximise headroom below. Early models, identified by a wooden toerail, are more prone to weather helm upwind than later ones.

Construction

The hull and deck mouldings are solid glassfibre, but not as heavily built as some of her contemporaries. There have been a few reports of cracks along the encapsulated keel and around the shroud plates, but serious problems are very rare. Her GRP deck has an effective non-skid surface. She has lead ballast

encapsulated in the keel. There are four windows and one forehatch, which let in an adequate amount of light. The cockpit seats are in laid teak. The hull-deck joint is covered by an aluminium toerail, fixed at 9in centres.

Sailplan

Her masthead, deck-stepped rig sports a tall, narrow mainsail of 13.24m² (142.5sq ft) – less than half the size of her 28.43m² (306sq ft) genoa, set on a roller furler. Conker also has a blade jib, cruising chute and spinnaker in her sail wardrobe. There are three slab reef points in the mainsail. She has a boom strut as well as a topping lift. The mainsheet traveller runs clear of the cockpit, in front of the main hatch. All lines are led aft.

Deck layout

Her cockpit is deep and safe. The original Lewmar sheet winches were old and tired and Barbara found them a real grind, so David replaced them with new, two-speed, self-tailing Harkens. On the coachroof are the original Lewmar

YACHTING MONTHLY'S 100-POINT RESULTS

UNDER SAIL

PERFORMANCE

She's lively under sail, if a touch on the tender side. She heaves-to purposefully and has good directional stability, which is useful when sailing solo. She produces similar speeds on most points of sail and would be a good boat for round-the-cans racing.

7/10

AT THE HELM

Two's company, three's a crowd in the cockpit and the laminated tiller, though hinged, is too long when short-tacking and gets in the way as crew go from lee to weather coaming. The sprayhood is low enough for the helmsman to see ahead over the top of it when standing.

7/10

ON DECK

DECK LAYOUT

She has a self-draining gas locker – an insurance necessity these days. There are grabrails the whole length of the coachroof from the sprayhood to the end of the cabin on both sides. The manual bilge pump in the cockpit is a good safety feature.

7/10

SAILPLAN

Generous sail area gives her excellent light weather sailing qualities. Upwards of 17 knots, it's time to tuck in the first reef. She lays over on her ear quickly, but this does not seem to affect her performance. But when heeled over, it's difficult to see to leeward under the genoa.

7/10

BUILD

DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION

Her lines put one in mind of a mini-Sadler 32. The hull is well laid up and Conker, built in 1979, could drop a decade off her appearance. The rudder is semi-balanced and the top of the blade is above the water level when she is upright – useful for clearing any fouled ropes.

8/10

MAINTENANCE

There is clear access to the front of the engine and you can get to the back of it, but the stern gland requires a bit of yoga: lying down on your stomach plunging your right hand through a panel in the quarterberth. The lower shrouds have support struts below deck to stiffen the deck.

8/10

ss for the halyards. The pushpit supports a bathing ladder and a rut for a wind generator.

The sidedecks are wide and easy to negotiate and the foredeck, too, has ample room for sail changes. A single bow roller carries a 25 lb (11kg) CQR anchor, which stows in a foredeck locker. She has 8in (20cm) alloy cleats at the bow, midships and aft. The port locker stows spare sails and the starboard locker is a moulded unit designed to house a liferaft, incorporating a locker that drains overboard.

Under power

The 10hp, two-cylinder Nanni diesel spins a three-blade prop on shaft supported by a P-bracket. She can maintain 5 knots' cruising speed in easy conditions but against any kind of stiff breeze she is underpowered. 'A choppy sea will knock way off,' David said. 'I told the crew: "She is a sailing boat and this engine is an auxiliary"' ▲

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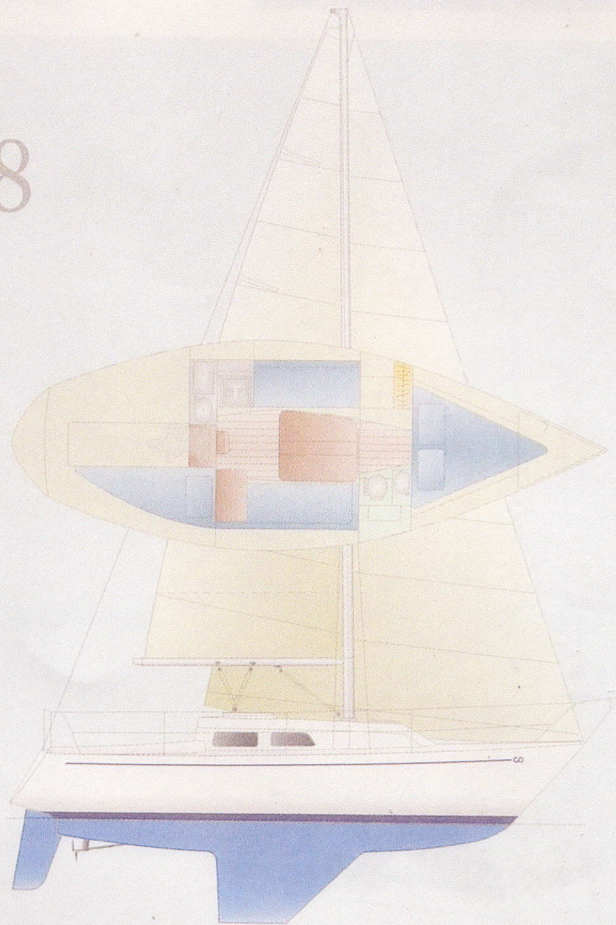


