



attempt to list the facilities and features. Lightwave has an excellent web site where you can obtain specifications and fitting details. See <http://www.lightwaveyachts.com/lw/>. What I am sharing is a little more esoteric, the vibe of the thing (to quote from the movie, *The Castle*).

And so to the sail. We departed Hope Harbour Marina on a beautiful day, light winds, but that's not a bad thing when you are testing a boat. Most boats will sail okay in 15 knots, it's light winds that really test a catamaran's performance. Of course heavy weather is a different sort of challenge, but when I am sailing on a new boat I always look forward to seeing how it handles the light air.

The boat is rigged in a fairly straightforward fashion, large main, small self tacking jib and a reacher on a soft furler. This sort of rig is appearing more and more as a standard for a performance cruising cat. Under sail I must admit to some surprise; these boats are strongly built, and do not lack in comfort or fitting so I was expecting some performance trade off, but in the lightest of breezes the 38 lifted to the wind. What really impressed was the manner in which the boat tacked. In slight wind with about two knots of boat speed tacking was a matter of swinging the wheel, no sheets no mucking about. The included angle for tack was fairly impressive, I didn't have access to instrumentation but visually the tacks were very positive.

Lightwave 38

by ANDREW CRAWFORD

designed (Tony Grainger) and incredibly well built. I also had the opportunity to look through the factory and see some boats in various stages of production.

Please note, my boat reviews are not written in the checklist style, i.e. I do not

THE Lightwave 38 was on display at the Sanctuary Cove Boat show. Since then I have had the opportunity to test sail the vessel in the Southport area. Nathan, from Overall Stanton Yachts was demonstrating the boat to two couples who were interested purchasers. I am advised that one of the couples has ordered a boat and the other couple are keenly interested. Two of the industry's most delightful people, Nathan Stanton and Roger Overell are behind the company and it is always pleasant to spend time talking multihulls with them. The 38's are beautifully



LIGHTWAVE at berth

The furler based reacher is certainly worth having. It allows for a boost in horsepower in light breezes and is fairly easy to manage. My personal view is that the ideal mix for cruising boat is the rig that the Lightwave had, coupled with a symmetrical spinnaker for downwind slides.

As would be expected from a boat of this size and style it was extremely comfortable to sail. It is obviously the product of good design and good engineering. I had a feeling of 'oneness' about the boat. It is a bit difficult to explain but I was left with a view that the designer understood the builder and vice versa, this great state of affairs doesn't always happen and can be a casualty in a production boat-building environment. The design has managed to include significant bridge deck clearance in what is a relatively short boat whilst maintaining a style and grace the causes the boat to draw admiring glances. The layout was extremely workable with a tendency for things to be naturally where I went looking for them, e.g. when manoeuvring under power I didn't look for the engine controls I just put my hand where they should be and they were there. Achieving such synergy between a boat and its human occupants is not easy to achieve. Clearly, thought has gone into the layout to reflect real world operation. And speaking of manoeuvring under power, it was extremely easy, on return to the berth we had to stop and back up and into a vacant area to allow another boat out and it was confidence inspiring stuff. Most stress, at least for me, in sailing comes from berthing. I would be very confident in this, and indeed any cat with well placed motors and effective rudders.

