


40TH ANNIVERSARY
1979-2019

X-Yachts
WORLD CLASS SINCE 1979

IN FEBRUARY 2019
IT WAS
40 YEARS SINCE,
X-YACHTS STARTED



X-YACHTS CELEBRATES 40 YEARS ANNIVERSARY IN 2019

It has been a long journey for us three founders.

My brother Lars and our friend Birger still very much enjoy to meet and jointly memorise the many years we shared most of our lives.

Fortunately, we humans mainly recall good memories and there are plenty. There has also been a lot of hard work, but we had a very strong friendship - and still have - that made us able to be together.

We shared the passion of making the boats, which we believed could be considered as some of the best boats in the world. To begin with, they should be the fastest, later they should be the best sailing boats, combining comfort, style and performance in a package enabling families to love being on the water.

We have all been fortunated by living our professional lives employing hard working and passionate employees and friends, we have enjoyed being in an environment where we were dealing with dealers and clients, who also shared our passion for X-Yachts.

This book has been made with the help from one of our many loyal clients, journalist Henrik Svensson, former Haderslev Weekly Post, who owned one of first X-102s for years and later an X-382 for many years.

The making of this book has given me the chance to look through our archives of thousands of photos, there are so many which we haven't been able to include. They will be stored carefully enabling our 50 years anniversary book to be very different from this 40 years anniversary book.

It has been important to show as many key people and X-Yachts models as possible in this book, but the main focus for the editor was to use content only where we could accompany the story with reasonable illustrations and images.

I hope you enjoy the book.

Sincerely yours
Niels Jeppesen



THE SAILING DANES

Designing and building fast, strong, safe and beautiful yachts, is not new to Danes. Denmark is an ancient land of Vikings. More than 1000 years ago their Viking ships concurred oceans, exploring Greenland as well as America.

Paul Elvstrøm

During the last century, Denmark became one of the world

leaders of sailing thanks to the fame of Paul Elvstrøm winning 4 Olympic Gold Medals and many Official World Championships. Many good sailors got the inspiration, and Yachting companies such as Elvstrøm Sails, Nordic Mast, Frederiksen fittings, Andersen Winches, John Mast, Diamond Sailmakers, Jefa Steering Systems, Quorning Trimarans and finally X-Yachts are companies with roots in Paul Elvstrøms career.

The light blue lines show the whereabouts of the vikings.

The Well Preserved Oseberg Ship, Historic Ship Exhibited in The Viking Ship Museum in Oslo, Norway,



Niels, Birger & Lars,
year 1989.

40 YEARS

OF SUPERIOR SAILING PLEASURE

By Henrik Svensson

February 2019 marked 40 years since X-Yachts first saw the light of day. An adventure had begun that not even world-famous Danish writer Hans Christian Andersen could have written better.

With enthusiasm and passion - but without a penny to their name - the three founders, brothers Lars and Niels Jeppesen, together with Birger Hansen set off on their journey.

From the very first boat to the present day - some 6,000 sailboats later - superior sailing abilities have been a hallmark of all X-Yachts boats.

Developing markets

For the first few years, the main part of production was sold on the domestic market. But it wasn't long before the outside world turned its attention to the great-sailing boats from Haderslev. In recent years, the export business has accounted for more than 95 per cent of sales.

Today, X-Yachts is an international leader in the development and production of the world's finest cruisers - luxurious quality boats exported around the world.

Lars & Niels

Lars and Niels Jeppesen (born in 1954 and 1956, respectively) grew up in Stubbekøbing where their father was an active yachtsman. Among his accomplishments

were the founding of the yacht club "Sejlklubben Grønsund", the construction of the marina, and later appointment to Honorary Chairman of same. In other words, the brothers were used to a steady diet of sailing from a young age. In their childhood years, however, life on land was in the cards, as at that time their grandfather owned Denmark's largest manufacturer of summer cottages, Jeppesen Bjælkehuse, with four factory locations in Denmark. When the grandfather died in 1965, their father became chairman of the board of directors, working four days as a practicing physician in Stubbekøbing and one day per week at the company.