TECHNICAL

Contessa 28

- Price guide £13,000 to £19,000
- LOA 8.43m (27ft 8in)
- LWL 6.71m (22ft)
- Beam 2.88m (9ft 5in)
- Draught 1.49m (4ft 10in)
- Displacement 3,160kg (6,970 lb)
- Ballast 1,270kg (2,800 lb)
- Sail area 32.15m² (356sq ft)
- Engine 10hp diesel
- Fuel 45 lit (10gal)
- Water 72 lit (16gal)
- Designer Doug Peterson
- Builder Jeremy Rogers

'She's a sound choice for coastal and continental cruising'



THREE ALTERNATIVE CHOICES (Priced at similar specification)

Atlanta 28 (£9,000 - £14,000) The hull mouldings were bulky, though she was spacious for her time. She sailed fairly well but was no racer.



2 Cutlass 27 (£8,000 - £12,000) A good sea-boat with attractive lines, quick, rewarding to sail and easy to handle. Spartan accommodation.



3 Cobra 850 (£11,000 - £14,000) Longish fin keel and large skeg supporting the rudder. Four-berth layout, docile boat but with good handling under sail.



BELOW DECK

CHART TABLE
Houdini would have found the clumsy fold-down chart table a warm-up exercise, turning his trunk around to plot a course while sitting on the head of the bunk. That said, there is plenty of 'wall' space for mounting instruments.

GALLEY
A stainless steel crash bar across the front of the cooker gives the sea cook something to hang on to and a strap provides extra security in heavy weather, when hot food becomes more important but cooking it less easy. It's a simple, effective, if Spartan use of space.

HEADS
There is little modesty available forward for either the occupant of the heads or the crew still sleeping in the forepeak. But there is a vanity unit over the washbasin and a hanging locker opposite, in which to throw your oilies while using the ablutions.

LIVING BELOW
Stowage is good, in lockers behind the backrests in the saloon and under the seats. Headroom is above average for a boat of this size and the layout is well thought-out for cruising. That said, the crew would feel really cramped if all six berths were occupied.

TOTAL SCORE

A game little cruiser with above average performance for a 1970s fin-keeler, decent build quality, good deck layout, functional accommodation for a couple or young family and adequate sea-keeping. She's a sound choice for coastal and continental cruising, but I wouldn't want to be caught out in a storm. Her generous spread of canvas is a boon in light airs but the huge genoa can be unwieldy in stays.

4_{/10}

6_{/10}

5_{/10}

8_{/10}

67

A RACER FOR CRUISING

sailed by RODGER WITT

MOVING EVER up-market, Jeremy Rogers is presently building a 39-foot Contessa—the poor man's Admiral's Cupper'. At the other end of the scale, moulds for the good-looking but uncompetitive Contessa 25 have gone to Sweden while, as everyone knows, the classic 26 stays nearer home at Maclean Marine's diminutive yard, just round the corner, in Lynton.

So today, the 28 is the smallest Contessa he makes. Clearly, Mr Rogers, who started out building cold-moulded Folkboats, has come a long way indeed. Add in his developments with vacuum-injection moulding on the OOD 34 (PBO 142) plus numerous racing successes, and it's no small wonder that he commands such respect.

In recent years, competition and Doug Peterson have been

board) harnessed to neat, streamlined jammers shows forethought, even if someone should have set up the reefing lines in advance. No matter, having sorted that out, everything worked smoothly and well. The coachroof-mounted mainsheet track is another good idea and saves space in the cockpit, but I thought the engine controls vulnerable. They might be better housed in a recess. On the other hand, proper liferaft stowage in the cockpit is a plus, so is excellent visibility at the tiller.

A rather conventional layout

Down below, we find a Vee berth forward, then moving aft, a toilet compartment complete with hanging locker and vanitory unit. The saloon has 'port and starboard' leather-look settees, the starboard one of which converts to a double—with a quarter berth to starboard just inside the companionway, and neat corner galley opposite. A chart table lives on rails and stows under the bridge-deck.

Auxiliary power comes in the shape of a Petter Mini Twin 12 hp diesel coupled to a folding prop which engages with a 'clunk' and takes time to bite in astern.

dominating influences but, for all that, production boats still exude good taste, and the 28 is no exception.

In contrast to your zappy, boat show interiors full of striped cloth and sharp corners, hers has silky smooth teak, plush, contoured berths, and not a gimmick in sight.

