Sadler 34 Upgrades

The first Sadler 34 was built in 1983 (being Alatash), which we sold last year to a customer in the North of England. Over the fourteen year period, some 250 have been built, the last few by Bowman Yachts, who I understand are not likely to build any further 34s.

Having sold a fair number of Sadler 34s over the last three years and having been involved in a good many more for maintenance and refurbishment, we have acquired a knowledge of what needs to be done. As the boat gets older, certain units in due course need replacement and other parts of the boat need refurbishment. We have dealt with a number of these over the last 12 months in Dartmouth and the object of this short article is to alert Sadler 34s owners to what is available and what can be done.

1 **REFRIGERATOR.** Many 34s have the chest type refrigerator which was built into the galley near the companionway under the work surface. After about a decade, the fridge door seals are generally degraded, the compressor becomes less efficient and the insulation less effective.

We have fitted the upgrade Engel fridge in a number of 34s and owners have reported greatly ehanced efficiency with of course a clean new unit to enhance galley appearance.

The shape has altered slightly in that the new fridge is a little higher and about 2" narrower. Adjustment to the aperture is easily carried out, with a new piece of teak trim either side to fill up the resulting gap. It certainly goes into the available space with no trouble.

2 **TEAK SEATING.** This was discussed in the May '97 issue of the Owner's Magazine and anyone wanting a reprint should give us a call. The material originally used for most of the Sadlers was plywood with a teak veneer on top and solid teak trim at the inboard edge. Most have degraded badly, with splits in the trim and exposed fastenings (which damage clothes and legs!). We can supply replacement panels to be fitted by the owner, or alternatively we can do the whole job in Dartmouth.

3 **RIG.** We are now conversant with a number of problems that can arise with the older 34s in relation to lower shrouds and chainplates. We can supply advice or rectification work/modifications as required.

4 **LIFTING KEELS.** A number of 34s were built with cast iron centre plates housed in the solid ballast keel, everything mounted external to the hull. There was no intrusion into the cabin, except for a small diameter conduit to take the control cable vertically, up behind the mast and onto a tackle mounted on the coachroof and finally to a winch.

Owners who have these centre plates, generally approve of the shallow draft (3' 6" when lifted) and the very acceptable windward performance when the keel is down.

Having dealt with these keels, we are of the opinion that a full service is required at least every five years, mainly to attend to the eye bolt fastened into the keel and the wire strop for the lifting mechanism. Anybody interested in refurbishment of their lifting keel should talk to us and we can deal with this in Dartmouth if required.

5 **BUHK 20 - COLD STARTING.** As the engine gets older and compression reduces, cold starting often becomes more difficult. There is now available from Bukh a cold start mechanism which can be retro-fitted. We have already supplied and fitted these units, which provides much improved cold starting.

6 **PRESSURISED WATER SYSTEM.** There are several ways in which the hot and cold water system can be improved and there are several well known and widespread problems within the Sadler 34 installations which can be readily overcome.

(a) **Fresh water cooling.** Most of the Sadler 34s with Bukh engines have the standard raw water cooling, hence the heat exchanger has salt water circulating, with all the resulting problems of

corrosion. If you do not have a hot water system, then we can supply a bolt-on calorifier, with unions and piping, to connect up a fresh water cooling arrangement for the engine. This is of course a greatly improved system, particularly as fresh water then circulates the engine rather than salt water.

(b) **Pump.** A further development is the availability of more efficient water pumps. That fitted on your boat is almost certainly inadequate and you can get higher pressure and more reliability from a new Whale Gusher pump or similar.

(c) **Accumulator tank.** A relatively low- cost accessory is an accumulator tank. This evens out the pressure in the system and provides a reservoir so that when the tap is initially turned on, it does not necessarily call for the water pump to operate and indeed this does not happen until the overall pressure drops below a certain level. This is particuarly important at night when the sound of the water pump can wake sleeping crew members.

(d) **Calorifier.** The old type calorifiers were effective and cheap, but problems have been experienced in the plumbing and also break down of insulation material around the calorifier.

Improved versions are now available with better fittings and plumbing connections.

7 **COOKER.** A replacement Plastimo Atlantic cooker is now available at a modest price, complete with gimbals and sea rail. This improves the appearance of the galley of course, but more impotantly, the modern cookers are better insulated than those supplied some ten years ago. Less heat loss means reduced gas consumption.

Be sure to have the local Corgi registered gas expert to check over the copper piping installation for abrasion and to replace the flexible armoured cable and various fittings to the cooker. Also fit an isolation tap so that the gas can be turned off within the cabin.

8 **SINKS AND GALLEY WORK SURFACE.** Upto about 1988 the Sadler 34 was fitted with double sinks in Vitreous enamel. These are liable to chip and are difficult to repair.

An attractive solution is to remove the old sinks and replace with a combination of modern stainless steel sinks, which are now available from the main suppliers. This also provides an opportunity to remove the old formica work surface and replace with a more attractive laminate. It involves removal only of the hardwood trim immediately around the galley, remove the old formica and stick the new formica down with a contact adhesive. Then replace the hardwood trim.

9 **UPHOLSTERY.** As time progresses, the foam filling becomes less resilient and fails to recover it's shape. In due course also, the cover material can become stained and loose its' colour through fading.

A dramatic improvement in the interior can be achieved through fitting new upholstery with modern foams (which are specified not to produce much smoke in the event of a fire) and modern fabrics, for which there is a very wide range of colours and patterns which can really transform the interior of the boat.

The original design of upholstery was fairly basic and much improved in 1989 when the Sadler International style was first implemented. These were shaped backs, with radius corner sections, a degree of buttoning and a shaped roll at the inboard edge to give support to the legs.

This is of course a fairly expensive upgrade, but should be considered as part of a general refurbishment plan, where the interior of the boat is being tackled.

10 **WIRING AND HOLES IN INTERIOR MOULDING.** We have seen a number of Sadler 34s, where installation of electrical equipment has been handled by the owner. Where the interior moulding is drilled to take cable, the access for water should be sealed by the fitting of conduit, or sealant such as Sikaflex, so as to seal the hole.

In general, any water finding it's way into the voids between the interior moulding and the hull will not travel far, because the polyurethane foam is of closed cell construction and does not allow the water to pass through. However, there have been cases where flexing of the outer skin (particularly in forward panels) has tended to break down the foam insulation in that area. If this combines with water getting into it through holes, then clearly there is a degree of water absorption. If water does not penetrate, then there is no damaging effect.

The important message is that where holes are drilled in the interior moulding, be sure to fill them up with something.

11 **TOILET INSTALLATION.** Relatively low cost improvements can be made by replacing the Brydon Boy ITT toilet with a new one. Alternatively, if the toilet is in good shape, then you can buy a replacement seat and lid as a separate item.

The job really worth doing is to replace the old hose which will certainly have degraded and produces a pungent smell as a result of sea water reaction to the material of the hose. Consider replacing this with the latest Hygena hose which is white and does not react to organic substances in the water.

12 **CONCLUSION.** I have outlined a few ideas which may well inspire some changes to your boat. If we can help further, you are welcome to give us a call at Mike Lucas Yachting 01803 212818.