Inspired by Nimbus

As the brothers got older, they realised that the sea exercised more of a draw than did the summer cottages. They were inspired by, among other things, the Nimbus yard in Stubbekøbing where 26, 30, and 33 foot sailboats were being series produced. Lars became a shipwright apprentice and worked in Esbjerg and Hvide Sande, while Niels started a marine engineering course in Elsinore. This, however, only lasted until he realised that it was primarily focused on the design of large steel vessels.

After six months, Niels Jeppesen began sailmaking work at Hamlet Sejl in Elsinore until 1977 when he moved to Haderslev to start teacher's training.



Birger and Lars in front of Martsrup Møllevej 28, the company's headquarter the first 7 years.
Winter 1980/81 - X-79 build no. 100.



Niels' first design, the prototype for Banner 30, was the Banner 29. It had an outboard engine fitted to the sliding transom bracket

BEFORE X-YACHTS

The Banner yard

Many drawings of vessels in the textbooks indicate, however, that the interest in boats had not died. And Niels Jeppesen could often be found strolling around Haderslev Harbour. He would also pass the Banner yard where the owner, Ib Hauge Nielsen, was making 26 and 33 foot sailboats. He was in need of something in the 30 foot segment, and showed Niels Jeppesen some drawings by an airline pilot from Copenhagen, Ib Pors Nielsen, who had become known for his 'light' constructions.

Banner 30 was born

This was the day before Niels Jeppesen was due to go home to Stubbekøbing for Christmas. During the night, therefore, Niels Jeppesen produced the drafts for a 29

foot boat which was to become the prototype for Banner 30.

Ib Hauge Nielsen liked the drafts which, when compared with Ib Pors Nielsen's design, showed a boat with less rounded sections and more beam, resulting in greater hull stability.

They agreed that Niels Jeppesen would be in charge of the design.

The Banner yard, which used to be where X-Yachts can be found today, had six employees, most of whom did moulding, and they were busy. This meant that Ib Hauge Nielsen had neither the room nor the time to build the prototype.

BANNER 30

Lgd. 9,00 m
Brd. 2,80 m
Dybg. 1,60 m
Kølvægt 1.200 kg.
Totalvægt 2.200 kg.
Storsejl: 22,5 m²
Genua: 22,5 m²
Fok: 13,5 m²
Spiler: 65 m²
Scandicapmål: 6,6
I.O.R: Ca. 24,4
Konstruktør: Niels Jeppesen.



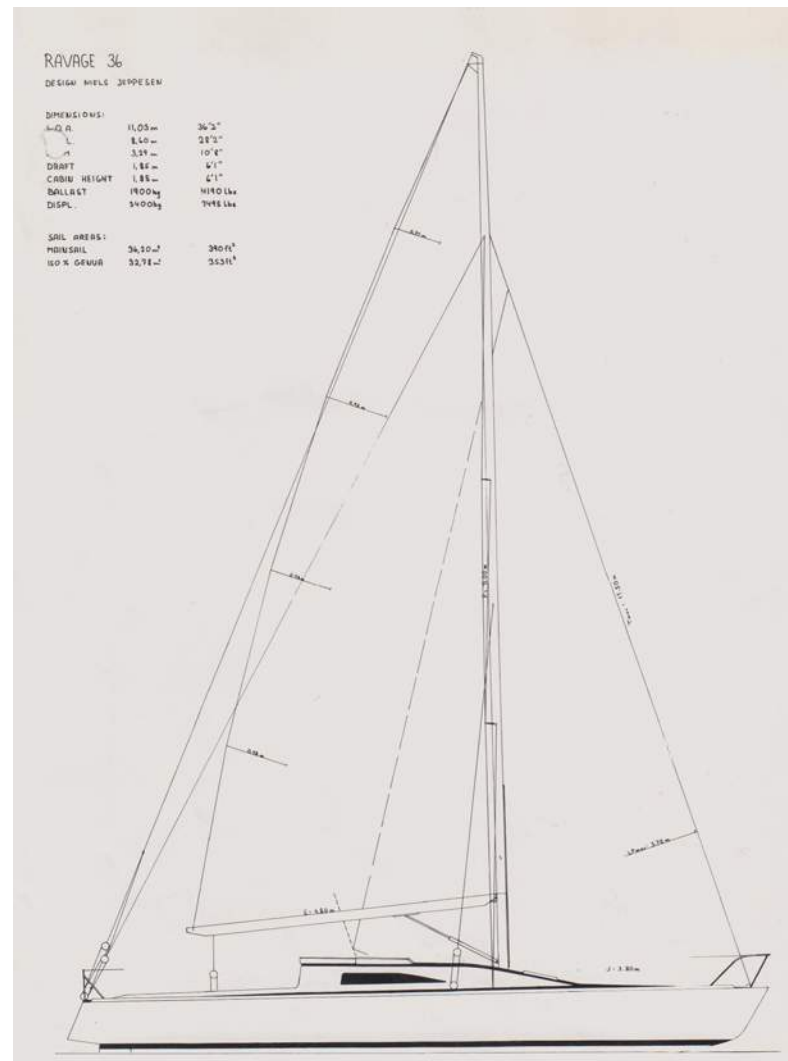
PRODUCENT:

