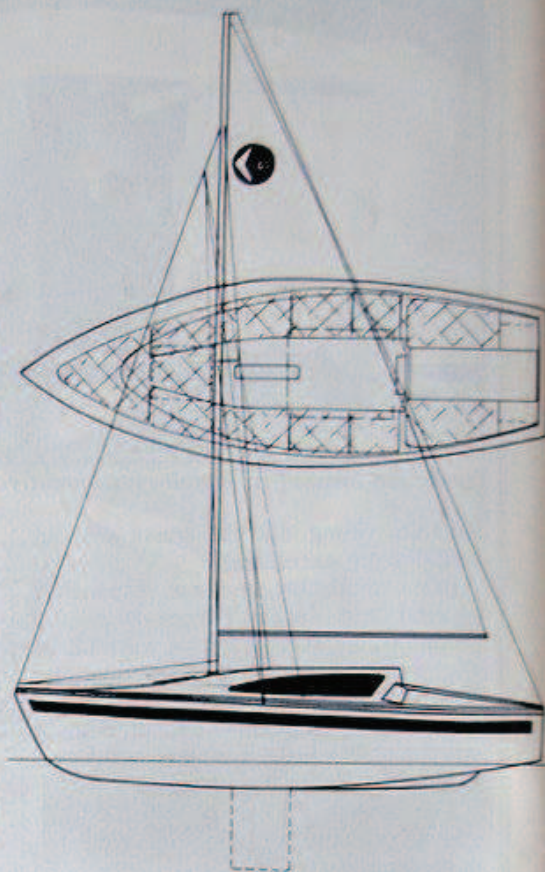


BOAT REVIEW

B63



Deck-line has been raised; profile eye pleasing in deck-mould re-design.

THE BOOMERANG 20, once one of Australia's most successful performance-oriented trailerable yachts, has been revamped to give more interior space and make it easier to sail.

Under a new name, B63, it is now aimed at the beginner's end of the market and, with an affordable price tag, has found its place.

The 20-year-old design, originally built by Maison Marine, in Victoria, was one of the most successful t/s classes, with 350 boats sold.

But times and tastes change. After Melbourne yachtsman Graeme Prowd acquired the moulds four-and-a-half years ago, he sold only two boats in two years.

"A few years ago the Boomerang 20

was catering to the "big" end of the t/s range," he said. "Now, with few boats around under 20ft, it is catering to the beginner's market and we had to look at the cost factor.

"Our biggest competitor became the second-hand market so we decided to offer people a fully completed boat at the bottom end of the price scale."

Whatever Prowd has done to the boat does seem to be correct in marketing terms — he has sold 13 of the new-version B63s in two years.

He re-designed the deck mould, shifting the cockpit, which remains the same area, right aft by deleting the seat that used to be across the stern to give more useable interior space. At the same time, he lifted the deck line from the

gunwale line 7.5cm to give even more room inside.

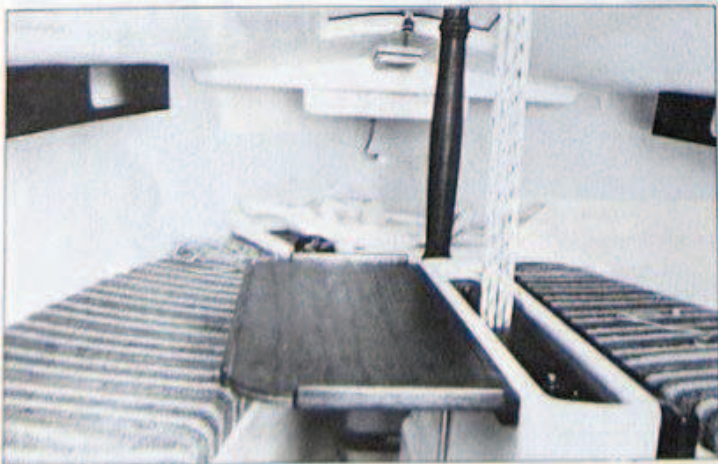
The companionway step is removable to give more floor space. The vee berth forward and quarter berths are joined by settees for continuous berths and seating either side. There was a break for a galley and table in the earlier boats. A standard galley moulding is available that can be fitted in a number of locations.

A drop leaf table is slung off the centrecase and a Porta Potti chemical toilet can be located under the infill for the vee berth. The shelf over the settees with four compartments each side is now teak pinrails instead of plywood as the standard shelf face.

There are stowage areas under all

Four-part rope tackle lifts board; table hangs off centrecase.

Looking aft: step can be removed to give more floor space.



bunks and under the cockpit going right to the stern. And there is full foam buoyancy under the vee berth and quarter berth.

A pop top is incorporated as standard but organised deliberately so that the boat cannot be sailed while the pop top is up.

The keel shape and its lifting arrangement have been improved. The keel is the same area as the old but has a much more efficient aerofoil shape. Where the old keel had a 226.8kg lead casting forming its lower third, the new is of fibreglass encasing lead, with 85kg of ballast in the board and 200kg in the bilge either side of the keel.

The lighter board is much easier to raise, with a 4:1 rope purchase led through the cabin to within reach of the

Cockpit coamings are high for security and back-rest comfort. Traveller is removable.



cockpit where the old was raised by a winch mounted in the transom

The daggerboard rudder lifts in a substantial aluminium case. There is a boarding ladder and opening in the pushpit for access to the cockpit. A bin is provided under the port cockpit seat for the outboard tank. The coaming rising sharply to the cabin line gives back support and a great sense of security to those seated in the cockpit. The traveller track spanning the cockpit is readily removed to give more room when the yacht is not being sailed. Its position does give the helmsman ready access to the mainsheet and separates him from the rest of the crew. There is a manual bilge pump.

The changed ballast arrangement does make the boat a little more tender than the original, but it is much quicker in light air. The masthead sail plan has been altered to 15/16ths fractional rig with bigger main, smaller headsail, with the mast shifted forward to compensate. It has aft-set caps and lowers and 4:1 tackle control on a backstay.

The boat now performs better under main alone and can also handle under headsail only. It did seven knots downwind under headsail in the windy 1988 Marlay Point race.

It is offered in cruising version with a furling headsail and Horizon Sails'

‘Batmain’ fully-battened mainsail that drops neatly onto the boom within lazy jacks. ‘It’s good for the newcomer,’ says Prowd. ‘With the 120 per cent furling genoa and Batmain, you really don’t have to leave the cockpit to get rid of sail.’

A pair of winches on the cabin top double for sheets and halyards, doing away with secondary winches on the coamings.

The B63 can be bought in various stages from assembled hull and deck. Sail away price is \$16,500. With everything including tandem trailer, motor, mainsail, jib, genoa, spinnaker, carpet liner, galley stove, water tank and solar panel for battery charging, it is about \$25,000.

Length overall.....	6.3m
Waterline.....	5.73kg
Beam.....	2.2m
Draft.....	0.3m-1.3m
Weight.....	950kg
Ballast.....	285kg
Mast height.....	7.62m
Sail area, main.....	125 sq ft
Jib.....	78 sq ft
Genoa.....	120 sq ft
Spinnaker.....	287 sq ft
Builder: Boomerang Yachts, 8 McLelland Drive, cnr Beech St, Langwarrin 3910.	