

TEST REPORT ON
SEASTREAM
465

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A BOAT INTERNATIONAL PUBLICATION

Seastream 465

RIGHT: excellent protection is afforded by the screen and fold down sprayhood

BELOW: the saloon is remarkable for its finish and sense of cosy luxury.

The Alcantara cushions are well complemented by the ambience of deeply polished cherry. Note the traditional Seastream dolphin carving. Each one is individual

*J*an Anderson, the designer of this quintessentially British yacht, is from an older school of yacht design. In the 1950s he was a colleague of Fred Parker, a prominent naval architect in the days when you would finish the season in September, put your old vessel with a broker in October and make a call on your designer, rather as one would make an appointment with one's tailor. The yacht would be lofted by Christmas, planked out in the cold winds of February and launched, if you were lucky, by May. In a distinguished career, Anderson went on to work for Camper & Nicholsons and Hurley Marine.

The Seastream is not a new design, but no worse for that. Built in Cornwall by as dedicated a band of craftsmen of the old school as you'll find she, rather unfashionably perhaps, belongs in the heavy displacement end of the cruising yacht spectrum at 16.25 tonnes. But again, that's no bad thing for a yacht that's built for heavy weather and load carrying.

Cutter rigged, and with a deck saloon that is not an afterthought, the 465 is an extended version of the 445, which has sold, albeit without fanfare, in respectable numbers over the years. You chance upon them in anchorages all over the world, quietly going about their business, looking after their crew in all weathers.



The hull and fitting out is done at Seastream's yard in Penryn, to Lloyd's rules in optimum humidity conditions, and from the detailed specification it is clear that the hull and balsa-cored deck are to the highest standards, using isophthalic resins, the shell strengthened while in the mould with substantial stringers and ring frames. Five tonnes of lead are encapsulated in the keel, then glassed over, and hefty longitudinals take the bearers for the reliable Perkins M90 80hp diesel – a workhorse which has been going strong for over 30 years in yachts, buses, tractors and generating plants the world over; so no problem finding spares in Surinam.

By extending the stern of the 445 to its logical and elegant conclusion, Anderson has taken the development of this 20-year-old design as far as it can go. The neat little transom, though narrow by the standards of today's fat-bottomed girls, is no affectation as it swallows a tender, diving gear, mooring warps and a neat bathing platform. The cockpit is deep and weatherly, the bridgedeck reassuring, while the high bulwark, and wide teak capping impart a sense of security to those working the decks.

One of the many advantages of the evolution of the Seastream 445 into the 465 is that she appears to be a well sorted out yacht. A great deal of thought has gone into her





layout and equipment. Stanchions are simply dropped into mounting holes in the capping. The boarding ladder is a clever extension of the guardrails, and take the anchor stowage: a 45CQR and Bruce share the hefty bow rollers which even the hoariest old seafarer would agree are beyond reproach. A Lofrans electric winch handles the 60m of 10mm chain which flakes into a locker abaft that which holds the gas bottles (with air-operated safety valves).

The custom Selden rig carries in-mast furling mainsail while the yankee and staysail are carried on Schaeffer manually operated furlers. The mainsheet track is carried clear of the cockpit, and the traveller trimmed by means of a captive reel winch. The mainsheet itself is self tailed from a winch on the cabin top, and as the helmsman stands in traditional fashion aft at his Whitlock King Cobra wheel, instruments before him but clear of the pedestal bar, the Seastream makes no pretence as a singlehander.

Seastream has made a fine job of the accommodation. Step below and you are enveloped in an extremely British ambience of deep polished cherry, well-rounded hand rails and solid craftsmanship. The folding table is a *tour de force* and everywhere you find deep lockers, properly made and fully lined. Fiddles around galley tops are high, floorboards lock in place, the alcantara upholstery is firm and comfortable. From the small, but cosy aft cabin to the mini-double in the bow, all was solidly traditional and reassuring. Catches caught, lockers made a satisfying clunk and the most satisfying of all was made by the watertight bulkhead door



to the forecabin, fitted at the insistence of this owner but a sensible precaution in this age of rogue containers on the high seas.

A few details must stand for the thought gone into the whole: the watertight lockers in the aft shower where you can stow towels and bedding; the way the work surface over the oven can be taken up and stowed away; the double-

ABOVE: with 60 knots over the deck at times during the review, Cantara had no chance to hide any weaknesses



ABOVE: the detailing throughout is excellent

RIGHT: the aft cabin benefits from the logical drawing out of the yacht's lines

BELOW: the transom hides an ingenious folding boarding ladder and bathing platform



folding doors to several lockers and the deep, open-topped stowage areas by the companionway, in the window recesses and next to the chart table. So often you need a safe, temporary place to set down a camera, book, binoculars or GPS. Here you'll find them.

So what of the Seastream's sailing traits? In a longish keeled, heavy displacement yacht of her era one can't expect miracles, but can expect safe, seakindly progress and decent average passage-making speeds. This the Seastream will guarantee in a thoroughly thoroughbred way, but don't expect an ocean greyhound, or a boat that likes to be driven beyond her limits. We chose to hang on to far too much sail to see how she behaved. In vicious squalls on a cold day, with a strong north wind hurling down Southampton Water, *Cantara* needed a powerful arm at the wheel at times. Under full sail she struggled in the gusts which drove her rail under and put some pressure on the wheel.

