S III - REBUILD

PART 3 - DECK LOCKERS

Most Silhouettes have deck lockers. The 'Standard' version has two and the'Suzanne' version has just the one.

The locker tops were made from marine ply and were neatly edged with strips of mahogany.There were two reinforcing strips, each one a few inches from the end of the underneath of the lid. Each of these strips had a brass eye screwed in and the lids were held down by two bungees fastened to eyes at each end of the locker floor framework.

Over the years people have done all sorts of modifications to this arrangement but, despite the fairly deep drain channels around the locker aperture, I have yet to find an arrangement that doesn't leak.

If the boat, either on the water or ashore , is not perfectly level, lengthwise and widthwise,the drain channels are easily blocked by any foreign matter and it will leak, a lot! Even if the boat is level and the drain channels free - it still leaks, a little!

I decided that I wanted my boat to be leakproof and the only way to achieve that was to seal the locker tops.. If you make this decision, but you still want to use the locker space you have to gain access to this space from the saloon. The job is laborious but not too difficult.

Start by drawing an outline on the existing locker front. Cut out as near as you can with a jig saw, padsaw and drilling holes in a line - you may have to use all three tolls.Clean the edges with a good sized rasp, fill and sand where necessary.

Then do the same thing to the locker back having first removed the locker floor plywood base and (see note) the framework("square wood_) on which the floor rests. You now have access to the locker space and you can seal the locker tops.I usually bed marine ply, sometimes using the original locker lids, on resin filler (car body filler is fine) and then glass over with chopped strand mat followed by glass tissue and the job is done!

There are other ways of sealing the locker tops and you can choose any way you wish. If you do not fancy working in sticky resin and glassfibre another successful method is to fasten the wooden cockpit lids down, sealed with door seal strip stuck to the raised part of the locker aperture and then smeared generously with silicone sealer.

To fasten them down use 5mm brass countersunk nuts and bolts, bolted about every 3"through the inner glassfibre flange of the locker aperture, countersunk into the wood and then filled with a good two-part filler. The bolts need to be 1 /1 " long, obviously depending on your wood thickness. If you use this method it is essential that the wooden locker tops are good flat pieces of marine ply.

Also, with this method, the bilge pump may have had to be removed, you will need it less now anyway.It is a good idea to leave the large round hole in the rear bulkhead to aid ventilation.

You have now made another major step towards a DRY boat .

NOTE - if you are going to use the locker space as storage only you may leave the existing plywood locker floor and framework in place.If, however , you wish to use the space as a quarter berth then you need to remove and lower the existing locker floor and framework. Just in case you are wondering whether these bulkhead removals will affect the integrity of the hull, I can assure you that the hull remains more than adequately strong. These S III's really were over-engineered.