I. N. FIBERBADE A/S
FJORDAGERVEJ 25
6100 HADERSLEV, DANMARK
TLF. 04 - 52 16 05

Banner 30 sail plan.



Ravage 36 was Niels' second design, prototype was built by "the three" in Birgers modernised cowshed, later the X-Yachts HQ and development center for first 7 years. Ravage 36 won "Sjælland Rundt" in 1979.



THE FIRST COLLABORATION

The outcome was that one of the moulders Birger Hansen (born 1948) took on the task.

Birger Hansen came from a farming family on Haderslev Point and was originally trained as a shop assistant at a grocer's in Øsby between Haderslev and Årøsund. In his leisure time, he enjoyed riding his motorcycle, but after an accident he had to undergo rehabilitation in Sønderborg, where he learned to work with fibre glass.

Fibre glass experience

He had been working as a fibre glass laminater at Banner Både for seven years.

After workhours, he ran a small company fitting out small motorboats, as well as

competition included a 55 foot archipelago cruiser captained by Peter Reedtz. He had an ambition to win Denmark's biggest sail race, Sjælland Rundt. With its more than 2,000 entrants, it was also one of the largest sailing races in the world.

Peter Reedtz was both impressed and enthused by the excellent qualities of the 29. He did, however, want a slightly bigger boat for the purpose. So he persuaded Niels Jeppesen to design a 36 foot boat. The resulting product to realise the dream was *Ravage 36*.

Once more, the three shared the building of the prototype in Birger Hansen's barn. The agreement was that they could spend

**HE PERSUADED NIELS JEPPESEN
TO DESIGN A 36 FOOT BOAT. THE
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laminated and sold GRP roofs for Citroën 2CV's and Dyane models. For this purpose, he had set up a workshop in a former barn by his home in Marstrup five kilometres outside Haderslev.

Banner 29

Here, the Banner 29 prototype was built. Lars and Niels helped out during weekends and evenings, and all three were able to sail on the boat in the first season.

The boat was launched in the spring of 1978, and in its first race - Little Belt Cup - arranged by Sejlklubben Assens - the Banner 29 was not just the first boat to reach the goal, it was also the overall winner. The

1,950 hours on the task and would be paid DKK 60 per hour. Work commenced in the autumn of 1978 and the launch took place during a snow storm on 3 December of the same year, in Vejle.

Sjælland Rundt 1979

The prototype was entered in the Sjælland Rundt race in the summer of 1979 and was the first DH boat in the large boat class to finish, with nearly 600 entries.

Peter Reedtz subsequently started a series production of the boat with Bianca Yachts in Rudkøbing on Langeland, the largest pleasure boat yard in Denmark at the time.

1979



Birger and Niels building the X-79 hull plug in Birgers shed, while Lars was hitch-hiking round the Mediterranean Sea. Lars, being educated wooden boat builder, didn't know that Niels and Birger had started the company in his absence. When he returned, he spotted (of course) some minor asymmetric defects, which actually all X-79's have today.

1979



X-79 hull plug almost ready for the final finish before the lines are applied. It is Lars Jeppesen to the left.

A few days later, the X-79 hull plug having the stripes marked. The sections for the plywood deck mould to the right. The first 2 decks were laminated in this "preliminary mould", the first deck went on hull 1, the second deck became the deck plug for the final deck mould. It is Birger in the background, it is Birger's son Christian in the foreground (8 years old).



