

The origins of the Vega 27 are curious. The story goes that in 1964 the owner of Swedish engine builders Larrson Trade AB commissioned Per Brohall to design a boat that would serve as a fitting promotional platform for their Albin petrol engines. But so encouraging was the commercial success of the Vega 27 that the company turned its back on engines, changed its name to Albin Marin and relaunched themselves as boatbuilders. The ultimate irony occurred in 1971 when they started to fit Volvo diesel engines.

Whether Albin or Volvo, early boats had 'combi' gearboxes, where the transition between forward and astern is gained by reversing the pitch of the propeller. The position of the propeller is also odd: being aft of the rudder, the usual benefits of prop-wash are denied, making low speed manoeuvring more entertaining than normal.

Notwithstanding her various eccentricities, the Vega 27 is one of the under-acknowledged treasures of the last quarter of the 20th

century. She was – indeed still is – immensely tough, and has proved herself offshore in countless ocean voyages. However, she never achieved the 'star' status of some of her contemporaries, despite often outperforming them. Perhaps her practical, rather than pretty, lines consigned her to a Cinderella role. But make no mistake: this is a serious boat with serious potential and could be a very good choice indeed for those sailors whose eyes turn always towards the horizon.

