

DEREK SANSON
sails two small
centreplaters . . .

MEET THE BRADWELL 18

THERE ARE TOO few sailing cruisers for under £700, fewer still designed for shoal-draft, family sailing. One newcomer which does seem to fit the bill is the Bradwell 18. The cabin has two berths forward (space for a loo between), a locker port and starboard to take a cooker and a sink, then two quarter berths running under the cockpit benches. There is good sitting headroom, plenty of light and ventilation through the fore-hatch and sliding main hatch. I would have preferred to have seen a ventilator placed over the cooker area amidships, and fiddle rails to the lockers. Other minor grouses were the restrictive height to the quarter birth tunnel, and the 3-inch mattresses through which I



could feel the resinglass moulding.

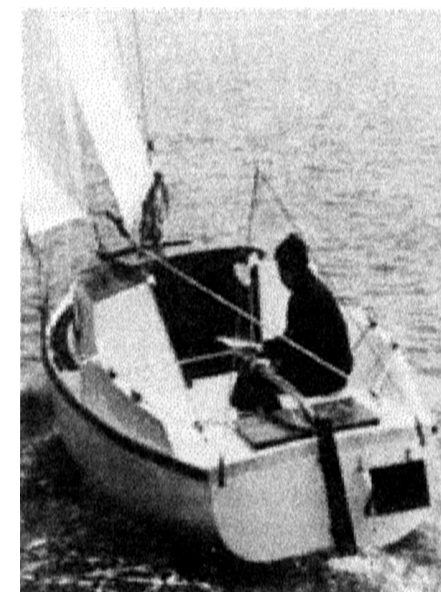
The cockpit is a good size for family sailing, comfortable, and snug with high cockpit coamings (which may have been angled out a little more). The cockpit sole has a recess moulded into it to take the hinging handle of the “push-down, pull-up” centreplate – a very good idea. The plate itself sits below the cabin sole with the tow coming up under the cockpit.

Under sail I found her very well

Bradwell 18 makes a fine estuary cruiser, able to be able to be beached in a few inches of water, or sailed into creaks and shoal areas denied to fixed-keel boats. Deck areas require non-slip paint!

balanced, and was able to leave the helm for about half a minute with out worry.

She comes complete with basic gear at £648 – anchor, warp, loo,



outboard etc. are extra. The same will buy her as a “motor cruiser” complete with small outboard motor.

For the statistically minded – LOA 18.75ft; LWL 16.8ft; Beam 6.25ft; draft with plate up 1.25ft or lowered 3.25ft; working sail area 148sq ft; displacement 1,100lb. Further details from Ferguson Brothers (Bradwell) Ltd, Unit 3 Hall Road Industrial Estate, Southminster, Essex.

(the other boat was a Family 18)