



KATE descends from her building shed, 300 feet up the side of a hill, to the Travelift pit eight miles away. The logistics of construction on St. Kitts were "no problem," says Philip Walwyn. "We have very good shipping from the U.S. and Europe."

wasn't surprised. He sets his mind to something and he gets it done." The rest of KATE's crew, sipping beer and chewing on steak, nodded in agreement.

The job of building KATE took 18,000 hours spread over four years, and was accomplished, mostly, by a two-and-a-half-man crew. Walwyn works during the week representing his wife, an artist of some renown. With his attention thus divided, he considers his contribution to the project to have been that of half a man. Others, including Ian Nicolson, see it differently:

"He was director, general manager, and foreman, all rolled into one," said Nicolson, who inspected the boat twice during the construction.

There was "no sitting down over coffee for three or four hours in the morning," said Walwyn. "We got right to work every day." The lead carpenter was 33-year-old Leroy Carey. He went to trade school in St. Kitts, but had no experience in building boats. In fact, nobody did, but for Walwyn, who describes Carey as "an ambitious guy, wants to get ahead." Marvin Harris assisted Carey; he had come to Walwyn several years before as a wayward youth of 16, seeking work. "He couldn't read a tape measure then," said Walwyn. But he learned: After the boat was turned over, he built the entire interior—whose material came mainly from mahogany reclaimed from old furniture. Lester Pogson, "a good working chap," also contributed, as did a crew of big guys, for longboarding.

"I lofted the boat to the original table of offsets and the original plans," said Walwyn. He poured the 11½-ton lead ballast keel on-site, using the salvaged keels of wrecked yachts. The centerline structure and frames were built of laminated mahogany glued with epoxy. The frames are on 2' centers (the original boat's frames were spaced closer; KATE's modern construction allows the wider span). There are eight plywood bulkheads (the original had three bulkheads), and the hull is planked in 1½"

didn't, and it's unclear (or, perhaps, eminently clear) why he didn't. "It was just an idea, really." Walwyn uses that phrase frequently—often, it seems, in connection with something that's destined to become a reality.

Upon Walwyn's return to St. Kitts, he turned his attention to TIGER, a 1928, 94' power cruiser built on the Clyde by "an obscure yard that doesn't exist anymore." She was built entirely of teak, except for the frames, which were of oak. And that was the problem: She was fastened with iron, which doesn't last well in the acidic grip of oak. Walwyn and his wife were gradually replacing the original fastenings, and using the boat in the process. "Kate and I bought her ten years ago, and spent five years fixing her up," said Walwyn. The couple spent two months circumnavigating Cuba and cruising the Caribbean. "Unfortunately on that trip we got into some moderately rough weather. I think we must have sprung a plank." The U.S. Coast Guard responded to the distress call and, recognizing the futility of the situation, Walwyn requested that the Coast Guard open fire on TIGER and send her to the bottom of the Caribbean Sea. "And then I said, 'I'm never having anything to do with boats again.' I spent a year saying that, during which time I came up with the idea to build KATE."



"He built the hull halfway up a mountain," said Dougie Gillanders, one of KATE's regular crewmen, as we talked over dinner and beer the night before the racing began at Tortola. He had seen the boat under construction when the hull was upside down, and then had come back several months later after it had been rolled over. On his second visit, the deck was on and the interior was progressing. The boat was transformed. "It was like someone had waved a magic wand. I was surprised...but, then, knowing Philip, I

The navigation station. Walwyn plans to campaign KATE away from the Caribbean; he has his sights set on the New England wooden yacht racing circuit in the coming years.

