

Boating SAILS

THE CHRIS-CRAFT APACHE 37

BY LARRY KEAN AND SYD ROGERS

Combined efforts of Sparkman & Stephens and Chris-Craft have brought forth a fast, efficient cruising racing auxiliary

After spending part of two days on the new Chris-Craft Apache 37, we were reminded of an old James Cagney gangster movie. The escape car for his gang of bank robbers appeared to the casual eye to be a comfortable family sedan. The joker, of course, was the engine. The power plant was a souped-up Cadillac V-16 which simply ran away from the opposition at the appropriate moment.

This latest fiberglass sailing auxiliary to bear the Chris-Craft name may well turn out to be a real get-away vehicle in the best Cagney tradition.

Viewed at the end of a dock, fresh from the builder, she looked handsome but quite conventional in profile. But after sailing her on the Tred Avon River off Oxford, Md., and studying her underwater shape when hauled out, we could see quite plainly that she is a racing sailboat. In skillful hands, she should have great potential speed.

The Stephens brothers—Olin and Rod—have designed the Apache in line with the current trend to achieve high performance over a wide range of wind conditions, so have given her minimum wetted surface. Her keel, short in lateral plane, is a well shaped iron fin with bulb. It is recessed into the fiberglass hull so that the joint is barely perceptible. Her rudder, of course, is separate; it is mounted well aft to gain maximum lever arm. Instead of being naked in the California tradition, it is hung on a small fiberglass skeg faired into the hull. Yet a grounding could conceivably still cause trouble.

The Apache's bilges have been made quite slack, again to minimize wetted surface. But when sailing on the wind in 12 knots of air under #1 genoa and mainsail, she was anything but tender.

Perhaps her most noticeable trait, even to an untutored eye, was the lack of wake aft and her business-like manner of getting through the short bay chop. Her bow has very little flare above the water line and achieves a fine entrance. Her beam is noticeable for a keel boat but not excessive, and it is carried far enough aft to give a comfortable cockpit and handsome stern.

Considerable thought obviously has gone into the rig. Her spars are aluminum. The boom with roller-reefing gear is also equipped with a clew fitting that is adjustable at the forward end of the

SPECIFICATIONS

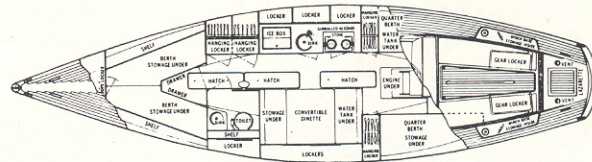
Dimensions:

Length overall.....	37'0"	Freeboard forward....	4'11"
Waterline length.....	26'3"	Freeboard aft.....	3'4"
Beam.....	10'2½"	Bridge Clearance*....	48'8"
Draft.....	5'9"	Ballast.....	6220 lbs. (cast iron)

*Waterline to top of mast

Designed displacement: 13,022 lbs.

Sail area: 595 sq ft.



Accommodations: Sleeps six: two V-berths in forward cabin, dinette converts to double berth, and two quarter berths aft. Galley with top-loading ice box; stainless steel sink; gimballed two-burner stove; 6' 6" counter, drawers, and lockers. Enclosed head with Groco manual w/c; fiberglass lavatory, shelves, and lockers. Four hanging lockers.

Construction: Hull, deck, cabin, and self-bailing cockpit of reinforced fiberglass. Molded bulwark and taffrail capped with natural teak. Cockpit coaming, grabrails, and trim of natural teak.

Spars and rigging: Elliptical aluminum mast with integral sail track, 6061-T6 alloy. Aluminum boom fitted with roller reefing gooseneck and ratchet outhaul. Stainless steel tangs and fittings. Stainless steel 1 x 19 standing rigging with swaged fitting and chrome-plated bronze turnbuckles. Dacron main and jib sheets, 7 x 19 s.s. main and jib halyards with dacron tails.

