

COCKPIT INSTRUMENT MOUNTING

Rick Lucas: *Ping*



On other 323s I've seen, the windex and other cockpit instruments were mounted low, next to the engine instrument panel. I'm not sure what the designers had in mind in putting them there, but I don't think they considered the opacity of knees and calves. The latest thinking has these instruments mounted in NavPods on the pedestal guards. That's great for the skipper, but the crew is left in the dark about the boat's telemetry.

One of Ping's POs had moved the instruments from their original location to the exterior of the cabin just to port of the companionway. Given the companionway's offset to starboard, mounting the instruments there makes them visible from everywhere in the cockpit.

The original mounting had the Signet windex mounted above the Signet SmartPak. By the time I bought Ping, the SmartPak's innards had been fried. A replacement was needed, but cost was a big consideration. Signet offered me the owner's discount on a new SmartPak, but the display alone came in at over US\$500. For less than half that, I picked up a complete Raymarine BiData unit. However it presented a challenge in mounting it as the display was shorter than the hole left by the old Signet. When all else fails, get out the wood.

I covered the old hole with a long piece of teak. Onto that I mounted the Raymarine display. It works. After many coats of Epiphanes teak finish it adds a bit of warmth to the cockpit.

UPDATE: I'd been asked to show what the interior behind the instruments looked like. The wires extend from the back of the instruments down along the inside cabin wall and underneath the bridgedeck. They then shoot through a hole cut in the cover that goes over the back of the engine instrument panel (inside the cabin) and are routed on their way to power and the transducers. Unadorned, it's not the prettiest thing you've ever seen. However, a PO built a box to cover the holes, wires and connections inside the cabin, and it helps a lot.



What is interesting is that the two original Signet instruments are a lot thicker than the new Raymarine unit I installed into one of the original holes. For someone doing this on their boat, the cover could be much thinner, not extending out anywhere near as far as the one on Ping.

Things I'd do differently: Nothing.

Cost: US\$30.00

Time: About 2 hours

