

# SKETCHBOOK

BY SAM DEVLIN

## Sockeye 62: Pacific Northwest Dreaming

**T**his month's column is purely hypothetical, though I wouldn't mind the story playing out this way. We all have dreams, and this is one of mine.

My customer and friend, Ralph, calls with good news: He's finally sold his business and is ready to retire. I congratulate him on his good fortune, but the conversation isn't over. Ralph has been thinking for some time that if his ship really comes in, he'll order a new boat, the penultimate cruiser he'd dreamed about for years.

Fifteen years earlier, in this fantasy, I had built Ralph's father one of my 45-foot Sockeye designs. They enjoyed it for many thousands of miles, cruising and exploring. I'm almost scared to hear what boat Ralph might want next. (I may have heard that he's interested in a Steve Dashew FPB long-distance cruiser built in aluminum.) When he tells me, my jaw drops to the ground.

Ralph wants me to finish the Sockeye 62, a design I've been whittling on for several years and a direct extension of the boat I built for his family. Ralph wants the 62 as his retirement home and cruiser. My head fills with the clutter of what needs to happen to see this project through to completion. Drawings galore to generate for the build team, and so many lists of equipment, parts and materials that to contemplate it from the start would not even blunt the edge of the final effort.

I uncover the dusty original drawings and look at what I'd started so many years ago. The Sockeye 62 has a traditional appearance with a strong Northwest lineage. In my opinion, she is very close to the definition of a "real"

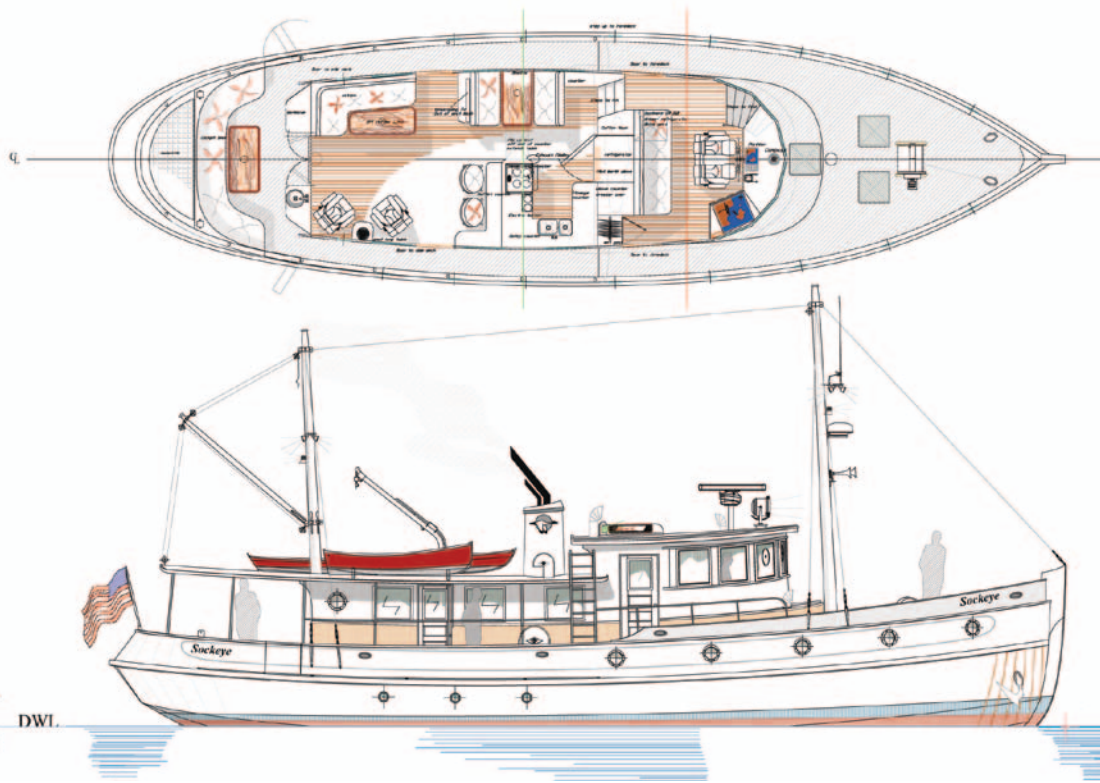
boat, leaning heavily toward the types used long before things got so sophisticated and convenience-oriented. Built with my stitch-and-glue construction, she'll be a tough and able vessel. Imagine a boat as a coat. In the case of the Sockeye 62, the coat is a mighty shearling, much like a leather B-3 bomber jacket: warm, comfortable and rugged, yet stylish in its simple function.

