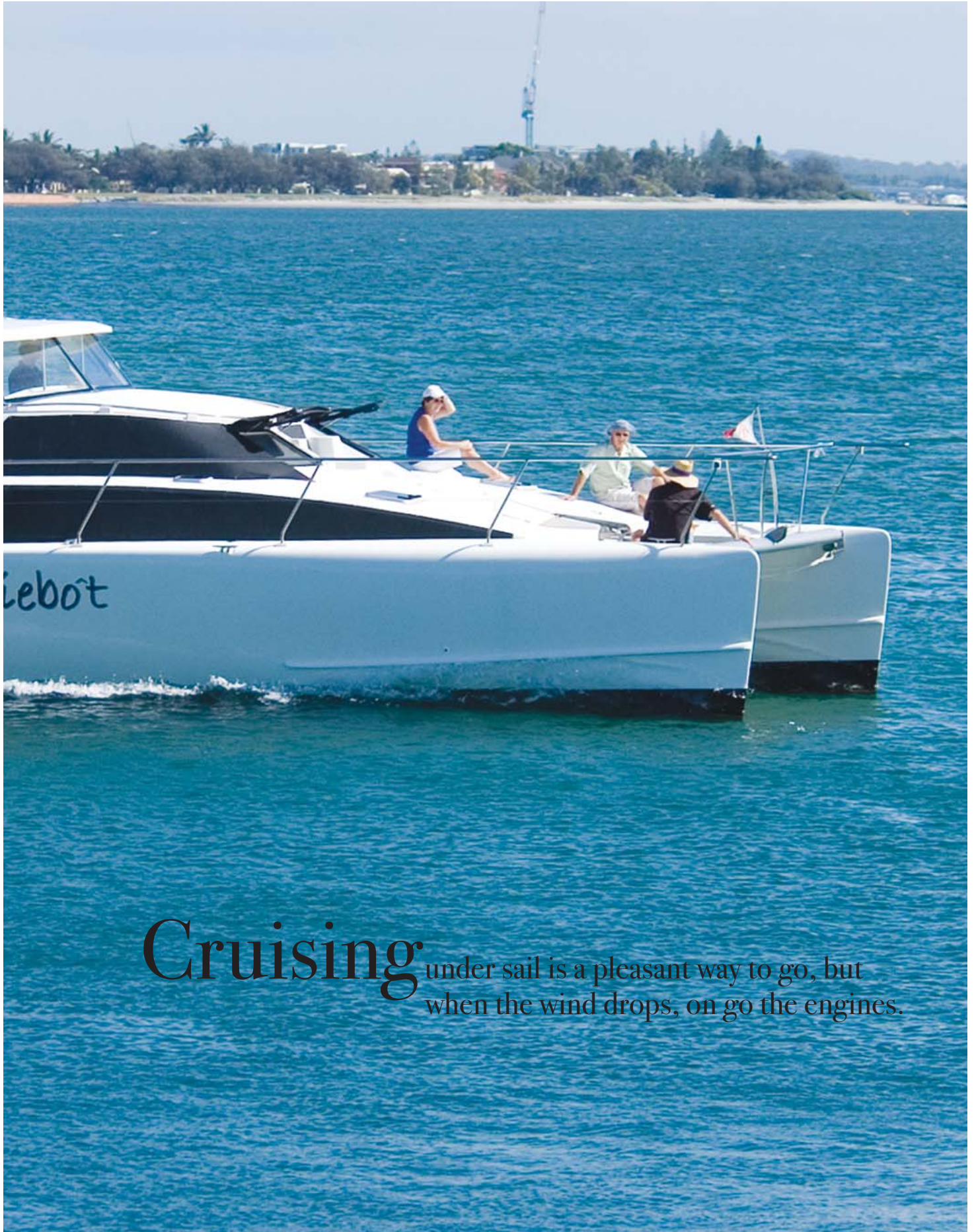


Lightwave 40



Cruising under sail is a pleasant way to go, but when the wind drops, on go the engines.

■ text and photos by
KEVAN WOLF

Most yachties will tell you that when they are cruising they spend about 70 to 80 per cent of their time on the motor. This is why power catamarans have become so popular. They offer the same deck and cabin space as a sailing cat without the need to be a skilled sailor.

Most sailing cat builders have one or two power models in their range. Including Coomera builders Lightwave yachts, but unlike some manufacturers who just drop the mast off and beef up the engines, the 11.9 metre hull of the Lightwave 40 has been designed for power operations.

Roger Overell and his then business partner Nathan Stanton, started building sailing catamarans in 1995. They saw an emerging market for power cats and developed a design based around their popular 38 sailing model. The concept was for a functional and stylish layout and a fuel-efficient hull for long range cruising.



They changed the bow and stern shape and extended the aft section. The bows are a fine entry with underwater bulbs taken through to the forepeak, and combined with the flatter hull and big canoe-shaped stern all the traditional catamaran hobby horsing has been taken out of the boat.

