



ON THE HORIZON
TOPSIDE PAINT UPDATE
12-VOLT FRIDGES
PRACTICAL WEBSITES
CANOE-STERN CRUISERS
TOP-NOTCH HANDHELD VHFS

Practical Sailor™

Boat Buyers on the Prowl

Down market draws out the bargain hunters.

Every so often, I find myself boat shopping and turn to the reviews in “Practical Boat Buying.” I’m looking for a trailerable, 20- to 26-foot, easy to rig, singlehandable boat—and fast wouldn’t hurt either. I am a beginner, thinking about the Rhodes 22, Tanzer 22, O’Day 23, or Balboa 26. Did I mention I didn’t have a lot of money to spend?

Al Otman
Lake Superior, Minn.

Of the four you suggest, the Rhodes appeals to us most. We have very few serious negative comments from Rhodes owners on file. The hefty Lyle Hess-designed Balboa is a worthy gunkholer, but the boat is heavy to tow, and it is hard to find one in good condition. The Tanzer has a loyal following and active owner’s association (www.tanzer22.com), something we like. It has a big-boat feel and a fixed



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iron keel, which should be closely inspected before buying one. The O’Day 23 is a logical starter boat. Owners seem generally pleased, giving it Fair to Good ratings on the water. Watch for rudder delamination. The

ubiquitous Catalina 22 also comes with its own cheering/advice section. You might also add the S&S-designed Yankee Dolphin (see below) or the PY23—two of our favorite trailer-sailers—to your list.

If getting sailing soon is your goal, don’t settle for a fixer upper, or you’ll wind up like us (see photo, above right) with all kinds of maintenance hobbies that don’t involve time on the water. Here are some criteria worth noting: a reputable design, solid support network, meticulous previous owner, and a sparkling survey. Hopefully some other readers will chime in with their views on the best trailer-sailer for a Great Lakes beginner with your pre-requisites.

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Tim Busse’s Brigadoon, a lovely Yankee Dolphin (Hull No. 102), awaits its next mission on Lake Carlyle, Ill.

POCKET CRUISERS?

Do you have any reviews/recommendations/etc. for pocket cruisers that would be appropriate for a couple on Chesapeake Bay? Years ago, we sailed our FJ on inland lakes in Colorado and enjoyed it very much. We are now looking forward to retiring in a few years, and we would enjoy getting comfortable with a fixed-keel boat. Lately, we have enjoyed daysailing around Annapolis, Md., in a Rainbow 24 and a Rhodes 19. We are now looking for something with a cabin and head that is safe for us to take on some overnighters, for example, from Annapolis to St. Michaels. I don’t believe we are interested in racing or that we would do much trailering—however, it might be nice to have that option for storage.

Tom Gargan
Fort Detrich, Md.

You might consider some of the boats that came out of an appeal to readers for trailerable pocket cruisers. That query netted a wide assortment of recommendations including the 22-foot Falmouth cutter from Sam Morse and Co., the Bruce Bingham-designed Flicka 20 or Compaq 23, the Nor’ Sea 27, and for multihull fans, the Corsair F-24. There are many less-expensive coastal sailers to include. Our Cape Dory 25 comes to mind as a contender, as does the Pearson Triton. Again, we stress the importance of a well-kept boat and a stellar survey. We expect our other readers will have plenty of suggestions in this category as well.

