



Catalina 22 - An All-Around Champion

The History of the Builder, the Class, and the People who Love this Boat

Part 1: Catalina Yachts and the Catalina 22

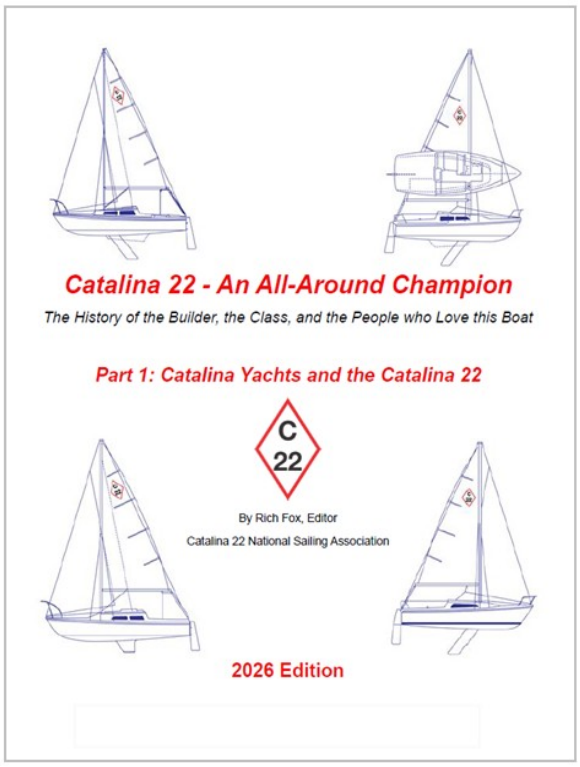




By Rich Fox, Editor

Catalina 22 National Sailing Association

2026 Edition



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Introduction

By Rich Fox, Editor

I am pleased to share with you the updated Catalina 22 History Book. My wife Denise and I started this project of building a publication to capture the vast history of Catalina Yachts, the Catalina 22 and the Catalina 22 National Sailing Association. I hope you enjoy reading it as much as we enjoyed preparing it.

If you are a Catalina 22 owner, then you own more than a great sailboat and membership in the Catalina 22 National Sailing Association. You also have access to a new network of friends throughout the United States and beyond. If you are not a Catalina 22 owner, we hope this publication may help inspire you to purchase a Catalina 22 and become involved with the Catalina 22 National Sailing Association.

The Journey Begins . . .

The publication is dedicated to Gene Ferguson - former Commodore, Editor, and a long-time Enthusiast of the Catalina 22 National Sailing Association. Gene was my mentor and friend. Gene passed away in September 2022. For over three decades Gene Ferguson was the backbone of the Catalina 22 National Sailing Association.

Gene joined the Catalina 22 National Sailing Association in 1978 after purchasing a Catalina 22 named *Princess Ann*. Gene said that membership in the Association “has helped me to form some long lasting friendships from all over the country that I would not have experienced had I not joined the Association.”



Gene Ferguson

1931 to 2022

“May you always be on time at the start;
May you never be over early;
May you always finish first;
And may you always be the kind of sailor
everyone is proud to know.”

For over 30 years Gene promoted the Catalina 22 National Sailing Association (C22NSA) making it one of the largest and most active one-design classes in the United States. In additional to being a great racer and always demonstrating exceptional sportsmanship, Gene had a long history of distinguished service and leadership in the Class.

Gene served as Commodore of the C22NSA from 1994 through 1997. In 1998, Gene became Editor of the Class publication – *MainBrace*. The *MainBrace* is where Gene's service really shined. In 1998, the C22NSA Board made a decision to begin writing, editing, printing, and distributing a stand-alone magazine for Catalina 22 owners – the *MainBrace*. The stand-alone publication was introduced in 1998 and distributed six times a year to over 1000 members of the Catalina 22 National Sailing Association. Under Gene's watch, *MainBrace* featured 24 to 28 pages of Catalina 22 racing and cruising news, technical tips, fleet updates, and officer reports. What is most amazing is that Gene always made sure that the *MainBrace* was consistently published and delivered on-time. Gene served as Editor of the *MainBrace* for sixteen years, retiring in 2014.

I consider it a great honor to follow in the footsteps of Gene Ferguson who served as my mentor when he turned over the helm of *MainBrace* to me in 2014.



An All-Around Champion

By Gene Ferguson
Printed in *Mainsheet*—November 1997

To breathe life into a piece of plywood and some fiberglass takes imagination to say the least, but that is exactly what happened. Frank Butler embarked on a project to build a small sailboat that was easily transportable and would accommodate a family at a reasonable price. What emerged was a boat that caught the eye of everyday folks who had never considered sailing and thus it became an overnight success. The Catalina 22 helped to launch the trailer sailing market, and although many other designs have entered the market, it remains at the top of the mobile sailing boats.

In 1969 Frank designed the swing keel version of the Catalina 22 and it went into production in1970.

In 1973 the pop top was introduced as an option to give sailors covered standing headroom while the boat was moored. That same year the fin-keel version was also introduced and the wing keel followed ten years later.

In 1985 a new style was introduced. For the boat's 25th anniversary of production, the designers at Catalina Yachts introduced a design with new materials and modern open interior.

"There's nothing pretentious about the boat, it just works," according to Catalina Yachts' Gerry Douglas "it could be considered the Model T or Volkswagen Beetle of the sailing world."

With a user-friendly cockpit, simple but workable interior, simple rigging and low upkeep, the boats are a natural for the first-time boat buyer, or a step between a sailing dinghy and a larger cruising or racing auxiliary. What happens in many cases, however, is that when owners move up to bigger boats, they keep their 22s to pass on to other family members or to race in the extensive one-design circuit. The Catalina 22 National Sailing Association is one of the strongest in sailing, and, once involved, many sailors never leave. The Catalina 22 has defined the pocket-cruising trailer-able class for the last 25 years.

Any time two or more boats are on the same lake, sooner or later a race will ensue. When the boats are the same model sailors can hone their racing skills and show each other how fast they are. Thus began the Catalina 22 National Sailing Association.

Since the boat was first sold in California it was only natural that area would be the starting place of what is now known as the Catalina 22 National Sailing Association. Its beginnings came from organizer Tom Winans who served as the National Commodore in 1971 & 1972. In 1973 the first Catalina 22 National regatta was held at Long Beach, California with Sam Crabtree selected as Vice Commodore in charge of organizing the regatta. A boat that was only three years old and already competing in a National regatta with 45 boats in attendance was a large accomplishment in itself and Tom Winans emerged as the first National Champion. Since that beginning other names have been added to the list. In the Genoa class they are Joe Becker, Carlos Canalizo, Gene Carapetyn, Terry Cobb, Bill Culp, Dick Durgin, Gene Ferguson, David Hayslip, Roger Kerr, John Mies, Tom Page, Beattie Purcell, Mitchell Richardson, Hal Smith, Steve Snider, Ed Webb, Jim Wilson, and Dick Woodside.



Tom Winans, Karen Steimle and Dick Winans of the Anacapa Yacht Club (Channel Islands Harbor, California), won the first Catalina 22 National Championship (held in 1973) regatta in their Catalina 22 "Sun Spot" (#407). Photograph from *MainBrace.*

The boat, designed as a family cruiser, came equipped with a main and 110% jib. That didn't last long as racers wanted more speed. The 150% Genoa was added to the sail inventory and the Class Rules were adjusted. One design racing in the Catalina 22 was off and running.

In 1975 the weak point of the boat showed up drastically at the Nationals, held on Lake Ray Hubbard in Dallas, Texas. At the start of one of the races, with high winds blowing, several of the masts came down. Due to a lack of tuning to accommodate the larger 150% head sail, excessive mast pumping caused the cast aluminum spreader brackets to fail. Since the boat was originally designed to carry a 110% head-sail, no thought had been given in the beginning that a larger head-sail would cause undue stress on the rigging. At that time the forward and aft lowers were only 3/32" wire, not strong enough to handle the extra loads created by the 150% Genoa and high winds. This incident began the search for a tuning guide to solve this problem. The final solution was to change the wire to 1/8", the same as the uppers, and to replace the aluminum spreader brackets with stainless steel spreader brackets. Eventually a new mast extrusion was developed which gave the mast more rigidity. These changes eliminated the problem of mast pump and failure.

In 1977 one of the Catalina 22 owners at the Fort Worth Boat Club complained to the National Sailing Association that the fin keel boats were much faster than his swing keel and sent the local race results from the past two years to prove his point. Upon review of those results, the National Association officers decided that the fin keel boats had an unfair advantage and banned the fin keel from racing in nationally sanctioned regattas. Since the majority of the boats in Fleet 47 at the Fort Worth Boat Club were fin keels and since Fleet 47 was to host the Nationals the following year, several Catalina 22 owners were upset. Under the leadership of Cal Daughty, Fleet 47 captain and Carlos Canalizo, Fleet 30 captain, both fleets petitioned the National Board to allow the fin keel to race in a class of its own. They agreed and so in 1978 there were two fleets. Bill Culp won the swing keel division and Carlos Canalizo won the fin keel division. Fleet 47 had the race committee record times on the first five finishers of each fleet in every race in order to compare the speed of each boat. (They knew the person who sent in the results never cleaned his boat bottom.) Surprise! Surprise! The swing keels had better times in every race, so the rules were changed to allow the fin keel to race heads up with the swing keel.



Carlos Canalizo, the first Catalina 22 Fixed Keel Division National Champion, with crew Charles and Gene Canalizo. Photograph from *MainBrace.*

Later the spinnaker was added to the sail inventory, brought on mostly by the Texas contingent of racers, and the first Spinnaker National regatta was held in conjunction with the Genoa National regatta at Ocala, Florida in 1981. The first National Spinnaker champion was Bill Vawter from Fleet 47 at the Fort Worth Boat Club. Others who have won this honor are Jack Armistead, Rosser Bodycomb, Dick Edwards, Gene Ferguson, Buz Owens and Don White. There is not sufficient interest in the spinnaker to muster enough boats to participate every year, but like the Jib fleet and Silver fleet, when the participants number at least ten, the association gives them a chance to compete.