Once reefed down to a sensible sail plan, of course, like all proper yachts she set to with enthusiasm and no loss of speed. It just does not pay to drive a yacht like this beyond her natural limit. Under just a scrap of mainsail and reefed staysail she'll pound upwind just as well without the stress. As she carries plenty of sail in quite a high aspect rig the area is best used in light winds when heavy displacement, under

canvased yachts can become stuck. Under power she made just over 7 knots dead upwind into the teeth of a biting northerly when we wisely called it a day.

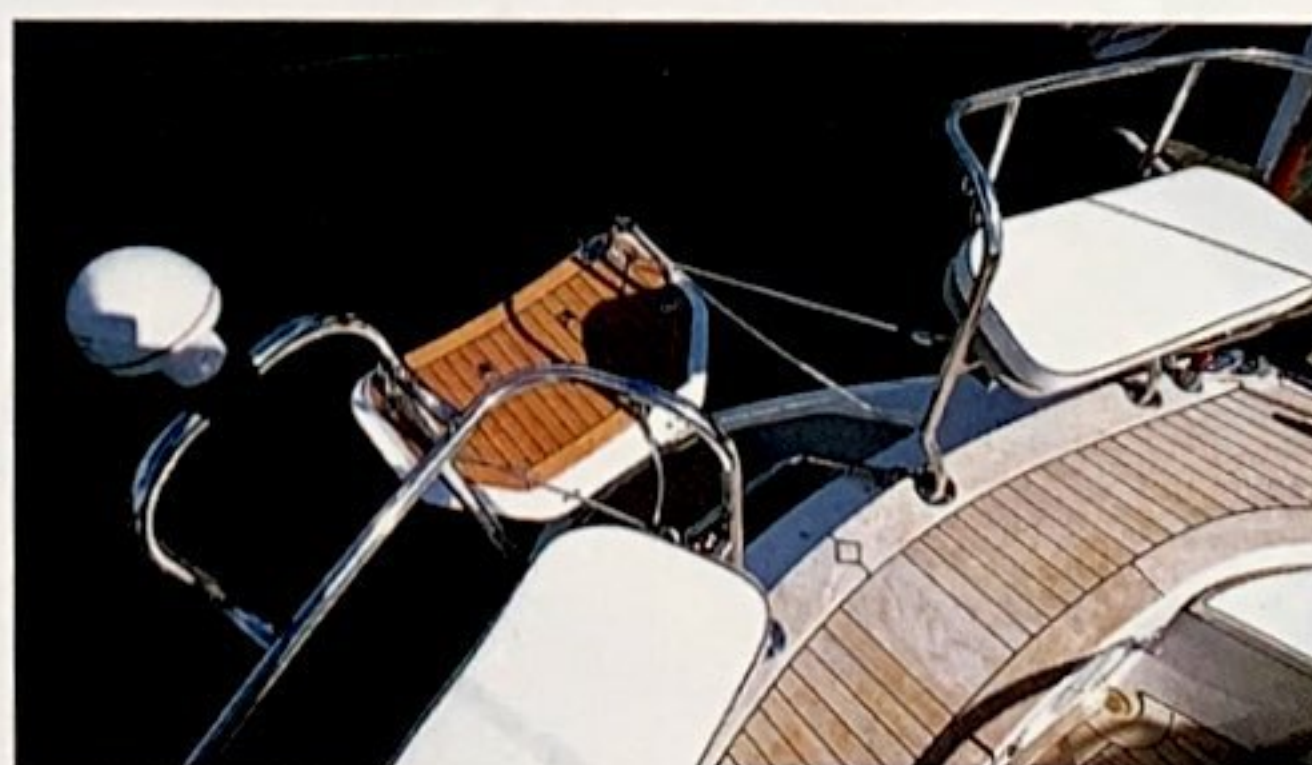
Cantara, above all, exuded strength of purpose that day. The more brutal gusts probably hit Force 8, and it was as severe a test of a yacht in three hours as one could hope for in three normal days. The spray seldom reached the helmsman, rarely the crew who have a comprehensive spray hood to protect them if things get too hairy. The bridgedeck makes a wide platform for sheltering off watch and a

comfortable perch when the table's up and lunch is being served in the aft part of the cockpit. The large diameter stainless steel 'crash' bar that divides the bridgedeck is an added source of security in a yacht that should reassure all but the most timid of non-sailors.

Cantara carried her age well. The deck saloon is bold and yet blends

well with the hull without recourse to fancy tricks. The Seastream has been called 'West Country boatbuilding's best kept secret.' Certainly the build quality was excellent, and real experience shows in her layout and systems. Anderson has been around long enough to know what matters on a cruising boat, and if the Seastream is long in the tooth, that's just another way of saying well matured.

This is the last Seastream to come from Anderson's board, and he is the first to concede that he cannot imagine why he didn't add the extra length in the first place. By drawing out the ends he has made a good boat better. And by constantly refining her she has become something of a classic. Be that as it may, it's going to be interesting to see the new Seastream 50. Ed Dubois is the designer but Anderson is happy to take a back seat this time. His experience is sure to be evident in the details, the kind which distinguish this archetypal British cruising yacht.



SEASTREAM 465

LOA
14.6m (48ft)
LWL
11.9m (39ft)
BEAM
4.3m (14ft)
DRAUGHT
1.9m (6ft 3in)
DISPLACEMENT
15.25 tonnes
SAIL AREA
76m² (816sqft)
BUILDER
Seastream Yachts