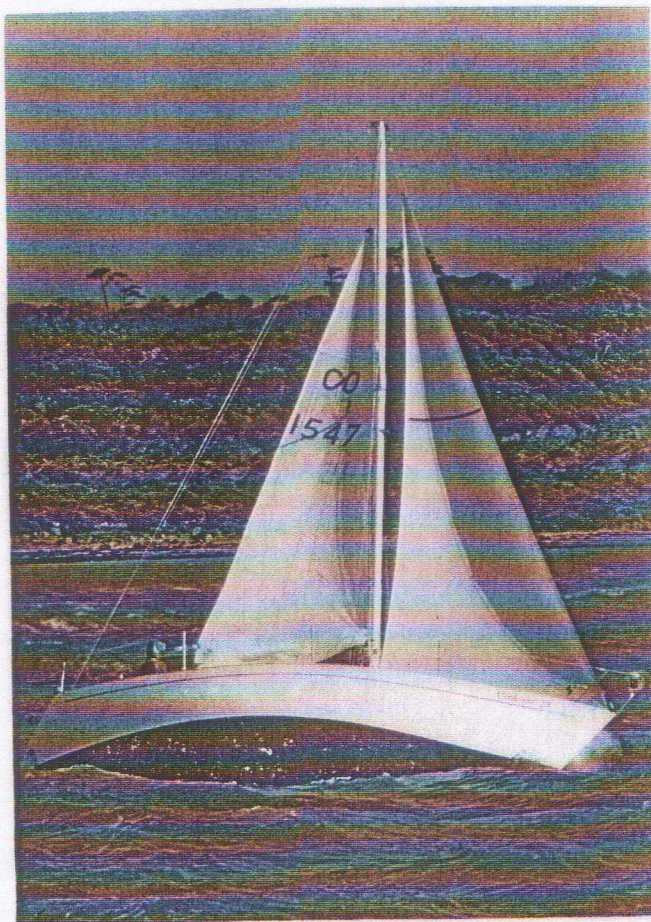
Her character is just as refined. She stems from a long line of successful racers—boats like Moonshine come quickly to mind—but avoids extremes, has a chunky, flat-bottomed keel for drying-out alongside, and should appeal as a fast, able cruiser. A strong, powerful boat which revels to windward, she feels buoyant and eager.

Early boats were somewhat heavy to steer, but a new rudder seems to have solved the problem, and my particular demo boat was



easy to handle. Mind you, unlike some craft which tend to 'stick in a groove' on the wind, Contessa responds to every twitch of the tiller or touch of the sheets. She's not skittish or awkward, merely alive.

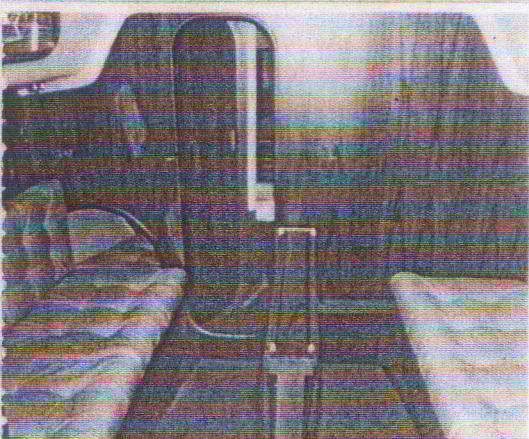
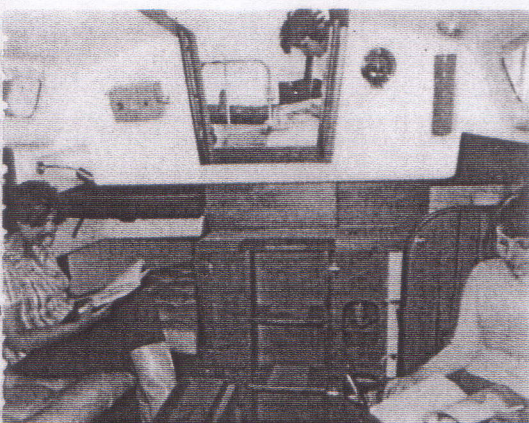
I tried her in gusty conditions with two reefs, and felt thoroughly relaxed. The slab reefing system itself is worthy of note. An efficient winch (one of eight on



Reefed down and going well to windward in F5 over a typical Solent 'chop'.

Aspects of the interior are shown facing. Note the leather-look and the pull-out chart-table over the quarter-berth.

PRACTICAL BOAT OWNER



On the construction front, after a single layer of chopped strand mat has been laid up on the gel coat, combinations of mat and Lin-rove are built up—although no figures were available to indicate the final thickness. Either way, the builders bond in three separate interior mouldings to add stiffness and make fitting-out easier. The bottom one even incorporates engine beds.

Good news here is that since Contessa 28 may be had part complete, practical boat owners can enjoy the time-saving benefits of

this sophisticated arrangement. So long as you like the layout...

The price in part complete form is £5,750 before VAT—which buys a bonded hull and deck complete with interior mouldings, encapsulated ballast, rudder and backing pads, all fitted to the boat. In addition, components such as hatches, windows and locker lids arrive loose, and drawings are thrown in for free.