With the Mississippi River and the Continental Divide being the dividing line, the United States is separated into three sections. The National Championship Regatta is rotated each year, giving each part of the country an opportunity to participate close to home. The annual National Championship Regatta is the biggest event of the year and is hosted by a local fleet who bids for the honor of being the host fleet. This event is a time of reunion for old friends and an opportunity to meet and make new friends that will last a lifetime. Because of the family relationship of the boat and the people who own and sail them, it is commonplace for "go fast" information to be shared among the racers.

At the National Championship Regatta each year, several awards are given to recognize members for their contributions to sailing and the Catalina 22 National Sailing Association other than racing in regattas.

Some of the awards include Leadership, Regional Commodore of the Year, Fleet of the Year, Cruising Family of the Year, Racing Family of the Year, Newest Racer and Newsletter of the Year. As time and circumstances have dictated, new awards are added from time to time. One of those is the Betty Gay Clements Women's Trophy presented to the female skipper with the best score in the National regatta. The latest to be added is the Sandy Kennedy Spirit Award.



Photograph: Cindy and Rich Obrosky receive the Sandy Kennedy Spirit Award at the annual General Membership Meeting in 2014.

As the Association grew, the need arose for cruising activities to be coordinated on a local, regional and national level. While the most visible and active members in the Catalina 22 National Association are involved in racing, the vast majority of the Association members are cruisers, who prefer non-racing, family-oriented sailing activities. In 1992 the office of National Cruising Chairman (Captain) was formed and Stephen Mabry accepted that responsibility.



With members in the United States, Australia, Azores Portugal, Canada, England, Mexico, New Zealand and Puerto Rico, the Catalina 22 National Sailing Association is actually an International organization. From the beginning the MainBrace, the publication for the Catalina 22, has been there to report the facts as well as the fiction (who says that sailors tell the complete truth when it comes to the description of a race, especially if they got lucky and won). This publication continues to be the link for the active regions and fleets to share local activities, photos and technical information.

The American Sail Advancement Program has chosen five boats to be inducted into the American Sailboat Hall of Fame. These are true American classics. These boats have, through the excellence of their design and construction, given sailors new opportunities to enjoy their sport. To qualify, the boat must have been introduced at least 15 years ago. It is noteworthy that four of the five Hall of Fame inductees are still in production, a testament to their enduring appeal. The Catalina 22 is one of those five boats selected.



Will this boat, the boat and the Catalina 22 National Sailing Association survive the rigors of the fast life and instant information age? Through strong national leadership, dedicated local leaders and concerned sailors, they will become even stronger. With a strong class association and support of the builder, the boat's future will race forward far into the next century.

Still An All-Around Champion

During the late 1980s and early 1990s, production of sailboats took a dive and many sailboat manufacturers closed their doors. Production of the Catalina 22 New Design model began to decline in the early 1990s and Catalina Yachts began work on plans for a new version of the Catalina 22 that might help turn-around a declining demand.

In 1991, the Catalina 22 National Sailing Association established the Silver Fleet for the National Championship Regatta. A Spinnaker Fleet was added to the Nationals in 1994. To this day, the three established fleets for the National Championship Regatta are Gold, Silver and Spinnaker. The winner of the Gold Fleet is the designated Catalina 22 National Champion.

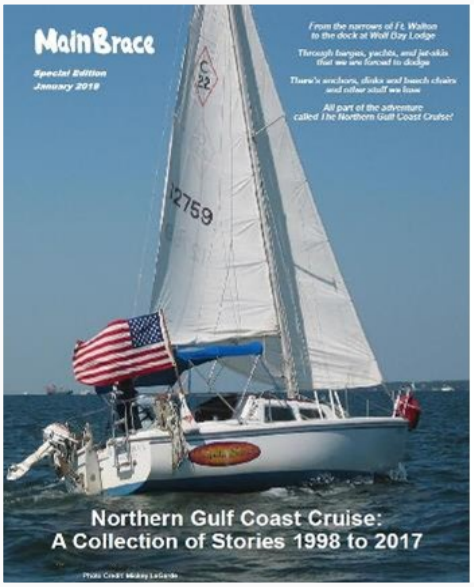
In 1994, Joe Becker and the Windycrest Yacht Club were honored by US SAILING and received the St. Petersburg Trophy for the best run regatta - the 1993 Catalina 22 National Championship Regatta.



In 1995 the third generation Catalina 22, branded as the Catalina 22 MK-II, was launched by Catalina Yachts beginning with approximately hull number 1534f5 The Catalina 22 MK-II featured eight more inches of beam at the deck, fiberglass encased wing keel or swing keel, a longer cabin trunk, optional slide-out galley, a tilt-up sliding cabin hatch, and more interior room and a larger cockpit. Catalina 22 MK-II #15355, a swing keel, finished ninth out of 34 boats racing in the Gold Fleet at the Nationals in Chautauqua, New York. The MK-II was discontinued in 2010 when Catalina Yachts relocated the remaining small boat production from Woodland Hills, California to Largo, Florida.

In 1996, a new *Catalina 22 Technical Manual* was offer to C22NSA members in print-only format with over 300 pages of content. The current version of the *Catalina 22 Technical Manual* was published in 2006 by Dale Mack. Three updates with additional content were added in 2014, 2017 and 2019. Today, the *Catalina 22 Technical Manual* has over 700 pages of content available in PDF format for easy reading, saving and printing. The *Catalina 22 Technical Manual* is a must-have publication for anybody new to Catalina 22 ownership. Membership in the Catalina 22 National Sailing Association is required to purchase the *Technical Manua*l. Most Catalina 22 sailors believe it is money well spent.

A year later, Dale Mack built the first "Catalina 22 Enthusiastic" website, putting the Catalina 22 National Sailing Association on the world wide web.

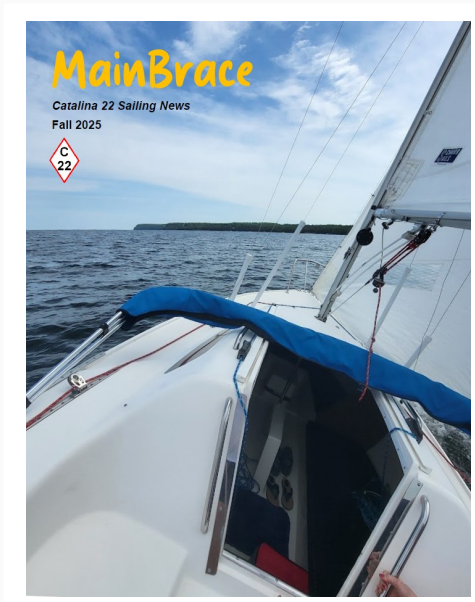


In the late 1990s, a new wave of interest in Catalina 22 cruising was about to take-off in the Catalina 22 sailing community as Bob and Trish Endicott along with Mickey and Dee LaGarde set sail on the June Moon Cruise along the Northern Gulf Coast of Florida. They sailed from Fort Walton Beach, Florida to Alabama and back. This trip in June 1998 established the foundation for the infamous Northern Gulf Coast Cruise. On the website you can enjoy a collection of articles written about the first twenty years of sailing the Northern Gulf Coast Cruise.

C22NSA members who log in to the website can read about destinations where Catalina 22 sailors have enjoyed cruising aboard their Catalina 22 including East Coast, West Coast, Gulf Coast, Mid-America, and Great Lakes. The current list of Catalina 22 Sailing Destination articles includes the following - Apalachicola River, Arkansas River, Cape Cod, Catalina Island, Chesapeake Bay / Middle Chesapeake Bay, Door County / Sister Bay / Green Bay, Florida Charlotte Harbor and Pine Island, Florida Emerald Coast, Florida Keys, Kentucky Lake, Lake Charlevoix, Lake Erie / Lake Michigan / Lake Ontario / Lake Superior, Lake Texoma Middle Chesapeake Bay, Nashville Percy Priest, New York Long Island, North Channel Canada, Pacific Northwest, and the San Juan Islands.



At the 2001 National Meeting, the Catalina 22 racing community expressed an interest in asking Catalina Yachts if they could develop a new Catalina 22 model that better reflected the weight and dimensions of the original Catalina 22. Commodore Pam Slaton and Chief Measurer Dale McCaffity took the feedback to Frank Butler of Catalina Yachts. In June 2004, Catalina Yachts launched the new Catalina 22 Sport beginning with hull number 15540. The Production was moved from Woodland Hills, California to Largo, Florida in 2010. The Catalina 22 Sport would remain in production through 2025 when production halted in response to a closure at Catalina Yachts. The last Catalina 22 Sport was approximately hull number 15815.



In response to declining membership and increasing costs to publish and mail the *MainBrace* magazine, in 2011, the Catalina 22 National Sailing Association stopped printing of *MainBrace* and all future editions would be published and available on the Association's website in PDF format. Since its inception in the Fall 1972, over 250 editions of the *MainBrace* have been published. Members of the Catalina 22 National Sailing Association have the option to purchase back issues dating back to Fall 1972.

Photograph of cover of MainBrace issue #250 published in Fall 2025.

Beginning around 2012, Ted McGee took on a major work effort to redesign the Association's website to make it a much more vibrant and an easily accessible source of information for the Catalina 22 sailing community. In 2014, Gene Ferguson retired as Editor and Rich Fox was elected Class Editor and Webmaster. In the August/ September issue of SAIL magazine, the Editors referred to the www.catalian22.org website as “a deep resource for all things Catalina 22.” The website remains the premier destination for Catalina 22 information.

