

Moxie, a legend that is still sailing...
for the joy of aficionados!

Moxie

Moxie is above all a magic silhouette...
Note the absolutely unique aft crossarm!



A PERFECT INSTRUMENT!

TEXT & PHOTO BY PHILIPPE ÉCHELLE

60 YEARS YOUNG

Phil Weld is a phenomenon, the typical friendly American. A quiet man, 6'2" and 200lbs, he symbolizes the "American dream". Born in Boston, he attended Harvard. His first boss at the Chicago Daily News told him: "You'll like journalism; it will enable you to stick your nose in other people's business!" He was in turn editor-in-chief of the European edition of the New York Herald Tribune, media manager then owner of a press group. Spontaneous, realistic and energetic, Phil developed outstanding empathy and indignation, which made him an advocate of lost causes. His reputation as a mediator was well deserved! As he said: "a good editorialist should find once a day one major reason to be beside oneself." This characteristic, associated with exceptional vitality and extreme concrete intelligence accompanied him in all the episodes of his tumultuous life. In 1937, this "ideal son-in-law" married his childhood sweetheart Anne Warren; they have five children, a boy and four girls.

OBJECTIVE: IN THE HEADLINES!

Phil sailed all his life; Le Chariot de Poseidon and Leonardo, his first multihulls, were sport catamarans. The choice of these iconoclastic speed machines distinguished him from the region's aristocracy. From Gloucester to Newport, the monohull reigned unchallenged at the time! In the early 1970s, the sly old fox disclosed his intentions: "I've always been frustrated from that standpoint; tell me how else a man my age can see his name on the sports page?" An attentive observer of the development of multihulls, Weld asked Derek Kelsall to design Trumpeter for him, on which he participated in the 1972 Transat; after 39 days, he came in 27th out of 56 contestants. A broken beam during practice consumed the relationship with this trimaran and he asked Dick Newick to design a boat that could win the 1976 Ostar. Larger than Trumpeter (which was 13.40m long), Gulfstreamer (in Airex sandwich) was built by Alan Vaites in Mattapoiset, Massachusetts. In four years on her



You can instantly recognize Dick Newick's stroke of genius...



Ready for the offing, the graceful Moxie awaits the squall that can be glimpsed in the distance...

board, Phil accumulated considerable racing experience, frantically sailing around Britain, in transatlantic convoys and the Bermuda race, until 27 April 1976. Halfway between Bermuda and Cape Hatteras, a low-pressure area centered on Nova Scotia swept across the Gulf Stream with 50-knot westerly winds, an erratic breaker struck the trimaran and capsized her during Bill Stephens' watch! Six days later, the two men were rescued at sea. It wasn't until much later that Phil learned from the press that a cargo vessel from Odessa (Russia) had salvaged Gulfstreamer.

“A GREED FOR SPEED”

An immoderate yearning for speed was now anchored in his mind, and he immediately asked Dick Newick for another design! There was excellent communication between the two men, and the “wizard” created the fantastic 60', RogueWave. Jean and Meade Gougeon (the inventors of the West system) assembled 60,000 pieces of six different kinds of wood and Weld participated in 1978 La Route du Rhum on the best trimaran in the fleet, but stupid mishaps with the mainsail sliders left him to finish third. Then

the British set the maximum waterline length at 15 meters for the Transat and RogueWave never won the Ostar!

THE “MAINE WIZARD”

At the finish of the 1978 Rhum, Weld considered deep inside that his apprenticeship was completed; he was ready to move on to the greater things! He had acquired a genuine multihulls “culture”: he knew how to sail them and their limitations and weak points held no more secrets for him. He was in excellent physical and psychological condition. He was ready, but he needed another boat! The third collaboration between Richard Newick and Phil Weld led them both to the top. In 1979, when he received the order for Moxie, Dick was living on Martha's Vineyard where he ran a group that influenced builders and colleagues from Maine to Massachusetts. In fact, he was at the worldwide hub of creativity in this field! At the time, he was a yacht designer unanimously recognized by racers, but his success in competition verge on misunderstanding, since his production does not aim for this goal! It expresses personal achievement and the intuitive interpretation calculated of the waterlines of

the Polynesian heritage revisited with genius. This visionary approach is on the confines of art and technique. The perfection of experiments like Cheers leaves you breathless! His drawing board is a bubbling cauldron and the wealth of this exceptionally gifted dandy's theoretical matrix is truly astonishing.

