Buying a Hurley 22

There is correlation between the prices of Hurley 22s currently offered for sale, the correlation is condition and age.

A rough example in poor condition, with poor sails, osmosis and a poor outboard should be free or the vendor should pay you to take it away.

A good example, in good condition, with new sails, dry hull and with a newish outboard or decent small inboard diesel might be offered up to £6,000.00 max.

You should be able to get a good example which is in very usable condition for around £4,000.00.

The Hurley 22, as with other Hurley yachts was a well built vessel. Heavily laid up and made from good quality materials. Resins, matting, teak, iroko and hardwood faced marine plywood.

As with any yacht they have areas that require special maintenance and also areas where care is needed when purchasing them. The week areas that require special consideration are the mast support area, rudder post tube, hull to deck join around the stem head, stem head fitting on early examples and chain plates which can pull out of the deck.

Mast compression: To create an open plan and large enough interior Hurley's main designer Ian Anderson did not specify a mast compression king post under the mast step area. Instead the weight of the mast and the considerable stresses exerted by the shrouds in tension is taken by a bonded in transverse beam and a plywood bulkhead. Normally this would be fine but the bulkhead is rather small in area and cut away to allow access to the forepeak. In short it does not support the mast properly and the mast compresses the coachroof downwards, bending and cracking it. The mast is under compression force as is the mast step, plinth and bulkhead. The force acting upon the transverse beam is bending force which can cause it to crack or even break. We call this condition Mast Compression and it can cause the vessel to handle badly and prevent proper tension from being applied to the forestay.

The cure is to fit a metal or timber mast support or 'King' post that transfers loads from the coachroof down to the bottom of the hull. Any modification would reduce the space in the forepeak but some ingenious compromises have been constructed in the past.

Rudder post tube: The rudder post tube on Hurley built Hurley 22's (1966 – 1973) was made from a piece of galvanized steel scaffolding pole which was cut with a thread at each end so that it could be attached to the hull and cockpit moulding by simple bushes. With time the tube rusts and will eventually leak. Several Hurley 22's have been lost because of this and special care should be given towards investigating this serious weakness! Access to view the tube is very limited and you will need to crawl under the cockpit by taking away the companionway steps and squeezing past the cockpit drain seacocks and hoses. This is not a pleasant job and you will need an assistant to pull you out as space is so tight and the area is claustrophobic.

Most Hurley 22's have had the horrible defect sorted out by fitting a tube of stainless steel. Later

Ravensail boats had tubes of PVC between two skin fittings with hose tails. The skin fittings were reamed out to make rudder post bushes.

Hull to deck join: The hull and deck have been known to part around the bow for the reason below.

Stem Head Fitting: On early examples the bronze stem head fitting was only bolted to the deck. As the forestay is secured to the stem head the forces exerted upon it could cause the cast bronze fitting to pull upwards away from the deck or even cause the deck itself to part from the hull at the bow. On later boats the stem head fitting was bolted to the bow stem of the hull as well. Some stem heads were of stainless steel and had a strap welded to it to run down the bow stem.

The cure is to bolt a strap to the underside of the deck, through the stem head fitting and bolt this strap to the bow stem through a hole made in the bow stem. Obviously you need to slacken off the forestay first.

Boats have been known to lose forestays and rigs because of this defect.

Chainplates: The capshroud and lower shroud chainplates have been known to pull out of the deck and rigs have been lost because of this. The side shroud chainplates were simply straps of stainless steel that were fitted through the deck and screwed to pieces of hardwood that were bonded onto the inside of the hull. The chainplates and bonding pad was neatened up by encapsulating it in resin and matting.

Water will eventually find its way through the deck around the chainplate and cause the screws securing the chainplate to its hardwood backing pad to corrode. The chainplate will become loose and could pull out. The hardwood pads have also been known to part from the hull.

The cure is to rip out the hardwood pad, as it often becomes sodden and rotten and replace the chainplate. Some people bolt through the hull as you find on Macwester yachts chainplates but to me this looks ugly.

The Hurley 22's big sister the 24/70 had 'D'-bolt chainplates and did not suffer from this problem.

Other problems include old seacocks which corrode and leak, old clear PVC hoses which can crack with age and frost damage, old standing rigging and old worn out engines.

However, the Hurley 22 is an excellent little yacht and it is not surprising that some issues have come to light after forty-four years! Some Hurley 22's that are happily sailing around are nearly 50 years old.