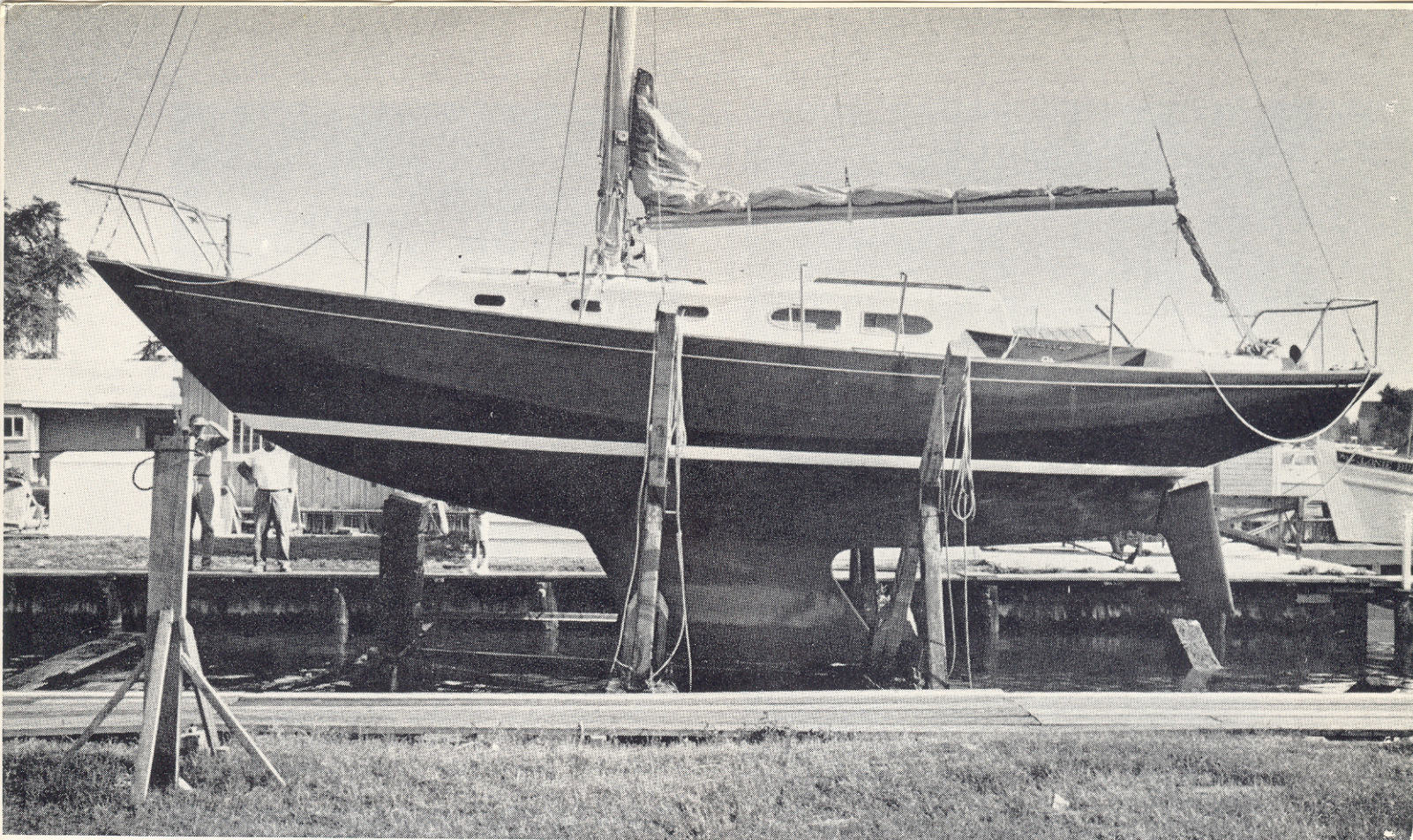
Equipment: International Rule running lights; hand bilge pump; two 2½ lb dry chemical fire extinguishers; deck fittings of chrome-plated bronze, stainless steel, and marine grade alloy; inner and outer genoa tracks; four screw-type track cars; two #5 sheet winches; #2 top action jib halyard winch; blocks; Marimum cleats and chocks; five fixed windows, 5/16" Plexiglas; three PVC cowl vents, one on dorade box; two separate 12 v electrical systems, one for engine, one for lighting; 6 cabin lights; electrical panel with 9 switches and 5 fuses; two 6 v batteries connected in series for each system; standing rigging and spars grounded to keel for lightning protection; 25 gal Monel fuel tank; 49 gal s.s. freshwater tank.

