

Trailer-sailers

Boomaroo 22

First impressions of the Boomaroo 22 are that she is all Californian. In profile you can see Gary Mull and his Santanas—a popular series of yachts in Australia. There is the American penchant for high topsides and 'chunky' build in her construction. And she has the ease of trailerability, if one can use such a term, that comes from a country where trailering is the whole scene, and a trailered yacht of 6.4 metres is little more than a dinghy!

The lines of this boat are fairly classic and very eye-pleasing. The topsides, as mentioned, are quite high, but not excessively so, and blend nicely with the rest of her styling so that the overall result is an excellently proportioned yacht. She has a conventionally rounded stem and forefoot, a modest sheer and the typically broad section that trailer-sailers adopt in the stern areas to give good cockpit space and added stability.

The cambered foredeck adds to the appearance while offering good rigidity to even the heaviest forward hand, and the cabin is low and again with a type of classic styling that blends pleasantly with the hull lines. If there is anything at all that appears to upset the overall picture of a classic yacht profile it is the transom-hung rudder which from an aesthetic point of view appears as an appendage.

However, from a practical angle transom-mounted rudders are indispensable for trailered craft, and even in the level-rating and similar performance yachts, transom-hung rudders are most popular.

In plan view the Boomaroo is also fairly standard, and her rig is straightforward masthead sloop with solid rigging including forestays and backstays, uppers and fore and aft lowers. The boom is sheeted at the transom, thus keeping unnecessary running gear out of the cockpit and the 7.6 metre mast offers a fairly high but pleasant aspect sail plan.

The keel arrangement is straightforward folding centreplate type with a good feature in that the housing does not intrude into the cabin space. This is achieved by keeping a certain amount of the plate outside the boat even when it is retracted

which means, of course, that it projects beneath the bottom of the boat and spoils the flat bottom for ease of trailering.

Whether you prefer to take up space in the cabin with a centreplate housing or have the plate partly projecting beneath the boat with the possibility of hampering trailering is obviously a matter of personal choice. But having seen the ease with which the Boomaroo rolls on and off the trailer, and having for years detested the intrusion of centreplate housings into otherwise comfortable accommodation, I know which I prefer.

'Ease' is a word which comes very much into prominence with the Boomaroo 22. Ease of rigging, ease of trailering, ease of launching and ease of handling are all features of this boat. Despite her size—6.4 metres is a fair lump of boat to trailer—nothing about her is hard or difficult. The heavy centreplate, for example, was so easy to wind up that I overwound it before I realised!

Complementing her attractive profile, the Boomaroo has a pleasantly designed and fitted out interior. By dropping the dinette you can sleep four below and the layout is such that the boat can be a comfortable holiday home while afloat, or a reasonable caravan while on the road. A pop-top gives added headroom to most of the main saloon area while the forward compartment offers two bunks and an offset toilet.

This boat is very roomy and conveniently laid out with the galley on the starboard side and the dinette to port. More sleeping room could have been gained by using the area under the cockpit seats as quarter berths, but this would have lost valuable storage space, particularly on the starboard side where the galley slides away under the cockpit and out of sight when not in use. Four berths are enough, anyway, and the fifth, made by sliding away the galley, could be used if you happen to be on the slim side!

One of the really good design features about this boat, and one which reflects the fact that she was designed for a climate such as ours, is that accommodation has not been gained at the expense of cockpit space. Despite the roominess below decks, the Boomaroo has a beautiful big cockpit. Since one spends most of one's sailing life

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In the cockpit in this climate, the 'downstairs' area is mainly for utility purposes such as cooking and sleeping. While it needs to be comfortable, it should never take space from the more used and more important 'on deck' areas, notably the cockpit.

The cockpit area is a failing of many Australian designs. It should be spacious and comfortable, and this is achieved in the Boomaroo by using up virtually the entire beam and length of the boat from the companionway to the transom.

As mentioned, rigging the boat is easy. In fact once you get the knack, she can be rigged single-handed without risk of a hernia or bent mast. However, as with any boat, raising the mast on the Boomaroo takes practice, so make sure, until you are skilled at it, that none of the family is standing beneath the mast or in addition to a bent extrusion you will get a few dented heads!

Launching is also easy. The special trailer which copes with the protruding centreplate makes it a one-man job, both launching and retrieving. Her 725 kilogram displacement weight slides onto the rollers with only a small standard winch and tilt trailer, needing no more effort than for a small power boat. Despite the protruding keel, she needs only half a metre of water in which to float and you will find that at most ramps, even the odd one in New South Wales.

There is no hassle with the centreplate, either. The handle is fitted just inside the companionway and makes light work of getting the 260 kilograms of ballast up into its housing. The plate can be raised without effort when making a downwind run at the beach.

With the basic jib and main, we took the Boomaroo out into a very stiff westerly to put her through her paces and were delighted with the result. As with the rigging and launching, handling was easy. Under the light conditions near the sheltered ramp she handled effortlessly and with little need for pressure anywhere. She moves along nicely, even in the light airs and the deep rudder blade gives her positive, light-handling characteristics.

Out into the open, she started to get the full blast of the westerly and revelled in it. Hard on the

wind she got her toe rail down quickly and settled to a good angle of heel, at the same time scooting forward through the chop in the style of an offshore racer. In the hard gusts she put a lot of pressure on the helm and it was necessary to ease the sheet somewhat, but this is standard practice with any fin-keeled craft and particularly with trailer-sailers.

Off the wind this boat really got going. Not that she wasn't going before, but once eased away a little she really got up and went! On a reach the ride was exhilarating and she handled easily. On a run she had good directional stability and with the plate up skimmed across the water with the ease and aptitude of a centreboarder.

At one point we set a spinnaker just by way of going to excesses in the stiff breeze, but once again the Boomaroo took it all in her stride. Even running shy with a fair bit of pressure aloft, she handled it without effort, although we naturally had to watch for the broach, as no boat would have carried a broached spinnaker in that weight of breeze without something drastic happening.

With their incipient instability, trailer-sailers tend to reach their optimum angle of heel very quickly. At around this point, if the righting moment is good, the boat will turn in a good, hard performance with no fear of capsize. If not, the slightest gust will heel her over the point of no return and she will capsize. T-S designers must therefore ensure that when the righting moment of the ballast reaches the point where it is insufficiently effective to create self-righting ability, the design sections of the hull will take up and resist the tendency for the boat to heel further.

This is a slight digression, but one which came to mind when testing the Boomaroo, for I found she had good stability, and since her ballast is relatively low in relation to her displacement as are all but a few trailer-sailers, then obviously good hull design was the secret behind her good stability.

Summing it all up, then, I was impressed with this Californian-designed T-S, as she showed some nice characteristics when viewed as a family cruising boat, and quite a nice turn of speed when considered as a possible racer. She is easy to rig,

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easy to launch and easy to handle and at her current price she offers good competition on what is now a very competitive market.

SPECIFICATIONS

LOA	6.4 m
LWL	5.89 m
Beam	2.2 m
Maximum draft	1.15 m
Minimum draft	0.3 m
Displacement	725 kg
Ballast	260 kg
Hull material	Fibreglass
Keel type	Swing—galvanised cast iron
Buoyancy	0.84 m ³ foam
Jib	9.75 m ²
Main	10.67 m ²
Berths	5
Motor	7 hp (5.2 kW) Suzuki
Price (at Jan. 1977)	\$6,210 + \$250 (Genoa)
Includes: Sails	Yes
Trailer	+ \$980
Motor	+ \$480

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