Complete boats start at £13,250; sixty five were sold in the first twelve months of production. As well as the new rudder, changes made during that time included alloy instead of wood for toerails and window frames, plus more grab rails below. Future mods may include an injection-moulded deck, but the situation should be clearer by the time this appears in print.

To get right up to date, write to Jeremy Rogers at Waterloo Road, Lymington, Hampshire or telephone (0590) 77244.

CONTESSA 28

LOA	27ft 8in
LWL	22ft
Beam	9ft 5in
Draft	4ft 10in
Displacement	6,970lb
Ballast (lead)	2,800lb
Sail area	356 sq ft
Designer	Doug Peterson



GETTING TO KNOW

Contessa 28

IN recent years, one of the fastest-growing firms in the whole of the British yacht-building industry has been the Lymington firm of J. C. Rogers. Starting modestly 11 years ago with the Folkboat-based Contessa 26 they progressed to the David Sadler designed Contessa 32, a middle-of-the-road cruiser racer which has been so successful that there is still a long waiting list for new boats five years after it was first introduced. With 350 built to date, the 32 now forms the most successful offshore one-design racing fleet in Britain. A little later, a range of committed racing yachts was introduced, beginning with the Peterson-designed 35 with which Jeremy

Rogers won the 1973 One Ton Cup. This was followed by a quarter tonner, the 25 and this year, the 43, which in the shape of *Moonshine* was the most successful boat in the victorious British Admiral's Cup team.

The ever-growing Lymington yard now builds four yachts each week but has no intention of resting on its laurels. Racing yachts come and go but the 26 and 32 have shown that good cruisers can go on practically for ever. Therefore it is entirely logical that the newest Contessa should be a cruiser-racer to plug the gap between these two boats.

The accommodation is closely based on what most people say they want from a cruising boat of this size: six berths, separate w.c. compartment, headroom in the saloon and a diesel auxiliary. To get all this into 28ft overall is quite an achievement and, as we shall see, certain sacrifices have to be made in order to achieve it.

Construction of the hull and deck is quite conventional, being hand-laid-up g.r.p. moulded in Rogers' own factory. The lead ballast of 2800lb is totally encapsulated in the g.r.p. fin keel. The deck is stiffened with balsa on its flat areas and bonded to the hull. The construction below has been designed for easy and fool-proof building with a series of g.r.p.

Lots of control downwind, though we did broach under spinnaker in 20 knots; not likely to happen in cruising conditions though

by David Pelly

sub-units which serve to locate the various items of furniture in the correct places.

The rudder was originally planned to have a small skeg in front of it but this was deleted in favour of a pure spade which is thickened at the top to blend into the hull.

Spars are by Kemp, the simple mast-head rig being amply supported by fore and aft lowers and cap shrouds on each side. The forward lowers could be replaced by an inner forestay but this would make it less easy to fit a forehatch. The mainsail is hoisted on slides and the jib on conventional hanks—no luff grooves or head-foils. Slab reefing is the standard arrangement with an unfamiliar method for pulling down the leach cringles without cheek blocks on the boom. One concession to racing practice is that the genoa and spinnaker halyards are led out at the foot of the mast and thence to the cockpit. The main halyard, however, remains on the mast where it is to hand when reefing.

There is an unusual mid-boom main-sheet with a short length of track immediately in front of the main hatch. Although this keeps the sheet clear of the cockpit, I thought it rather too far from the helmsman's grasp and not really very convenient in use. A further disadvantage is that it is not possible to fit a pram hood with this arrangement.

The cockpit is very comfortable



with a good backrest and just the right width to brace one's feet against the opposite seat. The tiller I felt to be rather too long. Apparently it had already been shortened once and may well lose some more inches on future boats. There are two Lewmar 40 winches for the genoa sheets and two 16s for the spinnaker sheets but I was astonished to find that the handles for the latter fouled the life-lines and the cleats provided were horrid.

On the starboard side of the cockpit there is a large locker (see photograph) for the liferaft and gas bottles. This is a good idea but I found the way that this locker opened rather awkward as the lid tends to fill the cockpit.

The non-slip deck surface is quite good for a moulded-in pattern and certainly superior to the diamond pattern so beloved by many boat-builders. Forward, there is an anchor well and a slightly rudimentary but adequate chain fairlead. The bow warp fairleads, on the other hand were virtually useless being the open type, with nasty sharp corners as well. I was also surprised that a wooden toe rail is fitted instead of the rather more useful pierced aluminium type.

Fitting in six berths has not been easy. It is done by having three berths in the saloon; one single and one double in addition to two in the forecabin and a quarter-berth. Inevitably there is pressure on the space available for the galley and chart table. The galley nevertheless includes a Flavel B700 cooker with grill and oven, a small sink and an icebox but stowage space is somewhat limited and working surface even more so. There is no fitted gash-bin (a common fault) and I felt the fresh-water supply of only 16 gallons to be definitely skimpy for six people.

