



A 2-week cruise on *Grace* from Friday Harbor to Desolation Sound B.C.

July 2004 - We have put 75 hours on *Grace* (hull #1) since her hailing port became Friday Harbor WA. Just recently we completed a two week cruise to Desolation Sound in British Columbia. Here's our report.

Overall 34z has to rate **A++** in all respects! The best single thing about the boat is being under way... the fun of driving. I had a hard time getting Nancy off the helm.

This boat is very seaworthy and in any normal, up to rough conditions, exceptionally dry and handling anything beautifully. Our biggest test thus far was when completely surprised by a freak storm cell on the cruise. A blast of wind estimated at 45 knots hit us on the beam, blowing the tops off the waves into spindrift. We had to claw into it off a lee shore for at least a mile until we could turn into a channel. But, then there was a strong counter current flowing out into the wind, creating large, steep waves. It took these severe conditions before a few waves could get over the bow. We surfed in good control, didn't experience much rolling and were able to maintain a steady 12-15 knots of speed. Fortunately the storm eased as quickly as it came up.

Fuel consumption is much less than expected. We have averaged about 4.2 gal/hr since we bought the boat. This includes all engine hours with numerous legs of 60 miles or so which we cruised at about 20 knots towing a dinghy. This compares to averaging about 11 gal/hr in our previous 36 ft. powerboat at a slower average cruising speed of around 15 knots. *Note: That would make the 34z more than three times more fuel efficient on a miles per gallon basis.*

One of our goals on this cruise was to test all systems. Initial concerns about water capacity and battery reserve while at anchor for any length of time were unfounded. As old sailboaters, we were well trained in conservation. We never used more than $\frac{1}{2}$ a tank (62 gallons capacity) of water in three days at anchor and the batteries (505 ampere hours capacity) never became an issue. We used the transom shower and fresh water wash down for the anchor line. It's easy to keep track of the water level by opening a cockpit locker and simply looking at the water level in the poly tank. The 12-volt Seafrost refrigeration is really good! We kept meats frozen for two weeks and made two trays of ice daily. The best thing about the reefer is how little power it uses. We rarely needed the generator.

The galley functioned easily. There was space to store all we needed for two weeks of eating aboard. In fact, we never ceased to be amazed at the storage space on the 34z. It seems more than what we had on our J/40 cruising sailboat or our previous 36 foot powerboat. With the two large pilothouse settee lockers, we had about twice the storage we needed. I did spend time moving cushions to get to some things, but it was a good way to exercise. You can't lie down and read all the time!

Dropping the table every night to make up the huge double as a sleeping arrangement was somewhat of a chore, so we usually just use the settees on either side as twin beds. With the back cushions out these are big comfortable bunks that are very easy to set up and restore back the next day. This also opens up the storage area originally designed for the insert cushions, if they are taken off the boat, creating a good place for clothes, jackets etc for daily use.

We had originally considered putting in an electric table lift, but found that with a little lubrication it went up and down easily. Nancy has a chronic back problem and remarked after the cruise that her back didn't hurt as usual. I guess that means we move on to the boat!

We also thought about installing a bow thruster and a transom entry door, but after using the boat as much as we have without them, they hardly seem necessary. There are not many details you overlooked in hull #1 and our suggestions for improvements are pretty minor. I think we'd like a bowl-bottomed sink in the head instead of flat bottom. The shower-head spigot now has a shutoff button (*now standard*) to conserve water and two bilge pumps (*now standard*) are helpful.

GRACE has had plenty of exposure at the Seattle Yacht Club outstations and at other coves and marinas. Dinghies

come by constantly to ask questions, preceded by wow's and favorable comments. Being a bit early for widespread MJM brand awareness, people wonder whether the boat is a new model Hinckley or San Juan. We often find ourselves describing the J/Boats- Johnstone connection. Owners of big power boats don't really show much interest. Sailors, on the other hand, all seem to talk about the 34z being the perfect next step. We agree!

WH 7/8/04