THEIR OWN PROJECT

After the launch of Ravage 36, Lars, Niels, and Birger discussed whether they should "own" their own project.

Before a conclusion was made, Lars, who has just finished his shipwright's training, realises an old dream of completing a three month long journey around the Mediterranean with a friend.

How it all began

Niels and Birger, however, did not wait three months. On 10 February 1979, Niels Jeppesen finalised the drawings for a light racing-orientated sailboat 78 metres in length. Niels and Birger started building the plug. After all, it would be quite amusing to have it ready when the trained shipwright eventually returned from his Mediterranean wanderings.

From 78 to 79

Along the way, the plug was extended by 10 centimetres. After all, when the boat was 79 metres long, the name was self-evident. It had to be something with the number 79.

After all, it was made in 1979 and is 79 metres long. As they failed to agree on the rest of the name, they gave it an interim denominator, X, representing the unknown.

Nordsø Bådværft

Lars Jeppesen learned about the project in Cairo as he collected a letter at the post office. (This was before mobile telephones, text messages and email).

The letter contained a cutting from a local newspaper stating that Niels, Birger and Lars had started their own shipyard: "Nordsø Bådværft ved Jeppesen og Hansens Bådebyggeri".

When Lars Jeppesen returned to Denmark, he hastened to Marstrup where he saw that the windows of the barn had been covered up. Inside, he met Birger and Niels, who had already finished the plug for the boat. They had made this entirely without the participation of the shipwright! Number one was launched 9 May 1979.



X-79 build no. 1, launch. Aboard is the daughter and son of Birger Hansen, Charlotte and Christian, among others.

LAUNCH OF THE X-79

After several month of intense work, the prototype was ready to set sail. This was happening on 9 May 1979 in Aabenraa at a local boat show. Just a month later, the shipyard entered two X-79ers into the Round Zealand yacht race.

Beating the J24

Here, the first boat built - sailed by Niels and Lars Jeppesen - beat 1,500 participants to claim a convincing first place on the short course. The boat crossed the line a whole two hours before the second-placed vessel - a J24 sailed by Lars Ive who would later become Chairman of the Royal Danish Yachtclub and

a customer of X-Yachts, buying a IMX-38 and an Xp 38.

One of the other beaten competitors was Bent Folke Larsen who had to watch the Jeppesens' aft from his Dehler Sprinta Sport. After seeing how well the X-79 could sail from behind, he just had to have one. Right now. He needed to buy the winning boat here and now.

The first x-79 was sold

As soon as the boats were in the harbour, the two parties rushed up to find a piece of paper, and drew up a hand-written contract. The first X-79 ever built was sold. The three boat builders from Haderslev went back home without a boat.



Winner of X-79 Danish Championship 1981, Stig Jensen and Jan Fauriskov (Jefa).

X-79 European Championship 1985. "Grøn fritid", owned by deceased Hans Madsen, who owned his own yard and assembled the first 2500 boats for X-Yachts. In 1985 he allowed Lars and Niels Jeppesen, Niels Ditmar and a deckhand from the X-One Ton boat "Maitresse", to sail his own X-79. The weekend before, at the X-79 Danish Championship, did not go very well for the team but without any change of the trim they won with quite a large margin to number 2, an X-79 sailed by the newly named RDY CEO, Anders Myralf.



Right: Swedish "Baadnyt" One-Of-A-Kind competition. X-79 won ahead of the Swedish Maxi-80 racers Albin Express and other modern boats. Aboard was Henrik Søderlund from Diamond Sailmakers (later North sails), Lars Jeppesen from X-Yachts, Niels Ditmar Approx 3 years before he started working for X-Yachts. (Back then, he was one of the best Danish sailors of the Spaekhugger and owner of the Spaekhugger named "Bamse").



Above: Danish yachting magazine "Bådnyt"s Match race final in 1980. The winning X-79 was helmed by Jens Christensen, newly established sailmaker with the company Diamond Sailmakers, had just returned from the Olympic Star Boat competition. The crew was formed by his Star Boat crew Morten Nielsen and his friend Lars Ise. Lars Ise later became a loyal X-Yachts owner with the IMX-38 and Xp 38, both named "Soldier Blue".

