

A MESSAGE ABOUT OUR BUILDER

Just a few years ago, it would have been very unusual for a sailboat distributor to brag about his Far Eastern supplier. In the early '70s the image of Taiwanese boat building was, needless to say, foreign, and the reputations of their products were by no means enviable. That is certainly no longer the case. The Tashing yard (more correctly the Ta Shing Yacht Building Company, Ltd.), our builder for the PANDA 40 and the PANDA 40 Pilothouse, has earned its place among the world's top pleasure boat builders through hard work, integrity, and a dedication to quality.

Tashing began producing yachts in the midst of the "first" oil crisis, early in 1975. The parent company for the yard, Ta Shing Sheng Dockyard, had thirty years of experience constructing commercial craft for the region's fishing industry, and they could see that the increased price of energy was going to cool the demand for fishing boats. The logical step was to move into pleasure boat construction. Fortunately for sailors all over the world, Tashing took their work boat attitudes with them into the pleasure boat business; the attitude that Tashing boats shouldn't break down (no fishermen will buy a known unreliable boat), that people were indeed staking their lives and futures on Tashing's products, and that there was no future in trying to fool consumers into buying an inferior product. In fact, Mr. C. M. Roan, the president of the commercial shipyard oversees the day-to-day business of the yacht building facility.

The new yard also had some fortuitous circumstances on its side, and they went right along with their unusual attitude about boat building. They became the prime builder for the new boats that Bob Berg was developing for the American market. These were boats that Bob Perry designed, and they drew heavily on the two men's knowledge of the Taiwanese boat building industry, its strengths and weaknesses. It was a pleasure to discover all the strengths at Tashing, and they soon landed the contracts for the Baba 30 (so-named because of the workers' pronunciation of Bob Berg's name), and went on to produce an expanded line of Perry cruising boats in addition to designs by Al Mason. The combination of these good designs and a very high standard of workmanship made the fortunes of Tashing.

Today there are over 200 skilled builders working at Tashing, from the lay-up crews, to finish carpenters, to ships mechanics. They produce yachts at a 9,500 square meter facility that is complete with its own log curing shed, its own sawmill for processing whole teak logs, and climate controlled fiberglass and gel-coat application shops. The yard has no equipment manufacturing interests, so they use the most efficient American, European, and Australian components available. Since they build yachts almost exclusively for these markets, they are always ready to review and inspect the yachts that are underway, ready to meet our particular standards as well as their own. There may be as many as eighteen yachts underway at any one time in the Tashing yard, but with our long association, we know that every Panda 40 receives the closest possible attention. When you inspect the Panda 40 for yourself, we know that you will see the results of that attention, too. That's why we like to brag about our builder.