

Book Review...

HYDROFOIL VOYAGER

by David A. Keiper

“If someone told you that a Force 4 puff of wind on 380 sq. ft. of sail could lift a sailing yacht weighing a ton and a half right out of the water, and make it go faster than the true wind speed, you might not believe him. But that is exactly what can be done.” So begins *Hydrofoil Voyager*, David Keiper’s story of how he designed and built the 31’4” sailing yacht *WILLIWAW*, then logged almost 20,000 miles of cruising around the Pacific to test and fine tune the design. You’ll never get closer to boat building, open-ocean sailing, and hydrofoiling without actually doing it yourself. Keiper tells his own story, and the precision of his telling — he seems to recall every wave, squall, and leak — pulls you into the adventure with him. Read, and you are there, thrilled as the hull surges up to sprint on its foils; impatient as the sea goes flat in a dying wind; inventive as some new crisis presents itself for a solution hundreds of miles from land.



Setting the bow foil by inserting one of two shear bolts below the waterline. It is a wet job out at sea.

Hydrofoil Voyager is rich with hard-earned insight on how to design, build, and sail your own boat, hydrofoil or not. By “living” through a design’s trial by sea, you gather the lessons as they become evident through experiences during the voyage. You confront the



The late afternoon sun catches *WILLIWAW* streaking across Hawaiian waters at 20 knots, powered by the northeast tradewinds. The hard-working leeward foil is almost hidden in its own spray. Molokai Island is seen in the distance.

problems along with the author, and you arrive with him at solutions by following his reasoning (not all of the “how to” nuggets are buried in the story, however; if you prefer your data bulletized, go to the appendix “How to Build a Hydrofoil Sailing Yacht”).

Design and construction details are not the end of useful information in Keiper’s book. The author (with readers in tow) also faces the perils of infectious disease on remote islands, creates ways to pay for extended voyages, and solves the thorny problem of recruiting female crew (yachting is largely a male sport, unfortunately).

Will there be a *Hydrofoil Voyager, Part II*? As Keiper muses, “somehow, the time, the place, the situation, and the money, all have to come together as they did when I created *WILLIWAW*. I trust that these things *will* all come together... I would be happy to work in partnership with others to bring about the reality of hydrofoil trimarans sailing all over the world.” Meanwhile Keiper is

creating new designs on his computer and manufacturing foil kits for daysailing catamarans and power boats.

IHS members may order *Hydrofoil Voyager* directly from Hinsdale Press, 123 South Pacific Street, Cape Girardeau MO 63703 USA to receive the discounted price of US\$25 incl. shipping (US\$7 extra for shipment overseas). You can contact the author by email at dvpw98e@prodigy.com and visit his web site <http://www.igateway.net/~dakh>.

[Reviewed by Barney C. Black]



Retracting *WILLIWAW*'s stern foil