THE “NEWICK ATTITUDE”

Dick Newick's “formulas” are shortcuts that may be hard to interpret, but some of them have become famous, expressing the basic attitudes guiding his production. Fast is fun: the thrill of speed, though indispensable, must reflect a general behavior that is both elegant and easy, and provide fine sailing, smooth, accurate and fun. Small is beautiful: the antonym of “small” in Newick's lexicon could be ungainly or excessive; a big boat can be “small” if the rest of its characteristics tend toward a single goal... riding the ocean without making waves. There can be no compromise in Newick's creations! Keep it strictly simple: steer clear of any accumulation of “modern inconveniences” like the plague! Machines, devices and attitudes of consumerist dependence deter from the objective of riding the surf fast, just for the fun of it.



Don't cut the moorings; she's ready to leap forward!



Moxie in the surf, quite simply!

THE BOAT AND THE MAN ARE MADE FOR EACH OTHER (D. Newick ON Moxie and P. Weld)

Walter Greene built Moxie at the same time as Gauloises IV (for Eric Loizeau), one of his most famous productions. The trio's synergy, each one's will for perfection, the talent and trust shared by the three comrades were such that they would achieve perfection! This dream team's conceptual, technical and sporting maturity led to the realization of the most perfect multihull of her generation. Weld found the mast a little too tall! His fall during practice enabled this resourceful man to resort to his secret weapon: a Hood furler mast! Walter, Tom Perkins (the loyal preparer) and Dick Newick were astounded, but Phil made the decision. The 1980 Ostar included 10 Newicks: four Vals and two praos in addition to Moxie, Panache, Olympus and Kriter VIII! If you add the three Greenes, Chaussettes Olympia, Jean's Foster and Gauloises IV, the “American Challenge” boasted 14 multihulls. Gauloises and Olympus sprung a leak, which kept these outsiders from the podium, like VSD II skippered by Riguidel, after a problem with the centerboard. Phil Weld ran an efficient intelligent race, making no mistakes! At the age of 66, he was in the lead, ahead of the furia francese, which

predicted he would slow down in the “rough” and won a historic Transat with “geriatric” rigging. Nick Keig, on the powerful Three Legs of Mann III, cross the line 7 hours behind him, and the unbelievable Stegall brought in the 12m Jean's Foster's 2 metric tons 40 minutes after the 16m Kelsall design! The great Mike came in a half-hour after, Olympus's starboard wing have been smashed to bits by a wave. The series came to an end 10 minutes later with the arrival of Walter Greene who, after having built the winning trimaran, reached Newport on his own A Capella in 5th position. The winner's charisma attracted all the participants' sympathy: when the prizes were given out, they hailed him with cries of: “Weld for President!”

LIFE AFTER VICTORY

Phil Weld, bursting with activity, launched into new adventures and began undertaking to bring to fruition the utopian dreams generated by the Transat. He invested massively in making windmills while pursuing with Newick a project for a “constant chamber” working trimaran for the developing world! When he died in 1985, Multihulls World paid tribute to him with the headline “So long Phil”, and summed up the spirit of the time in seafaring circles: “He was a giant, tasteful, hyperactive and brilliant, was committed to good causes and knew

how to be entertain in style. Destined to live to be a hundred, he was impressive for his youthful appearance at the age of seventy. From the first contact, his convincing and protective smile, voice and long arms like the vanes of a windmill made him the kind of man you wanted to confide in and consult on just about anything. A Boston blue-blood gifted with many blessings, he was one of those remarkable folk in whom nothing is lacking, even immortality. He fell down in the street one day when his force was apparently needed elsewhere for other labors. No doubt, he is already hard at work up there, but what a void he has left down here!” The victorious trimaran was donated to the Naval Academy, but the US Navy soon realized it was not able to make the best of the boat and asked Dick Newick to find her a new owner. Jim Rubinstein was this old glory's lucky “curator” and Walter Greene ensured her upkeep until another young American (only 50 years old) feel head-over-heels in love with Moxie and obtained the “moral” authorizations needed for such a prestigious “succession”.