The Sockeye 62 is a husky boat with enough weight and breadth to suffer through most any seas. At 62 feet, 6 inches long, 17 feet, 6 inches wide and with a 6-foot-7-inch draft and a displacement just shy of 86,000 pounds, she will be a statement on the water. Her fantail stern balances the height of the

houses, and with full walkaround side decks, she's easy to use.

Boarding doors aft in the cockpit open to a covered stern shading a U-shaped settee with a table — a great area to enjoy a cigar and a spot of rum after the drinking lamp is lit for the night. A built-in barbecue and sink in the cockpit tuck up against the rear bulkhead. Framing double doors access the main saloon, with L-shaped seating to port and a tabletop that, at the touch of a button, telescopes to coffee-table or full height. To starboard are a couple of swivel and rocking chairs — a reading area for a chilly night, with a view of any late arrivals at the anchorage.

The galley, dinette, saloon and cockpit are

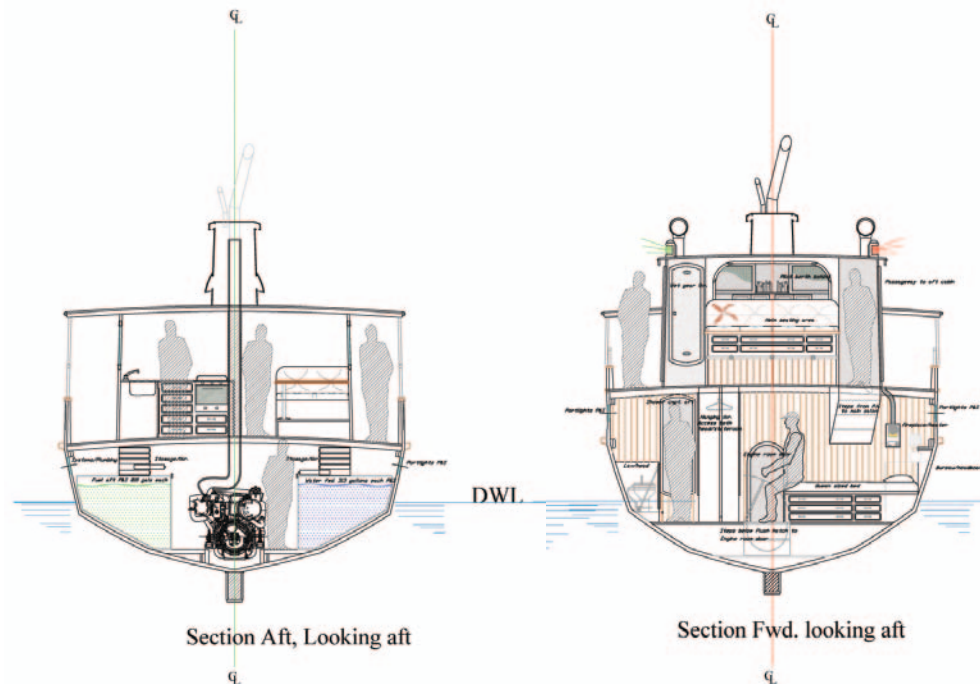


NEIL RABINOWITZ (TOP)

on the same level, leading four steps up into the pilothouse, with a double helm, a bench seat for off-watch guests and a pilot berth so the skipper can nap but still be at hand for the first mate. Going below from the forward section of the pilothouse leads to twin staterooms in the bows and a shared head to starboard. The master stateroom is below the pilothouse, with its own head and shower, and an athwartships queen berth with access to both sides. A vanity and hanging lockers are here, too, plus an engine-room access door (in addition to a cockpit hatch up top).

There's full headroom in the engine room, even under the insulated sole, and 360-degree access to the primary engine. Power is a 285- to 425-hp John Deere 6090AFM85 diesel, a 2,300-pound, 6-cylinder chunk of metal with enough torque and horsepower to spin the boat's 46-inch prop and enough stamina to work her hard and keep her happy.

To balance the single-screw propulsion for dockside maneuvering, there's an electric bow thruster with 660 pounds of thrust, run-



ning in a 12-inch tunnel. A Deflector rudder — built by my friend Lowell Stambaugh — with an attached mechanical trim tab allows amazing rudder control, especially when there's a crowd of dockside gawkers.

With fuel and water tanks large enough for

a range of 2,000-plus nautical miles, Ralph's new Sockeye 62 will be a well-deserved dream come true.

Until then, I hope you'll agree that the satisfaction derived from dreaming about boats falls just slightly below the joy of actual use. ■

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