

# GERT-JAN

DESIGN BY A. VOLKER

## Editor's Comment

ANYONE who has cruised in the waterways of Holland will understand the affection with which the Dutch regard their traditional types of sailing vessel. For hundreds of years the ordinary, and practically the only, method of transport in a great part of the Netherlands was by water and many different types of working boats were developed with strange names and picturesque shapes. Strange names indeed; tjalk, bolpraam, tjoetter, botter, boeieraak, hoogaars, hengst, schokker, to name some of them.

Most of the smaller vessels in Holland were, until recently, of a traditional type hardly different from those built several centuries earlier, but more recently there has been a change. Good roads and railways are a quicker means of transport than water: the motor barge has deserted the old form of hull, and yachts are more often built on modern lines than as botters, boeiers, hoogaars or lemsteraaks.

Recently the Royal Netherlands Yachting Union held a designing competition for a small yacht based on one of the traditional types, 7 metres (23ft) on the waterline. Seven entries were received and, of these, four at least were of exceptionally high standard and all different in inspiration.

Commenting on the competition in *De Waterkampioen* Mr. Jan Loeff, Secretary of the Dutch Yachting Union, who was one of the judges, says:

"After looking at the entries, I realized what a difficult competition it was. The designer had first to make up his mind what type to select before tackling the many other problems. I must admit that I had expected several competitors to tend in the direction of a scow or a punt, and I was pleasantly surprised to see that, with one exception, all the designs were much more advanced; the designers selecting models that made higher demands on their ability, and, it must be said, better looking results were obtained. I should like to see in this a further sign of affection for the old Dutch ship and confirmation of the fact that much may be found here that is especially suited to our inland waters, including the rivers, streams, the Zuiderzee and Waddenzee."

Winner of the first prize, Mr. A. Volker, designed *Gert-Jan* with the botter, or drifter, type in mind but with subtle differences which suggest to Mr. Loeff that she might better be called an "aakje," a small barge, or perhaps a "bolletje," a little ball or globule. Certainly her profile and sheer are more reminiscent of a Houten Lemsteraak, which also has the flat bottom and curved topsides of the botter.

Beam of 10ft on a waterline length of 23ft was considered very wide even in Holland, though, in fact, the proportion is not very different from that of some of the latest American yachts. *Gert-Jan* must rely entirely upon beam for her stability for her only ballast is the weight of her hull, and Mr. Loeff suggests that the hollow box keel should be filled with ballast as it would not do her any harm to float a little deeper. Her overall length is 26ft 7in, draft 2ft 3in, and sail area 450 sq ft, of which the mainsail comprises 236 sq ft.

In the past, a little ship like this would have been built of oak, the whole hull would have been varnished and very pretty she would have looked. Now, it is much cheaper to build in steel and which gives a good deal more accom-

modation for one's money; for the thick oak planking and the heavy frames of the wooden hull take up a lot of space. *Gert-Jan's* specification calls for steel 5mm thick for the bottom plate, 4mm for the sides and 3mm for the deck, though Mr. Loeff suggests that 3mm would have been preferable for the top strake. The steel frames are 45mm x 45mm x 5mm, spaced 350mm with the flanges inside.

In one respect the designer offends against tradition by running the stem down in a fair curve to the keel. A proper Dutch boat has a "loefbieter" or "loefhouder" which is an extension of the deadwood forward of the stem to form a sort of toe which is intended to prevent the head blowing off when going to windward. Mr. Loeff suggests that *Gert-Jan* has not enough forward and too much aft and that she would be more easily manoeuvrable if part of the after deadwood were to be cut away just forward of the propeller aperture.

Other points upon which the competition judges do not agree with the designer are, firstly the method of lowering the mast, which is in a tabernacle mounted on the coachroof. The judges thought that a mast pivoted in the tabernacle with a counterweight below decks would be easier to handle when going under bridges and well worth the disturbance to the accommodation. Secondly, they did not like the shape of the coachroof, the sides of which should slope inwards.

The shape of the hull is so unlike anything we have in this country that it is difficult for us to comment upon it except to say that it is a fair and pleasing design. It is amazing how this bluff, almost square bow will burst through the short, steep seas of the Dutch rivers, whereas in our own coastal waters such a vessel would be stopped dead. A point to notice is that Mr. Volker has drawn aerofoil sections for the leeboards, for well designed boards make a great difference to the performance to windward. Last year for the first time aerofoil leeboards were fitted to the barge which won the Thames Barge Race.

