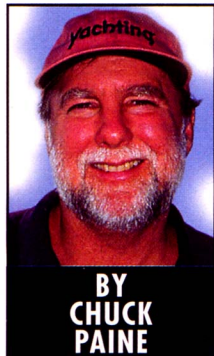


NESTER DINGHY



BY
CHUCK
PAINE

MY FATHER-IN-LAW, FRANK, SPENT HIS working life as a surgeon. It was a great career, but with one serious drawback: he couldn't build boats. With lives in the balance, it just wouldn't do to be passing those highly skilled digits within millimeters of whirling saw blades. Now retired, he can indulge his passion for woodworking. A few years ago

he went looking for the ideal design for a nesting dinghy to carry aboard his cruising sailboat, and after an exhaustive search, he built Dave Gerr's Nester. Residing as she does atop the family boat, she's a rowboat I've come to know and love.

You've come to expect a design review of a substantial powerboat on this page, but there's nothing like a good dinghy to make the cruising life a pleasure.

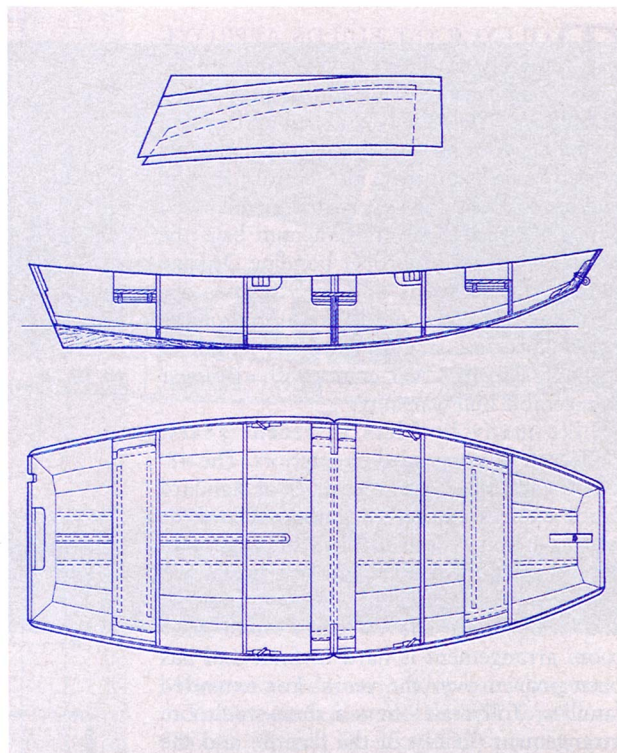
The advantages of a nesting dinghy are many. Stuff one half inside the other and you should be able to find a usable deck space to stow her, even aboard a relatively small boat. You'll need a space at least 5' 10" long by 4' 6" wide. Each half is lighter, therefore easier to lift on

IN A PINCH, WE'VE HAULED A MIXTURE OF SEVEN GROWNUPS AND KIDS AND THE ODD DOG—DON'T TELL THE COAST GUARD

board, than the whole of a one-piece dinghy. Still, you'll want a three-point bridle off a halyard on a sailboat, or a crane of some sort on a motor cruiser. Since she's easy to get on deck, she actually ends up there, so you sail faster and tell fewer of the old "swamped dinghy" stories at the yacht club bar.

Once in the water and buckled together, Nester becomes an 11' rowboat or an outboard-powered tender, not just your lowly dink. This is where Nester really shines—she's fabulous to row and she can carry a lot of freight. In a pinch, we've hauled a mixture of seven grownups and kids and the odd dog to shore—don't tell the Coast Guard. With one, two or three people aboard, she can really skate along. There's art in getting this right. The rocker in the bottom must be pronounced enough to keep the transom from dragging water, and the waterplane must be narrow in proportion to its length so she'll track straight. There are rowing thwarts and oarlocks for both the middle and the bow person to row. You take turns. One turn in three you're the Admiral in the stern sheets, calling out "stroke" like the Duke of Puke.

Nester's shape is double chine, and all of the curves of her two side strakes and bottom are developable, meaning



Buckled together, Nester is an 11' rowboat, not just a lowly dink.

LOA 11' 0"
LOA (Nested) 5' 10"
Max. beam 4' 6"
Beam/length ratio .409

that flat sheets of plywood will drape over the frames without having to be tortured into place. There's no keelson and no chine logs—

no longitudinal members at all except the plywood planks themselves and a gunwale strake around the sheer where she's liable to bang into things. The immense strength of cab-o-sil thickened epoxy fillets, covered with some glass tape on the outside for chafe resistance, eliminates the need for such stiffeners.

The detail in the plans is excellent. The success of a nesting dinghy hinges around how she's held together. You've got to be able to align the two halves in the water standing with one foot in each, and bend over and bolt the thing together with one hand before the obvious happens. Gerr has carefully detailed the vital fittings in his plans, and he's got the clearances just right so that alignment is not super critical, yet when you cinch the thing together it's all of a oneness, and won't come apart 'til you want it to. □

Contact: Gerr Marine Inc., Dept. Y, 838 West End Ave., Suite BB, New York, NY 10025. (212) 864-7030; fax (212) 932-0872.