



General

Atalanta is an entirely new type of cruiser. The full weight of her ballast keels is retractable and her stability characteristics, with keels up and down, are excellent. She is a wonderful sea boat and with some 50 sq. ft. of storm mainsail set can be handled in winds of 50 to 60 mph in enclosed waters. The total weight of Atalanta less crew is in the order of 4,000 lbs enabling her to be towed on a trailer behind a car and serve as a caravan during overland trips. The light displacement produces a more rapid but in no way uncomfortable motion at sea and for this reason it is recommended that life-lines are provided for those in the cockpit in exceptionally bad conditions.

Atalanta is intended to be beached on any reasonable surface but, of course, care must be taken that there are no snags such as old piles or small rocks which would puncture any hull. The drop keels are exceptionally strong and it is accepted practice to use them to check way when beaching or when coming alongside provided there is no sea which would cause the boat to pound on the keels. A new feature is that the twin keels when grounding prevent the head paying off and enable Atalanta to come to a stop on, for example, a close reach with mainsail and foresail flapping maintaining the original course. When one keel is raised the bow will immediately fall off as with a conventional boat. Atalanta will carry full sail, that is mainsail and standard foresail in 15-18 knots. As the wind increases to over 20 knots it will be necessary to start to lift the mainsail as in dinghy sailing and sail reduction will be advisable in 22-25 knots when closehauled. The Genoa can be effectively carried on the wind to 18-20 knots with the mainsail lifted as indicated. The drop keels should be trimmed to produce the amount of weather helm desired, again, as in dinghy sailing but should not be raised more than 45' in heavy conditions to retain a large righting moment. The rudder has an uphaul and downhaul following the usual practice and it is necessary to ensure that the downhaul is working and that the rudder blade is as near to the vertical as it will go to prevent the force on the tiller becoming greater than is desirable.

Drop Keels

The retractable keels are the essential feature of this boat. Their attachment is so arranged that the trunks are not touched by the keels and only serve to keep the boat water-tight. The whole of the forces generated when sailing are concentrated on the diagonal bulkhead so relieving the shell of the wringing stress normally encountered in a keel boat.

The keels are pivoted on the lower after bolt of the three. There is a disc brake mechanism which is actuated by heaving up with the tommy bar on all three bolts. This serves to do three things:

1. To prevent any lateral slop in a sea-way which might eventually enable the heavy keels to strike the trunks.
2. To transfer without backlash the sailing forces to the bulkhead structure and most important to clamp rigidly the keels in any position which is essential in heavy weather.
3. To serve to damp the movement of the keels when returning to their set position after striking a submerged obstruction.

It will be seen that a keel weighing 500 lbs falling unchecked onto the hoisting mechanism could cause damage and the disc brakes should, therefore, be set so that the keels are slightly less than fully braked so allowing them to fall at a controlled speed onto the hoisting gear after being knocked up.



The operation of this gear should be examined through the inspection window which will show how the lifting loop rides clear of the bronze nut on the worm shaft on striking an obstruction or when beaching Atalanta.

The hoisting gear is so powerful and easily operated that it is usual to leave the keels partly braked and simply overcome the friction with the hoisting handle. If maximum ease of hoisting is required the brakes can be slacked off when it will be found that a 12-year-old child can easily raise a keel.

Sail Handling

Atalanta sails, as in any other boat, should be set according to circumstances. All sail handling can be carried out from the cockpit with the headsail set or handled through the forehatch. There is no need to go on deck at all, making Atalanta exceptionally safe and suitable for family cruising. The main and foresail halyards are on self-stowing winches which can be easily reached from the main companion. The mainsheet slides can be adjusted according to the wind strength in line with current racing practice to delay the necessity of reefing. In bad weather or in particularly heavy sea conditions it may be advisable to shut the companion hatches to ensure that any splash entering the cockpit does not find its way into the accommodation.

After the keels have been lowered about 20' the wing nuts on the case sealing boards should be secured with the link right down so preventing surging in the trunks.

Rigging

The mast can be stepped without the use of a crane by attaching the main shrouds and backstay and hauling away on the spinnaker halyard. This cannot be done afloat as the mast will not be supported sideways until it is almost vertical. It will be found that it will be necessary to push up the mast with some device until it is about 45' as otherwise the load on the spinnaker halyard will be excessive. When the rigging is finally set up - it should be set up tight - the hinge bolt may be removed. It will be found that the fore sheets reeve from underneath the lead blocks and so to the sheet winches. The arrangement of the mainsheet is obvious. It was not considered that a topping lift is necessary. The mainsheet horse can be set up on the extension posts to provide a boom gallows over which the cockpit tent is set.

Engine

The Coventry Victor (M.W.2) 4-stroke motor burns regular gasoline. The oil level should be checked before starting and the test cock to show that the circulating water is flowing opened for a few seconds and then shut. Do not run the motor at full power for the first few hours for more than a couple of minutes after which it will be found reasonable to use full throttle for long periods giving a boat speed of 4.5 to 5 knots depending on conditions.

- Coventry Victor M.W.2 4-6 h.p. 6 to 7 knots.
- Coventry Victor W.N.4. 14-16 h.p. 6 to 7 knots. Ford 100E. 18-20 h.p.



Atalanta Production Summary

Atalanta 26'

- First boat – 1957
- Last boat – 1967.
- Sail numbers from 1 to 186
- Hull numbers from 1 to 198 include 12 hulls for the 12 Titanias.

In general, hull numbers were allotted as built and sail numbers as sold. The inclusion of the Titanias in the sequence of hull numbers but NOT in the sequence of (Atalanta) sail numbers, combined with the fact that some boats were show boats and sold late, resulted in boats having a different number from hull and sails from the very beginning.