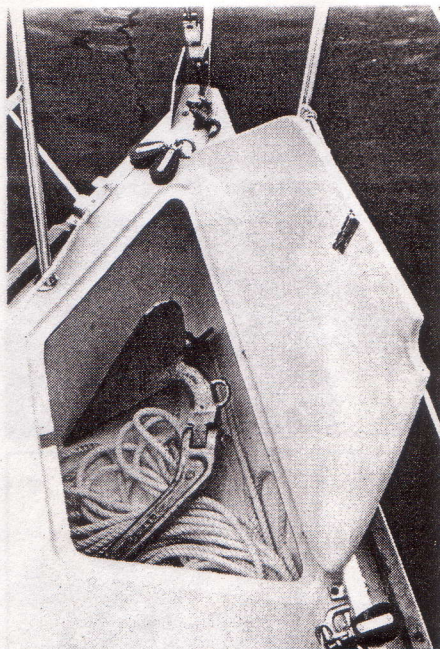
The chart-table problem has been solved by having a small box-type desk over the head of the quarter berth which swings up into a stowed position when not required. Although this is obviously much better than nothing it is nowhere near as convenient as a fixed table. The trouble is that most navigators (who are often also the owners of the yacht) like to make a little nest for themselves with instruments, books, rulers and other paraphernalia all neatly arranged in their special places and this is not really possible on the Contessa 28. Still, you cannot have everything.

No-one could complain, on the other hand, about the size of the saloon table. With the flaps down it is very narrow—just right for mugs of tea when sailing—and with the flaps up it is very large so that the entire crew can sit down to a proper meal.

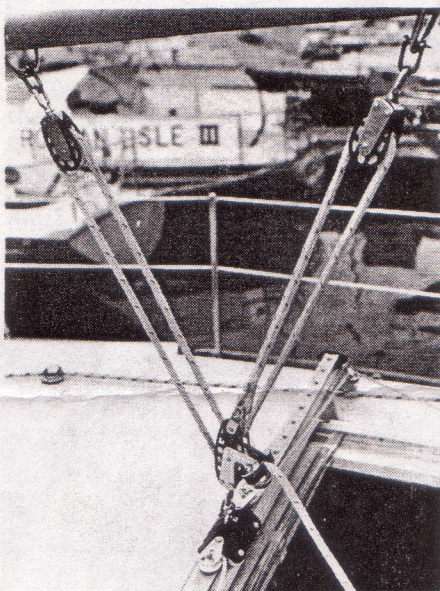
The arrangement of the fore-cabin is an ingenious attempt to get away

Decent sized double forward berth attempts to get away from the usual V shape

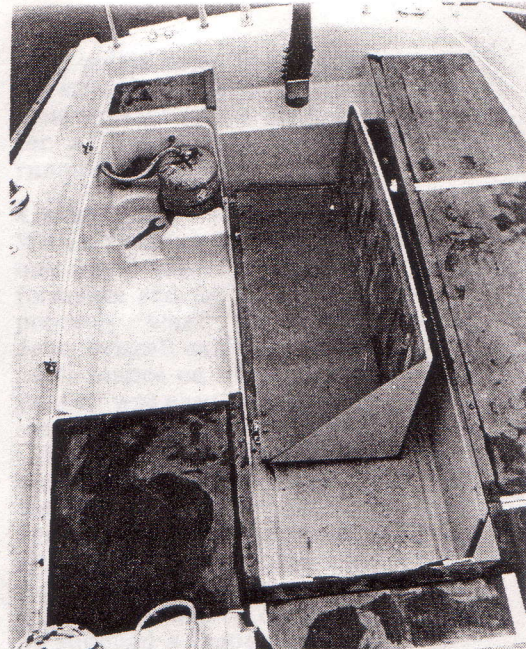
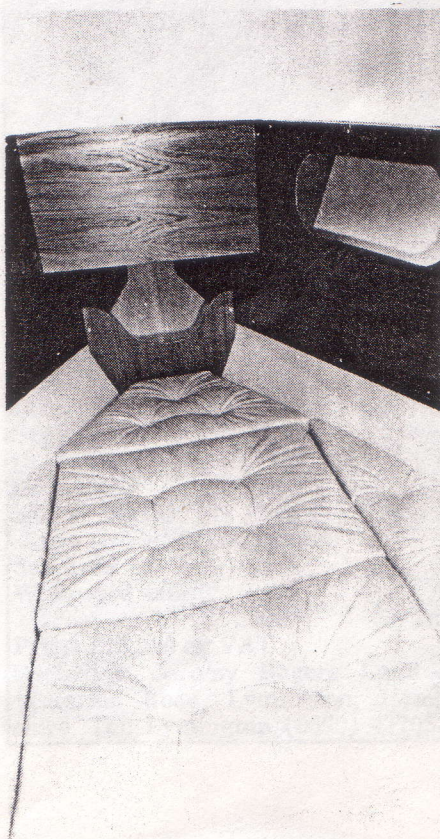
At least three sail bags can be fitted under the forward berths