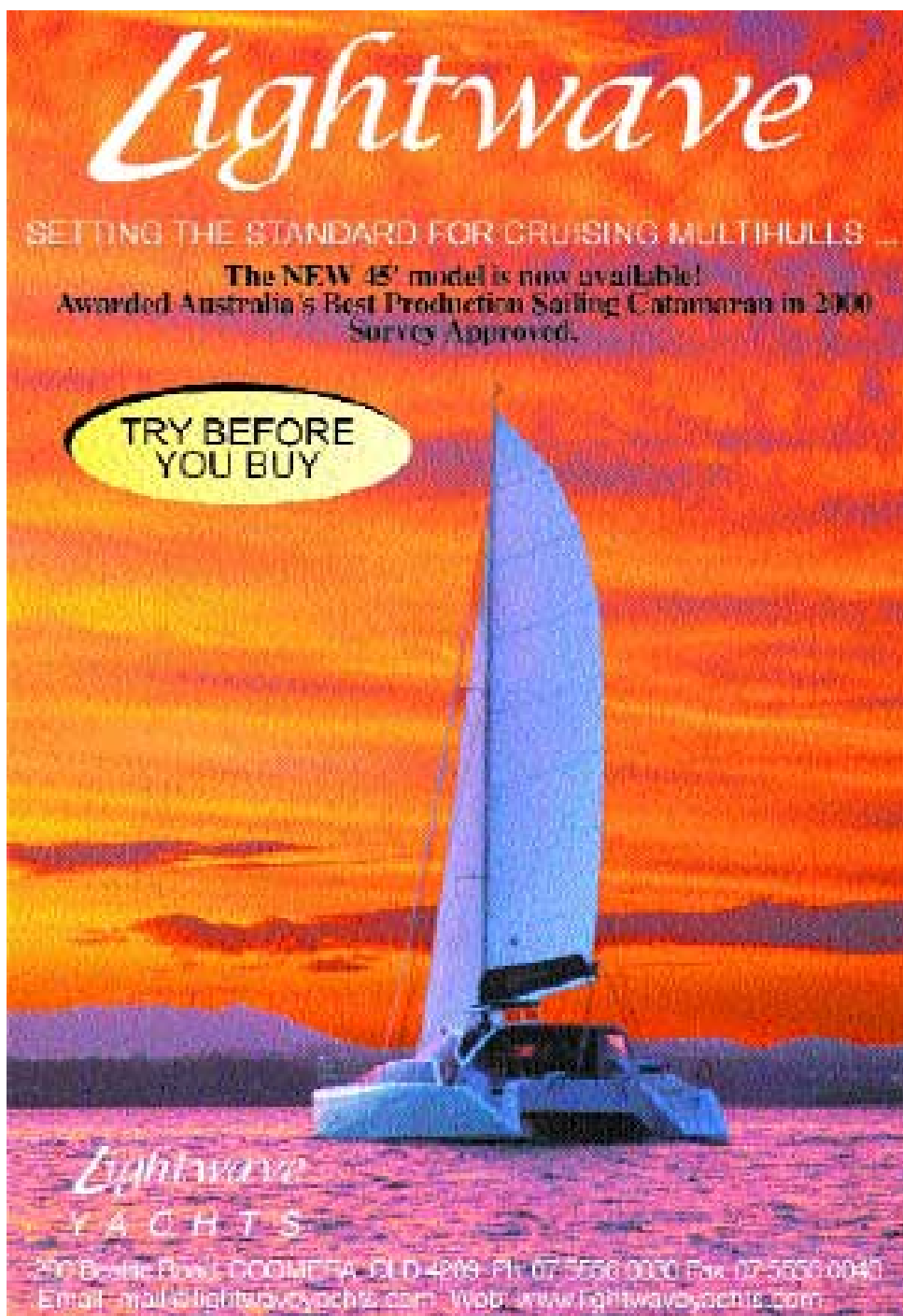
I am not sure about the canopy cover over the helm position from an aesthetics point of view, but I can see huge advantages for it from a cruising operation standpoint. Briefly, the cockpit roof over the helm seat has been, in effect raised by a metre or so to allow for shade at helm. The canopy has the facility for clear covers to be attached and I can certainly see that they would be welcome on those occasions where steering the boat in foul weather was called for. In any event it's a personal call and Overall Stanton are flexible enough to meet

their customers needs in areas such as this.

The prospective buyers were also impressed with the boat. One couple, from Broome, had researched their requirements well over the web and had all but settled on the Lightwave. The test sail confirmed their view and they placed an order soon after the sail. The other couple were equally impressed but were continuing to explore options, though it won't surprise me to hear they have placed an order in the near future. All four commented on similar attributes of the boat, easy to sail, well built, surprisingly efficient in light airs, great layout and a feeling of confidence in the boat.

As a value for money production boat it has a lot going for it. They are not cheap but certainly competitive. I would never want a cheap boat, just a good value one, and this certainly is when compared to other production boats in the market. As usual I did a quick scan of the net overseas and for more money in the USA you end up with a lot less boat, in terms of quality and efficiency. Of course Roger and Nathan offer an overseas purchaser support either direct or through their agents. If you are reading this in other parts of the world then contact Lightwave via their website and they will explain the details.

On a personal note I could easily see myself skipping one of these vessels.



Lightwave

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NATHAN Stanton Lightwave Yachts



Sonja and I were both 'at home' on the boat immediately and that is a sign of a good design. This is interesting given that my personal parameters usually include daggerboards and outboards, but this boat works so well that I could stand back and objectively assess how the boat would fit with our overall rather than specific requirements. Lightwave also offer a charter boat availability so you can try before you buy.

In terms of the building side of the operation again I came away impressed. The production facility at Coomera is large and allows for a number of boats to be in production at the same time. Nathan and Roger have had the same group of people working with them since their inception and that makes for a very positive effect on the finished product. I understand that they are up to about boat 27, certainly the product has a wealth of experience behind it and has benefited from evolution through usage.

What was interesting was viewing a number of boats under construction and seeing some individual differences in terms of interior layout. My personal preference is for galley down and a nav area on the bridgedeck. One of the boats had a very effective utilisation of space in that regard. Lightwave's recent newsletter includes photos of this layout.

It's an operational environment and accordingly whilst I am sure intending clients would be welcome, there is a need to manage interest so as not to interfere with production and to adhere to workplace health and safety requirements and you would be wise not to just turn up but discuss your interest with Nathan or Roger first.

The Lightwave 38 is a well designed boat that has been well built and has plenty of sea miles behind it. If you are in the market for a mid size production cat then I certainly would recommend considering the 38. It has carved its own market niche and is not in competition with other products like the Perry 43, another excellent locally built boat, rather it complements it and offers a product in a slightly smaller size and price range. ❖