In July 2019, the Catalina 22 National Sailing Association celebrated 50 years of Catalina 22 production at the National Championship Regatta on Fort Heffner Lake, Oklahoma. C22NSA Vice Commodore Duncan McBride lead the effort, and everybody enjoyed a fun week of Catalina 22 sailing and camaraderie.

Due to the COVID-19 global pandemic, the Catalina 22 National Sailing Association did not host the National Championship Regatta in 2020. This was the first and only time since 1972 that the Nationals were not held.

During an era when the interest in sailing has declined and many other sailing associations became silent, the Catalina 22 National Sailing Association has continued to maintained a steady helm with a vibrant calendar full of racing and cruising events.

In 2020, Catalina Yachts Founder and CEO Frank Butler passed away. Sharon Day was named the new CEO, a position she held until May 2025 when she retired in response to the sale of Catalina Yachts to Michael Reardon. Unfortunately, in October 2025, Catalina Yachts closed its doors, sealing the fate of the production of the Catalina 22 - a production run that survived 55 years and outlasted the other models built by Catalina Yachts.

The 1960s

The seeds of what would become the Catalina 22 and the Catalina 22 National Sailing Association were planted in the 1960s in Southern California when several key events came together.

In the late 1960s, Southern California was exploding with new, good paying jobs in the aerospace industry.

Up and down the California coast, new marinas were popping up to satisfy the needs of aerospace workers who were turning to boating as a new recreational activity.

The 1960s brought a new technology of fiberglass applied to the construction of mass-production boats allowing new companies to be established in California to meet the increasing consumer demand for water-based recreation.



Frank the Navy guy in his younger days, with his wife Jean

Catalina Yachts' founder Frank Butler's initial intent was not to build boats, but rather to have a boat built for his own use. In 1961, Butler took over the production of his own boat, a Victory 21, when the original boat builder ran out of funds and borrowed money from Butler. The builder was not able to repay the debt. Instead, the builder gave Butler the tooling to continue building the boat. Butler later gained full control of the company in 1961 renaming it Wesco Marine, and later Coronado Yachts.

The first models built by Coronado were the Aurora 21 and Victory 21 in 1964. In 1965, the Coronado 25 was built, becoming the first boat with a one-piece interior pan-liner, making the boat stronger, lighter, and less expensive than previous models. Mr. Butler said, "the idea for the pan-liner came from Lockheed and how they built their planes." The concept of the one-piece interior pan-liner was carried over six years later to the Catalina 22.

In 1968, Butler sold Coronado to the Whittaker Corporation which had already acquired Columbia Yachts. Columbia Yachts had been in the boat building business since 1963.

Whittaker kept the Coronado Yachts name plate in addition to Columbia Yachts name plate. The fuel crunch of the early 1970s took some toll on low-end buyers and Coronado Yachts ceased production of the Coronado 23 and 25. 1974 was the last year the Coronado Yachts name plate would be used, and all further production would be done by Columbia Yachts. Columbia did continue to use the Coronado Yachts name plate for the 28, 35, 41 and 45 until 1976. Columbia Yachts eventually went out of business in the mid-1980s after the company was sold to Hughes Boat Works in 1979, then later to Aura Yachts in 1982, then back to Hughes.

The Launch of Catalina Yachts

After selling Coronado Yachts to Whittaker Corporation, Butler remained with Whittaker Corporation for one year then left due to disagreements with the management of his proposed design for a 22-foot trailer-able sailboat. In 1968 Butler signed a non-compete agreement with Whittaker and could not build boats except those that Whittaker did not have rights for.

Butler formed Catalina Yachts in Hollywood, California, named after the nearby Catalina Islands.

In July 1969, Butler began tooling for production of the 22-foot sailboat that Whittaker did not want to build. The first boat built by the new Catalina Yachts company was the Catalina 22. The Catalina 22 could not be introduced to the market until the non-compete contract expired in 1970.

The Catalina 22 went on to become a tremendous success and introduced thousands of families to sailing without breaking the budget. The Catalina 22 was the right boat at the right time to meet demand for recreational boating in Southern California in the 1960s and well into the 1970s.



Catalina Yachts - Woodland Hills

Photograph by Catalina Yachts.

Growing Up With Their Customers

In support of the launch of the Catalina 22, Frank Butler hired Beattie Purcell to focus on marketing and developing relationships with dealers throughout the United States. Approximately four to five Catalina 22s were built daily to keep up with customer demand. Dealers were put on a quota system due to challenges in meeting customer demand. Production was expanded to South Carolina which helped to reduce shipping costs for East Coast customers. Customers were happy with their first Catalina purchase and started coming back for more.

Following the launch of the Catalina 22, Frank Butler quickly started designing and building bigger models. In 1970, the Catalina 27 was launched. This was followed by the Catalina 30 in 1974 and the Catalina 25 and Catalina 38 in 1978. This strategy enabled families who started with a Catalina 22 to grow up and stay within the Catalina Yachts family. Catalina Yachts continued to build a loyal following of customers and continued to grow with very little advertising needed.

The 1980s was a decade of further expansion. The acquisition of Morgan Yachts in Largo, Florida in 1984 marked a significant milestone allowing for specialization in cruising and charter boats on the East Coast. The Morgan Yachts facility also enabled Catalina Yachts to have plenty of space to continue to expand its product line. By the end of the decade, Catalina Yachts had launched many larger, classic boats including the Catalina 34, 36, 42 all of which set production records with well over a thousand hulls built for each model.



The brand's growth paralleled the evolving needs of its customers, offering scalable options from the Catalina 22 upwards. Customers were very loyal to the Catalina Yachts brand, many of whom owned three, four or even five Catalina sailboats over many decades.

The recession at the end of the 1980s decade saw many big name sailboat manufacturers go out of business due to a sudden decline in sales volume. Fortunately, Catalina Yachts was able to successfully weather the succession and rebounded in the 1990s.

The 1990s and 2000s brought continued expansion and a refresh of models that have been around for nearly 20 years. With the assistance of Sharon Day (Sales) and Gerry Douglas (Engineering) Catalina Yachts had become the largest sailboat manufacture in the United States.



By 2010, sailboat production in Woodland Hills, California had halted and all production was moved to its large facility in Largo, Florida. The last Catalina 22 built in Woodland Hills was hull number 15726.

Listening to customers allowed Catalina Yachts to evolve its designs and improve the quality of its products while still making boats that are accessible, affordable, and easy to sail. Noteworthy is the emphasis on practical design and continuous innovation, particularly through customer feedback leading to improvements exemplified by the “5 Series” and “6 Series.” Photographs by Catalina Yachts.



The Catalina 22, with over 15,000 units built, is frequently cited as the vessel that introduced many enthusiasts to sailing, thanks to its affordability and versatility. Catalina sailboats are prevalent globally, found in numerous marinas, a testament to Frank Butler's commitment to broadening access to sailing.



Message from Frank Butler

Founder & President of Catalina Yachts



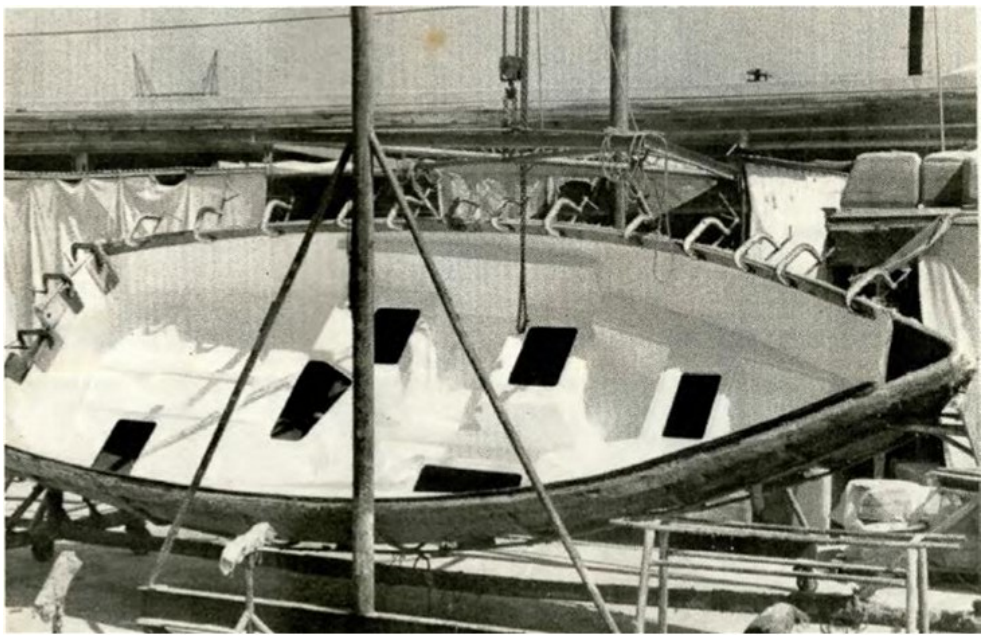
"When I founded Catalina Yachts in 1970, my goal was not to become the largest sailboat builder in the United States. My goal was, and still is, to build good boats that are a good value for our customers.

Accomplishing this requires planning, efficient manufacturing (a part of the process I particularly enjoy) and well-designed boats. I believe Catalinas do well in a very competitive market because they are the result of listening carefully to our customers and dealers. When we design a new boat, we don't try to reinvent the wheel each time. We incorporate proven features with new ideas and a lot of boat owners' suggestions. This gives the line continuity, helps us avoid overly trendy styling, and insures good resale value for Catalina owners.

At Catalina, we are especially proud of having the biggest percentage of repeat customers in the industry. We are all committed to maintaining the high level of customer confidence this represents. The Catalina philosophy means listening to our customers and doing our best every day.

