

Perry on Design

Precision 185

Daysailer

I have two primary rules when I do any new design: First, make it sexy, handsome, beautiful, perky and seductive. The other rule is: Make it work. I don't think the Precision is a very handsome boat. Its sheer is too flat. A mere two inches of spring in that sheer would have made a wonderful difference. Jim Taylor, the designer of the Precision series, likes his sheers flat.

The Precision 185 builds on the success of the P-15 and is a sturdy looking dinghy available as a centerboard model or with a fixed

are after stability, and you would gladly sacrifice boat speed so your granddaughters do not get a swimming lesson along with their sailing lesson, then the keel version might make sense. Bottom line is sailing trials have shown that the keelboat can beat the centerboard model to weather. It can at least hold its own on a reach and the centerboard

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keel with 3-foot, 6-inch draft. Choosing between the keel and centerboard may boil down to exactly how you are going to use the dinghy and where. There are conveniences with a board in that you can trailer the boat easily and with a wee bit of effort and a dock winch (the boat weighs 590 pounds) pull it up onto a dinghy dock. The keel version you can also trailer and dry sail but it might be happier left on a dock or a mooring.

The difference in displacement of the two versions is 290 pounds, so you can figure that there is about 375 pounds of weight in that bulbed keel fin when you deduct the weight of the board and trunk structure. The best way to appreciate the effect this will have on overall performance is to imagine what having an extra two people weighting 188-pounds apiece on board would do. It's a 49-percent increase in displacement so I imagine the effect will be dramatic. However, if you

model will win off the wind. The keel version is self-righting.

The cockpit is open to the transom with a low coaming to help keep water out. You can sit on the side decks or on the cockpit

seats. I think it's sort of a reflex to get your weight out to weather on any small boat, keel or not. There is room for a cooler, some under deck storage and room for four adults.

The sloop rig is as simple as can be. There is no traveler but the vang can be easily

reached by the crew, and doing away with the traveler makes the cockpit wide open.

There is no sailing substitute for time in small boats. The Precision 185 is capable of some ambitious voyages if you are the adventurous type. I remember going to town one day and leaving my 12-year-old son at the beach.

When I returned he was gone with the sailing dinghy. I scanned the horizon. Nothing. An hour later I could spot, coming around the headland, a tiny

speck of a sail about three miles to leeward. There was nothing I could do. I didn't own

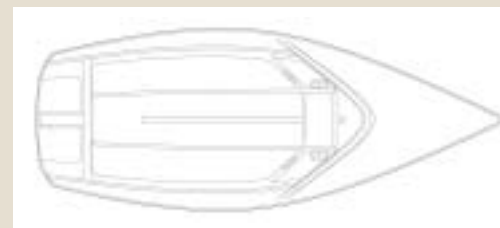
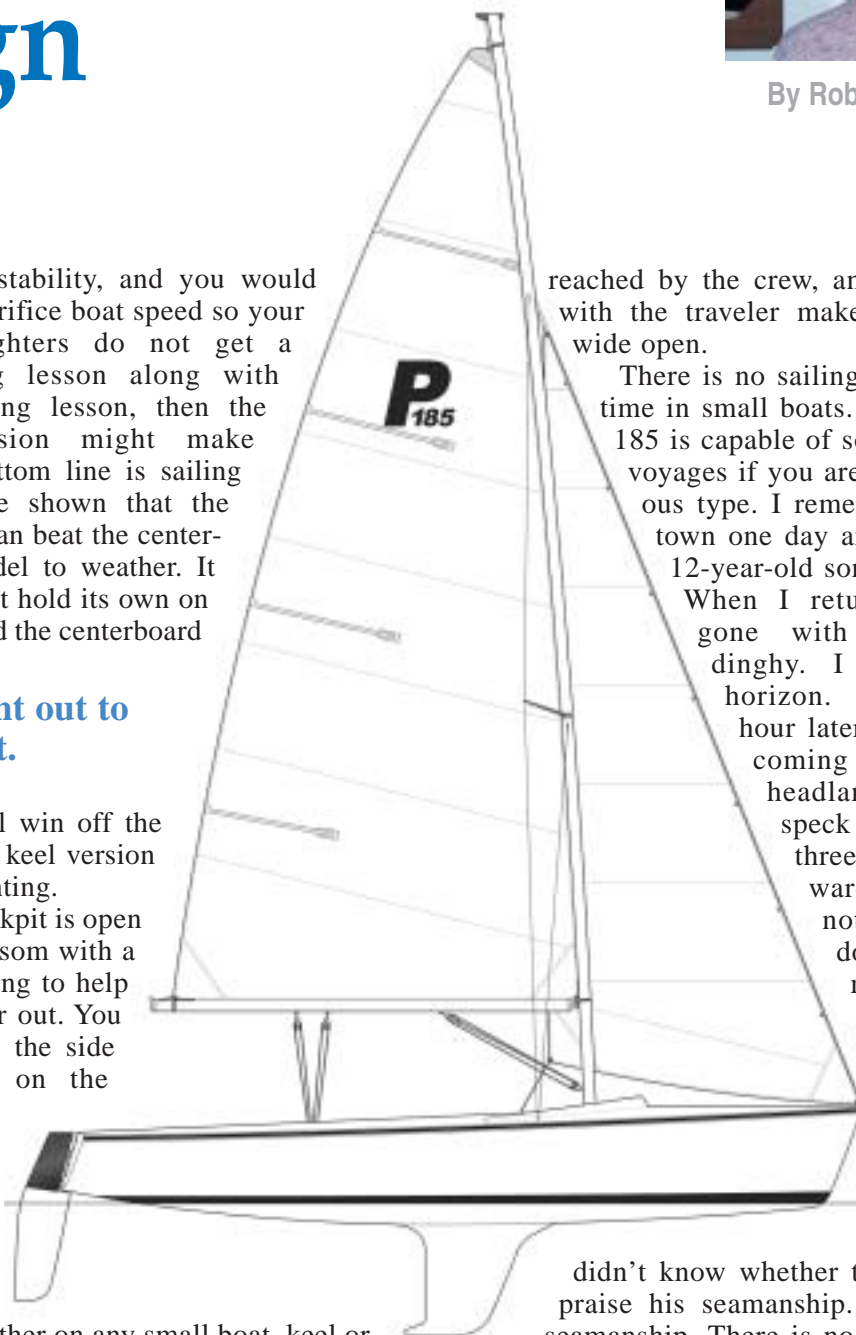
my Boston Whaler at the time. I just had to sit and wait and watch. He made it, and of course I

didn't know whether to beat him or praise his seamanship. I praised his seamanship. There is no way I wanted to introduce fear into sailing. Sailing would take care of that without my help.

I like this Precision. It's the type of boat I would like to own.



By Robert H. Perry



LOA 18'5"; LWL 16'8"; Beam 7'3"; Draft 3'6";
Displacement 880 lbs.; Ballast 375 lbs.;
Sail Area 181 sq. ft.; SA/D 31.5; D/L 86; L/B 2.5.

Precision Boat Works, 1511 18th Avenue
Drive East, Palletto, FL 34221, (941) 722-
6601, www.precisionboatworks.com

OBE: \$8,995 (keel version)
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