



## Sail Report



# Nautor Swan 65

Seaworthy, comfortable, luxurious, fast (she won the Whitbread Round-the-World race), Swan 65 seems to succeed in offering the best of all worlds.

By Larry Kean and Dick Rath

Photographs by Larry Kean

MOST OF THE WORLD'S SAILORS know of the Swan 65 as a highly successful example of Olin Stephens's art—or they should, since *Sayula II's* victory in the 1973 Whitbread Round the World Race—and most of us are aware of the high level of craftsmanship in any boat built by Nautor of Finland. The world can hardly be said to be over-supplied with such vessels, however, economic realities being what they are, so it isn't every day one gets an opportunity to sail such a yacht. So when Carlos Eccheveria of Sparkman & Stephens asked us if we might want to spend a few days in the Grenadines aboard Dr. Arthur

*Left: Venceremos demonstrates her quick ways off the Grenadine island of Bequia. Above: Plush main saloon seats eight to ten in large dinette to port, features elegant joinery work in laminated teak.*

Lee's *Venceremos*, and when Dr. Lee subsequently telephoned to extend a specific invitation, we hesitated not a minute before accepting.

We met Dr. Lee for the first time aboard a big Air France jet bound for Martinique, where *Venceremos's* captain had promised to be. Dr. Lee is a youthful, energetic man who exudes enthusiasm for the things in his own life. A thoracic surgeon in Buffalo, N.Y., he grew up with powerboats around Martha's Vineyard then, fairly recently, began racing Tornados with the Toronto Catamaran Club. He'd had some experience with Wood Pussies, Cape Cod Knockabouts, and Comets in the Junior Yacht Club at Martha's Vineyard, but his first brush with offshore sailing came aboard a friend's Hinckley 38. In October 1974 he bought *Venceremos* (she's Hull No. 1 of the Swan 65's) from her original owner, an

## The Nautor Swan 65



*Spinnaker drill proves easy in moderate air off Admiralty Bay.*

Englishman, in Palma, Majorca. There was a paid skipper and crew aboard, so Dr. Lee joined the ship and sailed for the Grenadine island of Bequia.

They called at Gibraltar and Tangier, and there the skipper announced he was leaving the vessel. There was no suitable replacement at hand, so Dr. Lee summoned a few of his friends from the Toronto Catamaran Club, and they set out for the Canary Islands, teaching themselves celestial navigation along the way. There were some anxious moments about their landfall, but they made a good one. Steve Keefe and Deryn Thomas, *Venceremos's* present skipper and cook, joined the ship in the Canaries, and all hands sailed on to Bequia.

We wondered how a man decides to move up from a Tornado cat to a Swan 65.

"I wanted a good boat for cruising, but one that could be competitive in an occasional ocean race, and I wanted a boat big enough to charter profitably with captain and cook when I wasn't using her. The Swan 65 seemed to fill all these needs, and I had a good opportunity to buy *Venceremos*, so I did. And I'm not sorry."

Reasonable enough, though we still had the thought that a move from a 20' daysailing catamaran to a 65' ocean racing ketch reflected a rather sturdy self confidence.

