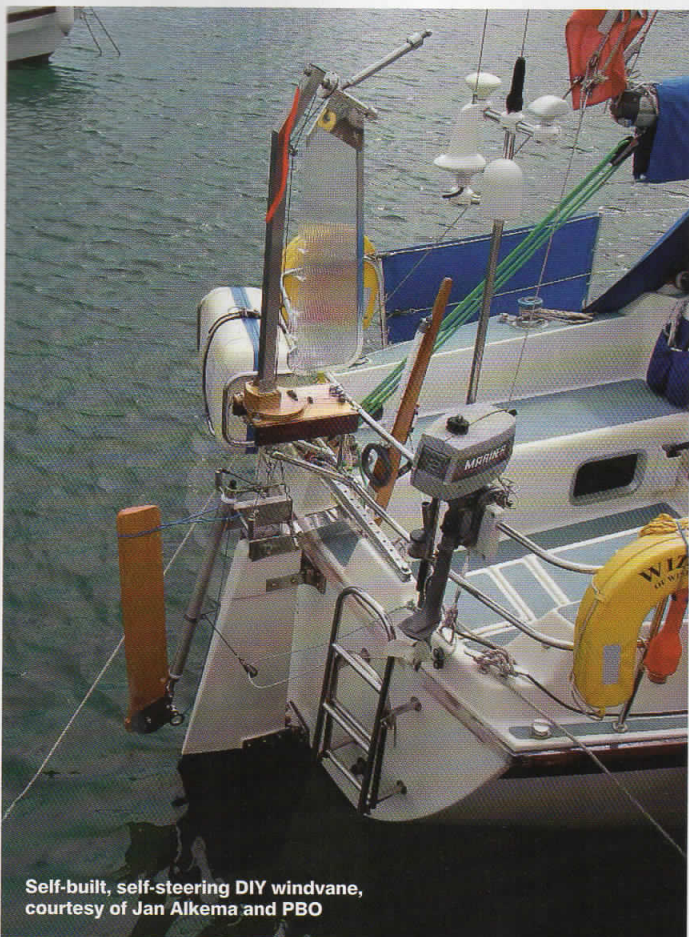


DIY WINDVANE GEAR



Self-built, self-steering DIY windvane, courtesy of Jan Alkema and PBO

■ I have always been interested in windvane steering, but consider most of the commercial windvanes to be too large for a 8.5m (28ft) boat, and expensive. They also all require too many holes to be drilled for the mounting bracket.

Jan Alkema's design (PBO 481) addresses all these issues. I built mine by scaling off the photographs in PBO, using the 25mm tube of the push-pit rail on the featured boat as a reference. After assembling all the components and before welding I contacted Jan to double-check some of the dimensions and found him to be very generous with help.

On the first sail, Conwy to the Isle

of Man, the windvane held the boat on course for 52NM without any need for adjustment. Absolutely brilliant! The whole system can be fitted on the stern in five minutes – and stored in even less time.

The cost of building it was about half of the smallest commercial windvane and would have been less if I'd had a lathe for the bearing.

Michael Williams

By email

PBO BUY ONLINE

Jan's design (PBO 481) can be ordered on www.pbo.co.uk. Click on 'Find PBO articles'