

BOLERO – Large Modern Ocean Racer
Sparkman and Stephens Design No. 711

LOA 73'6'', LWL 51', beam 15'1'', draught 9'6'', sail area 2,480 sq.ft.
Designed in 1946 for John N Brown. Launched by Nevens in 1949.

This boat represented the new technology of the post war era and in many ways in size and scope was the prototype of the modern maxi yacht. It was considered by many to be the most beautiful S&S boat ever designed (a claim shared with her near sister, BARUNA).

Her interior is laid out for 8 guests and a crew of 4. It makes an interesting comparison with modern boats of similar size, allowing for spacious accommodations.

Her design plans are revealing for they show a quality of construction which would probably be impossible to match today. Of composite construction, double planked mahogany 1 ¾ inches thick on metal lightened web frames, she was extremely strongly built. The construction sections show the extensive use of metal reinforcement allied to wooden blocking, spruce beams, white oak partners round the openings, extensive use of metal tie rods and a Douglas Fir clamp 7 ¼ x 2 ½ inches thick. The metal work was entirely in Monel or Everdur Bronze, materials which would be prohibitive today, if at all available.

She was fitted with coal galley stoves, early forms of refrigeration and very extensive interior furnishings. The extreme elegance of her double-headed rig belies the amount of physical manpower needed to sheet a 170 % overlapping genoa measuring 1500 sq. ft. A coffee grinder winch is mounted amidships in the most stable area in order to sheet the jib sheets via turning blocks; the double runners would necessitate extensive manpower requirements during tacking; again the mainsheet is led downwards at mid-boom to control lift and back to the cockpit winch mounted on the cabin roof. The small looking mizzen stay sail is nevertheless 540 sq. ft., the size of many smaller boat's genoa jibs. Both BOLERO and her earlier sister BARUNA were built to the maximum size allowed under the CCA (Cruising Club of America) racing rule for the Bermuda Race which worked out at approximately 72 feet overall.

In the 1951 Bermuda Race BARUNA and BOLERO found themselves racing against each other. Despite the almost 10 years that had elapsed between the two designs, the two boats both fought it out neck and neck arriving at the finishing line 466 miles later, only 24 seconds apart (the older boat winning on corrected time by 15 minutes).