

26' DOUBLE-ENDED YACHTS *FRANCES & FRANCES II*



The first FRANCES, built in rural Maine.

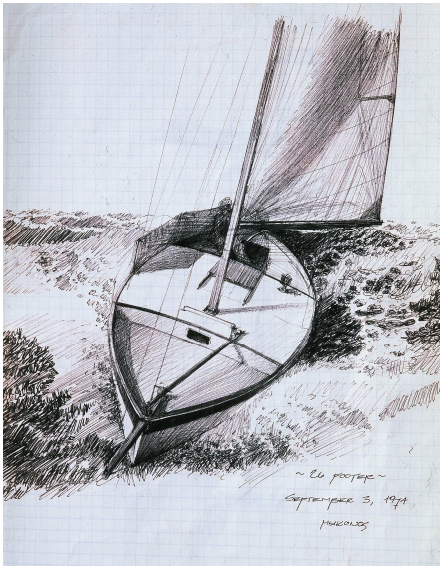


KARMA sailed singlehanded to the Caribbean. The oars were her only engine.

ORIGINAL FRANCES DIMENSIONS

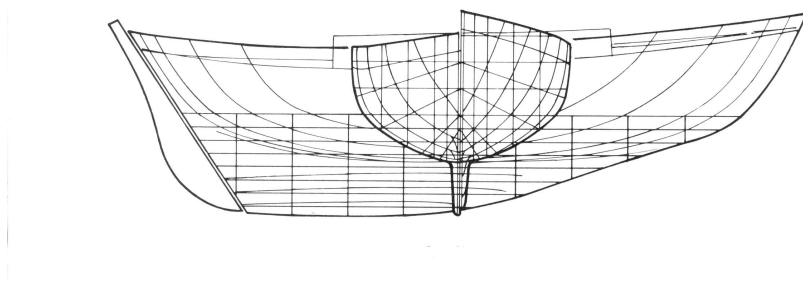
LOA:	25' 10"
LWL:	21' 3"
BEAM:	8' 2"
DRAFT:	3' 10"
DISPLACEMENT, 1/2 load:	6,800 lbs
BALLAST (lead):	3,500 lbs
SAIL AREA (100% foretriangle):	340 sq ft
DISPL/L RATIO:	316
SAIL AREA/DISP RATIO:	15.16

The FRANCES is one of recent history's most famous cruising designs. Over 200 of the small yachts are now sailing, and they are well loved wherever they voyage. I decided to design this small but capable cruising boat in 1974. My boat was flush-decked, and I cruised it from Maine to Rhode Island. A more ambitious one is on its second circumnavigation! Many of the sisterships added a small house for full headroom, and a variety of sailplans have been fitted. FRANCESes were built in fiberglass by Morris Yachts in America and Victoria Marine in the U.K. Quite a few of the finer ones were custom built of cold-moulded wood using the WEST system.



My preliminary sketch for FRANCES. The first FRANCES was sloop rigged with a self-tending jib.

I often ponder what it might be about the *FRANCES* design that makes it so popular. I think it must be the aesthetics first and foremost. It has the look of a boat that could take on the world. But the real surprise is how well it sails. Half of her weight is ballast, and it is made of lead. So despite her very shallow draft she is reasonably stable and surprisingly fast. Of the various rigs the ones with larger headsails and smaller mainsails proved to be the faster and more weatherly, at the expense of more work trimming, of course.



The original *FRANCES* hull is pared away in width below the points where the cabin sole needs width, the fairing radius between keel and hull is tight, and the waterline beam quite narrow. This is obviously a shape without a lot of form stability, so the *FRANCES* compensated with an unusually low center of gravity— nearly 6” below the waterline.

If I had it to do over again I’d change a few things, hence *FRANCES II* (Frances the second). The most significant improvement would be to replace the undulating profile shoal draft keel with a much more modern and effective one. With a slightly deeper keel and the “full flow aperture” I developed on the later of my offshore oriented custom designs, *FRANCES II* will stand up to a whole lot more sail and point much closer to the wind. The flush deck which offered sitting headroom only will give way to a nice looking but smallish deckhouse with full headroom.

I adored my little *FRANCES*. She was beautiful, well mannered, stable, and just plain fun. Narrow of beam, her sleek lines cut through resistance like a dreadnaught. Point *FRANCES* toward a destination and she was unstoppable. Her timeless virtues seem to have disappeared from the modern world. They just don't build 'em like *FRANCES* anymore. But you could, and if you do it should be the slightly longer, wider, heavier, deeper, and more powerfully canvassed version I perfected in my retirement, *FRANCES II*.

***FRANCES II* DIMENSIONS:**

LOA:	26' 2"
LWL:	21' 8"
BEAM:	8' 4"
DRAFT:	4' 3"
DISPLACEMENT, 1/2 load:	7,350 lbs
BALLAST (lead):	3,500 lbs
SAIL AREA (IMS):	357 sq ft
DISPL/L RATIO:	323
SAIL AREA/DISP RATIO:	16.76
HULL SPEED:	6.2 KT.



FRANCES II will have a short house like the British built version.