REFIT AND FINE KEELS

Craig Alexander, Moxie's new owner is a “citizen of the world”, with an Italian wife and living in the



Graig Alexander in the heart of his world! The perfect ergonomics of a rational deck layout

Baleares. He is quite a character! His gift of gab and amazing American accent provide just the right touch of youthful enthusiasm to accompany the Newick design! Noisy, droll and energetic, Craig takes his joy of living and sailing on this Stradivarius with him everywhere. Discreet refined Moxie casts her spell on exuberant guys! This globetrotter loves adventure and I have spent many unforgettable moments listening to him describe the various episodes of his Pacific crossing on a Colin Archer with no motor... or food. This saga lasted 120 days and left him “carbonized” and half-dead from hunger in the Coco Islands! Craig is a true sailor and his love for his trimaran is obvious in his touching respectful and protective attitudes that do not keep him from pushing the machine to the best of her capabilities. In the summer of 2002 Moxie underwent a complete cosmetic treatment in the Newport shipyard: inside and outside were patiently sanded down before being coated with epoxy and white Awlgrip lacquer. She was given the most cutting-edge running rigging and ball-bearing blocks. Every action was guided by the highest level requirements, the choice of equipment reveal true professionalism and concern for preserving the trimaran’s authenticity! When she was launched, Walter Greene stated: “She wasn’t that fine when we made her!”

MAKE MINE A MOXIE?

“A nerve tonic made after 1879 in Union, Maine, with plants discovered in Central America by Lieutenant Moxie! Guaranteed to cure nervous fatigue, loss of manhood, paralysis and softening of the brain, Moxie will restore your health, give you a voracious appetite and make all impressions of fatigue or overwork disappear as if by magic.” (genuine advertisement) This tribute that is revealing of Phil Weld’s state of mind, was also a profession of faith with respect to sponsoring! He, who needed none, considered industrial sponsorship to be indispensable for offshore racing and wanted to demonstrate this by publicly displaying on his trimaran a brand of soda, with an unlikely taste and effect, the power as ambassadors of multi-hulls.

SAILING ON MOXIE

I found the boat in southern Spain for La Route du Sel, the first part of which we accompanied. VSD was there, too, a survivor of the great blue yonder after dreadful misadventures! I spent several days onboard but could not resist the curiosity of a complete immediate appraisal of the trimaran. Moxie was in her “juice”, having just crossed the Atlantic, suffering partly from the bad weather that had struck the Rhum fleet (which cost her a fissure in the portside beam

planking). For several hours, I admired her design and construction to the tip of the beams. This “archaeological” investigation revealed the secrets of her construction and I was amazed at the trimaran’s structural “youth” and integrity. Except for the broadening of the passage through the partition in the forebeam, she was exactly as Weld had left her! Full face, her legendary silhouette held me in thrall! Purer than RogueWave’s, the proportions are miraculous and evoke an “brawnier” A Capella, the forebeam developing an exceptionally thin wing-like architecture, the structural “fuselage” evoking graceful feminine forms. The aftbeam conceals her powerful musculature as it crosses the central hull and it is by stepping back a little that you can perceive her force! The braces are of “physiological” beauty, like the “limbs” of a thoroughbred. For the quickworks, the shapes and seacocks are fine and progressive, with rounded V-sections. With very little wet surface, the floats barely “graze” the surface of the water and the “hooked” stem gives the overall line a spatula-like appearance. The back of the central hull shows up the pronounced V-shape and curves up a little in the area of the tilting rudder casing. Two structural gussets on the side make the hull more rigid longitudinally with fusion with the beam.

Voyaging through this legend, I realized that I, too, after him, had sailed on all of the first three boats to reach the finish of the 1980 Transat! Today, at 4pm, we were at the start of La Ruta de la Sal, a Spanish cruising race round Ibiza with nearly 300 boats. The prestigious racing units alongside cruisers and the presence of certain black-fiber sails and 3DL announced the stiff competition. VSD was signed up, while Moxie was participating in a friendly way in the first part of the race, whose first 60 miles took us to Formentera. In the exit channel from the port of Denia, I was at the helm and there was an instant spark between the trimaran and me; never has it taken so little time for me to get the feel of a vessel! The little 35HP diesel motor pushed us as if it were a 60HP and the “beast” gave me some of her vitality. Once the mainsail hastily hoisted, Moxie started immediately in a breeze blowing at just a few knots! With her genoa jib unfurled, the Newick designed seemed to float on a cushion of air, perfectly progressing leeward of a dumbfounded fleet! I warmed up the keels at 7-8 knots across the water, and could finally luff and pass the line more

