

From motor trials to yacht racing

A change from motor trials to yacht racing seems a fairly large and unlikely step but this is exactly what happened to South Australia's Graham Jones and Peter Mander.

Graham and Peter were very much involved in the trials scene in the 1960's when by chance, they were blooded into the Sport of sailing by Ron Patrick, the owner of a 23ft timber yacht, Judy Ann, sailing out of the Royal South Australian Yacht Squadron.

The two became so tied up in the yacht racing and cruising scene because of their association with Ron, that they wanted a bigger craft and decided to build their own. They enquired after locally built kits and finding none suitable they started looking at importing a half-tonner as a kit.

However, this was not economical and they decided it would be cheaper to start from scratch. After many more enquiries overseas, Graham and Peter decided on the Pion 30, an E G van de Stadt design in fibreglass. Early in 1972 they, with another friend Rick Ottaway, built a plug and a mould and Dynasty was born.

Dynasty has proved to be a most successful yacht in Royal South Australian Yacht Squadron events. Take the 1974-75 season: She was first in the Le Hunte Cup points score, first in the Le Hunte Cup Second Division points score, second in the Tapleys Shoal Race IOR points score, first in the Tapleys Shoal Race Offshore Second Division points score, second in the Gulf Race IOR points score, third in the Gulf Race Second Division points score, first in the Ardrossan Race IOR points score and first in the Ardrossan Race Offshore Second Division points score.

Early in the 1975-76 season, Dynasty tied with Minna, a Cole 43, for the State IOR series and then went to Melbourne for the Australian Half-Ton series. However, crew difficulties arising from an injury to Drew McDonald just before the series, forced Dynasty to sail with a scratch crew. Her best performance was to take the lead after 50 miles of the 100 mile race but she was unable to hold the lead in the fluky, light conditions. Valkyrie, another Pion, won the SA Half-Ton series.

Jones sailed Dynasty back from Melbourne in 4.5 days, stopping at Port Fairy and Robe, early in February of this year.

Because of their interest in the Pion 30, and partly to offset the cost of the original plug and mould, Jones and Mander approached E G van de Stadt and won the Australian rights for this craft. Mouldings are available from their company, Yachtcraft, 466 Milne Road, Redwood Park, South Australia 5097, as a kit which includes keel and rudder for \$8900.

A new model with rig and hull modifications which should improve its light weather and downwind performances, will make the Pion 30 even more competitive.

There are currently 16 Pion 30s in Australia, seven sailing from the RSAYS, four in Sydney, one in Melbourne, one in New Guinea, one in Tasmania, and one is currently being built at Port Lincoln

The Pion is the only one design keel yacht in the world.