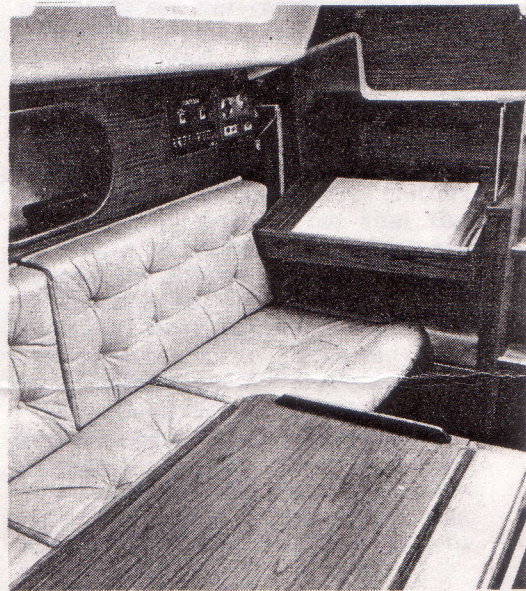
Rudimentary fairlead and anchor well. The bow warp fairleads were virtually useless



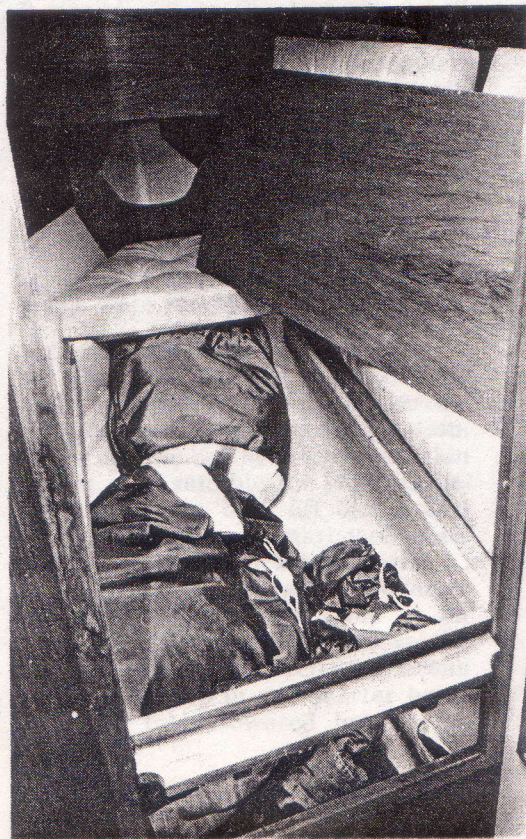
Unusual mid boom mainsheet with its snort length of track



Liferaft and gas bottle lockers, with rather awkward opening lid



Folding chart table above quarter berth, enormous saloon table that folds down; berth pulls out to form double



and bilge pumps, one on deck and one below.

Conclusions

The judges had to take into account the fact that this was an owner's boat and therefore had personalised detail and equipment in evidence. For Kitty Hampton she was the best boat in the Rally. "This is the boat I would most like to take my family cruising in, and I would also greatly enjoy long distance short/single-handed races in her as well."

Edward Bourne thought she would be excellent for the man who wants to cruise seriously and race non-IOR. He considered that with a little adaption she was the boat most suited to short-handed sailing.

Although not the prettiest boat in the Rally, the Achilles has benefited from being thoroughly tested and improved as a result. There can be little substitute for this style of development and clearly Chris Butler and his team have ended up with a product which achieves her aims as a tough, fast cruising boat.



Contessa 28

JEREMY ROGERS has been one of the most prolific builders of high class cruising and racing yachts in the country. He's currently going through a quiet time with the recession, but as the producer of boats as successful as the Contessa 28 it would be difficult to see him emerging from the recession in anything other than a strong position.

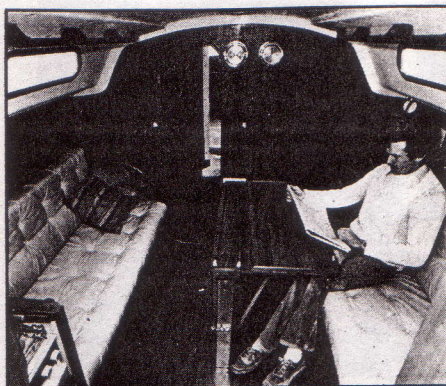
The 28 was designed by Doug Peterson, who was determined to combine comfort and volume with good performance and easy handling.

Construction

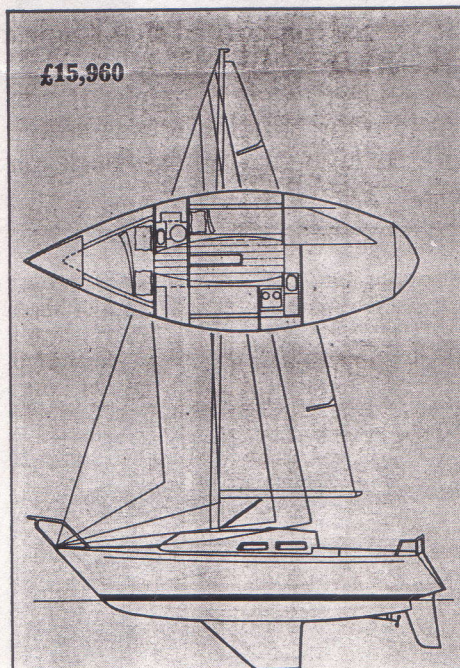
Eric Adams considered the quality and finish of all the mouldings to be good. The deck to hull joint is bedded and bolted satisfactorily and the 2,800lb (1,270kg) lead keel is encapsulated within the moulding.