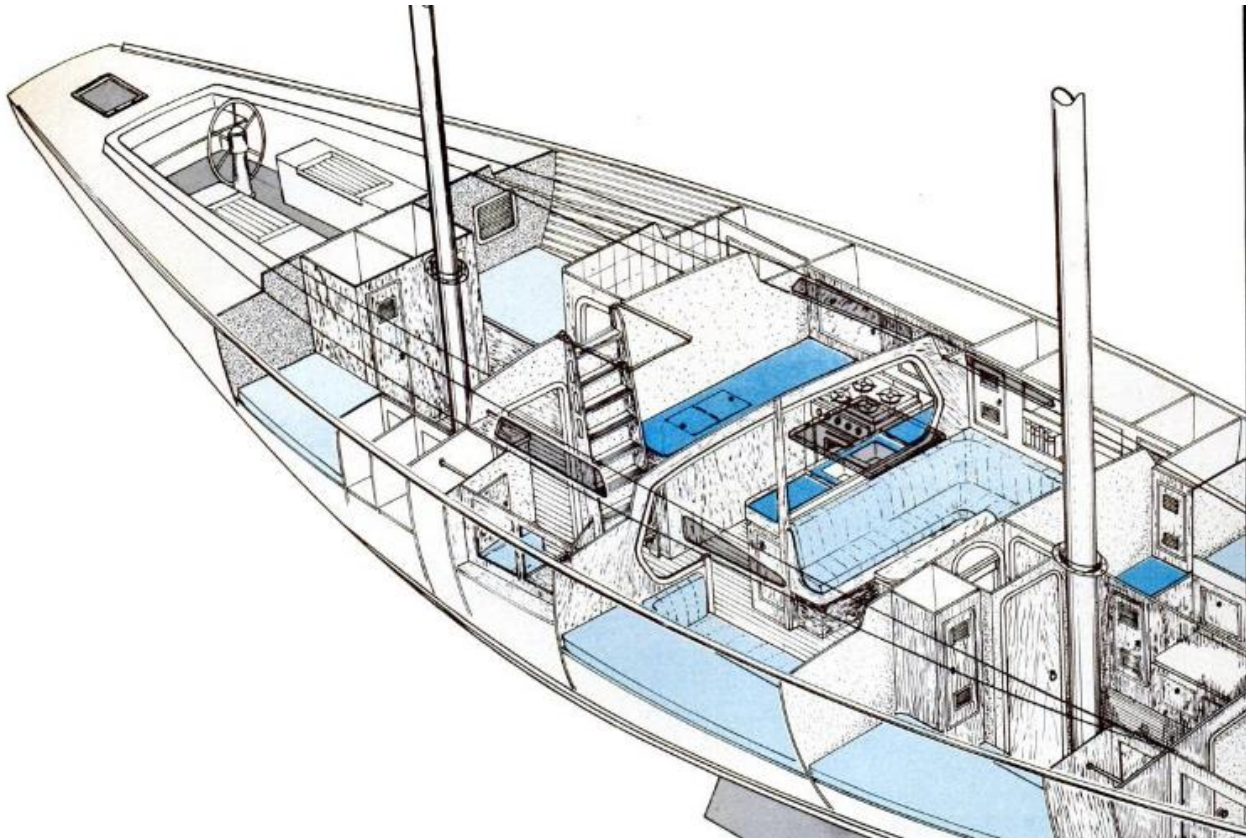
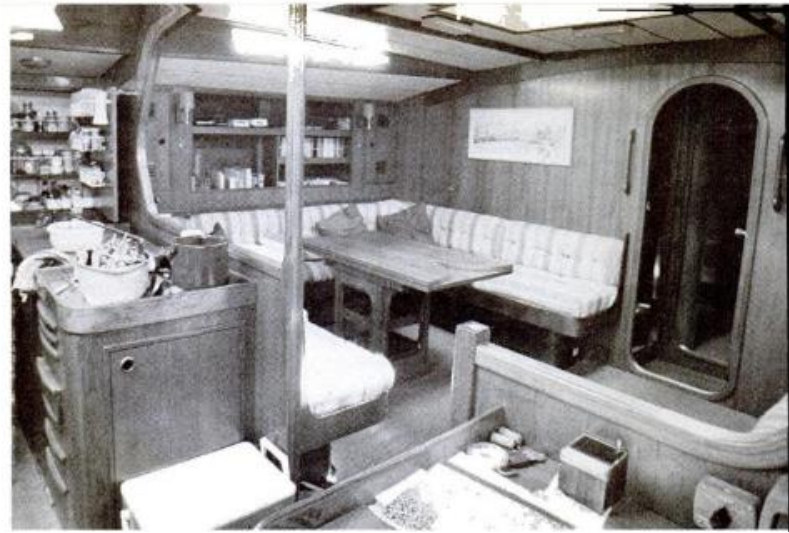
We touched down in Martinique, cleared a courteous and efficient Customs, and piled into an island taxi to go off looking for the boat. We'd scrutinized the yacht harbor from the aircraft as we came in, and Arthur was reasonably sure he'd seen her sticks near the town dock. He'd been right, and we'd scarcely lugged our gear to the dock before skipper Steve Keefe arrived in an outboard powered Zodiac inflatable to meet us. Once aboard, we met cook

