

Mini-Cat

—fast and easy to build and sail

From your home shop: a boat as good as you can buy—in time for spring

By SUSANNE and
PETER STEVENSON
PHOTOS BY THE AUTHORS

"Easy" is the word we had in mind when we designed the PS Mini-Cat. She's a well-mannered little craft that's easy to sail. She's also easy to build, transport, set up—and pay for. We built ours for under \$350.

We also wanted the Mini-Cat to be as speedy as production boats costing five times as much. So we included design elements usually found only on

much larger, new-generation cats.

The Mini-Cat is one of the few 14-footers to carry a jib. The mainsail has a high aspect ratio—its tall, thin shape is more efficient when sailing into the wind. A plastic fairing gives the mast an airfoil shape. This "wing mast" automatically pivots to face the wind on each tack. To cut drag, the halyard is inside the mast.

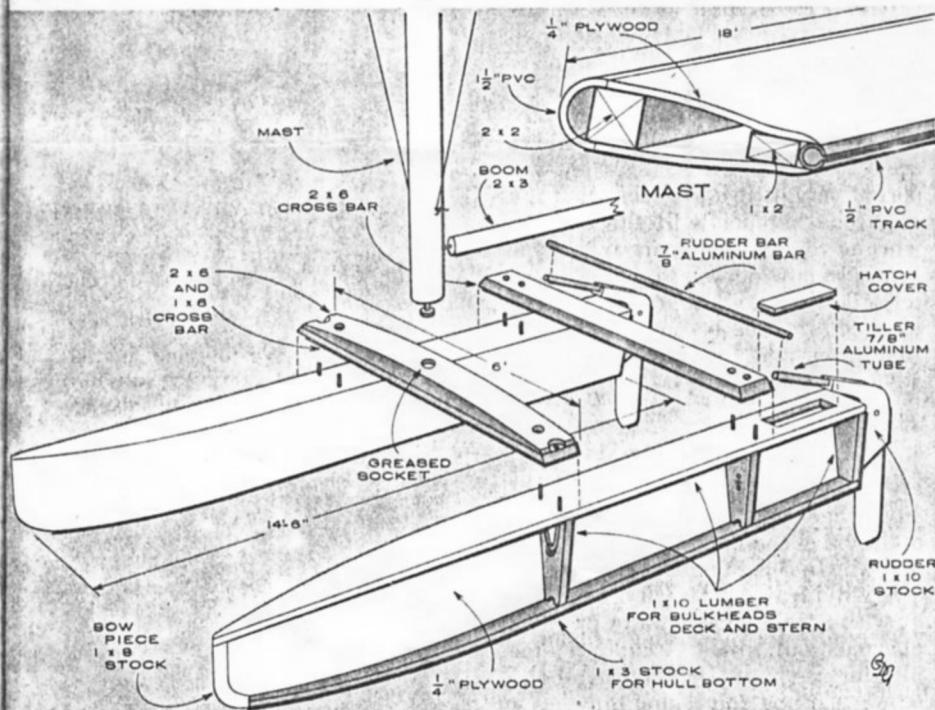
There's no daggerboard drag, either—the super-narrow, asymmetrical hulls are shaped to sail close to the wind and tack without a board.

You don't need any special tools or hardware to build this sophisticated little craft. As with our other PS designs [Feb. '78, '79], all parts are from standard lumberyard stock (see diagram). Because the hulls are a simple

box section without stringers, assembly is fast, and comparatively few fasteners are needed.

The sails, made from heavy-duty woven polyurethane used for tarpaulins, can be made in one afternoon—without sewing. These sturdy sails withstand high winds and are sun-resistant.

The Mini-Cat's heaviest parts are its 65-lb. hulls; so one person can easily transport and assemble the craft. Once on the water, her handling qualities are quickly evident. Even beginners have found her easy to tack on a first sail. And when the wind comes up, she accelerates smartly, showing top speeds of 15 knots. That's fully competitive with far more costly production cats of the same size. 13



No trailer needed—the lightweight modules are easy to car-top. The home-built cat is a good choice for those with subcompact cars—and ditto bank accounts.

Unique mast fairing and halyard track are made of PVC pipe. Mast pivots in greased socket. Detailed construction plans, including instructions for making sails and trampoline, are \$7 from Stevenson Projects, Dept. K-10, Box 584, Del Mar, Calif. 92104. Make checks or money orders payable to Stevenson Projects.



Modular Mini-Cat (right) is designed for one-person setup. The 14-ft. hulls are easily maneuvered into place. The trampoline (on the sand between the hulls) is pre-attached to the crossbars, which are simply bolted to the decks. It is then laced into place. The mast is part plastic (see inset in diagram, next page), so it's light enough for one person to step. A pull on the tiller bar kicks the rudders up for easy launching (top left). Gear and refreshments stow snugly away in twin hull hatches. Once under sail (top right), the little cat is surprisingly speedy, yet is quite docile when coming about—a tough maneuver for many cats.

