



Designer Olin Stephens and Charlie Britton go over the "check list" of last-minute details before the Tartan's initial cruise.

ing," recalls McLeod. "We wanted something neither too large nor too small and settled on the 27-foot length as being ideal. High production costs and increased taxes have brought an end to the era of custom-built boats and the successful builder is one who can turn out a comfortable and versatile craft on a production basis.

"These days people are too busy to spend all their spring weekends maintaining and fitting out their boats. The hull, deck and cabin is all of fiber glass and the mast and standing rigging all of non-corrosive aluminum or stainless steel. The only exterior woodwork trim is of teak which requires no refinishing or maintenance. The only thing necessary is a coat of anti-fouling paint on the hull in the spring."

"What we've done, essentially," Britton points out, "is to profit from the things I learned in living and sailing for a year on the Tenba. We've incorporated, and I think wisely, all the facilities of her 43-foot hull into one of 27 feet."

THE ACTUAL design, from the combined ideas of Britton and McLeod but with a liberal degree of leeway, was the work of New York's Olin Stephens of Sparkman and Stephens, Inc., designers of the famed Columbia, successful defender of the America Cup, and scores of other well-known ocean sailing craft.

Work on building the full-size wooden "plug" from which the hull mold was made began last fall, and in the intervening months 15 workers have been busy transposing ideas and materials into a new auxiliary boat. They call the design the "Tartan."

The sailing qualities of a new boat, however well she is designed and built,

become a known quantity only when she has deep water under her keel and a fair wind filling her sails. When a new boat, months in the planning and building, takes her first dip, it is a dramatic moment for those who have worked so long.

CONSEQUENTLY, on a recent spring day, designer Olin Stephens flew in to join the builders for the Tartan's shake-down cruise. Her four-cylinder engine purring smoothly, Tartan left her Grand River dock headed for Lake Erie. As soon as a fresh sou'west wind on the open lake caught her sails she heeled over gently, her decks getting their first taste of fresh water.

Tacking continuously as her sailing and handling characteristics were carefully observed, Tartan performed with grace and dignity all the tasks her designer and builders demanded of her.

"She'll do, she'll do," said Stephens after putting the boat through her paces for a couple of hours.

Both Britton and Stephens felt that the new design would make for a fast boat and the short Lake Erie trial seemed to fulfill their fondest hopes.

"She just took off," beamed Charlie.

Convincing proof came later when, in the famous "Off Soundings" race off Long Island, Tartan took first place in competition with 35 ocean racers.

With sleeping accommodations for five and ample headroom for living afloat, the Tartan, complete with head, icebox and galley, has an eight-foot-seven-inch beam, displaces 6,500 pounds, has a three-foot, two-inch draft and carries 2,000 pounds of outside lead ballast.