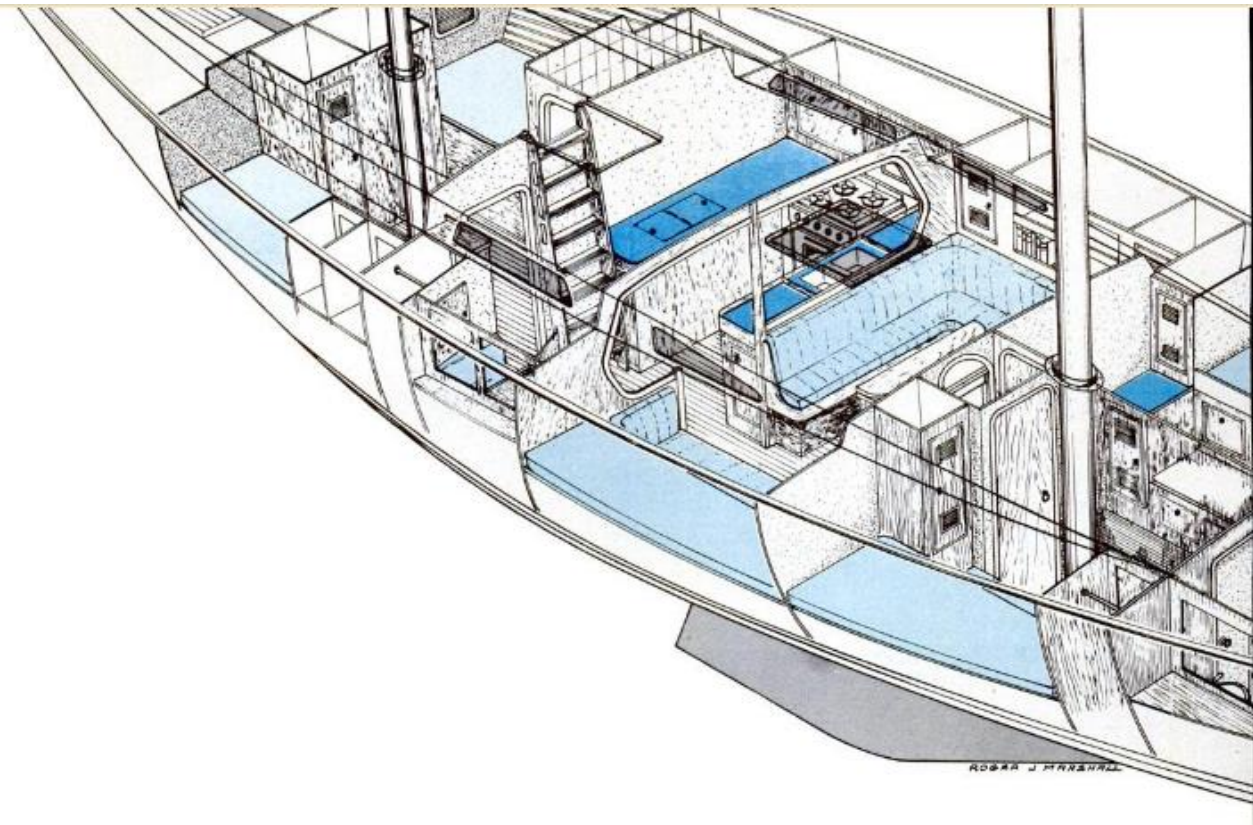
Deryn Thomas and deck hands Steve Mellon and Dan Delano, who showed us to the double guest stateroom to port just forward of the main saloon. The skipper requested we go barefoot aboard this vessel, something we'd prefer not to do—Topsiders give a much better footing than does skin—but being guests we acceded to the request.

Below, after changing New York clothes for Bermuda shorts, we inspected the accommodation. The owner's cabin, aft, is reached through a door adjacent to the companionway ladder, and includes a big double berth to port, a single berth and a seat to starboard, and large hanging lockers on the after bulkhead. A large opening port aft provides light and air and allows the owner to glance out at the helmsman to be sure he's not nodding off. Forward of the double berth to port is a large head with shower, and in this space to starboard is a dressing table with chest of drawers, and hanging lockers outboard. It's a spacious and comfortable cabin, with plenty of stowage space, yet it's not so large as to become uncomfortable in heavy weather.

