

A guide to Australian trailer-sailers, possibly Bob Ross circa late 70's.

Trailer-sailers

Sunmaid - incomplete

The most striking feature of the interior is the virtual lack of centreplate casing. One tends to look for this space killer instinctively. To my surprise, it extended only 30 centimetres or so from the companionway, where in fact it almost formed part of the step-down and was in no way obtrusive. It then tapers down to a height of only a few centimetres for the rest of its length. It hardly seemed to protrude above the cabin floor and thus added even more to the roomy feeling one had sitting down below.

The rig is simple, basic trailer-sailer with uppers and lowers, fore and backstays! You need that sort of simplicity for T-Ss which have to be rigged and de-rigged each time you go sailing. The sheet winches are of course standard as is the aluminium toe rail and a number of other useful, and not normally standard fittings.

The main sheet is horsed onto a standard track right aft of the cockpit, thus keeping everything nicely out of the way. The tiller is solid and has a good heavy feel about it, but I would have liked it to be 'tiltable' so that it could be raised out of the way when not in use or when sailing light. Maybe I am just used to tillers which tilt up out of the way, and admittedly it would be difficult to do with the Sun Maid as the tiller comes through an aperture in the transom, but in the cockpit of any yacht, space is always at a premium, and being able to tilt the tiller up out of the way gives those extra few centimetres that can make quite a difference.

The motor is outboard on a bracket, and again well out of the way, yet easy to get at when required. Rigging the sails took a matter of minutes, and there is no doubt that this boat is easy to rig from trailer upwards - an important point since you don't want to spend half your

sailing day rigging her in the car park.

The Sun Maid thumbed her nose at the weather slipping through the water with delightful ease in the light to moderate stuff and holding her own beautifully through the gusts.

Under pressure, she heeled only to her gunwale and rounded up somewhat, but this is a characteristic of fin keel and centreplate yachts, and is perhaps not a bad one for if a really savage gust hits and there is no time to release the mainsheet, she will round up and luff, thus giving you time to collect your thoughts. Most T-Ss do this, and as I say this is perhaps not a bad thing, for lying down with a press of canvas can invite trouble, whereas rounding up spills the wind and the trouble at the same time.

In the moderate winds the boat slipped along with almost no weather helm at all. In fact, she would virtually sail herself in these conditions and only the occasional gust would worry her. Light on the helm and light on the gear, there was just no hassle about sailing this boat and she responded quickly to every movement of the helm and sheets.

No boat, however large or small, will sail well or respond to the helm if she is over-canvased, and the Sun Maid is no exception. She rounded up in the savage squalls, but as soon as the sails were reset or adjusted for the weight of breeze, she settled back and sailed like a charm again. Incidentally, we found it impossible, during this exercise, to lie her on her ear!

Setting the spinnaker is easy on the quite roomy foredeck, and raising and lowering the plate was so easy I actually overwound it, not realising it was right up. She is easily handled by one person since the cockpit gear is ready to hand and, as mentioned, she almost sails herself in anything but the gusts anyway.

I found this little trailer-sailer to be absolutely tops for family use. She is well designed, she is comfortable, she handles well, is safe as any boat of her size could be and is a delight to sail. She is cruisable, beachable, trailerable, raceable ... in short a very 'able' craft.

SPECIFICATIONS

<i>LOA</i>	6.1 m
<i>LWL</i>	5.48 m
<i>Beam</i>	2.28 m
<i>Maximum draft</i>	1.3 m
<i>Minimum draft</i>	0.4 m
<i>Displacement</i>	840 kg
<i>Ballast</i>	320 kg
<i>Hull material</i>	Fibreglass
<i>Buoyancy</i>	Air tanks and foam insulation
<i>Jib</i>	5.57 m ²
<i>Main</i>	10.67 m ²
<i>Genoa</i>	12.53 m ²
<i>Berths</i>	4
<i>Motor</i>	6 hp (4.48 kW) outboard
<i>Price (at Jan. 1977)</i>	\$6,770
<i>Includes: Sails</i>	Yes
<i>Trailer</i>	No
<i>Motor</i>	No
<i>Manufacturer</i>	Sun Maid Yachts Pty Ltd 613 Nepean Highway Carrum Victoria 3197

