



A family business :
Lightwave Yachts Company
owner Roger Overell, with his
family, who now and again get
to enjoy time on board! Cover
photo and images feature
recently launched, Lightwave
38 Free Spirit.



STAYING

TRUE BLUE

The stormy waters of the global financial crisis have reshaped Australian boatbuilding, leaving a much leaner industry and Lightwave Yachts epitomises this new era with new boats and some radical new ideas, writes KEVIN GREEN.

■ photos Victoria Purdie – VidPicPro



The Lightwave 38 is a popular bluewater cruising boat.

For company owner Roger Overell, the writing was on the wall several years ago when the Gold Coast shipwright realised his options were either diversification or destruction for his catamaran yard, that has built 80 boats since its inception in 1996. “Lightwave is committed to staying Australian-made which is challenging in the current economic climate. It has taken some tough decisions and a new strategic plan to achieve it,” says Roger.

Roger and wife Louise acknowledged the precariousness of relying on customised, high-end boat manufacturing alone, so for the past eight years have operated a composite manufacturing facility in parallel with their

catamaran yard. The synergies from this business are apparent to anyone who closely looks at the exceptional GRP finish on a Lightwave. Construction is lightweight foam sandwich with strategically placed bulkheads to maximise structure and the finish feels hand-made, as I found out when sail testing a Lightwave 45 Grande. Sailing performance has always been an integral design feature of Lightwave, something racing sailor Overell values highly and demonstrates by his builds that have done successful ocean rallies, circumnavigations and ARC regattas. Being a family man, the next generation of Overells are also enjoying racing their Lightwave Raider One Design. The former liveboards remain passionate about their catamaran building, as Roger

told me when we met at Sanctuary Cove earlier this year. Back then he was working on plans for his latest design, the Lightwave 45 Maestro.

Launching at the 2014 Sanctuary Cove International Boat Show in May, the Maestro incorporates the popular selling Lightwave Grande's features – elegant raked lines, fully extended overhead hardtop over aft deck, raised helm station and large accommodation areas. Along with the owner, Roger has worked with naval architects and engineers to make slight changes in the upper cabin design for the Maestro model – to accommodate an owner's stateroom forward, on the same level as the saloon, galley and cockpit. "There is a fine line between accommodating the comfort level required for a big cruising cat and not compromising the high performance level Lightwave catamarans are renowned for," explains Overell. The master stateroom, with full head height, features a queen sized island bed on the bridgedeck level, with twin dressing rooms and ensuite facilities in the hulls. Commissioned by a LW38 owner who is changing boats, the Maestro offers



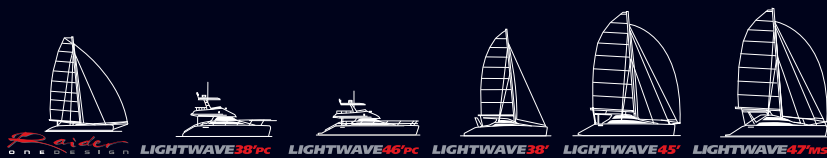
Roger enjoys family sailing and racing on the Lightwave Raider. Photo VidPicPro.

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something unique in this size of boat and illustrates the company's abilities to offer customised solutions to customers. "The Maestro caters for long range, live aboard couples or families with the convenience of living, cooking, entertaining and sleeping areas on the same level. The walk around queen sized stateroom is massive for a boat this length and is responding to the high interest we have received for this configuration." Overell pointed out that many 55 footers do not offer this level of comfort and convenience as a genuine live-aboard, world cruiser while at only 45ft long, boat handling is manageable along with berthing and running costs. "And the purchase price brings it into the budget range of many sailors, unlike similarly styled boats which are of course larger than ours." The owners have chosen the layout for their Maestro to also include a queen sized aft guest cabin, full sized second bathroom, a large galley up configuration, and a separate office area as well. The Lightwave 45 Maestro will be available in sail, motor or motor sailer versions, as an optional model alongside the Lightwave 45 Grande.

left: The raked lines of the Lightwave 38, and note plenty of bridgedeck clearance.

below: The powerful rig has a fully battened mainsail with cutter rig.





Lightwood finish and plenty of hatches give an airy feel to the double berths.



The galley is open plan so there's plenty of ventilation and sea views from the starboard stove/oven.