In the companionway area a large U-shaped galley to port includes a double s.s. sink, a three-burner propane stove with oven, a deep freeze, and an electric refrigerator. Counter space is abundant, large enough for even Deryn's rather elaborate cookery. There's excellent locker space for provisions, crockery, and the like under the counters, outboard of the range, and on the bulkhead above the counters, and the near-midships location of the galley means maximum comfort for the cook in heavy weather.

Opposite the galley, to starboard, a large oilskin locker allows crew members to stow wet foul weather gear as soon as they come below, without drip-





Above, left to right: At anchor in Port Elizabeth, Admiralty Bay, Bequia, *Venceremos* kept large awning rigged over main boom for comfort on deck, cool air below. . . . Galley is suitably located near amidships, where motion is least, access to dining area is most. . . . Because of generous 16' 4" beam, Swan provides comfortable and efficient platform for sail handling or, for that matter, sunbathing. . . . Dr. Arthur Lee jumped from a Tornado catamaran to *Venceremos*—finds move a good one. Left: Swan 65's arrangement reflects typical S & S practicality, Nautor's fine craftsmanship.

## The Navigator Swan 65

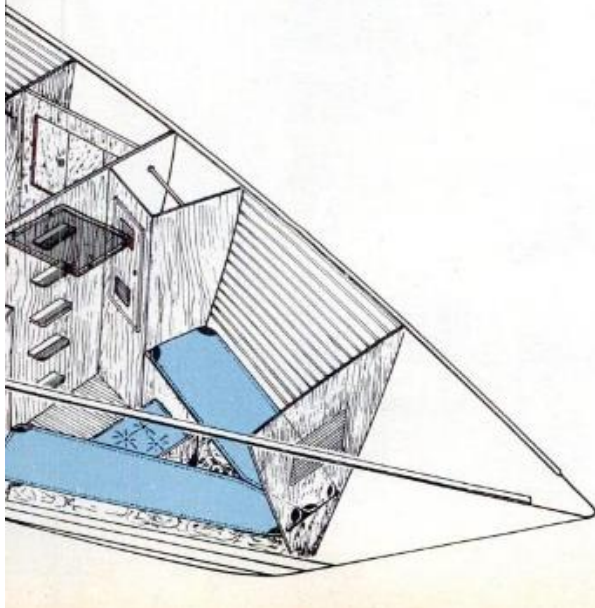


ping all over the accommodation. The navigator's station is immediately forward of this locker, and it includes a comfortable seat, a large chart table with chart stowage under, and ample shelves and lockers for navigation and electronic gear.

The main saloon seems vast, in part because of the Swan's 16' 4" beam, and in fact the large U-shaped dinette can seat eight or ten for meals without crowding. The standard Swan is provided with berths above and outboard of the settee and of the lounge seat to starboard, but on *Venceremos* this berth space to port is taken up with additional lockers, accommodating a stereo tape deck and Dr. Lee's superb collection of jazz and classical tapes.

Forward of the main saloon a pair of guest state-

Drawing by Roger Marshall



Forward of the main salon a pair of guest staterooms flank the mainmast. Each provides upper and lower bunks, a hanging locker, and plenty of stowage space in drawers, bins, and lockers, and each has a head complete with shower just forward of the stateroom. The difference is the port stateroom is private, while the starboard stateroom and head also act as a companionway forward to the forepeak, and the starboard head also serves the forepeak quarters. (A V-berth and hanging lockers make the forepeak a comfortable cabin for two, with its own access to the deck via a ladder and foredeck hatch.) Throughout the ship, bulkheads are of teak faced plywood, trimmed in laminated teak, and all the joinery work is absolutely first class.

After an hour or two of adjusting to the mini culture shock of finding ourselves afloat in Martinique on a comfortable and civilized sailing vessel when a few hours before we'd been coping with the usual urban hassles of New York, we were happy to join Arthur and the crew for a quiet dinner ashore. After dinner Arthur and the skipper discussed when we might sail, and it was clear that Arthur would have been quite happy to head out immediately, but he finally decided that it would be most practical to get a night's sleep and depart early in the morning.

