

[Previous](#)

1974 Venture, Page 3

[Return](#)

Sails

When the original sails wore out, we replaced them with new ones of 5.3-ounce tanbark Dacron. They enhance the traditional looks of the boat and are easy on the eyes as well. The staysail can be roller reefed to storm sail dimensions, and the jiffy reefing lines for the main are led inside the boom to clam cleats near the gooseneck. The main's luff is held with slug slides, a vast improvement over the original luff rope system, which required two people to raise or lower the sail.

These working sails are good for winds of less than 10 to over 40 knots. For even lighter winds, we have a 170-square-foot nylon drifter that is flown like a genoa on the headstay. Its luff is slightly shorter than the length of the headstay so that the working jib does not have to be removed when lowered; the drifter's tack pendant raises it above the bagged jib. The same is true of our 250-square-foot cruising spinnaker. A 1½-ounce nylon sock made for the cruising spinnaker enables me to hoist and douse the spinnaker single-handed in all types of weather.

We also made snug-fitting blue acrylic covers for the main, jib, and staysail. The headsail covers are particularly useful as they do not need to be removed from their stays when the sails are raised. The sails can be raised directly from the Velcro-fastened covers. And once lowered, the working sails can remain attached to their stays and still be protected.

Running Rigging

All lines are color coded, and multiple compound tackles make sail adjustments quick and easy. I find these systems are faster and easier to adjust than using halyard winches. A tackle can be adjusted with one hand while a winch takes two. Besides, the sails are all small enough so that sheet winches are not necessary. Ratchet blocks ease the load in heavy air. Genoa tracks permit adjustment of their positions.

The internal main and jib halyards and the external staysail halyard lead to the cockpit. Light lines from the top of the jib and the staysail lead along their respective luffs to turning blocks at the tacks and through fairleads to the cockpit. These light lines serve well as dousing lines (downhauls). Thus the headsails can be raised or lowered completely from the cockpit with no need to go on deck at all except to tidy up. Iazy jacks contain the mainsail as it is lowered.

Miscellaneous Exterior

We made a windowed enclosure for the pop top from the same acrylic fabric used for the sail covers. In addition, a 1½-ounce nylon awning covers most of the cockpit area. The awning is wide enough so that the sides can be pulled down to the deck, giving it the configuration of a wall tent. By using shockcord loops instead of rope, it only takes us a few minutes to set up. Plastic windows in the awning sides match the windows in the pop top cover and are located so that the view from the cabin is unobstructed. For privacy, we fastened acrylic shades to the windows from inside with Velcro tabs.

I fabricated a new mast tabernacle from 1/4-inch aluminum stock to make raising and lowering the mast easier. When lowered, the mast rests in a carrier that has an integral roller and fits in the rudder gudgeons. To

speed up rigging and derigging the boat for trailering, I use quick release pins in place of clevis pins on the forestay turnbuckles and even at the boom gooseneck. The mainsheet tackle and the boom vang both attach to the boom with snap shackles for quick removal.

Interior Appointments

We reupholstered the berth cushions with fabric, leaving the original vinyl upholstery on the bottom. Likewise, we replaced the Formica-covered bulkheads with several layers of mahogany plywood, and added a matching mahogany plywood dinette table.

A Nicro solar ventilator keeps the cabin fresh and free of mildew. I also cut holes and installed louvered stainless vents in each of the underberth lockers to keep them aired out. Additional storage is provided by several mahogany shelves (including one across the forepeak) and by many net gear hammocks. Light below was augmented by adding two non-opening ports to the forward end of the cabin.

The high point of the cabin is the sliding galley I made using mahogany plywood over a frame of 1x2s. There is a well for the portable propane stove. Its wood cover serves as a cutting board and, with a couple of legs, makes a small cockpit table. Built-in wells provide storage for cups, plates, and flatware. A plastic dishpan in a cutout serves well as a sink and is easily emptied over the side or into the self-draining cockpit. Water is supplied to the galley pump from collapsible 5-gallon jugs under the vee-berths through vinyl tubing. Access to the storage inside the galley and the lockers underneath is provided through a hinged door on the front and through a cutout in the after side. This cutout is normally covered by the swingup shelf, which provides additional counter space when raised. It is supported by a swinging knee. Another cutout in the counter top holds a pump-type thermos. We fill it with boiling water in the morning and have water for coffee, tea, or instant soup all day at the touch of a button.

We've put a lot of time and effort into improving Chiquita, but none of the modifications is beyond the capability of the average boatowner. You, too, can make your boat as near perfect as I think Chiquita is.



[Previous](#) [Return](#)