

# USCGA Leadership 44 Program

by Bob Hallock, '72, Procurement Chair

For those of you who have missed the discussions over the last 20 years (at least) about replacing our fleet of Luder yawls, which have been in service since 1964, here is an update.

The U.S. Naval Academy replaced their Luder fleet in 1986 with the Navy 44 MKI and is in the process of replacing those boats with 24 new Navy 44 MKIIs built by Pearson Yachts and designed by David Pedrick. In early 2008 a group of CGA supporters and staff began looking at the possibility of piggy-backing on the Navy contract and contracting for eight boats to create our new Coastal Sail Training fleet. A fleet of 8 boats would allow the Academy to train 100% of the second-class cadets during their summer rotation. The replacement of the Luder fleet was moved to the number 1 priority on the Superintendent's priority list, and in July of 2008 the Alumni Association voted to commit to the funding and purchase of a minimum of two of the new boats at a maximum of \$750K per boat. The Coast Guard Foundation fundamentally committed to the same. The \$750K figure was based on the anticipation of some increase in the Navy price but the final price was expected to be significantly lower than \$750K. It also became apparent that we were not going to be able to deal in a timely fashion with Pearson, the current builder because of some issues with their Navy contract.

In late summer the committee decided to ask David Pedrick to release the existing Navy MKII specifications to a group of 5 custom builders, including Pearson to seek bids on building a boat for USCGA. When the numbers came back, we were stunned as the numbers varied but tended to be in the \$800-900K per boat. A number that was deemed untenable in the worsening financial situation of the last quarter of 2008.

In January of this year we reconstituted the committee with the addition of several new members representing all

of the stakeholders in the Leadership 44 program. I represent the Alumni Association Board along with Admiral Rube Olsen, former Superintendent and new Board member. Larry Glenn represents the Coast Guard Foundation and Kelly Morgan the Parents Association. Capt. John Fitzgerald, Commandant of Cadets and Allen Kruger, head of the Academy waterfront represent the Superintendent and the Academy. Paul Miller, head of Naval Academy's naval architecture program and the head of the Navy 44 MKII program graciously accepted an invitation to join the committee and David Pedrick, the designer of the Navy 44.

We began weekly meetings in January which continue. In looking at all of the options available to us, we settled on two. We would turn to David Pedrick and develop a set of CGA specific plans and specifications that would reasonably reduce the overall cost of the Leadership 44 below that of the Navy version without sacrificing safety or performance. We would also release the new plans to additional boatyards as well as several production boat builders to expand the playing field. In choosing David Pedrick we chose an internationally renowned naval architect who has led the design teams on 8 America's Cup campaigns and produced two winners, Courageous in 1974 and Stars and Stripes in 1987. His work embodies the very best technical designs in the market today. Additionally, in early March, he was selected to be Technical Director in the development of the new America's Cup AC33 class, indicative of the regard with which he is held in the international design community.

The committee has worked hard to develop a boat that will meet the rigorous demands of the Coastal Sail Training program and give us a platform with excellent performance for years to come.