On that promise the Catalina family will continue to grow."

Photograph from *MainBrace.*



Frank Butler Speaks with Association Members

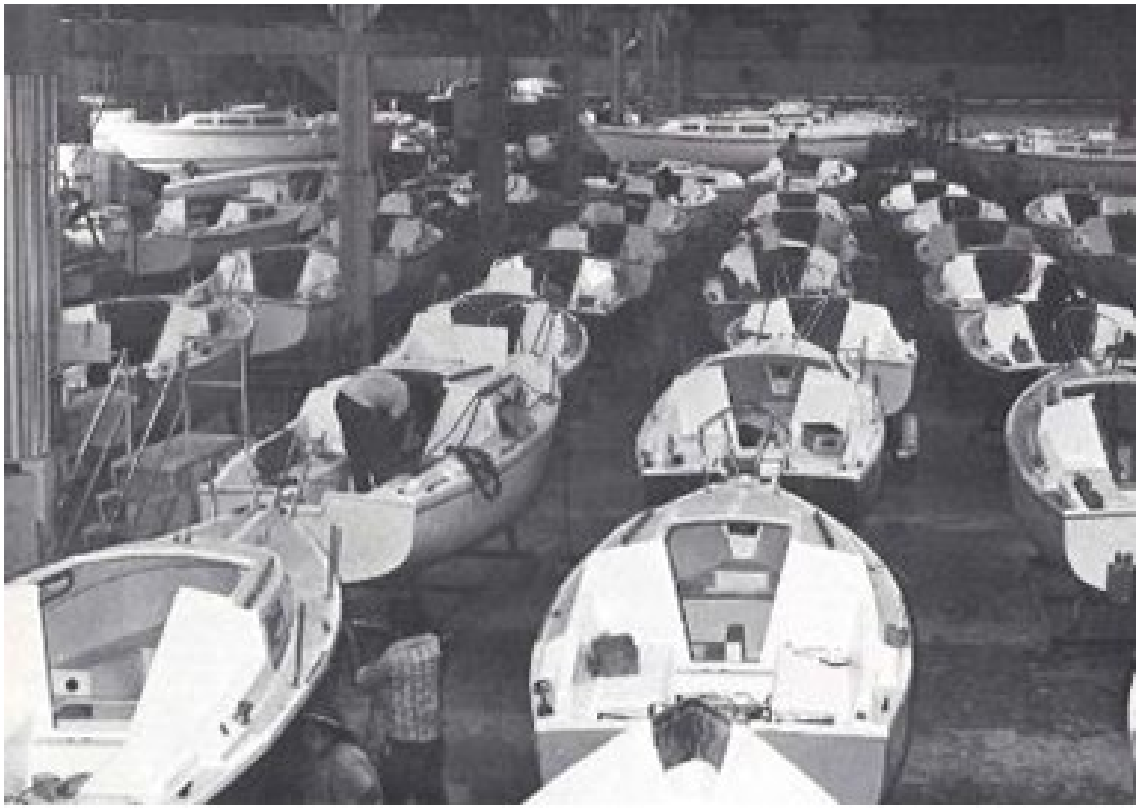
Originally published in December 1980 *MainBrace*.

Fellow Sailors:

“My goal for the Catalina 22 was to fill the need of many sailors for a nice looking, good sailing, one design class sailboat that could be easily trailered. I wanted it to have a roomy cockpit, comfortable accommodations, be nicely finished, and provide what I call “good value for the dollar.”

I still remember when I began designing the Catalina 22, you discover that what you draw on paper does not always turn out to be exactly what you would like in the finished product. As the tooling department began the mock up and I saw the Catalina 22 start to take shape, I spent a lot of my time there making changes and corrections. I enjoyed working closely with the tooling department in this important phase of development of the Catalina 22.

I was fortunate to be able to foresee corrections and improvements that needed to be made in its early stages. I feel this avoided many common pitfalls and has made the Catalina 22 a better boat than other boats on the market today.



Catalina Yachts West Coast production line.

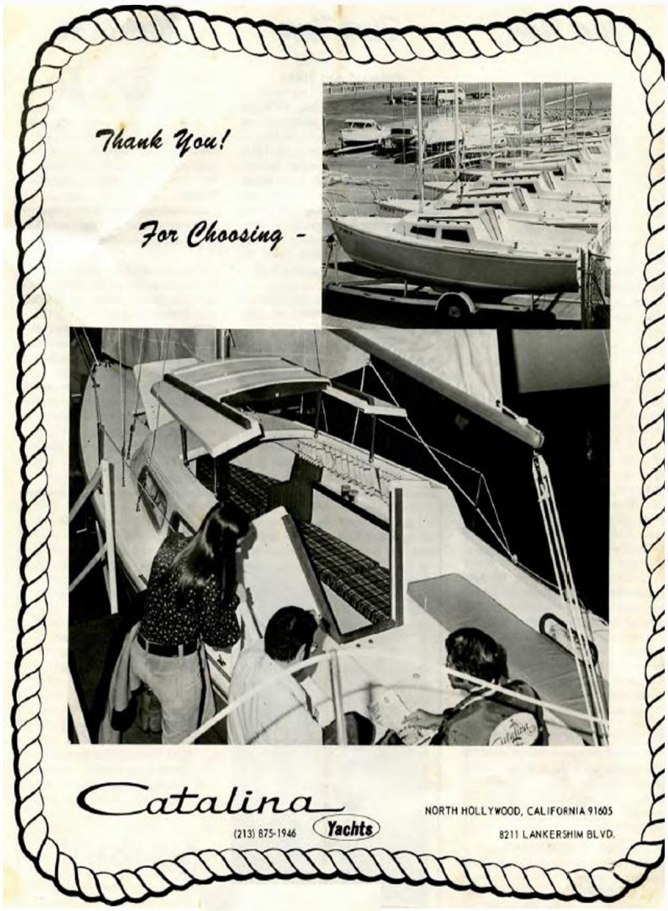
Photograph from *MainBrace.*

An important design feature of the Catalina 22 was the inner hull liner. The use of a molded fiberglass hull liner is a technique which I pioneered and developed during the mid-1960s. In 1969, when the Catalina was introduced, there were few boats with molded interior liners. This has since become almost standard practice in the sailboat industry, but the Catalina 22 was among the fist.

When the Catalina 22 was introduced, we hoped to build about 500. As we all know, the Catalina 22 has been a tremendous success story. I never dreamed we would build over 10,000. Because of the growth and constant interest in the Catalina 22, I think we can look forward to building another 5,000 or more in the future. The Catalina 22 is now being built in California, Florida, England, and Australia.

During the last decade of production, there have been few changes to the basic Catalina 22. The keel pivot arrangement was changed to a more efficient building method at approximately hull number 250. Later, a pop-top option was added which has become very popular and is now on about 90% of all boats produced. The mast section has also changed. I felt and still feel that the original section was adequate if properly tuned. The new design mast section, which is of approximately the same weight, is stiffer in heavier winds, and has worked out very well with new Catalina 22 owners.

A fixed keel model was also introduced, but the retractable keel model still accounts for approximately 90% of our production. Adjustable stops were added to the traveler bar, and the interior liner color was changed to beige. Changes in the production of the Catalina 22 are based on constructive suggestions from Catalina 22 owners. These suggestions are always welcome and appreciated to help make a good boat even better.



I feel the Catalina 22 is one of the best values on the market today. Without you, the owners and sailors who support the Catalina 22 and the National Sailing Association, we could never have achieved the success of the Catalina 22 we all enjoy today.

I take pride in being the designer and builder of the Catalina 22 and I thank you all for recognizing our efforts to build a good quality sailboat and buying a Catalina 22."

Frank W. Butler

Catalina Yachts Model Introduction by Year

1969

- Catalina 22

1970

- Catalina 27

1974

- Catalina 30

1978

- Catalina 25
- Catalina 38

1980

- Catalina Capri 25

1982

- Catalina 36

1984

- Catalina 22 Capri

1985

- Catalina Capri 18

1986

- Catalina 22 New Design
- Catalina 30 MK-II
- Catalina 34

1987

- Catalina Capri 16

1989

- Catalina 42
- Catalina 50

1990

- Catalina Capri 26
- Catalina 30 MK-III

1991

- Catalina Morgan 45 CC

1992

- Catalina 270
- Catalina 28

1993

- Catalina 320
- Catalina Morgan 381

1994

- Catalina 400
- Catalina 16.5 Expo
- Catalina 250
- Catalina 36 MK-II

1995

- Catalina 22 MK-II
- Catalina 28 MK-II
- Catalina 400
- Catalina 42 MK-II

1996

- Catalina 34 MK-II
- Catalina 380

1998

- Catalina 470

1999

- Catalina 310

2000

- Catalina 400 MK-II

2001

- Catalina 22 Capri MK-II
- Catalina 390
- Catalina 50

2002

- Catalina 350
- Catalina Expo 12.5
- Catalina Expo 14.2

2003

- Catalina 387

2004

- Catalina 18 MK-II
- Catalina 22 Sport
- Catalina Morgan 440

2005

- Catalina 309

2006

- Catalina 309
- Catalina 320 MK-II
- Catalina 425

2007

- Catalina 250 MK-II
- Catalina 350 MK-II

2008

- Catalina 375

2009

- Catalina 445

2010

- Catalina 355

2011

- Catalina 355

2012

- Catalina 315
- Catalina 385

2013

- Catalina 275

2016

- Catalina 425

2019

- Catalina 545

2024 / 6-Series

- Catalina 316
- Catalina 356
- Catalina 386
- Catalina 426
- Catalina 446

2025 - Catalina Yachts closed.

2026 - Catalina Yachts brand now built by C&T Composites.