The glassfibre, spade rudder is semi-balanced. There is excellent and extensive non-slip on the deck moulding.

A long tiller protrudes well into the long, comfortable cockpit but there is still plenty of room and, as Kitty Hampton said: "The sensibly long, wide seats in the cockpit allow comfortable sun bathing." The deck-stepped Kemp spar was adequately stayed with a single spreader configuration supported by caps, fore and aft lowers, and backstay. Fittings in general were tough.



Edward did note, however, that there was good access to all deck fittings through panels in the deck-head below. The accommodation was considered by the judges to be well-finished with a high standard of joinery. An internal moulding for the deck head lining gives the accommodation a smart appearance. Other



Contessa 28

LOA	27ft 8in	8.43m
LWL	22ft 0in	6.71m
Beam	9ft 5in	2.88m
Draught	4ft 10in	1.49m
Displacement	6,970lb	3,160kg
No. of berths:	Six (two doubles and two singles in two cabins)	

Sail area

Windward sailing area	356ft ²	32.1m ²
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Price: £15,960 ex VAT

Enquiries: Jeremy Rogers Limited, Waterloo Road, Lymington, Hampshire. Tel: Lymington (0590) 477053.

good points noted by the judges were the strong chainplate anchorages, and good stowage spaces aft in the cockpit for a liferaft, gas bottles, general running rigging and sails.

Under Sail

With a designer of Peterson's calibre, one would expect a good sailing performance and for most judges this is precisely what they experienced. John Driscoll said: "I found a lively performance on all points of sailing. Reefing was easy and spinnaker work simple with no inner forestay."

Edward Bourne found the tiller somewhat stiff and Kitty described steering the boat as "dead", but both agreed that she performed well on all points of sail. Robert Weguelin, from the yard, was so confident of the boat's performance off the wind that he supplied a Contessa 32 spinnaker. Naturally, on a dead run she proved to be very fast indeed and it was surprising to see her carrying the spinnaker in a reasonable breeze on a fairly close reach.

The Contessa has an unusual main sheet arrangement. The track is mounted on the coachroof over the companionway hatch garage. Although this leaves the cockpit free of clutter, John Driscoll pointed out that the helmsman could not reach the main sheet if the cockpit crew are working at the headsail winches. The sheet itself was only adjustable from the starboard side, although the car could be adjusted from the port side.

The Contessa is a fast, well-balanced boat which Edward Bourne expects would improve as the wind gets fresher. She is capable of steering herself and slab reefing the Lucas main proved easy. The boat hove-to without fuss.

Under Power

The 28 is fitted with a 12hp (8.9kW) Petter Mini-Twin diesel which pushed her along at a good rate. The engine drives a fixed, two-bladed propeller through a 2:1 reduction box. Ten gallons (45lit) of fuel is carried in a stainless steel tank and there is a single 60 amp/hr battery properly installed.

The judges had no complaints about the handling qualities of the boat but the high noise and vibration levels were mentioned by all judges.

Accommodation

All the judges commented on the high standard of finish in the conventionally laid out accommodation. There are two berths in the fore cabin (really only suitable for children because they are only 5ft 3in (1.6m) long), a toilet area to starboard amidships, two standard settee berths, a galley to port and a starboard quarter berth. The navigation table is an ingenious fold-away affair above the head of the quarter berth. Someone could just sleep in the quarter berth with the table lowered but he/she →

could certainly not get in and out when the table is in use. The aft facing table takes a once folded Admiralty chart almost exactly. There is no separate seat for the navigator, who has to brace himself sideways on the starboard settee.

The galley is well-equipped with a Flavel gas stove and Eric Adams found no problems with the gas installation and piping. In this area, and throughout the boat, stowage space was plentiful. Water is carried in flexible bag tanks and supply to the galley is by hand pump.

Kitty Hampton noted that the sea cocks for the toilet were in the fore-cabin under the starboard bunks which can be a real nuisance when there is a full crew aboard and a lot of gear right up forward. With good lee cloths on the settee berths there were three sea berths including the quarter berth.

Conclusions

John Driscoll commented: "Apart from the mainsheet arrangement, I have no really adverse comments about this boat, which makes the necessary compromise between performance and comfort."

Edward Bourne considered the best aspects of the boat to be all-round performance, quality, value, stowage and deck lay-out and pointed out that someone like Jeremy Rogers would be expected to get things like that right. The things he didn't like were the engine noise, small cockpit cleats, lack of ventilation and the companionway steps, the top one of which proved to be flimsy. The latter problem is shortly to be resolved on the production line.