A fat little boat like this has plenty of room below and the judges had this to say about accommodation:

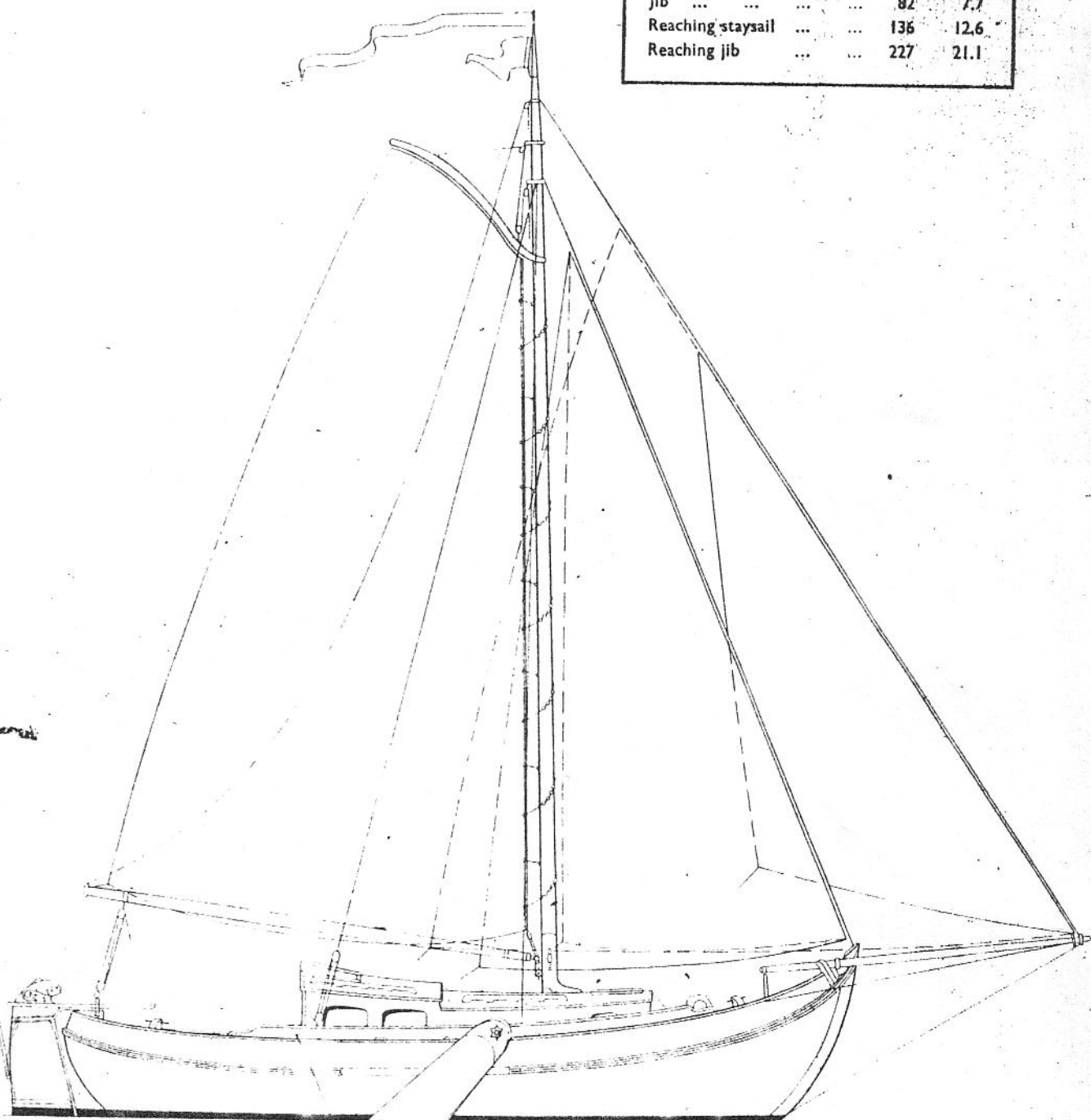
"The appointments are neat. Sleeping accommodation for five is more than was asked. It is delightful, though, if the cabin can remain unslept in and this can be done if there were three people. The sail room forward is, however, too small, so that the bunks in the fo'c's'le cannot remain free from sail bags. The location of the w.c. in the fo'c's'le is practical. The U-shaped bench in the cabin is rather narrow, but the table is made with two flaps. A chart table is perhaps too large a feature for so small a ship. The oilskin locker could be enlarged at the expense of the chart table. A storage locker is not shown, but a portion of the hanging locker under the gangway can be fitted out for the purpose."

