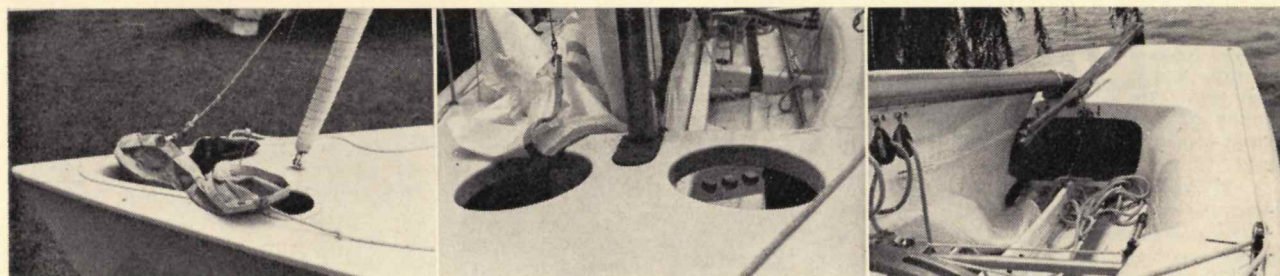


DON ORD'S 'GLASS' F.D.



ONE of the most remarkable yachts seen in South Africa for many years is a new fibreglass Flying Dutchman which arrived in Johannesburg towards the end of 1966.

Called the Plastrend Flying Dutchman Hull, the craft was manufactured by the Plastrend Corporation of Fort Worth, Texas, U.S.A., and imported into South Africa by Don Ord. The Plastrend hulls incorporate many ultra-modern design features which have not been seen in the Republic. The craft's layout and design show radical changes from the conventional Flying Dutchman and these improvements are a big change from fibreglass hulls which were imported some years ago.

One of the main faults of the earlier models was the lack of rigidity which meant the hull twisted in heavy seas. This irregular twisting produced serious structural cracks and many of the remaining fibreglass models in South Africa show evidence of the fault.

Plastrend have a long history in the manufacturing of fibreglass equipment and they produce the famous Chaparral car body as well as fibreglass ocean cruisers.

President of Plastrend is the keen American yachtsman Andy Green. It was probably his enthusiasm which sent his engineers in search of a fibreglass hull which would provide the answers to the old bogies which have crept up in other fibreglass hulls.

The result of their studies was the "creature" design which embodies a solid centreboard casing about 8 in. high and 4 in. wide. This is strengthened by two big supports on either side of the casing to prevent any movement. Hollow fibreglass strips have been laid down the length of the boat and, in addition to providing an ideal method of encasing sheets, it prevents any lateral movement. The emphasis in design has been laid on strength and to achieve extra toughness in the component parts, fibreglass cloth has been used. (It was found that the previous methods using chips did not provide enough rigidity.)

The Plastrend has proved its ability in the United States where there were six Plastrends in the top ten positions at the recent American F.D. Championships. Among the top Americans who use the new Plastrend are Bud Melges and Bill Bentson.

The hull is described from stem to stern, starting with a general view of Don Ord's Plastrend which he launched at East Rand Yacht Club at the beginning of December.

Top left: Pride of the yacht. A nifty gadget with a spring-loaded device for taking in the slack from the spin-

naker hoist once the bag is flying. This prevents the endless rolls of sheeting which often causes knots and delays.

The device is located under the aft deck and in front of the rudder attachment.

Centre: The rudder is a conventional wooden type, but the stock is cast aluminium. Although not lighter than a wooden stock, it provides extra strength.

Right: The Plastrend, as yet unnamed, beside a willow at East Rand Y.C. There is little difference in appearance from the conventional F.D.

Above left: On the point of the bow is the unique spinnaker bow launcher. The pictures show the spinnaker in place with the head and sheets appearing. When the spinnaker is hoisted, the "bag" pops out and billows in the breeze. This will enable easy setting whichever way the wind is blowing!

The centre of the outside of the spinnaker (i.e. the portion which faces down wind when the "bag" is set), is connected to sheeting which emerges from the launcher. When the bag is struck, the crew pulls the sheet which causes the centre of the spinnaker to come aboard and disappear down the launcher. The rest of the spinnaker follows with the head and ends remaining outside. The sheet is connected to the outside of the spinnaker to ensure that when it is struck, the centre of the bag is immediately pulled aboard to prevent it falling in the water and slipping under the hull. This would be disastrous, causing the destruction of the bag.

The bow launcher should provide fast setting and striking. The inside of the launcher is shaped like a funnel and in my opinion it is not long enough. This might cause the spinnaker to fall out of the tube beneath the deck and be instrumental to a colossal foul up when it is next used.