Catalina Yachts Announces Loss of CEO Frank W. Butler



Woodland Hills, CA – November 15, 2020 – It is with great sadness that we announce that Frank Willis Butler, President and Chief Executive Officer of Catalina Yachts, passed away November 15, 2020 in Westlake Village, California, due to unexpected complications from a recent illness. We extend our most heartfelt condolences and sympathy to Frank's family. Our thoughts are with them at this most difficult time.

A sailing icon and industry “kingspoke,” Frank Butler has introduced hundreds of thousands of people to sailing during his lifetime. Those of us who have been fortunate enough to know and work with Frank have lost a dear friend and an inspiring mentor. Frank leaves behind a company that only he could have built, and his spirit will forever be the foundation of Catalina Yachts.

Born in California in 1928, Frank’s line of popular sailboats put more than 85,000 Catalinas on the water throughout the yachting world. His boat building career began in 1962, when he contracted with a Southern California builder for a 21-foot daysailer. The builder was unable to finish the boat and gave Butler the tooling. He completed building the boat himself, found he enjoyed the process, and agreed to take over the company.

A few years later he founded Catalina Yachts, which has grown to become the largest builder of fiberglass production sailboats in the United States, a position it holds to this day.

A key to Butler’s success in the sailboat industry was his attention to Catalina customers. Handling warranty issues himself, owners were nearly always surprised and reassured to get a personal call from Frank to discuss their concerns.

Butler was inducted into the National Sailing Hall of Fame in 2013. In recognition of his support of the Congressional Cup, a world match racing event, Long Beach Yacht Club awarded him the Crimson Blazer. He was also a founder and lifelong member of the Westlake Yacht Club in Westlake, California.

Following his graduation from Glendale High School, he served in the US Navy. He met his wife, Jean, at a school dance; they recently celebrated their 71st anniversary.

Frank is survived by Jean, their four daughters, Deborah Reese, Mary Linn, Nancy Bear, and Karen Butler; three sons, David, Robert and Steve; 20 grandchildren, 28 great-grandchildren, and four great-great-grandchildren.

Awakening the joy of sailing for so many people in past generations, Frank Butler's sailing legacy will certainly continue well into in future generations.

Sharon Day Named President of Catalina Yachts



Following the passing of Frank Butler, Sharon Day was named the President of Catalina Yachts. Sharon had been working side-by-side with Frank Butler since the mid-1970s. Sharon previously served as National Sales Manager and Vice President of Sales. Sharon Day and played a pivotal role in the growth of Catalina Yachts. After 50 years of service to the company, Sharon retired from Catalina Yachts in April 2025 following the sale of the company to Michael Reardon. Photograph of Sharon Day from Catalina Yachts Facebook page.

Michael Reardon Acquired Catalina Yachts

On April 30, 2025, it was announced that Michael Reardon, Founder and CEO of Daedalus Yachts, had acquired Catalina Yachts and its sister company True North. This move was expected to open a new chapter for Catalina Yachts and lead them into the next era of growth an innovation. Instead, a press release dated October 13, 2025 written by CEO Patrick Turner, announced that Catalina Yachts would temporarily suspend production. In late October, it was reported that a Court order had evicted Michael Reardon from the Catalina Yachts facilities in Largo, Florida due to defaulting on an "asset purchase agreement" with the family of Frank Butler valued at approximately $1 million.

C&T Composites Now Building Catalina Yachts

In late June 2026 it was announced by CEO Patrick Turner that C&T Composites based in Largo, Florida would restart American boat-building for Catalina Yachts and True North. The company's mission is to preserve the heritage of Catalina Yachts and True North while bringing back experienced designers and engineers, adding new talent, and building the next generation of boats in the U.S.

The Historical Impact of Catalina Yachts

Catalina Yachts has had a trans-formative and long-lasting impact on recreational sailing, shaped by its founder Frank Butler's philosophy, its enormous production scale, and its influence on both cruising and racing culture.

Catalina Yachts changed sailing – making it accessible to ordinary people. Catalina Yachts grew into one of the largest sailboat manufacturers in the world, producing more than 80,000 boats across its lineup. This scale mattered: Catalina's boats were intentionally designed to be affordable, durable, and easy to sail. Frank Butler emphasized value, efficient manufacturing, and listening to customers, which kept prices within reach for middle-class families.

This approach helped expand sailing beyond yacht clubs and coastal elites, fueling the growth of trailer-sailing, family cruising, and entry-level ownership.

Catalina's design ethos—proven features, incremental innovation, and customer feedback—created boats that were stable, forgiving, and practical. This philosophy influenced the broader industry in several ways:

- Fiberglass construction became the norm for durability and low maintenance.
- Masthead sloop rigs and simple deck layouts set standards for ease of use.
- Trailerable cruisers like the Catalina 22 opened up inland sailing markets.
- Mid-sized cruisers such as the Catalina 27 and Catalina 30 became benchmarks for comfort and performance.

Expanding the culture of cruising and club racing. Catalina sailboats helped fuel the rise of:

- One-design racing fleets, especially around the Catalina 22 and 27
- Family cruising, thanks to roomy interiors and forgiving handling
- Community sailing programs, which adopted Catalinas for training and rentals

Because Catalina owners tended to stay loyal—Catalina Yachts boasts one of the highest repeat-customer rates in the industry—large, active owner associations formed around many models. These communities strengthened the culture of grassroots sailing and kept older boats active on the water.

Catalina's historical impact can be seen in several long-term trends:

- Normalization of value-driven boat building: Frank Butler and Catalina Yachts proved that well-designed, affordable boats could dominate the market.
- Growth of the American trailer-sailing movement: The Catalina 22 (first built in 1969) became one of the most iconic small cruisers ever produced.
- Stability in the mid-size cruiser market: Boats like the Catalina 27 and 30 set new expectations for comfort, layout, and performance in 27 to 35-foot cruisers.
- A multi-generational sailing pipeline: Many sailors began on Catalinas and stayed in the sport because the boats were approachable and reliable.

Frank Butler's original goal wasn't to become the biggest builder—just to build "good boats that are a good value." Ironically, that philosophy is exactly what made Catalina Yachts a giant and leaving an ever-lasting impact on the recreational sailing industry.

Catalina 22 Hull #1

By Sandy Kennedy
Originally published in *Mainsheet*—February 1989

Contrary to popular believe . . . hull number 1 is alive and well in Grand Forks, North Dakota.

Some time ago, an article in *Mainsheet* indicated that the original prototype Catalina 22, #1, had been destroyed. No so. Bob roller of Grand Forks, North Dakota, is the proud new owner of the very first Catalina 22, and the boat is still in excellent sailing condition. She has enjoyed a long life with many owners in the Midwest.

Hull #1's life began when Frank Butler designed and built her in 1969. Butler took her to the Chicago Yacht Club for her first outing, and he sailed her in the "One of a Kind" race that year, before selling her. Butler has not revealed where she placed in the race.

Her first owner was Warren Wong of Rochester, New York. He sailed her on Lake Pepin, then sold her to Albert Spottke of Minnetonka, Minnesota in 1971. She continued to cruise Lake Pepin but had no name.





Sometime later, Spottke sold the boat to Glenn Webster of St. Paul, Minnesota, and she was finally named Mayfly. In 1975, Michael Mackany purchased Mayfly for a reported $5,200. He pained her bottom, gave her a new tiller, and added some new sails before selling her to Fritz Stuneck in 1984. She was renamed Song. This year, the first Catalina 22 was purchased by Bob Roller of Roller Office Supply in Grand Forks. Bob says her original jib and main were made by Hanna Sailmakers of Costa Mesa. A letter from Bob to Loal (*MainBrace* Editor) dated October 24, 1988, reveals the following.

“After talking with Frank Butler yesterday, I am even more amazed at how unaltered this boat is after twenty years. It’s pretty much the original condition now as when it was sailed in the Chicago Yacht Club race, except for the replacement of the marine pump-out head with a porta-potty and painting over the dark blue waterline with bottom paint. I plan to restore the boat after I’ve sailed it a season. We plan to keep it at Leech Lake next spring, as about five families in the area have recently purchased cruising boats and look forward to keel hauling next year. We’ve named her *Genesis*, which the definition in Webster’s explains as the coming into being of anything.”

Unfortunately, we have no pictures of *Genesis* under sail, but, hopefully, Bob Roller will share some with us next time.





Editor’s Note - Catalina 22 hull number 1 is now in the possession of Catalina 22 Commodore Duncan McBride where the boat is receiving exceptional love and attention. Hull number 1 has been displayed multiple times at select Catalina 22 National Championship Regattas.

More Catalina 22 #1

This isn't confirmed, but sometime ago, rumor has it that Frank Butler was able to track down and purchase back Catalina 22 hull #1. For a decade or two, she was stored inside the Catalina Yachts facility in Woodland Hills, California. More recently, Commodore Duncan McBride of the Catalina 22 National Sailing Association, was able to purchase hull #1 from Frank Butler. Duncan and his family and friends have restored the boat to its full glory and she is often put on display at selected Catalina 22 National Championship Regatta. Enjoy a few additional photographs compliments of Duncan McBride, Katie McBride, and Ted McGee.









Photographs by Katie McBride (top left, top right), and Ted McGee (lower right).

Production Milestones

July 1969, the first Catalina 22 is built in North Hollywood, California. Frank Butler hopes to build 100 boats if all goes well.



February 1975, hull number 5000 is built.

May 1977, a flat-sided mast becomes standard on new boats.

February 1980, SAIL magazine names the Catalina 22 as “Trailer-able Boat of the Decade”.

September 1980, hull number 10000 is built. The Catalina 22 is built in plants in California, Florida, England, Australia and Canada.

July 1985, the Catalina 22 “New Design” is introduced beginning with hull number 13343.

1987, the wing keel is offered as an option.