The design works. At a cruising speed of 10 kts the standard 75hp engines deliver a very economical one litre of fuel

to one nautical mile run – you can't do much better than that.

The 6.7-metre beam is also a lot wider than most power cats. This adds more room below and makes the boat very

Owner Chris showing off great vision from the raised steering position. (above)

Wide beam provides expansive deck space for entertaining or sun bathing. (below)





Large Cockpit area with ability to fully enclose.

stable at rest. With the big beam the boat offers the width of two boats, which is taken advantage of in the main cabin and accommodation plan. It also provides big, open deck space up front.

The newest Lightwave 40 is owned by Chris Biggens, a former Melbourne stockbroker and sometime farmer. Chris readily admits that he was a better stockbroker than he was a farmer. Since retiring to the Gold Coast he spends as much time as he can cruising.

He has owned a couple of boats including a 30ft Riviera and a 30ft Prowler catamaran, however the Prowler was a tad small to go away cruising in, so he opted for the bigger Lightwave. He regularly drives up to Moreton Island for a week or so and with the 0.95m draft the inland channels are not a problem.

“I was surprised how quickly I got used to the bigger boat,” said Chris.

Lightwave cats are built with a full protective keel, they are actually built right side up on the keel, “so there is not

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Expansive interior space offering 360 views. (from the top)

Light, vision and ventilation achieved in the mid-galley.

Entertainment unit featuring a wine/spirit unit that not only stores your bottles and glasses but looks stunning too.

much to cry about if we touch the bottom,” he said.

One Lightwave owner up north admits he regularly looks for shallow water and when the tide goes out the cat sits on the sand on its keel. He reckons he gets the best night’s sleep he has ever had.

The Lightwave 40 is a two-to-four people boat with a traditional cat layout below that incorporates double berth cabins in each bow, the galley down the starboard side and a third cabin in the stern.

The passageway to the owners cabin in the port hull leads past a desk with a swing out stool that serves as an office, and the owner’s bathroom is aft.

The main cabin combines a large wrap around lounge with a dining table and a bar. A handy feature is the “escape” hatch, found in all the Lightwave sailing cats, set in the saloon floor. When it’s opened with the boat anchored into the wind it catches the air flowing between the hulls and directs it into the cabin, and



with the two big forward hatches open the boat is very airy. The floor hatch is only 700mm off the water, so it needs to be kept closed when running.

The cabin finish is unusual. Chris opted for a retro look using aluminium-framed cupboard doors with an acrylic inner. It's different and as Roger admitted he wasn't too sure at first, but the look tends to grow on you.

Out the back is a large entertainment area with a full-length lounge across the transom and another small dinette. It's shaded by the bridge deck hardtop and can be enclosed with canvas and clears.

Behind this a platform to carry the dinghy, which is launched easily with a hand-winch crane.

The stepped helm station is designed so that the skipper is not sitting up with the gods by himself wondering what the rest of the company is doing downstairs. The helm station is an integral part of the aft cabin and the main saloon, and because of the way it's positioned the hardtop has a low profile. This gives the boat a sleek look and makes it easier to get under the Gold Coast bridges.

The angled helm console is neat and similar to the layout of a monohull with the instruments and the Raymarine electronics mounted so that they are easy to read. The stainless steel wheel has a knob to make it easier to use one-handed when manoeuvring.

The boat handles easily, the only thing to remember is that there is another 'boat' out on the right hand side. Although, the view from the helm station allows the skipper to see the corners of the boat. There is no need to use the wheel when manoeuvring the boat, the engines are centred 4.8 metres apart, so the boat will turn on one engine and when the bows are pointing in the right direction the other engine is engaged.

The Lightwave 40 is an ideal boat for pottering up the coast; it is easy to drive and as Chris says, "it's a lazy man's boat". The standard engines are Volvo Penta D2, 75hp, saildrives. Chris has opted for the bigger 110hp Yanmars and shaft drives, which come with the unmistakable Yanmar diesel sound, and push it along at 9kts at 1800rpm. This is the boat's most economical speed and with the optional 750L fuel tank, Lightwave say it will steam some 1000nm before having to put in for fuel.

The Lightwave 40 is a comfortable long-range cruising boat. It's not designed for rushing about the ocean; the top speed at 3400rpm is a respectable 17kts.

The cat is well finished and there are a lot of little innovative standard features, which make it a very comfortable boat to live with.

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SPECIFICATIONS		
loa		11.9m
beam		6.67m
draft		0.95m
displacement (light ship)		6000kg
fuel capacity standard		500ltr
fresh water capacity		500ltr
price	Motor away	\$481,600.00
	Standard	\$495,000.00
	Deluxe	\$624,890.00

Office area suitable for computer and printer set up. There is also plenty of room for books and office supplies.