NAVIGATION EQUIPMENT

I installed a Seafarer depthsounder and a Speedolog which I purchased from Thomas Folkes in England. (Dept. YM/76, Lansdowne Road, Leytonstone, London, E11 3 HB.) The purchase price at that time (1978) was 114 pounds for the Speedolog and 32 pounds for the depthsounder, or $232 total. The instruments are portable and there are brackets for mounting if you wish. I made a swinging gate on the port bulkhead so the instruments swing into the companionway and then back.

The transducer is through-hull. The Speedolog is electromagnetic. During the first season I had to clean it three times but it is simple to clean. I had the Speedolog transducer installed under the starboard bunk which was a goof because on a port tack it is out of the water. I am going to move it to where the existing depthsounder is, under the stove.

- Sam Amoss

I have a Datamarine digital depthsounder, and an EMS U25 knotmeter. Each is installed in a cockpit locker, at the front inside corner about half way between the keel and the water line; about eight inches or more under water. Both work fine. I have some bottom paint which is pure copper in xylol, and a small bottle of this paint is about $3. It is very effective in preventing fouling.

The knotmeter paddlewheel can be removed and cleaned from inside the boat, using the supplied blank to plug the through-hull hole while doing so. For the depthsounder transducer, which cannot be removed, from time to time I stick my arm under the boat and if I feel barnacles on the transducer, I pick them off. Once you get a big blob of barnacles and sea grass on the transducer, you get erratic readings.

One more thing about depthsounders. Mine has an alarm which is set at seven feet. It cannot be changed, although there are others where the alarm is adjustable and it can be set wherever you want it. The boat yard put a switch on that alarm because at seven feet it would be buzzing all the time. If you have a fixed alarm I would urge a switch so it can be turned off.

- Art Levin

I installed a Loran C, a Nelco with the microprocessor. Program all your possible waypoints at the dock, and when visibility goes to pot, the Loran will take care of you.

- E. W. Hancock

I had a knotmeter and I thought there was something wrong with it. The first year I made a run between the mile markers off Kent Island and it was very true. I concluded the problem was very soft bottom. The knotmeter was AMF. Now I have a Seafarer and it works very well. The problem had to do with high frequency. I have my knotmeter and depthsounder up forward. - Jim Hartzler

The Seafarer knotmeter has a click built into it, as it clicks off hundredths of miles. You can tell variations in speed by listening to the clicks and actually trim sails accordingly. - Sam Amoss

I have a Pearce-Simpson and the transducer is in a well under the port forward berth, up against the bulkhead. The well is a plastic fruit jar I bought in a hardware store. I cut it at an angle so the top would be level and bolted the stem from the transducer to the cap. The fluid can be water or mineral oil but I found that water works fine so I use water. The hull thickness does not seem to affect it.
- Stuart Horn

For us poor guys I have a plastic tube knotmeter and it reads accurately to within a third or a quarter of a knot.
- Tyke Furey

For those still poorer guys I go forward, drop a can off the bow, give a signal the moment it hits the water, my wife in the cockpit with a stop watch notes the number of seconds it took the can to pass the transom, and then the seconds are applied to a predetermined scale that was published sometime back in Rudder Magazine, which will give the speed of the boat.

I do have a Ray Jefferson 410 depthsounder which has a needle. It is easy to read but has been undependable. I have returned it to the factory once and also had it checked by Suitland Electronics, both of whom find nothing wrong.
- Russ Walker

A simple depthsounder is a coke bottle tied to a line, say four feet from the end. Throw the line out ahead of the bow and if the bottle floats you know you are approaching water with a depth of less than four feet; if the bottle sinks the depth is over four feet. - Jim Hartzler

Signet instruments mounted through bulkhead on starboard side of cockpit. Inside cabin parts covered with custom teak

instrument box with removable cover for adjustments.

Model 20 Log
Model MK9 Knotmeter
Model MK24 Windpoint
Model MK30 Windspeed

After calibration all instruments very good performers.

Ray Jefferson Model 5120 Alarm Depthfinder, Mounted transducer inside hull in bath of mineral oil just forward of hanging locker. By subtracting distance from it to keel bottom (3') it gives very accurate readings. Readout unit is mounted on bulkhead in main cabin, port side, up high.

- Herb Edwards

I mounted my compass on the outer edge of the companionway sliding lid on top. It is high, but I stand a lot anyway.

- Stuart Horn

My compass is mounted on a bracket on the starboard bulkhead in the cockpit, and can be removed. The compass should not be closer than three feet to the engine, nor too close to the metal dodger supports either, both of which can cause interference. Compass can be wired or plugged into cigar lighter socket over icebox. Twist lead wires around each other along full length from compass light to socket to prevent electrical field that will affect compass reading.