After a good breakfast we made sail and took a few turns through the boats moored in the harbor. Steve seemed to know most of the crews, and exchanged banter with them in a thick BWI accent. He'd drop this accent, we noticed, when talking to Arthur, Deryn, or us, reverting to his normal British accent, but he seemed to enjoy the verbal flavor of island English when he talked to his sailing

specifications on page 101;  
text continued on page 104

## Swan 65 Specifications

### Dimensions:

Overall length ..... 64' 10½" (19m 77)  
Waterline length ..... 47' 0" (14m 33)  
Beam ..... 16' 4" (4m 98)  
Draft ..... 9' 1½" (2m 81)  
Freeboard forward ..... 6' 9" (2m 57)  
Freeboard aft ..... 5' 3" (1m 60)  
Bridge clearance\* ..... 80' 9" (24m 61)  
Cabin headroom ..... 7' 2½" (2m 20)

\*Waterline to top of mast.

**Displacement:** 56,371 lbs. (26,024 kg)

Ballast: 25,000 lbs (11,340 kg) (lead)

Ballast/displacement ratio: 44.3%

Displacement/length ratio: 242

**Sail Area:** Ketch rig, with 100% foretriangle 1797 sq ft (166.94 sq m)

Sail area/displacement ratio: 19.5

**IOR Rating:** 46.8 ft (14.26m)

**Accommodations:** Sleeps 12 in four cabin spaces—two in forecabin in pipe berths, four in two forward cabins in pilot berths, three in main cabin in pilot berths and convertible settee, and three in a single and a double berth in the aft cabin. Two forward heads with w/c, lavatory, and shower; one after head with w/c, lavatory, and shower. U-shaped galley with three-burner range and oven, double s.s. sink, pressure water system, water heater, top opening refrigerator and deep freeze units, and ample storage areas.

**Standard Equipment:** Complete International Rule navigation lights; four portable fire

engine; stern deck hatch, fiberglass; pedestal steerer with 48" Navy-type wheel; cable and quadrant steering system; Danforth compass mounted on steering pedestal; two diaphragm-type hand bilge pumps; 24v electrical system with circuit breaker switchboard and heavy duty 12v starting and lighting batteries connected in series; automatic battery charging from engine alternator; lightning protection bonding system; 264 gal (1000 liters) capacity fuel tanks; 396 gal (1500 liters) capacity fresh water tanks; teak decking; anti-fouling bottom paint.

**Spars & Rigging:** Ketch rig, with aluminum spars and s.s. standing and running rigging. Main mast has double spreaders (aluminum), mizzen mast single spreaders. Standing rigging 1 x 19 s.s. wire rope with swaged fittings and consists of headstay, main backstay, forestay, triatic stay, mizzen backstay, single upper shrouds and double lowers on main, single uppers and lowers on mizzen; halyards are 7 x 19 s.s. wire; sheets are Dacron yacht braid; main and mizzen booms are aluminum, and slab reefing or roller reefing is optional; spinnaker poles and reaching strut are aluminum; chain plates and rigging tangs are s.s. flat bar; winches are Lewmar.

**Auxiliary Propulsion:** Volvo Penta MD 32A, 106 HP diesel engine with hydraulic reverse/reduction gear and 21" x 13½" two-bladed folding propeller; pedestal mounted controls; cockpit mounted instruments.

**Standard Equipment:** Complete International Rule navigation lights; four portable fire extinguishers; exhaust blowers in heads, galley and engine compartment; three anchors and anchor rodes; docking lines; s.s. pulpit and pushpit; s.s. rail stanchions with double life lines of plastic covered wire rope; s.s. stemhead fitting; chocks at bow, midships and stern quarters; extruded aluminum toerail; four 1 6" light alloy mooring cleats on fore deck, twin cleats p/s amidships and two towing cleats on after deck—all through bolted to deck blocking; sliding hatch over forecabin to permit passing sails; three deck hatches over forward cabins and main salon, fitted with perspex tops; sliding companionway hatch with perspex top, large enough to pass the main

traverse leading to cabin, provision stowage controls; cockpit mounted instruments.