Propulsion: Universal Atomic Four 30 hp gasoline engine, direct drive to 13" x 9" 2-bladed Michigan Sailboat wheel. 35 amp alternator with charge divider. Diesel power available as optional extra.

Price: With equipment described above and standard propulsion, \$19,990 fob Salisbury, Md. Test boat with all required equipment, sails, and numerous extras had a retail value of over \$23,000.

Designer: Sparkman & Stephens, Inc.

Builder: Chris-Craft Corp., Pompano Beach, Fla. 33061



Apache's distinctive racing underbody is revealed during haul-out. Her cast iron fin-keel is adjustable fore and aft.

LARRY KEAN

boom by a removable crank attached to an internal wire outhaul. Changes in sail shape can thus be made when off the wind.

Her spreaders are narrow to permit close trimming of headsails, a feature which pays off only when there is an easily driven hull underneath. The hull, we were told, was tank tested by designer Olin Stephens.

For a company that built its reputation on wooden inboard power cruisers this fiberglass sailboat is a startling departure. The first Chris-Craft sailing yachts to appear on the market a few years ago seemed to be aimed at a transition market: power boatmen who wanted to get into sail. The designs were conservative, the boats forgiving in their performance and not intended to be raced.

However, to find happiness in today's sailing auxiliary market, a builder must offer the promise of performance even if many buyers turn out to be gunk-holing cruising men at heart.

For anyone who enjoys competition, this boat should be a strong contender in any kind of racing. For the cruising man, the design offers a stable platform for comfort, and a choice of alternative cabin arrangements.

Getting down to details, there were many things we liked and a few we think could be improved.

Chris-Craft has hidden a great big plus in this boat . . . all appliances, blowers, fixtures, including the carburetor flame arrester are approved by the Yacht Safety Bureau. This is a step that we heartily recommend for all builders of pleasure craft.

The ventilation system for the engine is excellent.

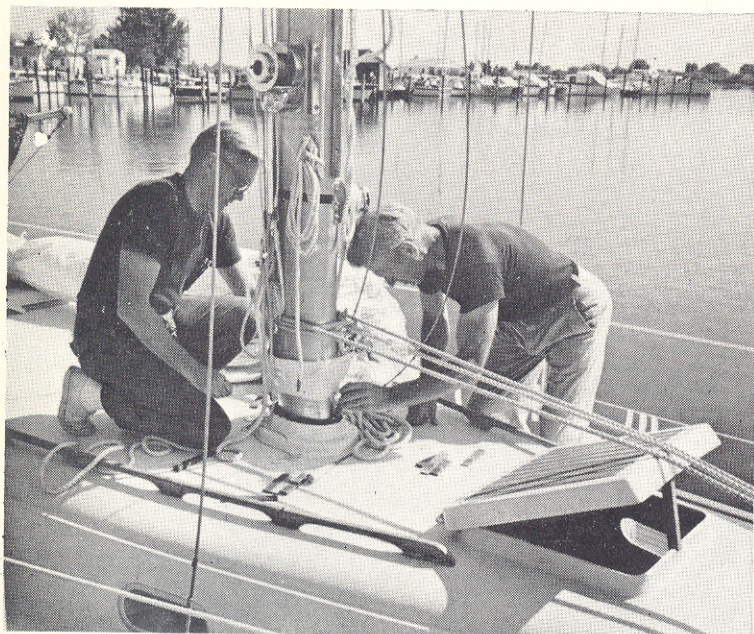
Vents and ducts are slightly oversized and in all respects meet the new Coast Guard regulations. The Apache's rigging is grounded to the keel bolts.