February 1990, hull number 15000 is built.

January 1995, the Catalina 22 MK-II is introduced beginning with hull number 15345 (estimated). It features an enlarged cockpit, deck and interior, fiberglass encased keel.

February 1995, the Catalina 22 is named as one of the five charter members to the Sailboat Hall of Fame.

June 2004, the Catalina 22 Sport is built beginning with hull number 15540 and makes its debut at the National Championship Regatta on Lake Lanier, Georgia.

The last Catalina 22 is built at the Woodland Hills facility - hull number 15726 (Sport).



August 2010, after relocating from Woodland Hills, California to Largo, Florida, production of the Catalina 22 Sport resumes with hull number 15727. The Catalina 22 MK-II is no longer in production.

July 2019, 50-year production anniversary of the Catalina 22.

2025, the last Catalina 22 (Sport) is built in Largo, Florida prior to the shut down of Catalina Yachts. A total of 15,814Catalina 22s were built since 1969.

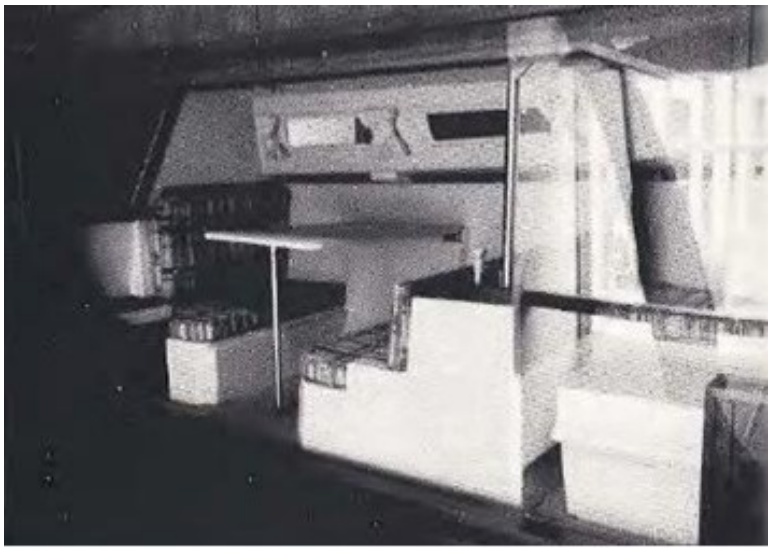
World's Largest Half Model

A Catalina 22 full-sized half-model was set-up in 1992 at the Ventura County Maritime Museum at Channel Islands Harbor, California. The full-sized Catalina 22 was cut in-half and mounted on a plaque seven feet tall and 25 feet long. Visitors could step behind the plaque and see how the boat is fitted out below. This half-model Catalina 22 was donated by Catalina Yachts at the grand opening of the museum. A plaque introducing this exhibit reads in part:

"The Catalina 22 has introduced thousands to the pleasure of sailing and cruising small boats. Often referred to as the 'Model-T' of cruising sailboats, the Catalina 22 was conceived by Frank Butler in 1969. This boat was the first to be produced by his company, Catalina Yachts. To date, over 15,000 Catalina 22s have been built. This accomplishment deserved SAIL magazine's award as 'Outstanding Boat of the Decade'".

Photographs from *MainBrace.*





Catalina 22 (Original)

The original Catalina 22 model, built from 1969 to 1985 with over 13,000 hulls coming off the production line, was one of the most successful sailboats ever built.

The Catalina 22 is a boat that does everything pretty darn well. It is easy to trailer. It is easy to rig. It is easy and inexpensive to maintain. It is fun to race. It is enjoyable to cruise and day sail. And due to the love and care provided by their owners, many Catalina 22s built back in 1969 are still sailing around the country and looking fantastic!

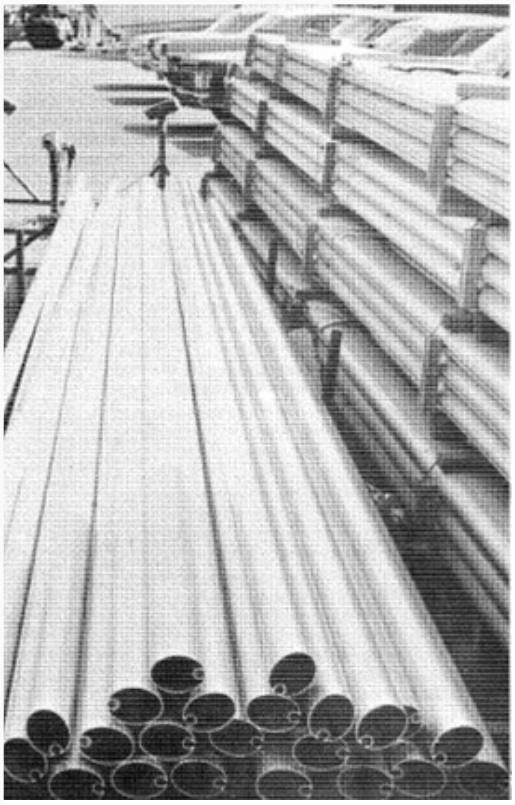
A benefit of owning a Catalina 22 is access to the Catalina 22 National Sailing Association and the *Catalina 22 Technical Manual.* The racing members of the Catalina 22 National Sailing Association can proudly boast that there has been a Catalina 22 National Championship Regatta every year since the first event was held in 1973 in California.

The original Catalina 22 model, especially hull numbers less than 500, continues to be the preferred model for racing as racers actively seek out the lightweight boats with thin keels to maximize their competitiveness on the race course.



The photograph, provided by Catalina Yachts, shows Beattie Purcell skippering hull #1 at the “One of a Kind Regatta” in the early 1970s on Lake Michigan. The photo was obtained from the article “Catalina Yachts: One Big Family” by Steve Mitchell and printed in ***Good Old Boat*** magazine (Volume 4, Number 1) in January/February 2001.

Most of the Catalina 22s built were swing keels. A fin keel with a 3’ 6” draft was an option. A wing keel was never offered with the “Original” model, although there may have been a few boats where the swing keels were replaced with wing keels. The swing keel, along with the associated lifting and pivoting hardware and keel cable require regular inspection and should be replaced at first sign of excessive wear and tear, especially if the boat is used in salt water. Although the target weight of the swing keel is 550 pounds, the mass production of the boat during the early 1970s resulted in some variation in shape and weight of the swing keel. The swing keel is preferred by racers.



From 1969 through 1977, an oval shaped mast was standard. For all boats built as of May 1977, a more robust mast with flat sides was introduced and offered as standard to better support use of a Genoa 150% sail. Many racers prefer the original, overall mast due to its lighter weight and flexibility. The picture from the Spring 1977 *MainBrace* publication shows a stack of original oval masts.

There is more to sailing a Catalina 22 than racing. There are many Catalina 22 sailors who have participated in many of the week-long cruises throughout the United States.

Although the original Catalina 22 has its issues, the boat is very well built and can take a lot of abuse. The demand for used Catalina 22s remains strong because of their relatively inexpensive price tag and easy access to spare parts and knowledgeable resources.

Owners who perform good maintenance practices on their original Catalina 22 have a boat that will be enjoyed for many years to come. For anybody purchasing a Catalina 22, the *Catalina 22 Technical Manual* has been available since the mid-1980s to help provide restoration and maintenance tips.



The weight of the original Catalina 22 varies widely. Some early models weigh-in slightly under 2,000 pounds with others weighing up to 2,500 pounds. This large discrepancy of weight has made it very difficult for the Catalina 22 National Sailing Association to establish a minimum weight in an effort to more equalize the performance of the boats. In addition, there is a lot of weight variance and some shape variance in the shape of the swing keel.

With a typical Catalina 22 weighing less than 2,500 pounds, the boat is easy to trailer behind an SUV or small pick-up truck. The combined weight of a Catalina 22 and trailer is usually a little under 3,500 pounds.

A Catalina 22 can easily be propelled by a 3.5 horse-powered outboard motor at an inland lake or reservoir. A little more horsepower is needed for coastal cruising or on the Great Lakes or similar large waterway.

A few other observations of the boat include:

- Storage of the gasoline tank in the designated locker allows fumes into the main cabin
- A pop-top is available, a popular option for those who enjoy cruising on a Catalina22
- There is no separate anchor locker - one is available on the New Design and MK-II.
- Side decks are narrow, although the cockpit is long and fairly comfortable.
- The swing keel lifting hardware and cable require regularly inspection and occasional replacement.

Overall, the Catalina 22 is a fun boat that offers its owners a variety of sailing opportunities. Class racing is available across the United States. Week long cruising opportunities are also available. Parts are easily available from Catalina Direct, eBay, or from boats that are being parted out. With over 13,000 original Catalina 22s built from 1969 to 1985, they are relatively easy and inexpensive to acquire and restore.



Photograph by Eric Weist.

Catalina 22 New Design

In what was perhaps a very bold move in 1985, Catalina Yachts redesigned the Catalina 22 after 16 years of production and over 13,000 hulls built and sold. In July 1985, a newly designed Catalina 22 rolled off the production line for the 1986 model year.


REDESIGNED Catalina 22 C 22

The New Catalina 22

Interior

Deck Layout

Although the Catalina Yachts' brochures never referenced the 1986-1994 Catalina 22 as the "New Design", the reference to "New Design" most likely originated within the Catalina 22 National Sailing Association as a way to differentiate it from the original Catalina 22 (built 1969-1985). The 1986-1994 Catalina 22 model probably should have been tagged by the builder as the Mk-II. Or, perhaps Catalina Yachts did not want to change the Catalina 22 name plate to help the new boat follow the production success of its predecessor. Regardless, the reference to the 1986-1994 model as the New Design has stuck.