Headroom below the normal coachroof is 5ft 7in, and under the raised portion is 5ft 11in, which is unusual for a small flat-bottom. A Ford Prefect engine should give ample power when required.

We commend the idea of the Royal Netherlands Yachting Union for this competition which has produced such admirable designs in general and such an artistic, practical and interesting entry as that of *Gert-Jan*.

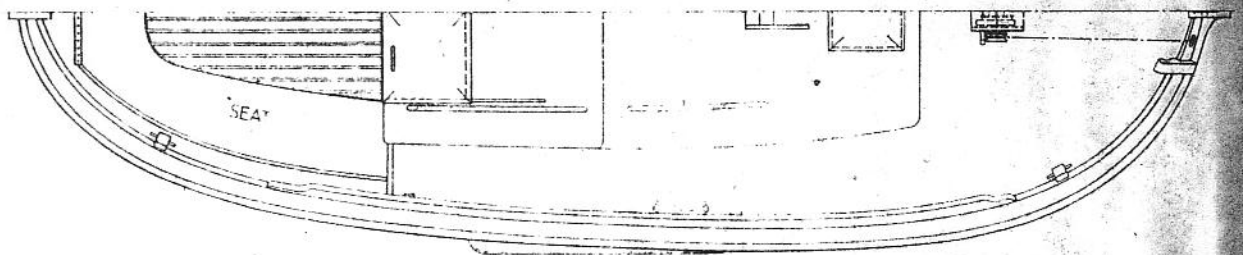
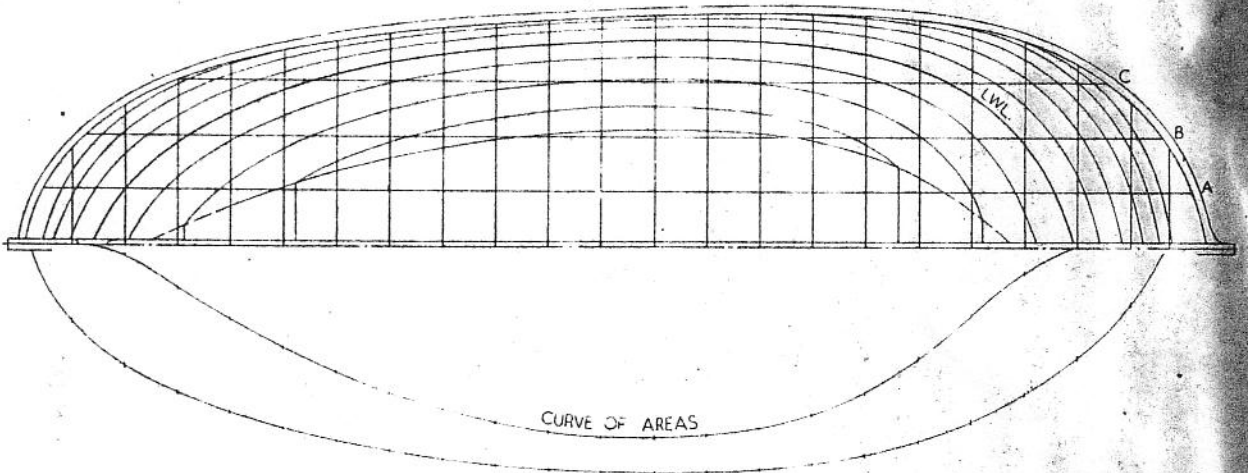
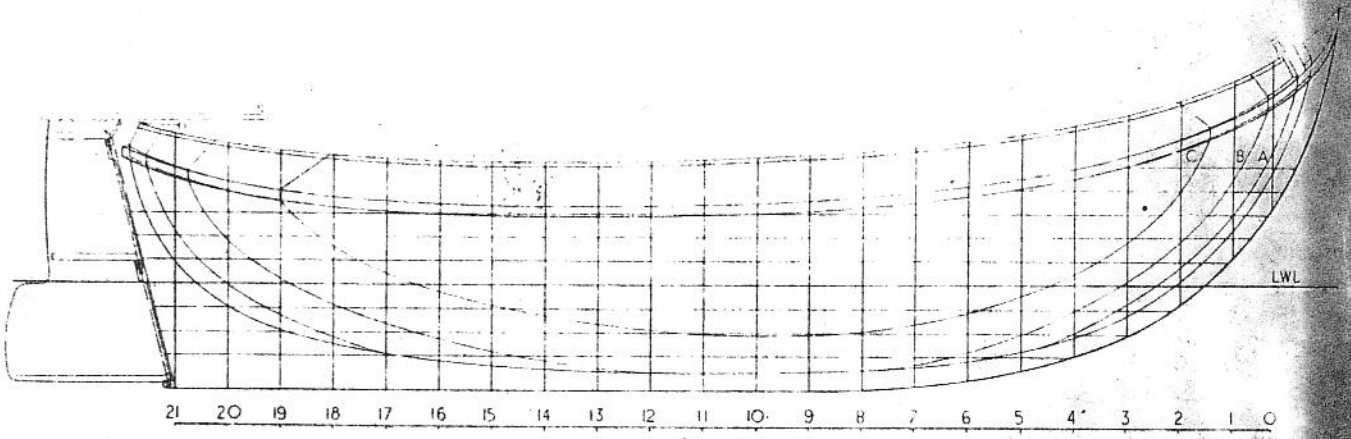
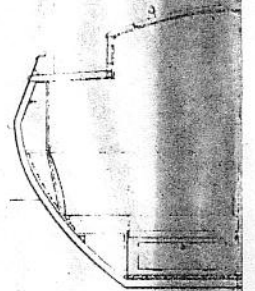
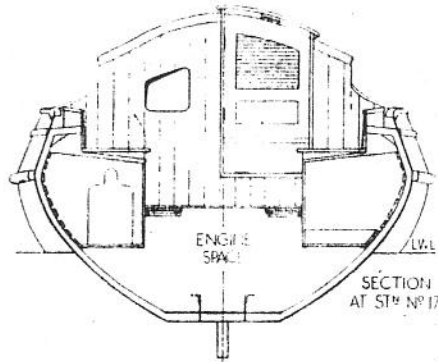
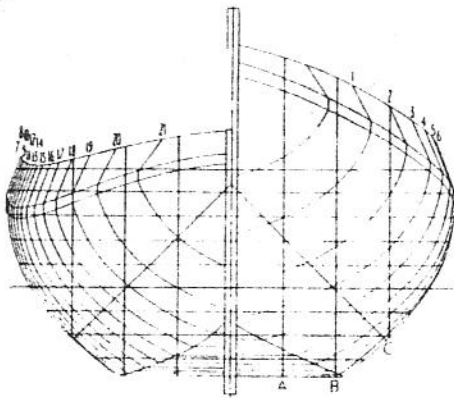
# GERT-JAN

