



# Sirius 42

A rugged yacht for serious offshore sailing



**Y**ou've heard the one about the man who liked the razor so much he bought the company. That's not quite the story behind the Sirius 42, but it's close. When Midlands-based photographic retailer Alan Jessop had a steel 38-footer built in 1989, he was impressed with the workmanship of two of the men associated with the yard. To cut a long story short, Jessop came up with the funds to help Bryan Jones and Phil Bishton set up on their own, and thus was Sirius Yachts of Stourport-on-Severn formed.

The Sirius 42 is the first issue of this

union. The partners engaged David Thomas to design a heavy-displacement steel cruising yacht, big enough to carry the provisions and equipment for extended offshore work and strong enough to bounce off the odd reef or shatter the occasional ice floe.

Thomas has drawn a powerful, well-balanced hull designed for sea-keeping ability rather than speed. It has short overhangs, moderate freeboard and a deep underbody, allowing engine and tanks to be carried well under the waterline, and a long fin keel holding 3½ tons of cast iron ballast. Thomas wanted to keep weight low so the







proper righting moment and sail-carrying ability could be attained without resorting to a heavy ballast/displacement ratio. A keel skeg forms a deep sump as well as protecting the propshaft, and the rudder is hung on a full-depth skeg. Maximum beam is carried amidships and there is plenty of volume in the ends. Displacement is a whisker under 32,500 lb.

As befits a yacht designed for long-distance sailing, she has been given a sturdy cutter rig, centred around a keel-stepped double-spreader Kemp mast, with a roller furling yankee and a hanked-on staysail.

An unusual method of plating is employed on the Sirius. The hull is assembled upside-down over a frame, and the grade 50A BS 4360 high-tensile steel plates are welded on to a bed of full-length T-bar stringers. That's nothing unusual, but instead of the hull sections being plated conventionally, the 4mm plates are applied vertically, in strips, from the keel down, dished slightly where necessary and welded together and to the stringers. The result, after preparation and painting, is an exceptionally fair hull: from the quayside, the Sirius is indistinguishable from a GRP yacht, an effect heightened by the nicely radiused curves of her 3mm plate upperworks. Decks and cockpit seats are lined with teak, and the bridgedeck/companionway area is particularly well finished.

Below decks, crew's quarters are arranged fore and aft of a large, airy saloon. The layout differs from conventional big-boat format in that the master cabin is forward of the mast. The cabin has a double to port, a seat to starboard and ample stowage space in the way of hanging lockers and under-berth drawers. Forward of this is a roomy, well fitted-out heads compartment; the shower waste is pumped directly overboard, and the Blake toilet discharges either to sea or to a holding tank under the owner's bunk. A mirror on the forward bulkhead conceals a sealing hatch in a collision bulkhead.

The aftercabin is not as generously proportioned: there is a seat, and adequate standing room and stowage,

*Clockwise from left: removing a squab and insulated plate exposes the engine's main service points. Washboards stow neatly just inside the companionway. Liferaft stowage and emergency tiller access beneath the contoured helmsman's seat. Sail controls are worked in the shelter of the large sprayhood. The saloon seats six and has two good seaberths. Navigation area has plenty of room for electronics.*

*Photography by Patrick Roach*



but the double berth is a little narrow. This cabin has its own door through to the large after heads compartment, which has another shower, plenty of stowage and access to a big wet locker in the space under the companionway usually occupied by an engine.

The freshwater-cooled 59hp Perkins is located in the middle of the boat, under the inboard end of the galley worktop, which can be lifted clear to expose the engine's service points. Should it be necessary to remove the engine, a tackle can be fixed to a lug hidden under the headlining directly above. A hatch in the teak-veneered  $\frac{3}{4}$  in ply galley sole allows access to the gearbox, propshaft and stern gland. The engine box is well muffled, and even though the aft end of the dinette seat is directly above the installation, noise is not obtrusive. Fuel capacity is 80 gallons. The twin batteries are also located under the sole, adjacent to the chart table.

The C-shaped dinette and settee opposite seat six people comfortably at the large saloon table. To give extra working space around the engine, the teak table's leaves are hinged athwartships. Outboard of the dinette



# On board



is a generous pilot berth with a large two-tier stowage bin beneath. There is another good seaberth behind the large chart table, with its head forming the navigator's seat.

The L-shaped galley has good stowage, with plenty of worktop space on either side of the Taylor gas cooker, a large top-opening fridge and twin stainless steel sinks. There is pressurised hot and cold water, and a salt water pump. Throughout, ventilation is good, with big overhead hatches in saloon, forward cabin and heads, a smaller hatch above the galley and opening ports in the aftercabin and heads. Teak predominates in the well-executed joinery work below decks; even the cabin soles are teak-veneered. Such copious amounts of hardwood could make the saloon seem gloomy, were it not for the large armoured-glass windows, which admit more than enough daylight. Sleeping cabins are lined in oak, with teak trim.