The cockpit, at seat level, has a scupper on the outboard side to drain the length of the seat. The covers to sail lockers in the cockpit also have deep recessed scuppers. Visibility over the trunk cabin is good. The gasoline fuel pipe is grounded and is accessible on the raised winch base outboard of the cockpit coaming. No fumes can collect, and spillage runs over the side. The gasoline tank vent is high on the transom, far from the cockpit, and is protected with a sharp U-bend to prevent water entrance.

The winch bases are sloped for convenient cranking of the handles. Winch bases are bolted through the main deck as well as through the base of the molded fiberglass platform. Cleats, fastenings, stanchion bases are through-bolted with back-up plates. All through-hull openings have seacocks, and they are quite accessible.

As with any prototype design in the process of being tested, faults can be found. The stanchion bases appeared to be not very rugged and not quite suitable for the tall (2'3") stanchions. The boat we sailed had only one pair of main deck scuppers, of small diameter, which drained overboard half way down the topsides. They were easily clogged. This pair, we gather from her builders, will be enlarged and at least one more pair added in another location.

Belowdecks, the Apache 37 reflects the same care that went into her hull and rig design. The main

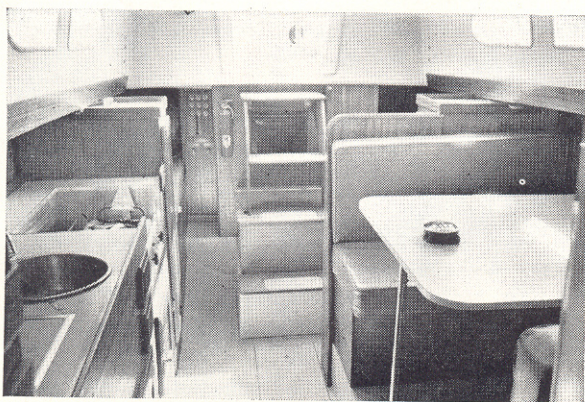


PHOTOGRAPHS BY LARRY KEAN

Designers Olin (left) and Rod Stephens replace rubber wedges after shifting Apache's mast during sailing trials.

cabin is bright, cheerful and well arranged. First thing to catch your eye is the large galley area running fore and aft along the starboard side. The working surface, over 6 feet long, is finished with an attractive high pressure laminate and fitted with sea rails. Convenient dish lockers with sliding doors run the length of the counter top. A stainless-steel-lined well contains a two-burner gimbaled alcohol stove, and a top-loading, foam-insulated ice chest is located under the forward end of the counter. A 13" dia stainless steel sink with a positive shut-off pump completes the combination. The experienced owner will probably elect to install a pair of pad eyes and a strap for bracing the cook in heavy weather.

As the plan on page 46 shows, a convertible dinette occupies the space opposite the galley. It is fitted with a 3'5½" x 3'1½" table, seats four and converts easily to a 6'6" x 3'5½" double berth. The table lacks sea rails, which we feel are a must for a cruising/racing boat. We had mixed feelings about the dinette. At sea the berths are usually not needed but the table does make a good navigator's area. In harbor, however, the dinette is not the place



Apache's main cabin is neatly divided by two lockers that add to the privacy of the commodious quarter berths.

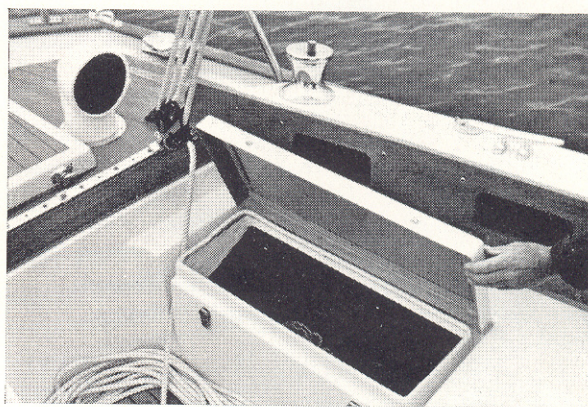
for late sleepers; it ties-up the main cabin completely.