For Catalina Yachts, designing a new Catalina 22 was a balancing act. On one hand, they probably did not want to change the boat too much and have potential buyers see new boat as an entirely different boat, which might negatively impact sales. On the other hand, Catalina Yachts probably wanted to update the appearance and expand the appeal of the Catalina 22 to remain competitive in the booming 1980's sailboat marketplace.



The Catalina 22 New Design introduced a long list of new features and improvements for the Catalina 22 brand. Many of the new features and improvements that originated in the New Design were carried forward to the Mk-II and Sport and remain as standard some 40 years later.

Comparing the Catalina 22 New Design with the original Catalina 22, Catalina Yachts retained a few very important design elements of the original boat. The hull, swing keel, rudder, and boom remained the same to support participation in one-design racing. The mast was also the same but shortened by three inches to accommodate a slightly higher cabin trunk. The running and standing rigging design are almost the same, although some variation in location and length to make it work in the newly designed deck plan. The highly desired cabin trunk "pop-top" feature was also incorporated into the New Design.



Beginning with the 1988 model year, an optional fixed wing keel was introduced with a draft of 2 feet 6 inches. The wing keel model created a little controversy within the Association as there was concern the wing keel design would outperform the swing keel design. Eventually, critics were put at ease, and the wing keel was accepted for one-design class racing.

In the mid to late 1980s, Catalina 22 racers were starting to take note of the significant variation of weight between boats. Feedback from several sailors identified that the New Design was approximately 400 pounds heavier than the original Catalina 22. The New Design weighed-in at approximately 2,700 pounds versus 2,250 pounds, on average, for the original Catalina 22. For years, the members and the officers of the Association discussed many ways to address this issue, including setting a minimum weight, a separate class for the New Design, a handicap system to accommodate the three keel types - swing, fixed, and wing. After much discussion, nothing changed, and the racers continued to embrace the original Catalina 22 model.

In the Fall 1985 *Mainsheet* magazine, Catalina Yachts wrote that the deck and interior of the Catalina 22 New Design were redesigned to incorporate some of the features found on larger boats in the Catalina line.



Anchor Locker - incorporated into the fore-deck, the anchor locker is large enough to accommodate an appropriately sized anchor, chain and rode. This feature was continued forward with the Mk-II model, but not the Sport.

Cabin Trunk - very similar in appearance to the original Catalina 22, except a little bit taller, resulting in a little more room below.

Windows - a new window designed was introduced to eliminate leaks by removing the aluminum frame. Windows are glued and screwed. Although leaks are possible, you usually don't hear New Design owners complaining about window leak problems.



Forward Cabin Hatch - built into the forward slope of the cabin trunk instead of on the fore-deck. This designed eliminated the problem with leaks. For the 1986-87 model years the forward hatch is fiberglass. In the 1988-1994 model years, the forward cabin hatch is strong Plexiglas to allow light in the v-berth. The forward cabin trunk hatch design was carried forward to the Mk-II and the Sport.

Cockpit Gas Locker - one of the biggest issues with the design of the original Catalina 22 was the cockpit storage of gas containers allowed gas fumes into the cabin. The New Design features a separate storage locker on the port side to accommodate a standard six-gallon outboard fuel container. This design was carried forward to the Mk-II and Sport.

Internal Halyards Lead Aft - running of rope halyards through the mast, and four turning blocks to run the halyards to the cockpit is standard in the New Design. An optional winch or two located at the rear of the cabin trunk could be ordered. This design was carried forward to the Mk-II. The Sport includes internal halyards, but not the turning blocks as standard equipment.

Coaming - one of the design elements of the New Design that was not thought out was its design to accommodate use of the winch for the jib or genoa. The coaming design is too narrow, and cleats were located to the aft of the winch, instead of to the inboard side of the winch. This aft location of the cleats meant the person working the foresail had to usually sit aft of the winch and on the low side, instead of across from the winch and on the windward, to cleat-in the sail.

Cockpit Drainage - two scuppers located along the transom allows any water to quickly exit the cockpit floor. This design meant that leaves would no longer clog up the drains, allowing standing water to build up. The cockpit floor has a gradual slope downward to aft to help direct the water to exit at the rear of the boat. This design was carried forward to the Mk-II and Sport.

Traveler - the standard stern pulpit included a built-in traveler. This eliminated the problem of having to drill holes to tighten the traveler. The traveler track and car were also redesigned. This design was carried forward to the Mk-II and Sport.

Rub Rail - was increased in width.

Galley - the most significant design change to the interior was location of the galley with its forward location between the main cabin and the v-berth area. The galley includes a location for a stove to starboard, a location for a small plastic trash can to port, and a sink in the middle.

Cooler - stepping into the cabin, a 48-quart cooler with a teak step, serves a dual purpose as step and cooler.

Floor - the floor of the interior has been slightly raised, and is entirely flat, all the way to the porta-potty. Two teak boards provide access to the bilge. To make up for the slightly raised floor, the cabin trunk was also raised slightly.

Shelves - missing are the port-side and starboard-side shelves that were located beneath the deck.

Storage Lockers - there is plenty of storage on the New Design - beneath the v-berth, settee, stove area, and cockpit. The storage area below the v-berth and settee are lined so contents cannot get wet from water in the bilge.

The well-thought-out design, along with many great features inside and out, the Catalina 22 New Design remains a highly sought after model for first time buyers, and for Catalina 22 sailors who enjoy extended cruising.

Owners of the New Design model tend to be very pleased with the boat. They are very well built, and the design still has a modern appearance.



A Comparison of the Wing Keel and Swing Keel

By Tom Page, Chief Measurer
From *Mainsheet,* Winter 1985

This past spring, I had an opportunity to get some first-hand knowledge of a wing keel Catalina 22 competing against some swing keel Catalina 22s. Bob Baker, a new Fleet 4 member, recently purchased #14694, a wing keel model. His boat has all the normal racing controls plus, after the first race day, inboard genoa tracks and a set of Hart racing sails.



Bob is a very experienced skipper who has competed in the Snipe, Lightning, Star, and Hobie 18 classes. After competing against him in several races, I would rate him a very good skipper. In my opinion, he could hold his own in any level of Catalina 22 competition, including the National Championship Regatta.

Conclusion:

Bob Baker's boat, right now, is pretty close to the race-prepared swing keel Catalina 22s on Folsom Lake. Baker's sails are probably the best on the lake, his bottom is smooth, new gelcoat, and his skippering seems first-rate, yet he hasn't been able to beat the swing keel boats under normal wind conditions. The swing keel boats seem to have a slight edge in pointing ability and upwind speed. Off the wind, Bob's boat seems just a tiny bit faster, whether this is due to the wing keel or his super-roach mainsail, I'm not sure. Baker's keel is quite smooth, stock from the factory, but a little fairing would probably help. Bob reports that his boat does not develop marked weather helm when the wind picks up. This sounds similar to the fin keel Catalina 22s.

Overall, from the comparison I was able to observe, I would judge the wing keel Catalina 22 to be a little slower than the swing keel versions. Could a wing keel Catalina 22 win the Nationals? Perhaps, given good preparation, good sailing, and good racing luck, which is what it takes to win in any boat. Could the wing keel boats dominate the class? In my opinion, no way.

Catalina 22 MK-II

By Don Boyko

When Catalina Yachts came out with the third generation of the popular Catalina 22 for the 1995 model year, they called it the MK-II, and it was probably the most controversial Catalina 22 due to its wider hull at the deck.



Although there was a major redesign of the Catalina 22 in 1986, the Catalina 22 New Design retained the original hull and swing keel. See photograph with MK-II on the left and New Design on the right. The MK-II has a completely new, and wider hull. The photo shows the MK-II hull sides angles further out when compared to Catalina 22 New Design.

The swing keel is completely different. Although basically the same design, profile, and mounting hardware is used, it's no longer cast iron, but made with a stainless-steel support frame, lead ballast, and encased in a smooth fiberglass shell.

The wing keel was retained. However, the MK-II's wing keel was borrowed from the Capri 22, and some came from the factory with a one-inch stainless steel bolt molded in for the attachment of a lifting harness.

The hull-to-deck joint was also completely redesigned with a rounded mating flange that is fully bonded with no calking to worry about drying out and leaking. Having been out now for 20 years, this change has proven to be an effective improvement.

One of the most visible changes with the MK-II's was the elimination of all exterior wood.

The absence of the familiar teak trimming gave the MK-II's the personality of a Clorox bottle some may say. Many of the MK-II's used a smoked Plexiglas sliding hatch.

The interior was also a major redesign with the elimination of the dinette, giving her a more open interior. A small oval table covers the keel trunk.

The MK-II's were Catalina Yachts' answer to the lower priced competition from Hunter and MacGregor boats of similar size. Price is often the sole decision-maker for many first-time sailboat buyers, and the MK-II's showed some cost savings.

The cockpit is wider than the previous two models. The cockpit coaming is flat to facilitate sitting on the high side of the cockpit when under way.



The interior quarter berth cushions are a one-piece design covering two compartments.

The sliding galley returned, but in my opinion, served more as a marketing tool, and we've found better use for the space it took up on our MK-II.

The popular pop-top from the first two Catalina 22 versions is gone, but it was replaced with a hinged sliding hatch assembly, and an enclosure was also available.





Another cost savings was made with the plastic framed forward cabin hatch.



Catalina Yachts also offered a mast-raising system on the MK-II's. It consists of a gin pole that slides into a receiver hole at the base of the mast, and baby-stays that attach to the sides of the mast with "T"-fittings, and pelican hooks on the opposite end that attach to the tops of the cabin-top mounted turning blocks for the mainsail and jib halyards.

Time proved the Catalina 22 MK-II was not a major threat to the established racing community, but she has excelled in the cruiser community.



The Catalina Mark II Debut, photo by V. Leffe'.