**Construction:** Molded fiberglass hull, deck and deckhouse structure. Hull is hand lay-up of woven roving, mat and fiberglass cloth; deck and deckhouse are foamed core sandwiched between layers of glass; additional reinforcement is provided through the use of fiberglass stiffeners; all construction is to Lloyds highest standards.

**Price:** Standard boat with above equipment, suit of sails and basic electronic gear, \$340,000 FOB East Coast.

**Designer:** Sparkman & Stephens, Inc., New York, N.Y.

**Builder:** Nautor, Pietarsaari, Finland

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*Cockpit is well planned for separation of helmsman's and winch handlers' labors.*

## NAUTOR SWAN 65 *continued*

### Designer's Comments

In hull form and general character, the Swan 65 clearly typifies a successful development under the IOR. She has proven to be an excellent cruising boat and it appears that the success of the class is based on the preference of the cruising owner rather than the racing owner.

Although the very happy result of the Round the World Race is convincing evidence that the boat is not slow, two major factors in *Sayula's* Round the World win were her strength and her controllability.

The major thrust of our design effort was to use the already successful *Dora* as a starting point for a slightly larger design and to modify that design in terms of displacement and structure so as to adopt it to fiberglass construction in such a way as to provide an extremely strong hull. Clearly these objectives were met and if the racing success of the 65 has been less than that of *Dora*, I think it is largely because of the conservative rig which is better adapted to cruising than to racing. Most of the 65's carry the standard ketch rig. The several that have been built with a single masted rig have not been engaged in very much competition.

Her interior seems both practical and attractive. She has good headroom throughout and the owner's stateroom is generously roomy, the two guest staterooms are also roomy, and the forepeak can be used by one or two paid hands or guests. The location of the galley aft and the chart table adjacent to the companionway seems to have worked out well. Cockpit space is generous and the deck over all is both comfortable and practical. The Volvo auxiliary, an MD-32, provides excellent performance under power.

While there may be some feeling that the divided keel and skeg arrangement is undesirable for cruising, I personally do not accept this criticism, feeling rather that when the skeg and rudder are of adequate size and the other characteristics of the boat are in balance, one can get excellent control with a relatively short keel. In turn, the short keel which minimizes wetted surface permits good performance in light as well as heavy weather with a small rig, which is ideal from the cruising man's point of view. This seems to me the right way to design a modern auxiliary, whether intended primarily for cruising or for racing.

CLIN J. STEPHENS II



*Swan 65 under full sail is potent sight.*

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friends. He also used it when talking to the islanders themselves, and it seemed to improve communications.

Departing Fort de France, we set a course for St. Lucia, 30 miles to the south. A southeast wind of 18 to 20 knots had us closehauled, and *Venceremos* began to show off her quick ways. Her speed indicator moved up to 11 knots, and stayed there. "Well, we're still getting a lee from the island," we thought, "so of course we have a good wind and a flat sea. It may be a little different when we sail out from behind."

It was different—more wind, considerably more sea—but the knotmeter still reported 11 knots. She slammed her nose into some good ones, but they didn't slow her down at all.

About 1530, a puff laid her over a bit, and she picked up a wayward sea in her No. 3 genny. There was a small explosion, and we watched the sail part right up the mitre from the clew. We ran forward and began subduing several acres of flailing dacron. When we had the damaged sail stopped down, Steve had the jib and fore staysail ready to set. Though these two sails don't give the area of the genny, *Venceremos* maintained her freight train speed. The wind may have picked up a bit, but the boat certainly didn't slow down. And Arthur had had no trouble keeping her on course during all this, even without her headsail.

He seemed as amused as a man can be who has

watched an expensive piece of his own sailcloth rip. "That sail must have been getting tired. Let's see, we've got at least 16,000 miles on it. Well, I've got a good friend in Bequia who's a good sailmaker, and that rip didn't look too bad. Guess we'll have to get a new No. 3, though."