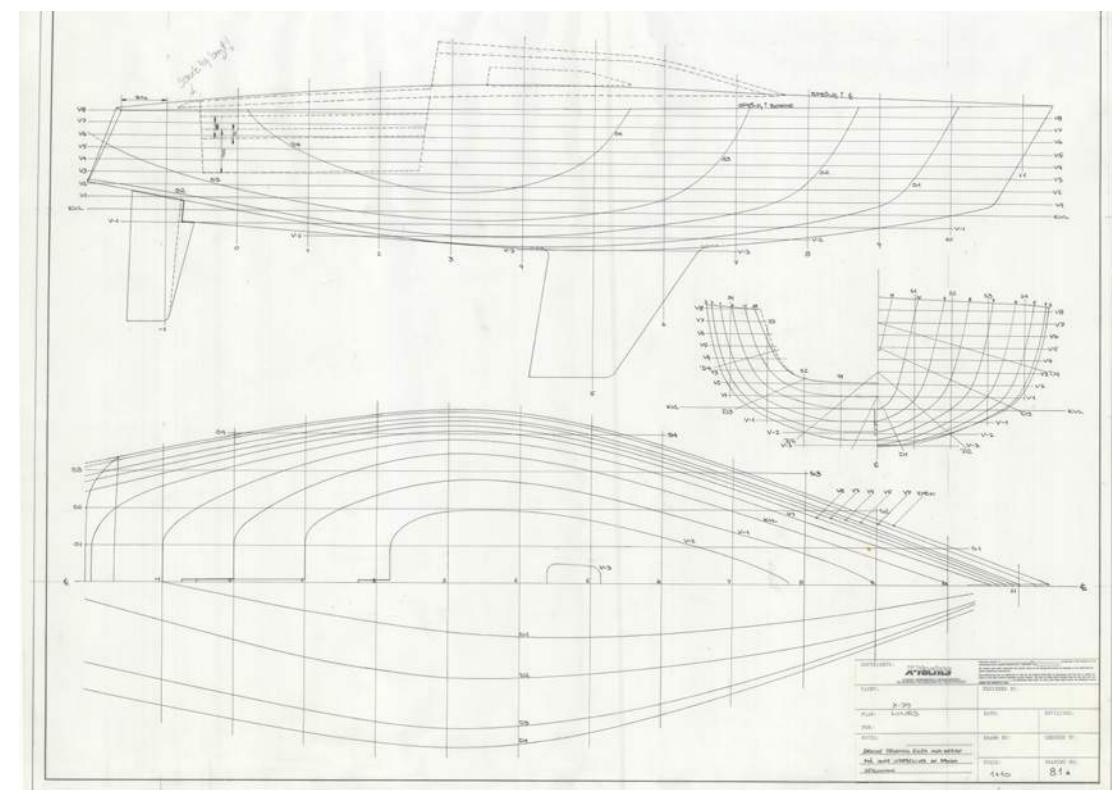
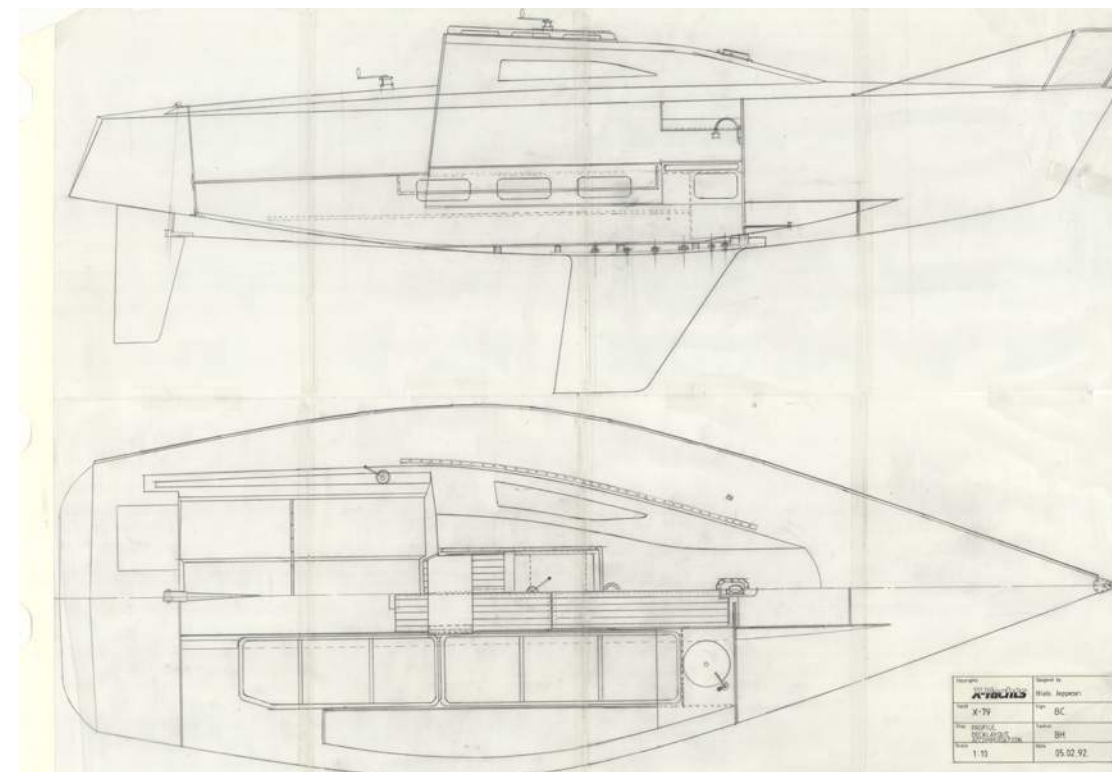
DIMENSION:

