

## **Vic's Check List for Buying Used J22's**

By Vic - Mo' Money on Thursday, March 23, 2006

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I was asked what to look for in a used J/22, here are my thoughts. I've included this in the FAQ section to encourage others to add or dispute what I wrote. vic

As the the J/22 is a basic, small keelboat, it is a rather simple boat that lends itself to "Do It Yourself" projects. Many problems can be addressed DIY at far less cost than professional repairs. The price is time and often time's hard work. This is not intended to be a boat survey course, just some info on possible J/22 issues.

### **1.) GENERAL**

\* Inspect the Bulkheads. If the chainplates have leaked, the water often soaks into the plywood bulkhead and deck balsa core. Indications of possible problems are: a soft feel in the bulkhead wood when pushed with a screwdriver or knife blade, and heavy grain cracks showing in the white paint. Check the area of the chainplate attachments proper and lower down also. The lower problems may be a result of the water wicking down the inside layers of plywood from the chainplates or standing water in the forward area, not necessarily that the boat was filled with bilge water. (See Desperado's This Old Boat site.) Minor chainplate problems can often be addressed by installing oversized clamp plates to increase the surface area and the number of fasteners.

\* Check the Air Tanks. There are two floatation tanks. One forward under the vee berth. One aft under the cockpit sole. Remove the interior plastic deck plate covers and look for standing water. They should be dry. Check for indications of rot in the tank sides from long term standing water. Remove the outside aft tank deck plate (located under the tiller). This allows easy inspection of the rudder gudgeon plate bolts and back plates. It is not uncommon for leaks to develop around the gudgeon plate bolts. Water leaks here can soak up into, and rot, the transom balsa core.

\* Look for Streaks Down the inside of the Hull. The toerail and flange bolts loosen over time and may leak. This is generally not a major problem as I don't believe the bolts penetrate the balsa core, just some information. I have found that tightening all the toerail and flange nuts will usually stop the leaks.

\* Inspect the Deck around the Chainplate Covers. The deck is balsa cored. If the chainplates leaked, over time the balsa core can rot. Look for heavy stress cracks around the chainplate covers (spider cracks are common and generally not a problem), or spongy feel in the area.

- \* Inspect the Sea Hood. Improperly bedded hardware like cam cleats, fairleads, etc. can allow water into the balsa core. Check for spongy areas. Removing the sea hood and inspecting the underside for dark areas showing the rot may be necessary. (See Desperado's This Old Boat site.)
- \* Inspect the Mast Step. The mast plate should be properly bedded and bolted tight. Small spider cracks are common and not generally a concern. Heavy, deep cracks may indicate problems.
- \* Inspect the Transom Gelcoat. Cracks radiating out from the gudgeon plates may indicate problems with the transom balsa core. Inspect the cockpit drain fittings for the same cracks indicating weakening from leaks there too.
- \* Inspect the Keel. Check for cracking along the keel sump to keel joint. Small spider cracks are not uncommon. A heavy obvious crack will require at the least tightening of the keel studs and repairing the joint.
- \* Inspect the Mainsheet and Vang Bales on the Boom. The threaded bolt end can saw thru the aluminum. This can enlarge the hole and weaken the extrusion.

## **RACING**

- \* Check for a J/22 Class Measurement Certificate. If a boat has never been measured in, it can be quite a bit of work to get her to J/22 Class standards. A new certificate will be necessary, as it is not transferable to the new owner.
- \* A properly faired bottom, keel and rudder is a plus. (Notice I said "properly", not "professionally". It is possible for a non-professional to do a good job, but a reputable professional does add credibility.)
- \* Check for Bottom Paint. If you plan to seriously race in major J/22 One Design events, eventually you will want an unpainted bottom. Bottom paint removal can be done, but it is hard work.
- \* Don't worry about Racing Sails. You will need to buy some new sails for big events anyway. If there are good sails, that's a plus, but not a "must have".
- \* You don't want lifelines and pulpits. All the lifelines do is interfere with foresails and hit you in the lower leg to flip you overboard.
- \* Inspect the Traveler Hardware. If you plan to race, you probably won't be happy with the old Nico Fico hardware.
- \* You'll need a good trailer to travel.

