

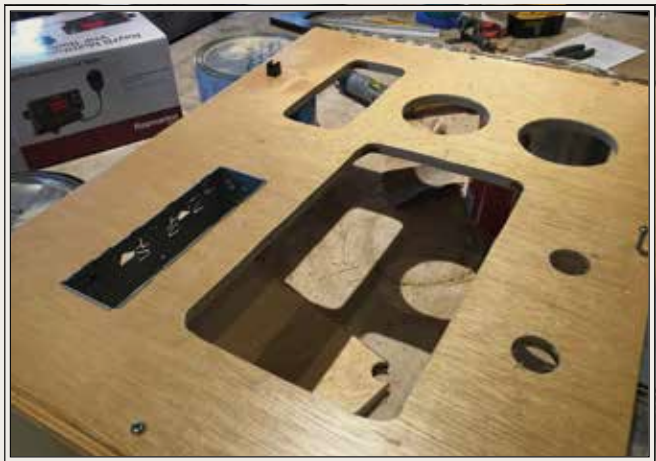
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The concluding edition of our five-part series about the complete overhaul of a classic-plastic Pearson 36 homes in on charging systems and electronics.

THE SNOEK CHRONICLES BY ONNE VAN DER WAL

PROJECTS

Over the course of a long winter and spring in 2015 and 2016, I undertook a total refit of my Pearson 36, *Snoek*, so named after a saltwater fish indigenous to the waters off South Africa, where I was raised (see “The *Snoek* Chronicles” in the Hands-On Sailor 2017 issue; “Plumb Crazy,” April 2017; “Deck, Mate,” July 2017; and “Sails Away,” August/September 2017). The first article was an overview of the project, and subsequent stories detailed the work on specific parts of the boat. In this, the concluding chapter of the series, we’ll delve into electricity and electronics.



On the day of my very first test sail, the navigation station was bare-bones, with only a VHF radio and a stereo for instrumentation (above). I decided to go with all Raymarine products, and once I collected all the gear, I was able to measure everything and do all the cutouts on a piece of plywood that would be the centerpiece of the new nav area (top right). The finished nav station features a Raymarine chart plotter and VHF radio (with a remote microphone topside on the steering pedestal), the autopilot and a multifunction display showing speed, wind strength and direction, and so on (right). It’s a pretty simple, straightforward setup but much better than what was there originally.





For the charging system, I chose several items from Blue Sea Systems. The company's 10-amp BatteryLink unit converts 110-volt shore power into 12-volt power that feeds directly to the batteries (left). I don't spend a lot of time on shore power, but when I do, it sure is nice. The True Power 400 inverter is plenty big for my needs; if I want to hook up a little vacuum or power drill or charge my camera batteries, I have plenty of juice (center). I also pulled out some of the old household-type electrical outlets and in their place added battery monitors from Blue Sea Systems (right). I have two batteries and wanted to know what was going in and out in terms of amps and volts. These little gauges work perfectly.



My ultimate goal was to have solar panels on my boat. I called Bruce Schwab at OceanPlanet Energy, and he suggested a pair of 24-by-24-inch 100-watt flexible panels. To upgrade my electricity system I also purchased two AGM 100-amp-hour batteries (top left). Bruce also supplied a couple of Genasun regulators, which monitor the flow of power from the panels to the batteries so they never overcharge (left). I was a bit hesitant about doing the installation myself, but I did a little online research and talked to Bruce and the entire job took only half a day. The crew at Canvasbacks Sail Loft and Canvas Shop in North Kingstown, Rhode Island, came and measured everything and then attached them to the dodger with stitching and Velcro (above). I was able to hide the wires, so the installation is clean and tidy. My whole goal with the panels, in addition to keeping the batteries topped off, was to add an Engel 12-volt fridge that I could just leave running 24/7 (bottom left). That way I can leave butter and other staples aboard, and always have cold beers if I want to head out for a sunset sail.



For the sailing instruments, I was able to refurbish and use the old teak mounting plate (left). I put on the stickers Raymarine supplied to see what would go where, and I ended up having to drill the holes a bit bigger. Otherwise, everything came together quite easily, and we now have nice, big cockpit displays for wind speed, depth and boat speed (right).



The gang at Imtra supplied me with all-new LED lighting to replace the original incandescent lights. You can see the old Pearson fitting, which is kind of cool — probably handmade by a guy in the shop — but it uses a lot of power, it heats up and the lighting is just mediocre (top left). The new light is energy efficient, dimmable and rotates — just a superior product all the way around. I added another new light in the saloon that's perfect as an accent light or for reading (left).



Renowned marine photographer Onne van der Wal lives in Jamestown, Rhode Island. For more on his work and his gallery, visit his website (vanderwal.com). For the complete work list on Snoek, visit cruisingworld.com/snoek.