LOA.	7.960 m	26'12"
LWL.	6.400 m	21'00"
B. Max	2.880 m	9'50"
Draft	1.330 m	4'36"
Ballast	670 kg	1.474 lbs
Displ.	1.345 kg	2.960 lbs

Engine
Outboard 3 hp - 6 hp

SAILS AREA:

Mainsail	20.3 m ²	219 ft ²
Genoa I	18.6 m ²	201 ft ²
Genoa III	12.5 m ²	135 ft ²
Stormjib	5.0 m ²	54 ft ²
IOR-spinn	43.5 m ²	470 ft ²
SC-spinn	54.0 m ²	538 ft ²



Original drawings of the X-79

X-79, during Bådnyts match racing final, here helmed by Poul Ricahrd Høj-Jensen, double Olympic Gold winner in Soling. He came 2nd.



Tjörn Runt is an annual long distance sailing competition that takes place in Sweden around the island of Tjörn. The race has been held on the third Saturday of August every year since 1963.



LICENSE AGREEMENT WITH SWEDISH YARD

After the success of the convincing Sjælland Rundt race victory, the three boat-builders from Haderslev were ready for the next step: Lars and Niels Jeppesen travelled to Sweden to enter an X-79 in Tjörn Rundt, Sweden's largest sailing race at the time. They brought home another convincing victory, beating competition as the Swedish Albin Express and Maxi 80 Racer.

120 models in two years

The Swedish success motivated Delta Marin in Västervik to get in touch to enquire about the possibility of building the X-79 on license.

The parties agreed that the Haderslev yard would receive a five percent commission on the sale price of boats sold, and Swedish production commenced in the winter 1979/1980. Over the next two years, the Swedes produced 120 X-79 models!

The first boat show

In November 1979, there was a boat show in Bellacenter in Copenhagen. The cost of a stand is DKK 20,000. This was a large amount of money in 1979. The three agreed, however, that putting in an appearance was necessary. To save on accommodation costs, they slept in the display boat. The show resulted in an additional 17 X-79's being sold.

Over the next two years, the yard in Haderslev sold 160 boats, both to Denmark and the Northern European market.

Beneficial collaboration

As the Marstrup workshop did not have the capacity to series manufacture boats, agreements were concluded with a number of subcontractors. Bøges Glasfiberstøberi in Lunderskov would supply hulls, decks, and other fibre glass elements. Gesten Båadaptering would manufacture the accommodation and Buchwald og Madsens Bådebyggeri in Ferup was charged with assembly of X-79's sold as finished versions.