In the late afternoon we passed Castries, St. Lucia, then a few miles south, Marigot Bay. "This island has been one of the world's most fought-over pieces of real estate," Steve informed us. "Back about the time of the American Revolution, Rodney brought a small British fleet down here to take Castries. When he sailed by he saw a fleet of French anchored in the harbor. And of course they saw him. He led his fleet on down the coast to Marigot Bay, right in *there*, where he knew there was this good hurricane hole. He sent the crews scrambling for palm fronds to festoon their upper rigging, and by the time the French fleet came flying down the coast after him, they sailed right by without seeing the British ships. Rodney waited awhile, sailed back to Castries, and took it without firing a shot." Steve seemed delighted by the story.

About nightfall we fetched the Pitons, two impressive rock outcroppings at the mouth of Soufriere Harbor, where Steve and Arthur had decided to stop for dinner. Sailing in close to the beach where the water would be shallow enough to anchor and run a stern line ashore, we found ourselves about to pass under a power line that ran from the moun-

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tainside to the left down across the harbor to a two-story building at the water's edge. From the deck it looked as if *Venceremos's* towering mainmast wouldn't clear. Arthur, no doubt with visions of sparks flying and the whole waterfront being plunged into darkness, put her about and sailed over close to the mountain before passing under the line.

As soon as the hook was down, two very young Soufriere boys came alongside in a small graceful dugout boat. "Take your line ashore, mon?" They took the stern line and quickly had it ashore and secured to a palm tree. "What time you leave, mon?" Arthur said we'd leave in about two hours. "We'll cast you off, mon," they said, and pulled back into the beach.

After we'd consumed a superb curry dinner (the galley had been redolent for hours with Deryn's preparations) the two young boatmen reappeared, released our stern line, and brought it out to the boat. We passed them an American dollar, and their faces fell. "Can't spend that, mon." Steve soon produced some BWI currency, which was quite acceptable. They smiled and waved goodbye.

Watches were set, and the off watch went below. Night sailing in these islands is as close to perfection as anything we know: the air is warm, the water phosphorescent, the wind steady, the sea moderately rough, and the sky offers a moving light show of moon, stars, and cloud. A helmsman can take joy

in the power of the ship under his feet, letting his mind wander through the beauty that surrounds him.

Aboard the Swan 65, however, he'd better interrupt his reveries with frequent checks of compass or stars: like every other fin keeler, this boat wants constant steering. A moment or two spent in fascination at, say, the wake boiling out under the stern is more than likely to be rewarded by a 10 or 15 degree wander off course.

Dawn found us entering Bequia Harbor. This island is *Venceremos's* true home port, despite the "Dover, Del." on her transom: it's Arthur's childhood home. As we tacked through the fleet of coasters, island schooners, and yachts anchored in the harbor, crews interrupted their deck swabbing to greet us. "Hi, Arthur, where ya been?" "How's your mother?" "Son's over at the hotel; he'll want to see you." (Arthur's cousin, Son Mitchell, is a former Premier of St. Vincent. He and his Canadian wife Pat operate the excellent Frangipani Hotel at the water's edge.) Arthur clearly regards the island as home. His family has been here since the early 19th Century, fishing, whaling, building, and sailing inter-island schooners.

Shortly after breakfast, he went off in the Zodiac to visit friends and relatives, and left us to our own lazy devices. After a short swim—an exercise spoiled somewhat by Deryn's casual reference to sharks—we took notebook in hand and checked out

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the Swan's deck gear.

It's complete. She carries four 16" mooring cleats on the foredeck, 16" spring line cleats amidships, and similar stern cleats port and starboard. All securely through-bolted. Her stemhead fitting is a weldment designed to carry her 75 lb CQR anchor which, on *Venceremos*, is handled by a Simpson-Lawrence 24v windlass. A 60 lb and a 35 lb Danforth are part of her standard equipment.

Double life lines, stainless steel covered with white plastic, are connected to the pulpit and pushpit, and supported by s.s. stanchions with bases through-bolted. The toe rail, in keeping with modern practice, is perforated anodized aluminum, extending the length of the vessel.

Her standard equipment winch list reads like a list of options: two Lewmar No. 65 genoa sheet winches, two 65's for spinnaker sheets, a Lewmar 43 for the mainsheet, two 45's for genoa halyards, two 45's for spinnaker halyards, a No. 3 for the main halyard, two 43's for the foreguy and vang, a No. 1 for the mizzen halyard, a No. 40 for the mizzen staysail halyard, a No. 40 for the mizzen staysail sheet, and a No. 40 for the mizzen sheet.

