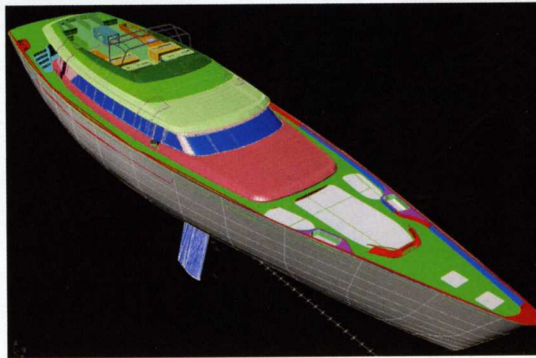


Clockwise from above: Advances in computer-based systems have resulted in "black box" nav/com equipment. When paired with model testing, CAD software has increased design predictability, accuracy and repeatability.



gauges and more than a bit of cursing on the part of the ship's engineer, today we have systems that start themselves, parallel generators, shed unwanted loads and, when in port, convert frequencies and voltages automatically. On larger vessels, diesel-electric propulsion systems and pod drives are replacing shaft-driven systems, increasing efficiency, adding to the flexibility of operations and, in many cases, allowing better positioning of machinery that result in improved interior arrangements for the owner.

So, where do we go from here? As the old saying goes, the sky's the limit. Perhaps technology will allow us to produce boats that are easier to recycle than the thousands of FRP structures delivered each year. Perhaps we'll be able to produce

decking with the long-lasting beauty of teak before the rare wood's rising value makes it extinct. Perhaps the Soviet technology that resulted in the wing-in-ground-effect Ekranoplan vehicles (WIGs) can be adapted to usher in an age of faster, more fuel-efficient vessels. And speaking of efficiency, just as fuel injection and, more recently, common-rail technology raised the bar for fuel efficiency in diesel engines, will solar or fuel-cell technology someday replace diesels to give us non-polluting propulsion?

These are all questions being worked on by a new generation of engineers, who, with any luck, will be able to guide yacht designers and builders through the next 25 years and beyond. ☐

2004

Lürssen delivers *Rising Sun*. *Athena* delivered by Royal Huisman. Vosper delivers *Mirabella V*. *Ecstasea* (pictured) delivered by Feadship Royal Van Lent.



2005



Delta Marine delivers *Laurel* (pictured), the largest yacht built in America in decades. Trinity delivers *Mia Elise*.

2006

First Westport 164, *Vango*, is delivered. Perini Navi delivers *The Maltese Falcon* (pictured).



2007

Project Sigma delivered by Blohm + Voss.