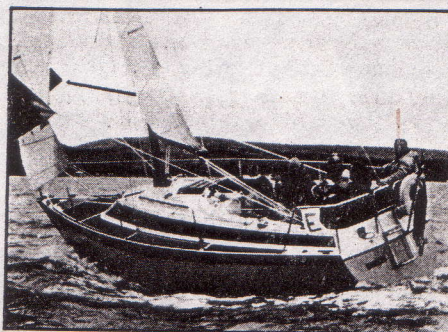
It was clear that with the Jeremy Rogers reputation under scrutiny, the judges were looking at the Contessa with a keen eye. Generally they were happy with what they found. Peterson has obviously designed a good, satisfying sailing boat and Rogers has finished her in a high class fashion.



Duetta 86

THE DUETTA is built in Germany by Dehler Yachtbau and designed by E. G. Van de Stadt and Partners. She is sold in the UK by Alan Bourdon Yachts of Poole.

The design criteria was to produce a roomy, comfortable cruising boat with a lively performance. She was the only boat at the rally to have no fore-cabin as such—just a large open



saloon area and quarter berths. Judges were particularly interested in this boat because there were many innovative design points.

Construction

Eric Adams commented: "The hull and deck construction appears to

have been completed to a high standard. The hull to deck butt joint is perhaps unusual, but provided the overlay matt bonding to the inner surface is satisfactory this should pose no problems."

He liked the self-tacking headsail arrangement, and below, thought the stowage areas were almost more than adequate for a boat of this size. However, Eric thought some of the moulded stowages "may prove fragile."

There are two keel versions to this boat, although both are basically fin and skeg. Alan Bourdon decided to import the shallow draught version.

The mast and boom are a type of bronze anodised colour to match the startling brown/gold/bronze colour scheme chosen for this yacht. The spars are made by Dehler themselves, and the parallel, heavy section mast looked well supported. The slightly swept-back spreaders came in for some criticism from Kitty Hampton. She noted that there would be considerable chafe on the mainsail.

John Driscoll and Edward Bourne disliked the topping lift and clew out-haul arrangements which were both adjustable from the outboard end of the boom. Both these could easily have been led to the mast end.

There was an abundance of ABS plastic vacuum moulding below, which ranged from the pencil holders for the navigator to the chart stowage tray itself beneath the wooden chart table. These mouldings are obviously cheap and easy to produce but are not particularly attractive. There was some criticism of the bulkheads which enclosed the toilet area which didn't butt up to the deck head or hull completely.

One other construction detail which the judges didn't like was the massive stowage area on the foredeck for sails and other deck gear. Although this enabled a lot of wet gear to be kept out of the accommodation, it meant that when the locker hatches were open in a seaway there would be a dangerous chance of getting a lot of water into this compartment.

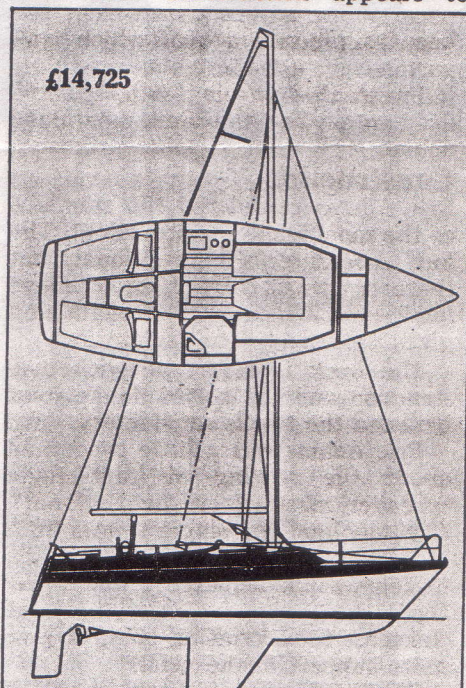
Under Sail

There was no doubt that this boat sailed very well. She was fast, responsive and directionally stable and she could carry her spinnaker impressively well even on a close reach.

Kitty Hampton said: "The self-tacking jib meant that if you wanted to heave to you would have to go forward to lash it down."

This boat was fitted with hydraulic steering connected to a wheel. John Driscoll said: "The wheel is unusual on a boat of this size but one quickly gets used to it. It is better hydraulic steering than I have found on other boats, with less than three turns from lock to lock." John thought the boat needed bigger sheet winches.

Edward Bourne said that the boat +>



£14,725		
Duetta 86		
LOA	28ft 1in	8.60m
LWL	26ft 7in	7.20m
Beam	9ft 7in	2.95m
Draught		
(fin)	4ft 11in	1.50m
(long keel)	3ft 7in	1.10m
Displacement	6,613lb	3,000kg
No. of berths: Five (one triple (!) and two singles in one cabin)		
Sail area		
Main	205ft ²	19.2m ²
No. 1 genoa	248ft ²	23.3m ²
Price: £14,725 ex VAT		
Enquiries: Alan Bourdon Yachts, 42 Constitution Hill Road, Poole, Dorset. Tel: Poole (0202) 741911.		