

On Board Seastream 43

Custom-built, comfortable
motor-sailer

THE FIRST SEASTREAM 43 was launched some two years ago in the wake of her successful forerunner, the Seastream 34. The aim of her builder and designer from the outset was to produce a high quality yacht with all the comfort and advantages of a motor-sailer, but with the sailing performance of a good cruising yacht.

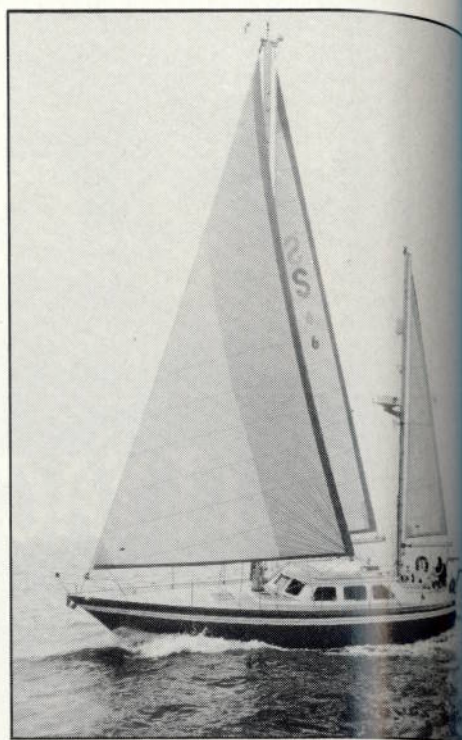
To this end she has a distinctive and not unattractive wheelhouse housing a large deck saloon and inside steering position. Power is supplied by a Mercedes 314, although other engines are possible, whilst below the water is a long fin keel and skeg hung rudder. Sail power is provided by a masthead ketch rig, though a cutter headed option is offered. The layout on the accompanying drawing shows the standard accommodation plan, but within the parameters dictated by structural components of the hull the builders can cater for a wide variation — in effect every boat is custom-built. For example, in place of the forecabin shown, the owner of the trial boat, a keen photographer, had opted for a larger galley and a complete darkroom up for'd.

The Seastream, with her 14ft beam and

high topsides, is a pretty substantial yacht, which allows for very spacious accommodation. The owner's after cabin has over 6ft headroom under the bridgedeck; likewise there is good standing room throughout. The deck saloon is as big as many people's sitting rooms, the galley one of the largest and best equipped we've seen on any boat, and the two berth guest cabin should prove quite adequately comfortable.

The standard of finish throughout is high; in particular the engine and electrical departments were impressive. £89,700 might sound a great deal of money for any yacht, but for one of this standard represents good value when compared with the competition. She is the sort of yacht which almost demands all the latest sailing technology, from satnav to radar, and the trial boat was fitted with virtually every conceivable modern navigation aid, backed up by three electrical systems (12v, 24v and mains), fifteen batteries and a powerful auxiliary generator.

We can't comment on her light weather performance, as we sailed her in winds between 15 and 30 knots, but with the well insulated engine compartment, passages under power or motor-sailing in light airs should be relatively painless. Under nearly full sail she was overpressed in the squalls, but never uncontrollable, just becoming a little heavy on the wheel as she started to bury her enormous topsides. A speed over 6 knots was easily reached sailing to windward, 8 knots when reaching, with the needle just touching 9 knots on a couple of occasions. She is the sort



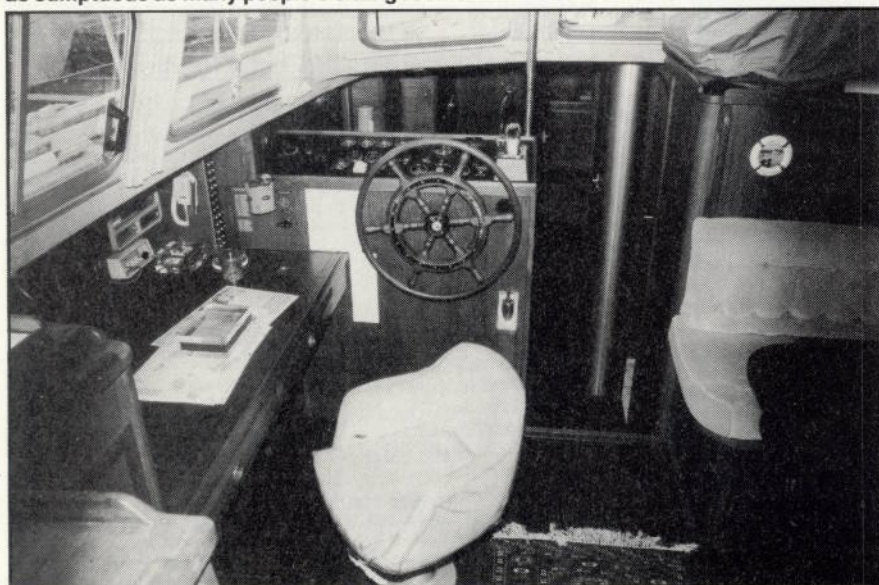
of yacht which will quite happily be able to average in excess of 6 knots when cruising, whether under power, sail or a combination of both.

The inside steering position is less successful than other areas of the boat on account of poor visibility for the helmsman. Once heeled the view through the leeward windows is of water, to windward one of sky whilst visibility ahead is hampered by the mainmast which is stepped just a few inches forward of the deckhouse. Although a small port is provided in the after wheelhouse bulkhead, from the steering position little can be seen from here. With the boat level, perhaps under power, it would be possible to keep watch from here provided a good look-out is kept astern.

Under power she is quiet and tractable, easily reaching 8 knots, though 7 knots might be a more sensible cruising speed with economy in mind. Control ahead is good, astern less so, as she takes some time before gathering enough way to make steering possible.

The Seastream 43 is a happy compromise between sailing yacht and motor-sailer. The quality of the finish is high and whilst she doesn't pretend to be any kind of greyhound under sail, her sailing performance is more than adequate for a cruising boat. To use a much abused term, she is a proper, fully powered yacht. **AB**

Visibility from the inside steering position is not good once heeled, but the saloon itself is as sumptuous as many people's sitting rooms



YM photo

DATA

LOA	13.25m (43ft 5in)
LWL	10.8m (35ft 5in)
Beam	4.27m (14ft)
Draught	1.83m (6ft)
Displacement	14,750kg (14.5 tons)
Ballast	5,080kg (5 tons)
Engine	Mercedes 314 80hp 4-cylinder diesel
Designer	Ian Anderson
Sales	Seastream Yachts Ltd, The Ferry House, Hamble, Hampshire (Tel: 070345 5264 & Bursledon 4228)
Price	£89,700