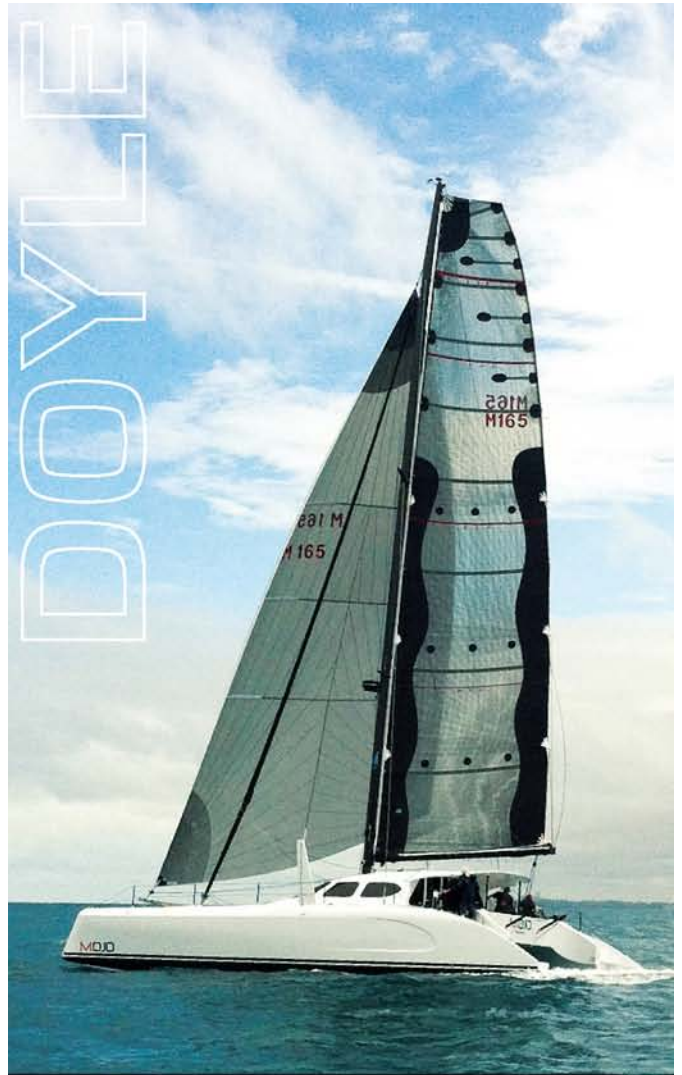
The feeling of a hand made finish apparent on Lightwave catamarans.



LW38 forward master cabin with end mounting bed arrangement.

BUSY WITH UNIQUE NEW BUILDS

As I yachting journalist I see an awful lot of boats around the world but I've yet to see one with inbuilt piano keyboards; yet Lightwave has built two. The second one, currently under construction, a Lightwave 38 is for Geoff and Naomi Page. "With boat design there is always compromise, but with the semi-custom boat building philosophy employed by Lightwave Yachts we found this can be minimised," said Geoff Page. "We get the feeling that Roger and Lightwave



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above: Raised helm position – a popular feature of Lightwave catamarans.

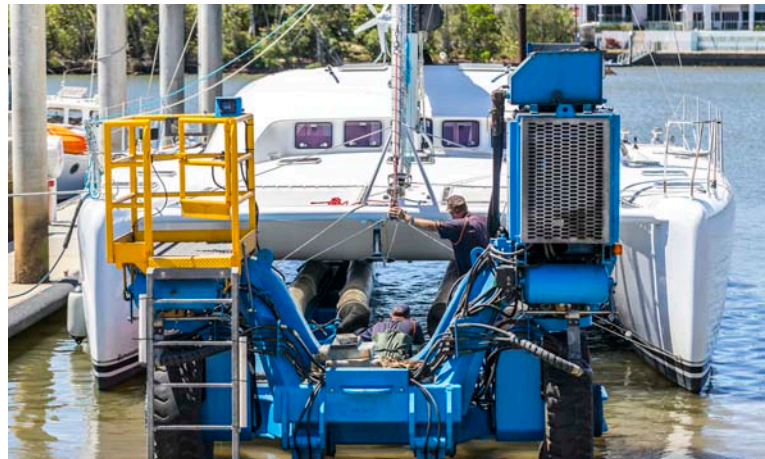
right: The galley has ample work surface space with cupboards and those large windows give good natural light.



Yachts are artisans and enjoy crafting a solution that is just right for the owner.”

Louise Overell tells me the company has orders through to September 2015 and a long running contract with a Japanese company; manufacturing their composite product for the Australian market – an impressive result from this sole remaining Australian production cruising catamaran builder. “Lightwave is successful because we focus on what our clients want – to build a boat of exceptional quality and performance, customised to suit their needs. We build them their boat,” says Louise.

Is this Australia's new multihull capital?



One of its kind: Australia's only 45 tonne Sealift in action.

Recent groundbreaking activity at The Boat Works has the marine service seriously digging up space to accommodate demand. The bustling Gold Coast yard is full with towering masts as multihull owners take advantage of limited time half-price hardstand specials, and experience the unique offering the Coomera River facility provides.

The flagship marine service recently welcomed the southern hemisphere's first permanent out-of-water boat show, in collaboration with the respected Multihull Solutions. Envied designs of quality pre-loved cats are on display to satiate curiosities and desires.

“We've really become known to cater for the multihull market with our machines, our centre's size, the new yard development, and the launch of the Multihull Solutions dry land brokerage. We're set to be the best equipped multihull facility in Australia when it comes to lifting, storage and maintenance,” says David Whyte, general manager at The Boat Works.

A new hardstand and storage development at the 9.2ha facility is in the works, increasing an already formidable yard size. The multihull presence is set to be a mainstay as owners seek out the premium service and fresh energy the complex offers, complimented by Australia's only 45 tonne Sea Lift machine.

The unique machine specifically caters for wide beam vessels with adjustable hydraulic fingers with variable-pressure cushioning airbags. Teamed up with the travel lift, these machines have lifted more vessels in the last month than ever recorded. Many of these new customers would proclaim it's actually the crew on the controls rather than the machines themselves that makes such a difference in the haul-out experience.

The team is enthusiastic. They enjoy what they do. And their aim is to treat every boat like it was their own pride-and-joy. Here, simply, you and your boat matter.

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