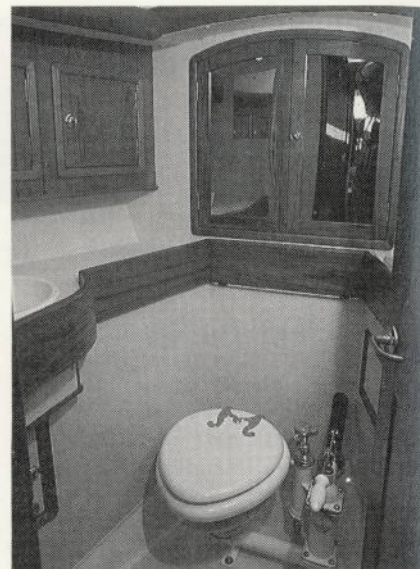
One of the more appealing features for a prospective owner is the way maximum use has been made of space



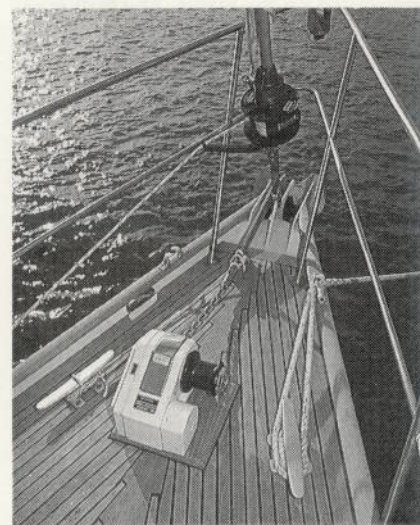
which would otherwise be wasted: pull up one of the numerous hatch covers in the cabin sole and if it's not an access point for tanks or plumbing it'll be for stowage, even if only sufficient for a dozen tins. Similarly, there are cave lockers and cubbyholes everywhere one looks.

The Sirius's sailplan is controlled from the cockpit, with all lines led aft through clutches. A total of eight Lewmar winches deal with the heavy work. The teak-laid sidedecks are wide enough for the yankee and staysail sheets and running backstay lines not to get in the way, and there are good stainless steel handholds along the high coachroof. The large T-shaped cockpit incorporates sufficient lock-erage under its teak-topped seats to stow most of the items needed on an ocean cruiser; the locker lids are of GRP to keep their weight down. The helmsman has a good view over the large sprayhood when standing, and there is stowage under his seat for an eight-man liferaft. Eyes for harness hooks are welded unobtrusively around the cockpit.

A brief but breezy sail revealed that the Sirius is as powerful as she looks. In 15-18 knots of wind she bulldozed to weather through the short Solent chop at 5-6 knots. When freed off she surged along at 7.5 knots, with a slow and easy motion giving promise of an imperturbable character in waters more suited to her purpose. The three-sail rig gives plenty of room to experiment with different sail combinations; we were tempted to put in a reef when the lee rail dipped under, but settled for a couple of rolls in the yankee, which eased matters. You can't expect a boat of this size and weight to spin in its

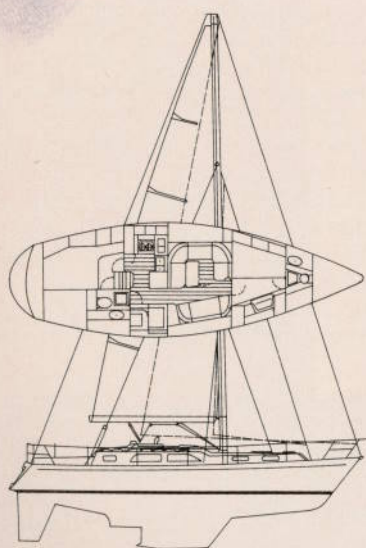


*Clockwise from left: the inboard end of the galley peninsula can be removed for access to the engine. Behind the mirror in the forward heads is a watertight hatch leading to the chain locker. Tidy foredeck arrangement, with sturdy double bow roller and power windlass*



own length, but the Sirius tacked quickly and cleanly despite the crew having two sets of headsail sheets to deal with.

Carrying a price tag of £226,550 at the time we sailed her, the Sirius is at the top end of the market. She boasts an extensive inventory, and many items which other boatbuilders would include in their options list are standard fare. Although she doesn't meet the popular definition of a luxury yacht – no TV, video or jacuzzi – it is difficult to fault the standard of workmanship which has gone into her, and she looks more than capable of fulfilling the purpose for which she was designed. PN



## Specifications

LOA	12.75m	(41ft) 10in)
LWL	10.41m	(34ft 2in)
Beam	4.03m	(13ft 3in)
Draught	1.72m	(5ft 8in)
Displacement	14,732kg	(32,480 lb)
Ballast	3,919kg	(8,640 lb)
Sail area	71.44m <sup>2</sup>	(769sq ft)
	(100 per cent foretriangle)	
Builder	Sirius Yachts Ltd, Redstone Wharf, Sandy Lane, Stourport-on-Severn, Worcs DY13 9PN (Tel: 02993 71048)	