Thanks to collaboration with subcontractors, the yard did not have to invest in production equipment, but could concentrate on developing new boats.

Division of labour

Despite the busy times, Lars and Niels Jeppesen and Birger Hansen - thanks to the subcontractor agreements - remained the only employees at the yard. They soon arrived at a suitable division of labour. Niels drew the new boats, Birger handled the accounts and paperwork and at the same time became the company's moulding expert, while Lars was responsible for all the boatbuilding issues and other practical tasks.

LOOKING AFTER EVERY PENNY

Although work was plentiful, the same could not be said about funds. The yard worked with a DKK 150,000 overdraft facility, each party guaranteeing DKK 50,000. The two Jeppesen brothers had persuaded their father to post security while Birger Hansen used his house in Marstrup as collateral.

Working around the clock

All possible savings were made. Salaries paid only just covered daily expenses. Due to the busy times, they often also had to work evenings. This does not, however, give the usual after-hours allowance. On the contrary, they decide to reduce the hourly rate by half. After all, when you have had a long day at work, you are tired and less efficient. For this reason, there was no payment at all for working past 11 p.m.!

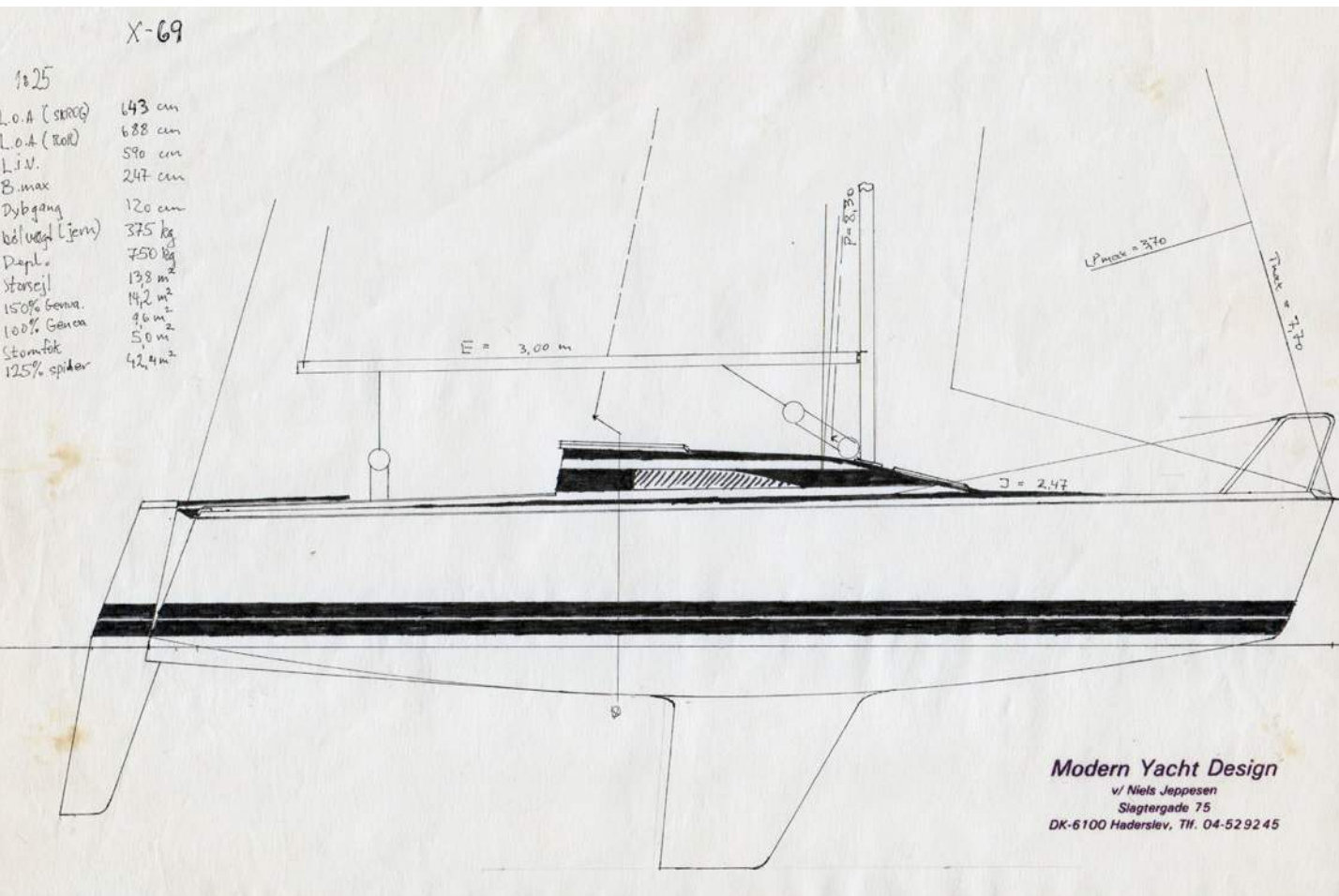
They did not even spend money on a telephone connection. They used Birger Hansen's existing private telephone connection.

