CONSTRUCTION DETAILS: SHANNON 37/38

Shannon's construction technique was fairly conventional for the Shannon 38 (99 hulls built between 1975 and 1983) and the 37 (19 hulls between 1985 and 1993), but it excelled in workmanship. For this reason, Shannons are relatively free of the problems that plague other boats of this era.

HULL: The early Shannon 37s are solid FRP laminate. All boats were laid up as one piece in the bolted-together mold, which allows the fiberglass laminates to be continuous athwartships, with overlaps of double thickness on the centerline. In 1985, Shannon started using closed-cell cross-linked PVC foam (Airex) in the hull from just below the sheer to the turn of the bilge.

Blister-resistant isophthalic gelcoat has been used since 1978. In 1986, Shannon began to use vinylester resin and epoxy undercoating for additional hull protection. Small ring frames on the inside of the hull provide additional rigidity. Hardwood ceiling battens are fastened to these frames, creating an airspace that, in conjunction with the Airex core in newer boats, prevents condensation along the hull side in cold weather.

DECK: Between 1975 and 1982, the Shannons had balsa-cored decks. In 1983, Shannon switched to Divynicell or Klegecell in the decks, which is still being used. Some older Shannons have had problems with cosmetic crazing (small cracks) in the deck gelcoat. This will be readily apparent on an affected boat. The through-bolts on all deck hardware are accessible by removing some trim pieces.

The Shannons diamond nonskid traced its origins to the pattern on the bed of designer Walter Shulz's Ford pickup truck.

HULL-DECK JOINT: The hull-to-deck joint is bonded with structural adhesive/bonding compound and mechanically fastened with 3/8-inch stainless steel bolts, washers, and aircraft lock nuts on 16-inch centers. The deck is further secured by through-bolting the teak toe rail on the deck with 5/16-inch bolts on alternate 16-inch centers, and then through-bolting the genoa track on the toerail with 1/4-inch bolts on 4-inch centers. As the bolts are staggered, the deck is through-bolted to the internal hull flange at least every eight inches.

All structural bulkheads are attached to the hull with continuous fiberglass filaments that are threaded through the bulkheads and tabbed using vinylester resin, which means that bulkheads do not come adrift on these boats.

KEEL AND RUDDER: On fixed keel models, the ballast lead is internal and encapsulated. The centerboard on the 37 is stainless steel encapsulated in fiberglass.

SPARS AND RIGGING: Twin-spreader, aluminum masts featuring parallel headstays were a standard feature on both the ketch and cutter rigs. Solid stainless steel rod rigging replaced conventional wire in 1979 to avoid swage failures.