- Art Levin

Equipment - used by various Vega owners (1978)

Seafarer Depth Sounder	Purchased from Thomas Folks,
Seafarer Speedo-Log	England for $232 Approx.

Pearce-Simpson Depth Sounder, transducer in plastic jar well epoxyed underneath port forward berth against hanging locker.

Datamarine Depth Sounder, digital, up to 199 feet, $259.

Raytheon #DE 737 Depth Finder, needle indicator up to 90 feet.

EMS U25K Knotmeter, $78.21 plus $5.95 for light, from Goldbergs'.

I have a "Tillermate" self-steerer. The Vega cockpit is a little too narrow, so I put a little outrigger on it. It steers by compass. There is not much drain on the battery. My only problem has been on glassy days. The cost is about $300 (1978) and I am extremely pleased with it.

- Jim Hartzler.

I hope most members have learned to set up their Vegas for self-steering. All it takes is two small pulleys on top of, and on either side of the cockpit coamings. A piece of 1/4" rope is then tied to mainsheet (between the boom and the mainsheet cleat) run through the pulley and attached to the tiller. On the other side, an elastic is run from the tiller to the cockpit coaming. I've broad reached from Annapolis to the Solomons without ever touching the tiller by using this simple technique.

- Mike Johnson

A word about VHF radiotelephone channels. I have a 55 channel radio, of which about 45 channels are of little or no use. I bought it because it was the only "synthesized" radio available, and I did not want to bother getting crystals installed. In my opinion, a 12 channel radio, <u>including</u> two weather channels, is all that is needed for recreational boating.

- Art Levin

The Autohelm 1000 self-steerer is available at a savings of over $100 from local prices from Capt. O.M. Watts, Ltd. (a British mail order firm), 45 Albemarle Street, Piccadilly, London WIX 4BJ, England. The price of the unit is 150 pounds, with an additional 8 pounds for surface shipping and insurance (4 weeks) or 14 pounds airmail and insurance. An optional wind vane (for off-shore cruising) is available at 35 pounds. You can mail them a bank draft in English pounds, or call a commercial bank for the current exchange rate and mail them your personal check in the required dollar amount.

As far as installation is concerned, it couldn't be simpler, and the instructions are in plain English. It needs a 12-volt power supply connection and fuse. It uses about the same average wattage as one navigation light so there is no concernof running the battery down. It is so light that merely tightening the tiller bolt supports the tiller and the Autohelm. It has one switch with four positions: Off, Calm, Rough, and Vane. I use the Autohelm even going through winding channels, just turning the compass control. It steers much better than I do, and quickly figures out the correct amount of weather helm to carry. So far I have used it in winds up to 25 knots and it has performed well.

- Gordon Hempton

We replaced our nonfunctioning running lights with AQUA-SIGNAL running lights. The conversion is very simple as the existing wiring can be used, and the existing mounts will accept the new lights after new holes are drilled for the fastening hardware. The AQUA-SIGNAL lights have much larger lenses. We also installed an AQUA-SIGNAL masthead tri-color running light to provide better visibility in any sea conditions. The lights are available thru BOAT/US at a considerable savings.

- Ron and Micki Pugh

Installed the NAVIK self-steering vane on "AQUARIUS." Cost was $995, plus $35 shipping from California. To complete the installation required two special brackets ($60) and some welding to lengthen the lower struts ($10). Once I had all the parts, installation took about two hours (with a friend holding the screwdriver). In use the NAVIK was easy to use and held a course very well.

- John Cleveland

I have purchased a WINDPILOT 2500 automatic steerer. It is twice as fast as the Autohelm, twice as strong, has a dodging option, electronic selectable feedback, and automatic weather helm correction. The latter will be helpful on gusty days to keep the boat on proper course. I ordered this from Thomas Folkes in England by phone using Mastercard. Their telephone number is 011 441 539 5627. They will take the card number over the phone and ship immediately. The cost was 207 pounds ($296) plus $12.80 for the telephone call and $14.00 for customs. The unit arrived within three weeks.

- William Edelstein

This year I mounted a tri-color masthead light. It mounts on a flange directly on the masthead using machine screws. I was able to drill a ¼" hole for the power wire and used aluminum clothesline wire for a fishwire to pull thru the new wire. These units are much more visible than the hull-mounted ones, and they use only one bulb instead of three, saving about 24 amp/hrs over a 12-hour night, or about one-half the consumption of the refrigerator.

- William Edelstein

We replaced the deck ventilator with a Nicro solar ventilator and it works like a charm.

- Bob & Cleo Phillips