Steering is by a 48" Navy-type wheel mounted on an aluminum pedestal which houses the C654C Danforth compass mounted in a dome-type binnacle. The pedestal steerer is connected to the rudder quadrant by cable and sheaves, and the vessel is equipped with a s.s. pipe emergency tiller, which can be fitted directly to the rudder stock in the cock-

pit sole directly forward of the pedestal. A good, sea-going arrangement.

*Venceremos* has a larger Perkins diesel, installed at the order of her original owner, but the standard power for the Swan 65 is a Volvo Penta MD 32A diesel, rated at 106 hp and turning a 21" two-bladed, folding propeller through a 2.1:1 hydraulic gear. Access to the machinery space is, in our opinion, one of the vessel's worst features: with all machinery neatly tucked below the cabin sole, virtually no living space is sacrificed, but when a skipper has to crawl down into a cramped space through a hatch in the sole, he just isn't going to do it as often as he might if access were better. Even a paid skipper. Even a conscientious paid skipper.

For ship's electricity, six 12v batteries, each rated 105 amp hours, are connected in series/parallel to provide a whole lot of 24v power; they're charged by a 75 amp alternator on the main engine. Two 12v batteries of similar rating, are connected in series to provide 24v starting power, and these are charged by a 35 amp alternator on the main engine. All electrical work is properly bonded, and a lightning protection system is installed, consisting of a heavy wire connected to chainplates, backstay fittings, and headstay fittings, then grounded to keel bolts. The compressor for the refrigerator and freezer runs off the main engine.

Nautor's unusually complete standard equipment list for the Swan has, we learned, a history. Some years ago the company allowed customers to make

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fairly major changes in the arrangements of larger boats. One customer, after making extensive custom changes, didn't like the result, and asked the builders to return the boat to its original plan. At that point the builders resolved to include every amenity as standard equipment, then allow buyers to subtract items they don't want, rather than specify extensive customizing. It seems to work, at least on this big, plush boat.

The day passed rapidly with our lazing and note taking, and Arthur's visiting and, in early evening, we repaired to the Frangipani for rum punches and an elaborate island dinner. Our table afforded a good view of the harbor, which was fortunate because toward the end of the meal *Venceremos* began to drag her anchor. Steve Mellon volunteered to take care of this nuisance, and wound up weighing anchor and resetting it. (We'd set the anchor under sail and it hadn't, apparently, dug in.)

Our flight back to the real world was booked from St. Vincent the next day, and Arthur decided the most appropriate way for us to get there was to sail. (There were inter-island boats leaving on schedule, but we offered no objection to his plan.) So, bright and early in the morning, we got under way and enjoyed a fine reach, on the starboard tack for a change, to St. Vincent, to the accompaniment of Paul Desmond and Dave Brubeck on Arthur's deck-mounted stereo speakers.

In St. Vincent, aided by Steve's patois, we secured alongside a little coaster that was unloading at the

quay and, still having time to have lunch aboard, watched Deryn prepare two huge spiny lobsters that Arthur had picked up from a Bequia fisherman early in the morning. The lunch was a resounding success, but it didn't make us feel any cheerier about leaving.

Back in New York, we checked into the Swan's construction through Sparkman & Stephens and through Mark C. Ewing, President of Nautor, Inc. of Oxford, Md. The plant, we learned, is situated at Pietarsaari, Finland, on the Gulf of Bothnia, not quite 180 miles south of the Arctic Circle. It's an area with an old boatbuilding tradition, and this shows in the quality of Nautor's construction. The Swans are built to Lloyd's scantlings and are delivered with Lloyd's Certificate of Hull Construction, which means that Lloyd's inspectors supervise each stage of the hull construction.

As Olin Stephens points out in his "Designer's Comments," his objective was to design a fast, easily handled, comfortable cruising boat with a relatively small rig. Nautor's objective clearly has been to build the very finest yacht of her type that could be built.

That both the designer and the builder have succeeded in their objectives seems, to us, evident. We think Arthur Lee—who's in a better position to make such a judgement—would agree. ⚓

