



BELLA by DAVE CROSS

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I decided I would write a little article about a sailboat that I built. She has a very distinctive look of hard multichine boat. You may walk the docks for days at marinas up and down the West Coast and never see another one. In fact, she is from a design that maybe 20 boats have been built. I modified the design and construction to make her a Pacific Northwest American built sailboat. The look of Bella is very much like that of a T-Bird with the modified pilothouse, but quite a bit larger. When we first took her out we got a lot of “is that a T-Bird?” which of course I take as a compliment, to a certain point. Then it leads me to believe that maybe some people don’t look very closely or are friendly and want to make conversation I will take the latter. Her nick name is “Big Bird” don’t use it around me.

My decision to build her is quite simple, everybody does something and I build sailboats. I started building boats in 1985 and for the most part have been building something ever since then. She is the sixth boat, the largest and the last. When I turned fifty I knew it was time I had one more boat in me. I didn’t want to wait until I may possibly end up saying “I wished I had built that boat”. For the most part I live life with no regrets. So refinance the house and find a design. The financing was the easy part. The reason she looks like (I will say it) a Big Bird is that is what I was looking for. A chined hull which I like for its sailing qualities, pilot house looks and ease of construction (that last part is a lie). I looked at designs by Dudley Dix



and Sam Devlin. If I wouldn’t have found this design I would have built one of their designs. So enters Roberto Barros of B&G Yacht Design at the time out of Brazil now Australia. When I first saw it I knew this is something I can work with. I am a disciple of the Gougeon Brothers W.E.S.T systems. Got their books and all previous boats were built with their products, philosophy and building technique. I got the plans and started studying. So now is probably a good time to explain why I built a boat instead of buying a 30foot sailboat. So if you are thinking about owning a 30foot sailboat and you may say to yourself, “boy I can save money if built one”. Back away from the magazine and get back on your medications. Saving money is not even in the conversation. So it comes down to one question. Why? It is simple. I built a 30foot sailboat not because I wanted a 30 foot sailboat it is because I wanted to build a 30 foot sailboat. That’s the difference.



So let’s get down to what she is all about. First the plans from Roberto are metric and I always wanted to build in that scale. You have to think in that scale. 10 cm is not 4 inches it’s 10 cm. I had the plans changed to add 1 meter to the mast height, double spreaders, and a keel that was deeper, thinner and made of lead. In developing the hull, I vacuumed bagged the plywood sections together. When asked what she is built from I say a composite of epoxy, fiberglass, plywood, CVG, sweat, blood and tears.

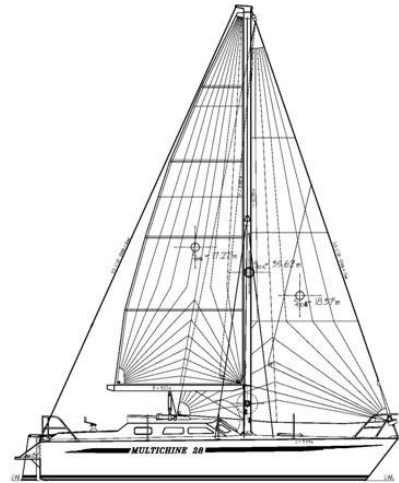
The particulars.

- Length: 28 feet when I am getting a slip, 30 feet when I am bragging about her. Actual L.O.A 29 feet 6 inches.
- Waterline: 24'9"
- Beam: 10'5"
- Draft: 5'5"
- Ballast: 2643 lb
- Displacement: 7885 lb

I have never weighed her but I imagine she is about 300 lbs lighter than the designed plans.

The engine is electric. An Electric Yacht inboard Quiet Torque 10.0. It is a fantastic engine. No matter what they say about electric motors if you do not have an on board charging system of solar panels, wind generator, gas generator, fuel cells or whatever it is and leave it to a shore power battery charger you are not going to go very fast for very long. I have four 8D batteries in series that gets me 48 volts at 240 amp hours. I can go 4 knots for 4 to 5 hours. I can go hull speed for about an hour or so. I can go 2 knots all day long. What an electric motor does for you is it makes you a better sailor. If the winds are light I can run a couple of amps and get the apparent wind

SAILS					
SAIL	CLOTH	LUFF	LEECH	FOOT	AREA
MAIN	6.5 oz	8.96 m	9.48 m	3.10 m	17.27 m ²
GENOA	4.5 oz	10.14 m	9.59 m	5.02 m	24.70 m ²
JIB	6.5 oz	10.14 m	8.63 m	4.19 m	18.27 m ²
STORM JIB	8.0 oz	6.00 m	4.47 m	3.20 m	6.96 m ²



Spars are by Ballinger. Buzz did exactly what he said he would do. He delivered on time, on price and complete. There wasn't a piece or part missing. And there are a lot of pieces and parts.

Sails built by Ballard Sails. These guys (Alex) are great. Alex came to Tacoma to do the measurements and he delivered the sails and helped me bend them on. Professional and fun couldn't ask for more. Very nice sails!

The keel was by Mars Metals out of Ontario. The original design was in cast iron. This was one of the first design changes. B&G worked up 3 different keel designs until I got the one that looked right. I didn't have any personal contact with anyone from Mars Metals. I sent them a lot of money and they sent me a lead keel. They did help out with how the keel bolts were attached. You talk about your BOAT BUCKS. As the price of lead went up the price of the keel was going up on a monthly basis.

I give a lot of credit to B&G Yacht Designers. The taller mast with double spreaders was a straight forward design change. The keel was a little more involved. In the design changes I asked for they never asked for additional compensation. The design changes have been incorporated into the stock Multichine 28 plans.

We sail out of Tacoma. More South Sound than North. We race with CYCT Windseekers on Wednesday nights and some Saturdays. We win some and lose more and have a great time always.

Time to complete her ten years almost to the day. That is it except for the dream. The dream is to build a boat and sail her to Hawaii. So for the last 30 years that is what I have been doing. Gathering sailing skills and learning how to build boats. Retirement is close. It will take about another 5-7 boat bucks to get her ready.

In closing there are friends that I would like to thank. My wife Dawn whose support and ability to help me brush and tip the paint was of great. Without her help none of this would have happened. To my friend Tim who helped me keep focused and helped with that extra set of hands. We had many Friday nights in the boat shop. To my friend Butch who I bounced ideas off of and he would bounce them back with a "that's a good idea, but what if?" To Dean who helped (did most of it) with the rigging. What he did in two days would have taken me a week. My

Dad and the Illinois River got me into sailing. Dad taught me to make a big project a number of small projects and to keep going until she floats. In reality the list of family and friends is very long. For ten years "the boat" is all I talked about. The commitment is huge. I worked on it every day. Taking a vacation just meant I could work on her more.

So if you are considering building a boat make sure you are doing it for the right reason. It will take longer than you think and cost more than you thought.

The poem. By d.cross

Bella the beautiful

Bella the brave

I see you smiling at each passing wave

Wood gives you life

And Wind lifts your soul

Bella the beautiful

Bella the bold