Aft, separated from the galley and dinette by a pair of hanging lockers, is a pair of large (6'6") quarter berths. With almost half of their length in the main cabin, the usual coffin-like feeling of most quarter berths has been avoided.

Hard by the starboard berth is the electrical panel, which—in keeping with the high standards characteristic of Chris-Craft's powerboat line—is beautifully designed. Fuses are readily accessible and all the toggle switches are neatly labeled. A pair of master switches controls the two 12 v systems (engine starting and lighting). Each system has a pair of 6 v batteries connected in series and charged through a charge divider from the 35 amp engine alternator.

The private forward cabin sleeps two in a pair of roomy, foam cushioned V-berths. The privacy is somewhat illusory, however, since the cabin door doubles as the head door. Full length shelves, drawers, and under-berth stowage add to the usefulness of the cabin.

The head has a fiberglass sole, designed to function as a shower pan with the optional shower installation. A pair of huge hanging lockers is located



Cam-type fasteners, plus high coamings, and deep drain slots keep her large cockpit seat lockers watertight.

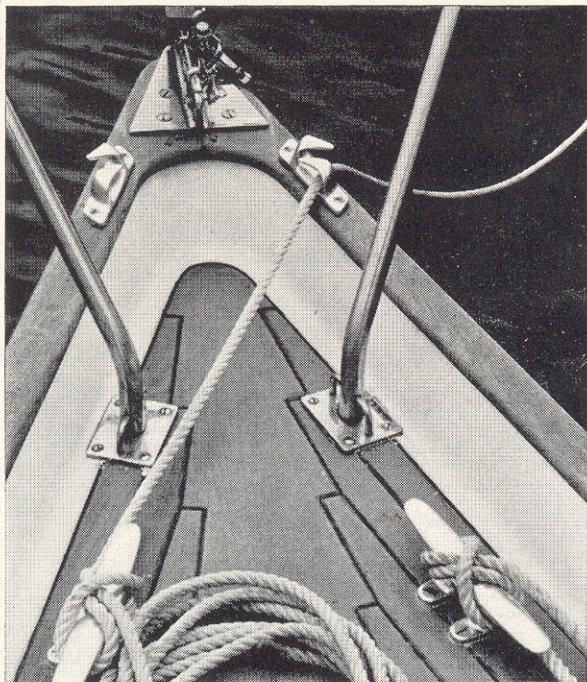
opposite the head, equally convenient to either cabin. Stowage space throughout the Apache is excellent for a boat this size.

Both Chris-Craft and Sparkman & Stephens have done an excellent job in making the engine fully accessible—remove the ladder, remove the upper housing and presto! there's the engine . . . no tools required.

This ease of accessibility is repeated throughout the boat, a feature missing in many stock boats we have sailed.

Back topsides, a word about the deck surface—when we first approached the boat at dockside she appeared to have a laid teak deck. On close inspection, however, we saw it was fiberglass. Bill Seger, Chris-Craft's sailboat boss man, told us that the plug was planked-up with a teak deck and through some gel coat magic involving hand striping and several gel coat colors, the finished product really looks like the genuine article . . . and a good non-skid surface to boot (or shoe).

The boat steered with a heavy helm at the time of



Twin mooring cleats are typical of Apache's detailing. Her non-skid deck surface is simulated teak fiberglass.

our sailing her and in the puffs developed a weather helm. Some of this was directly attributable to the spanking new sails that had tight leeches and excessive draft too far aft. And some of it was apparently caused by the rudder which has been modified in size and shape to incorporate a balanced effect.

All new designs—sail and power—require a degree

of tinkering by designer and builder to achieve maximum performance. Witness the feverish work that precedes success in a 12-Meter, or accompanies the tuning of engine and testing of various propellers on racing powerboats. On the Apache 37, we were allowed to sail the boat during its trials.

Apache 37's performance during our sail was impressive and convincing proof that Chris-Craft means to have a winner. ⚓

Companion steps conceal Apache's 30 hp Atomic Four engine. Note neatly arranged electrical panel to starboard.

