

# P E R R Y O N D E S I G N



## Colgate 26

Daysailer

Many of us learned to sail aboard dinghies in which we were dunked when we made a mistake. But, perhaps your wherewithal to own a boat came at a time when getting dunked was no longer socially acceptable. Now, how do you learn?

I have frequently recommended Steve Colgate's comprehensive sailing courses. In the past, Colgate used Solings almost exclusively for his training boats. Solings are fast, stable, quite demanding and, at the same time, rewarding. I owned a Soling 20 years ago.

Over the years, the Colgate group assembled a list of parameters for a new trainer and waited for a manufacturer to step forth. The wait was long enough to convince Colgate to

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develop the boat himself. He went to designer Jim Taylor and began to put together a design that would combine comfort, safety and performance, and bridge the gap between clumsy, old-styled weekend cruisers and highly demanding lightweight sport boats. The goal was a boat that people would be happy to own even after the training period.

I think the most interesting feature of this design is the aft teacher position. Note that what appears to be an open transom design is in fact a boat with the transom pushed forward up into the cockpit, leaving a seating area aft for the instructor. This gives the students the security of being surrounded by boat. The instructor has immediate access to the outboard motor and can sit to either side within easy reach of the mainsheet, tiller and traveler. Psychologically, I think it is nice to have the instructor removed from the actual cockpit so that the students feel more responsible for the boat's performance. Most of you know from your own experiences that it is easier to see what is going on when you stay as far aft as possible, where you increase your "aspect of reference."

The hull form is moderate, with relatively firm bilges for stability. The D/L is 145. The extended counter aft makes room for the instructor's seat and gives the boat a graceful look. Most boats designed as trainers have about as much style as a Checker Cab. This boat is stylish and very handsome. If you want your students to get excited about sailing, give them boats that look exciting. I think this Taylor design does that job very well.

The cuddy cabin features berths for two adults and two children. The V-berth is literally a V-berth, with the foot coming to a point. There is a minimal galley with a one-burner alcohol stove and molded-in sink. A large ice chest fits snugly between the mast and the head of the V-berth. A portable head slides back under the cockpit. As ungraceful as this head installation is, it is a dramatic improvement over holding it for three hours while you sail with a mixed crew on a Soling.

Another improvement over the old Soling is the cockpit. You just sit on the deck of the Soling when you aren't hiking. The new boat, however, has a deep, self-draining cockpit. The Soling just fills up with water and sinks unless you fit it with flotation bags. The Colgate 26 is unsinkable. The new boat also has seat backs and enough side deck to allow you to sit on the deck if you choose.

The SA/D is 24. This is enough to allow the boat to be sailed aggressively in light air, while not quickly overpowering the boat. We seem to be in a horsepower race so often now. "My SA/D's bigger than yours." The race for more and more sail area on lighter and lighter boats is leading us away from good, wholesome boats that you can enjoy with panache and grace.

This is a very appealing design. I would guess that Precision Boat Works will sell as many of these boats as recreational daysailers as it will as training boats.

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A four-person sail trainer novices will want to keep, even after the lessons are over.

LOA 25.7', LWL 20', Beam 8.5', Draft 4.5', Displacement 2,600 lbs., Ballast 1,050 lbs., Sail Area 283 sq. ft., SA/D 24, D/L 145, L/B 3.02