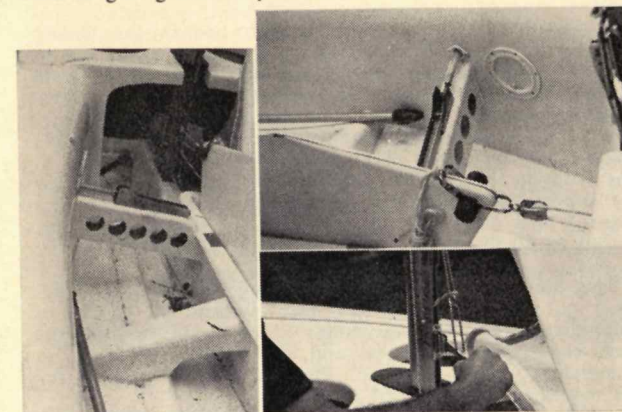
Centre: Just in case the prospective owner does not trust the spinnaker bow launcher, the makers have added two conventional spinnaker bags.

Right: The aft section of the cockpit is uncluttered. There is a pronounced roundness of the aft deck which provides wonderful comfort for the skipper when he leans out on long beats.

Opposite top left: A striking view of the "creature design" from the skipper's cockpit on the port side. It can be seen that little movement from the centreboard case is possible.

Top right: Closer view of the centreboard and the mast before it enters the deck. Note the spar holding the centreboard case in position. On top of the spar is a Hifield controlling adjustment of the port shroud.

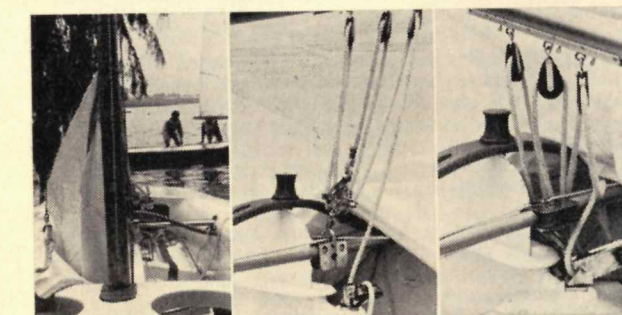
Below right: Lou Serrurier works the Hifield lever which controls the jib hoist. The old method of fixing the jib to the mast and adjusting it with a screw fitting in the boat is out. The Hifield can be moved up and down the mast to give greater adjustment.



Below left: Don has fitted a new Procter "B" section mast. The mast is rounded and is stiffened laterally to prevent sideways movement. Its main feature is the movement fore and aft.

Below right: The Plastrend has a snubbing winch. This went out of fashion some years ago, but apparently the Americans feel it is a far more efficient method of playing the jib in heavy squalls. The crew winds the jib sheets round the winch, pulls the jib tight and cleats in on the deck.

There is nothing complicated on the entire boat and the involved horses one has seen in the past for the main sheet have vanished. Gone are the well-oiled runners and ball-bearings and in their place is a simple steel bar with an unsophisticated runner on it.



The shrouds have been set well inboard on the deck and are at least 6 in. from the edge. Normally, the shrouds are much closer to the edge. The boat is fitted with a substantial splash rail. The round edge of the deck can be seen. This provides greater comfort for the crew.

This is the Plastrend F.D. for South Africa. No one knows how it will perform. Even if it does not outclass the normal wooden hulls, and this is doubtful, the simple design and layout will be a pointer to the future. The complicated equipment which many skippers use to-day will be shown to be essential and many sailors will follow the pattern set by Ord and his Plastrend.

What is the boat's future in South Africa? Is it feasible to import them. No one doubts the expense involved in bringing a hull from Texas. The makers do sell kits consisting of loose hulls, centreboards casing and decks. An experienced technician in fibreglass can finish them off, but the work involved is probably beyond the ability of the ordinary owner.

The only alternative is for one of our leading fibreglass firms, like Halmatic or Maitland Sheet Metal to negotiate permission to make the hulls under licence for South Africa from Plastrend. If this is done and, providing the finished product is lower in cost than imported wooden hulls, there will be a tremendous future in South Africa for the locally-made Plastrends.

ROUND THE BUOYS

(Continued from page 25)

F.H. Hydros

Gerry Drake really excelled himself and must now be showing on the selectors' short list. Drake made an immaculate clean sweep of all three heats. Starting a little late each time, he carved his way through the field to win. Sonny Morgan and Vincent Fay had a good dice and Philip Gears showed an extraordinary turn of speed, to tie for second overall with Sonny. Dawie Bekker in the big ex-Lanham-Love cabover looked "hairy" and appeared to have some difficulty, especially in his initial turning. During the first race he pushed Jim Fay into the bank, but later seemed to get better control over the big hydro.

E. Inboard

This event was won easily by Gordon Lanham-Love in the SK powered by the Hulman-Moodie Ford. Jim Harcus took overall second with Pieterse and Braund third and fourth respectively.

This event was not very closely contested.

X.V. Outboard

Peter Daley won this event with good firsts and a third. The racing was keen between Daley and South Africa's holder Dave Spierrenberg who dropped out in the second heat. Bill Richards did well to finish second overall, with one win and two thirds. Bill works hard at this type of regatta changing his motor from the X.T. runabout to the X.U. outfit between heats. Dawie Bekker finished third overall with a fourth and second place.



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