XYZ Extreme: A Study in Compromise

By maximizing the fluke surface area and minimizing the shank volume, the XYZ Extreme is designed to quickly and deeply penetrate the sea bottom. The relatively sharp-edged horn at the end of the shank, designed to help the anchor settle fluke-down under load, will also penetrate the bottom easily. But these design features, which effectively improve performance, involve a compromise in terms of practical application.

The short, swaged stainless steel wire leader (photo at right, bottom) is vulnerable to corrosion when immersed in seawater. XYZ advises replacing this on a yearly basis and says the anchor will still work well without it. For working anchor service, we would fasten the anchor directly to chain. Also, the shank-to-fluke joint involves mechanical fasteners (photo at right, top), introducing another failure point not found in a unibody drop-forged design. According to XYZ, the anchor will support its designed loads with two bolts; four are in place for redundancy.

Finally, the anchor's horn seemed vulnerable to getting wrapped with chain while it is on the bottom, or snagging a jib sheet while it is on a bow roller. XYZ says the horn on its latest design is less likely to snag a line or chain.

While *Practical Sailor* applauds the efforts of XYZ to re-examine anchor design in pursuit of ultimate holding power, we still see room for improvement if the XYZ anchor is meant to serve as an everyday working anchor that will stow on the bow roller of a sailboat.

Details that drew testers' attention were the bolted shank-to-fluke joint (top) and the swaged leader.