SAIL AREAS			
		sq. ft.	m <sup>2</sup>
Mainsail	...	236	22
Staysail	...	101	9.4
Jib	...	82	7.7
Reaching staysail	...	136	12.6
Reaching jib	...	227	21.1



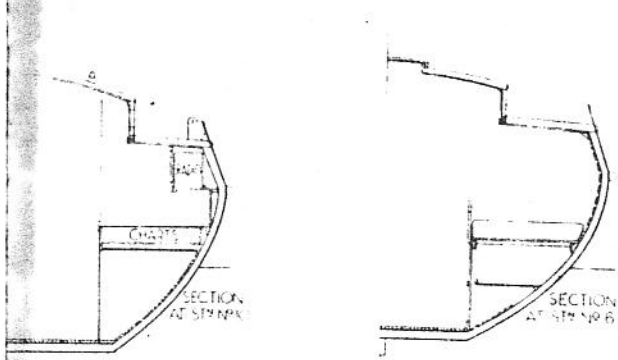
# GERT

DESIGN BY

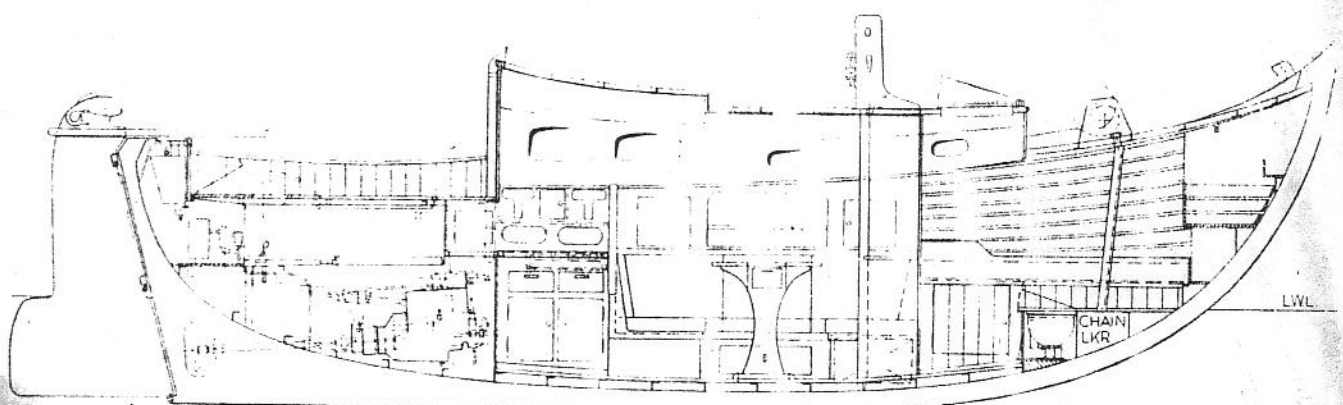


# T-JAN

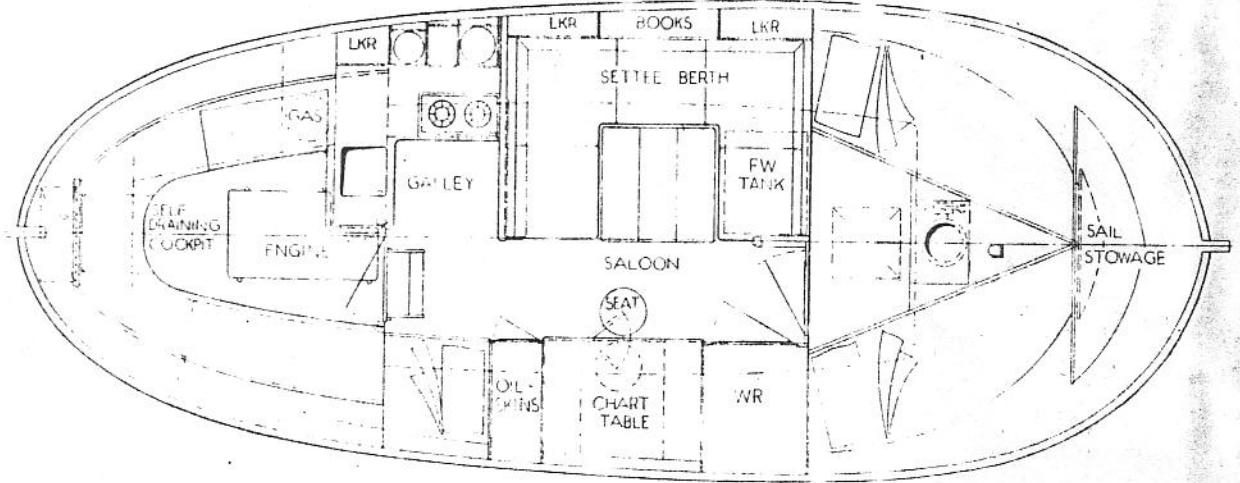
A. VOLKER



DIMENSIONS			
		ft.	m.
L.O.A.	...	26.6	8.10
L.W.L.	...	23	7
Beam	...	10.08	3.07
Draft	...	2.23	0.68
Sail Area	...	450sq. ft.	42sq. m.



21 20 19 18 17 16 15 14 13 12 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0



0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

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