than a half-hour after “first series”. In this lull with 4-knot winds no one seemed to be able to head East! The miracle of the Newick design unfolded before my very eyes and we concentrated as we luffed by accelerating. This boat is like an alchemist making the necessary speed and wind from atoms of breeze and uses to energy to advance! The residual sea after yesterday’s strong 50 knots of wind wreaked havoc with the other, but Moxie’s thing stems thoroughly enjoyed these amusing waves! We hoisted the reacher; only a few high-tech monohull prototypes seemed to hold up as well; Phil Weld’s “magic sail” blocked the horizon, sending the 50-footer on another planet. We accelerated again with peaks at 8/9 knots accompanying adjustment of the runners (the true wind oscillating from 5 to 7 knots). The communication with this epoxy wood missile goes through an abundant deck layout that is clear and easy to use. The boat’s biomechanics (Greene and Stegall) managed to put Friends & Lovers’s ergonomics “on a Pullman cockpit: perfection! At nightfall we crossed the last lines of resistance (the superb proto Duende). Soon the last rigging was visible only by radar, Moxie had come in first! At 3am, we motored to the marina of Ibiza. Van Morrison and “Gloria” were at the controls!

The day after the next, a stormy southwesterly wind darkened the horizon and struck just as we were casting off. The channel between Formentera and Ibiza provides wonderful waters with scattered islets and we sailed out of port starboard tack upwind, mainsail and genoa jib full in squalls oscillating between 15 and 25 knots. I would have preferred a long downwind charge and assumed that the sky and this unpredictable breeze associated with choppy water would not put the boat to her best advantage! How wrong I was: she rose against the wind as if towed by an invisible line; at 10-12 knots closehauled, I luffed constantly and experienced the thrills of a per-

formance monohull. I was enjoying the sheer pleasure of this and the little metal wheel gave me all the trimaran’s parameters: no strain at all! The support of the leeward float was smooth and graceful as if it were “swimming” quietly alongside us. A glance at the sails showed that nothing distorted the Spectra profiles, the hollow of the genoa jib did not recede under pressure and our stay was properly stiff. On the platform, I checked its stiffness and it was obvious that, despite a gracile appearance, the chassis is rugged, with no “hard spots” and the distortions inherent to such treatment are harmoniously distributed within the structure. On any other boat, I would have had to reduce the genoa jib. True, this “working jib” is very well cut but, most of all, Moxie’s geometry is so fluid and efficient that it relieves her of the impact of the waves and gusts of wind. Instead of wallowing, the “Maine horse” accelerates and speeds on. Her stability is so perfect that, between two adjustments, I never connected the automatic pilot. We took one reef under a veritable deluge; the exercise, completed in a few seconds reinforced the general feeling of easy maneuverability. A few glides at 13-14 knots brought this spellbinding test to an end. We had already reached Formentera.

I had been under Moxie’s mysterious charm for nearly 20 years and it isn’t always a good thing to confront dream and reality! In the particular case of this trimaran, it is no exaggeration to say that the thrills of sailing were well above my expectations and that the general balance of the Newick design convinced that I was at the helm of a truly exceptional boat. And there is more, Moxie cast her spell on me! I was enchanted with her static beauty and the grace of her dynamic movements. I will never forget the observations made onboard this unique thoroughbred, and I hope to be able to gallop on her deck again to experience her unbelievable “surfing” qualities.

“I designed Moxie for Phil Weld in the 1980 Ostar. The trimaran is 1.8m shorter than the maximum limit at the time and the 15.2m mast bore only 106m2 of sails for the race. The loss of performance linked to the furler mast did not keep Phil from winning! Although Anne and Phil Weld are no longer with us today, I remember how magnificently she supported her husband’s enthusiasm. I was very lucky to have Phil Weld as a friend.”
DICK NEWICK

The legend inside... Spartan!



► SPECIFICATIONS

MOXIE

Designer:	Dick Newick (plan No.48)
Maker:	Walter Greene
Light displacement:	4.5T
Length:	15.23m
Waterline length:	13.96m
Beam:	9.85m
Sail area upwind:	106m2
Reacher:	95m2
Height of standard mast:	16.45m
Height of OSTAR 80 mast:	15.25m
Height of present mast:	16.80m
Draft:	2.63m
Max waterline beam of hull:	1.06m
Float length:	12.81m
Motors:	35CV Westerbeke, line shafting and folding propeller