On the 17th of March we received the

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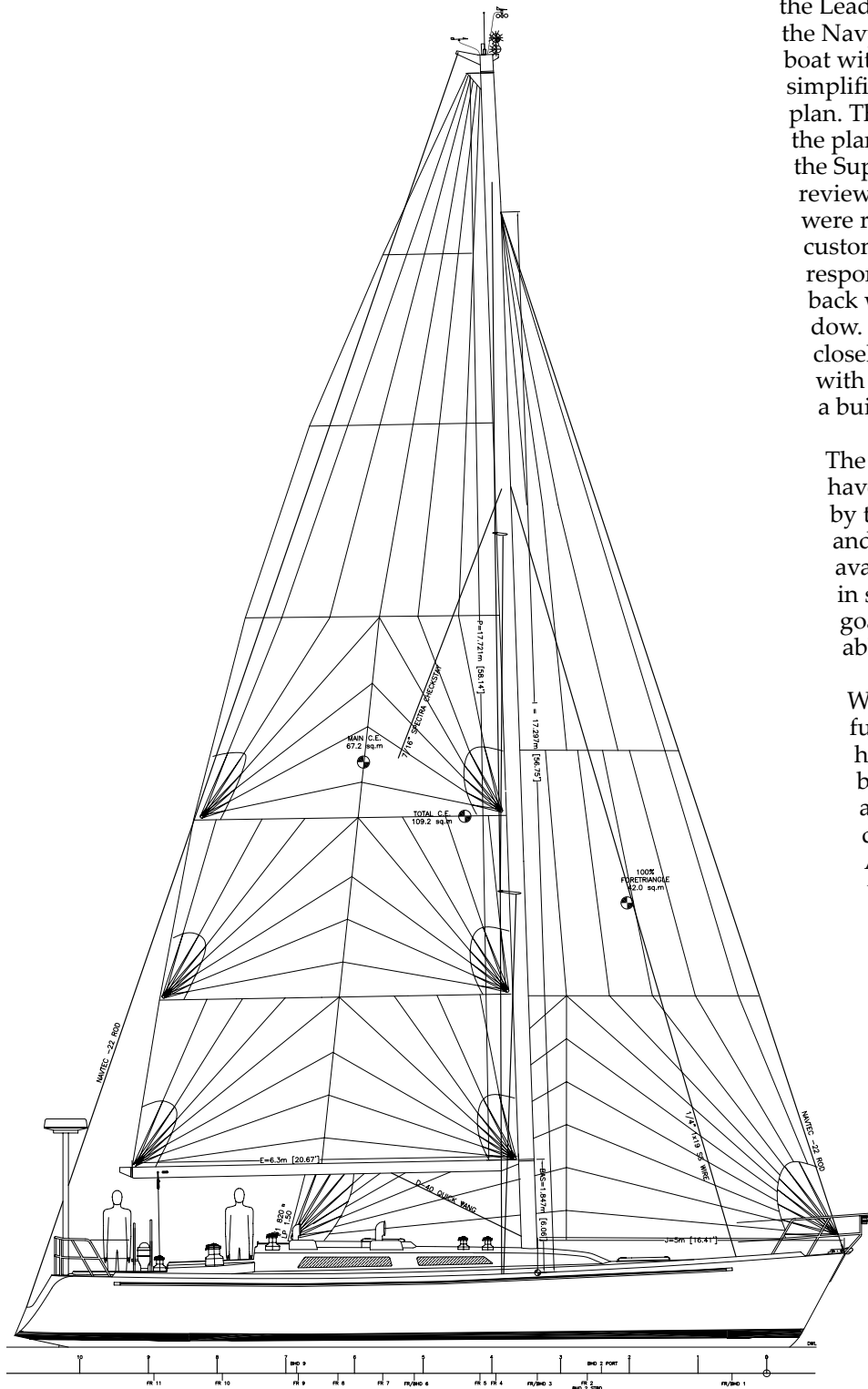
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final specifications and designs for the Leadership 44. Pedrick updated the Navy 44 MKII and created a boat with contemporary lines, simplified rig and improved sail plan. The committee forwarded the plans and specifications to the Superintendent's office for review and approval. The plans were released to 11 builders, both custom and production for bid responses which should come back within a 30-45 day window. The Committee will begin closely examining the responses with an anticipated selection of a builder by the end of June.

The goal of the committee is to have the first boats in the water by the start of sailing in 2010, and certainly to have several available for the training cycle in summer 2010. While this goal is aggressive, it is reasonable.

While the goal of raising funds for acquisition will be handled by others, largely by the Alumni Association and the Coast Guard Foundation and potentially the Academy Parents' Association, our committee will continue to be involved throughout the life of this project.

Without question, this is the most exciting project that has been undertaken since we raised the funds for the Alumni Association Building. It is a project that we all can get behind and support enthusiastically, for it will directly provide benefit for the Corp of Cadets in a very demonstrable way. Please contact me, John Maxham or Jim Sylvester on how YOU can get involved.



The Leadership 44 design