As the two companies were named "Nordsø Marine" and "Nordsø Bådværft ved Jeppesen og Hansens Bådebyggeri" respectively, they could just answer the telephone with the word 'Nordsø' and then ask if the caller wanted the workshop or the marine department.

X-Yachts founded

Not until 1983 - four years after start-up - did the yard officially change its name to X-Yachts, inspired by a Swedish dealer calling his company X-Yachts of Sweden.

Lars and Niels Jeppesen and Birger Hansen had agreed to clear the overdraft facility as soon as possible to make the yard self-financing.



X-69 was a "study" a small sister to X-79, which was under discussion in 1980. The final decision was that a larger model should be the second X-Yachts model, namely the X-102.



From the left: Niels Jeppesen, Henrik Petersen, Niels Ditmar and Flemming Risager at Danish X-79 Championship, 1981.

Below: The Danish double Olympic Gold winner (Soling class), Poul Richard Høj-Jensen (at that time North Sails) with his crew Theiss Palm and XY's Copenhagen agent Flemming Als, came second in the Bådnyt Match Racing final in Aabenraa Fjord in 1981.

"SUBSIDIARY" AT HADERSLEV HARBOUR

Some customers wanted their newly acquired boat delivered with complete rigging and launched. An agreement was concluded with Haderslev Municipality which established five berths in a corner of the industrial port. Not far from the hand-cranked harbour crane which they could use to launch the X-79's before rigging. A site trailer was borrowed from a carpenter's firm and placed on the quay by the five berths. This was used to store tools and various equipment.

The successful X-79

In the summer of 1980, almost 50 X-79's participated in Sjælland Rundt. The results were convincing once more, as the first four places overall were taken by X-79's. The class was a reality, and the first ever official Danish Championship was held in Kerteminde.





READY FOR X-102, WINNER OF THE 1981 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

But the laurels were not for resting on. At the autumn exhibition in Copenhagen, the yard published the plans for the next model, a 10 metre long cruiser/racer with a central cockpit.

The decision to develop the new boat was based on several factors: One reason was the desire to expand the "range", just as Lars and Niels Jeppesen and Birger Hansen had concluded that it was difficult to sell the X-79 in all parts of Europe.

New model in pipeline

The new boat, named X-102, was designed to the IOR ¾ Ton parameters, but was equipped with accommodation to make it family friendly.

Launch was in the spring of 1981 to enable entry in the sailing races Fyn Rundt and Sjælland Rundt. This gave the opportunity to optimise the boat before the middle of July when it was entered in the official world championship in Helsingfors in Finland for boats with an IOR handicap not exceeding 24.55 ft, the upper limit of the ¾ Ton class.

The "old" guard

X-102 "Soldier Blue" participated and won the World Championship. The boat was captained by Ib Ussing Andersen and steered by Jens Christensen. They were both co-founders and co-owners of the newly established sail-making firm "Sejlmagerne", later "Diamond Sailmakers", which became the main driving force behind North Sails' conquest of the world market for sails for the world's largest and most exclusive ocean cruisers.

The crew of the "Soldier Blue" also included tactician Lars Ive, who had two years previously placed his J-24 second behind the X-79 at the Sjælland Rundt race. Lars and Niels Jeppesen also participated in the championship in another X-102, taking the seventh place.