Editor's Note - In 1995, Catalina 22 MK-II #15355 ("New Dog, Old Tricks") made its racing debut and respectfully finished in 9th place out of 34 boats racing in the Gold Fleet at the National Championship Regatta on Chautauqua Lake, New York. The boat was skipper by Ed Webb.

Editor's Note - due to a production overlap of the New Design and MK-II, it is believed the first MK-II is approximately hull number 15345.

Following a 15-year production run, manufacturing of the Catalina 22 MK-II ceased in 2010. When the production of the Catalina 22 was moved from Woodland Hills, California to Largo, Florida, Catalina Yachts made the decision not to retool for production of the MK-II, keeping only the recently introduced Catalina 22 Sport in production.

The few hundred MK-II versions built generally demand premium prices. A clean clean Mk-II in very good condition does not stay on the market very long.

Catalina 22 Sport

During the 2001 C22NSA Annual Meeting in Fort Walton Beach, Florida, the membership had identified that the Catalina 22s in production since 1986 were heavy and non-competitive on the race course. The New Design model (1986-1994) was heavier and had an optional wing keel making the boat slower on the race course compared to the original swing keel model. The MK-II model (1995-2010), although lighter than the New Design, was 8 inches wider at the deck (e.g., shrouds more outboard = less pointing ability) and also featured an optional wing keel. These two models, unfortunately, were identified by racers in the Association as boats that were not competitive against the original Catalina 22.

Later that year, Pam Slaton (Commodore) and Dale McCaffety (Chief Measurer) initiated contact with Catalina Yachts. Possible plans for a new Catalina 22 sailboat, designed to reflect the characteristics and weight of the original Catalina 22 more closely, were discussed.

Catalina Yachts listened to the request from the C22NSA Board and then worked carefully with Chief Measurer Dale McCaffety on the many pre-production design details of the new boat. With hull number one still at the Woodland Hills, California facility, the Catalina Yachts design team frequently referenced this boat to make sure the hardware on the Sport were installed in the proper location as the original Catalina 22..

Photograph of a Catalina 22 Sport starting in production at Catalina Yachts.



In June 2004, the first Catalina 22 Sport, hull number 15540, made its debut immediately following the Catalina 22 National Championship Regatta in Atlanta, Georgia.

Sometime around 2010-2011, production was moved to Largo, Florida and the first Sport hull number built was 15727.

In response to feedback shared by Rich Fox with Catalina Yachts, Frank Butler wrote “we are making a change in the production line to build the Sports on the East Coast. We are going to have tighter control, and these comments really help.” Butler also wrote “I am going to watch the weight of the boat and the keel, and a lot of little things to make it a much better boat.”

The swing keel is the only keel option available on the Sport. No wing keel. No fin keel. A carry over from the MK-II production line, the swing keel for the Sport is built around a large stainless-steel support frame with lead encased with smooth fiberglass jacket to make it more maintenance free from rust. Along the lower trailing edge, the stainless-steel frame exits the keel and provides a connecting point for the keel cable. A greater portion of the weight of the keel is located in the bottom of the keel, giving it greater stability in stronger wind conditions.

Compared to the previous three generations of Catalina 22s, the Sport has the smallest cabin interior due to a shorter and more narrow cabin trunk profile. However, this created more room in the cockpit and wider side decks. The cooler-as-a-step feature remains standard, as it has for the past 30 years. There is no galley. There is no pop-top. The only teak is the bulkhead, bilge access cover, and cooler step. The vinyl interior cushions are standard and gives the cabin a Clorox bottle appearance. However, Catalina Yachts also offers cloth cushions in various colors, as an upgrade, that will nicely add color to the interior, making it much more inviting. The interior cushion sizes are excellent. The v-berth cushions in the Sport is as long as the v-berth in the Mk-II, although two inches less in width. The two side settee cushions on the Sport as long as they are in the Mk-II. Surprisingly, the cushions are wider by five more inches.



A strong, all-fiberglass forward cabin truck hatch is located directly above the porta-potty, providing interior ventilation, and giving foredeck crew solid support when setting the whisker or spinnaker pole.

There is plenty of storage below the v-berth and settees. The large, open area below the cockpit is all storage, and accessible from the cabin and from the cockpit port-side hatch.

Whereas the cabin is smaller compared to earlier models, at 6 feet and 10 inches in length, the cockpit of the Sport is at least half-a-foot longer than all earlier models. The cockpit is bigger than those found on most 25-foot boats.

The flat coaming provides skipper and crew the opportunity to sit comfortably “outboard” when the wind picks up. The gas locker is to starboard and can hold a six-gallon fuel tank. The locker does not open up to the interior. The port hatch opens up to the enormous space below the cockpit.

In the 2017 Catalina 22 National Championship Regatta, a Sport finished second in the Gold Fleet and ahead of many past Catalina 22 National Champions, proving this boat can be very competitive against the older hulls.

The Last Catalina 22 - #15814

With the closure of Catalina Yachts in late 2025, the hull number of the last Catalina 22 / Catalina 22 Sport was 15814 (selfie below provided by Jennifer Bennett). As of late 2026 with C&T Composites now producing boats under the Catalina Yachts brand, it is not yet known if the Catalina 22 Sport, or a new Catalina 22 variant, will be built.



How Old is Your Catalina 22?

The hull number of a Catalina 22 will reveal its age. The chart below provides a ball-park estimate of the age of a Catalina 22 based on its hull number. Boats built since 1972 should have their hull number engraved in the upper right-hand corner of the transom.



Model Year	Hull Number
1970	1
1971	322
1972	804
1973	1912
1974	3144
1975	4680
1976	5679
1977	6646
1978	7976
1979	8270
1980	9247
1981	10208
1982	10531
1983	11935
1984	11999
1985	13142
1986	13143
1987	13827
1988	14371
1989	14802
1990	14943
1991	15195
1992	15248
1993	15286
1994	15345
1995	15348

Model Year	Hull Number
1996	15370
1997	15390
1998	15431
1999	15450
2000	15464
2001	15475
2002	15480
2003	15500
2004	15540
2005	15550
2006	15582
2007	15627
2008	15703
2009	15724
2011	15737
2012	15747
2013	15756
2017	15777
2018	15782
2020	15786
2021	15801
2023	15810
2025	15814 (last C22)

The Historical Impact of the Catalina 22

The Catalina 22, first built in 1969, quickly became one of the most popular small keelboats ever produced, with approximately 15,815 hulls built by 2025. That scale alone made it a cultural touchstone. Its trailerability, swing-keel versatility, and forgiving handling lowered the barrier to entry for thousands of new sailors. Many people's first bigger boat sailing experiences happened on a Catalina 22, which helped broaden the sport's demographic and geographic reach.

Several design features contributed to its influence:

- Swing keel flexibility — allowing shallow-water sailing, easy trailering, and access to inland lakes and coastal areas that deeper-keel boats couldn't reach.
- Fiberglass construction — durable, low-maintenance, and affordable, reinforcing the shift toward fiberglass as the dominant material for recreational boats.
- Simple masthead sloop rig — approachable for beginners yet tunable enough for competitive sailors.

The boat's popularity led to the formation of the Catalina 22 National Sailing Association, which has documented more than 50 years of organized racing, cruising events, and class development. This strong class association has:

- Maintained its focus as a family racing, cruising and sailing association.
- Created a stable one-design racing environment.
- Fostered a multi-generational community.
- Helped maintain the boat's relevance through decades of design updates.

The Catalina 22's impact extends beyond its design features and popularity:

- It democratized cruising, making overnight and weekend trips feasible for average families.
- It became a fixture in sailing clubs, often serving as the default training or rental keelboat.
- It helped define the American trailer-sailing movement, encouraging mobility and exploration of diverse sailing waters.
- It remains one of the most recognizable sailboats ever built, with a legacy preserved through active fleets and restoration communities.

The Catalina 22 endures because it hits a rare, sweet spot - affordable, capable, simple, and fun. Its combination of accessibility and sailing community support has made it not just a boat, but a pathway into a lifelong sailing identity.

Sailing is More FUN in a Catalina 22

Whether you own a Catalina 22 Original, New Design, MK-II, or Sport, Frank Butler designed and built a great little boat that has opened up accessibility and new opportunities to have fun on the water. Sailing a Catalina 22 has a kind of charm that sneaks up on you. It's not the biggest boat, or the fastest, or the fanciest—and that's exactly why so many sailors swear it's the most fun.



Light enough to be lively. The Catalina 22 is famously responsive. A puff of wind actually does something. You feel the boat accelerate, heel, and dance with the water. It handles chop, gusts, and distance cruising surprisingly well. Catalina 22 sailors get get the thrill of "real sailing" without the intimidation of a big keelboat.

Forgiving for beginners, playful for experts. The Catalina 22 is one of those rare boats that lets new sailors learn without being punished for every mistake. And it still rewards experienced sailors who want to tweak trim, play with sail shape, or push performance.



Trailerable freedom. Being able to tow a Catalina 22 opens up a whole world of sailing. Inland lakes one weekend. Coastal sailing the next. Then off to regattas without needing a permanent wet slip. There is something fun about knowing your boat can go wherever you want.

A cabin that's just enough. It's not luxurious, but it's cozy—and that makes adventures feel more personal.

Low cost, low stress. Because the Catalina 22 is affordable to buy, maintain, and repair, you are not constantly worrying about every scratch or squeak. You just sail it. That type of freedom from stress is underrated.

A huge, friendly community. Catalina 22 owners are everywhere, and they are passionate. There are fleets, week-long cruises, regattas, and decades of shared wisdom. Owning a Catalina feels like joining a club. Joining the Catalina 22 National Sailing Association is one of the best ways to maximize the fun and enjoyment of sailing a Catalina 22.



Learn more about the history of the Catalina in part two of this publication.