

Dragonfly 35 Boat Test



A family cruiser – the kayak fits into the rear of the floats through an opening hatch

We have been looking forward to testing the Dragonfly 35 for some time but UK dealer Multihull Solutions has had a quick turnaround of new boats going to owners and we have never quite been able to hook up our diaries.

Fortunately a new boat and a patient owner arrived and with it some blustery early March weather. In all pretty good conditions in which to put Dragonfly's flagship through its paces and see what we thought.

The Dragonfly 35 (DF35) was first launched in the spring boat shows 2007. It immediately turned heads with its striking colour schemes usually with a metallic paint job on the hulls and floats. This styling expressed confidence and boldness and when tested by sailing media this was not overstated as she was awarded the European Boat of the Year in 2008.

The DF35 replaced the 1000 in the range and filled the gap between the 920 and 1200. It has adopted the overall style of the 920 but with improved aesthetics, interior sophistication and an improved volume to performance ratio. It is designed to appeal to existing owners seeking to step

up, appeal to monohull owners converting to a performance multihull and designed to be a great cruiser but also an accomplished racer being offered in a 'racing' and an 'ultimate' version.

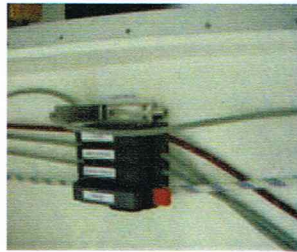
As with all Dragonfly trimarans it has been designed in house by MD Jens Quorning, son of the founder of the company, with 3D CAD and stress analysis work by consultant Steen Olsen. The tooling was then computer milled for ultimate precision and fit.



Nice shot!

Construction

The boat is built using one piece hull and deck moulds for the main hull and the floats. Construction uses vinyl ester resin throughout and is based around using multifaxial and uni-directional fibres around a foam core, with solid laminate along the centre line. The construction emphasises light weight and immense strength and uses modern materials to achieve this. As a swing wing trimaran the structure is focussed on accommodating the loads necessary to ensure reliability of the folding system in the toughest conditions. The structural engineering of these highly loaded components dominates the engineering design and are most visible in the structural bulkheads fore and aft which cleverly hide substantial steel and composite structures that take the rig, beam and swing wing loads.



The centreboard and rudder are both kick up and controlled by ropes with an ingenious but simple kick up arrangement – a cam cleat kept in place by a spring loaded ball bearing – too much load and the cam cleat overpowers the resistance of the spring forcing the ball bearing up as the spring compresses and pops up releasing the rope and kicking the board or rudder up! Neat! The rudder is semi-balanced and, as we found, quite powerful.

The camcleat has popped up and pressure from the board tensions the downhaul on the board forcing the ball-bearing to compress and the camcleat to pop up releasing the rope and the board.

When folded they sit close against the main hull and slightly lower than when opened thus reducing the folded beam width and making the boat very stable when folded. It can be motored into and out of a berth folded which reduces mooring costs.

The engineering of the swing wing system is complex but beautifully finished with various confidence building chunks of stainless steel and hugely strong pivot pins at each beam to hull and beam to float joint. With the folding line led to the electric primary winch, each float is quickly unfolded and the trampolines tensioned in one operation. Once opened up the beams are secured in place by the folding system wires connected to the outboard aft corners of the trampolines and are locked off with jammers hidden in a cockpit locker. Connecting the forward security wire completes the process.

As one would expect in a performance trimaran all secondary structure is composite to minimise weight with wood only used to finish the interior. The DF35 has a 30HP three cylinder inboard engine.



In its berth and folded there is less beam than most modern 35' monohulls

The interior layout is designed to be familiar and attractive to those who are considering moving from a monohull to a performance trimaran. It certainly achieves this. What does surprise is the quality of finish and detailing.

The companionway is broad with a pleasantly curved sliding hatch leading to carefully angled hardwood companionway steps which lead to a teak and holly flooring that runs throughout the saloon area. Immediately to the left of the companionway is the navigation area whose seal marks the start of the saloon seating area that occupies the port side of the saloon. Raised to allow space for tankage, storage and to provide visibility through saloon windows they are served by a very highly finished saloon table mounted on top of the centreboard box. Opposite this is a full length galley area that feels spacious and is well equipped. There are neat fold down seats attached to the centreboard box which enable six to comfortably sit for dinner.

Forward from the galley is the spacious toilet shower compartment and then forward over a substantial bulkhead hiding the swing wing structure to a V shaped forward double berth which is well finished in wood trim.



Very good looking saloon area.