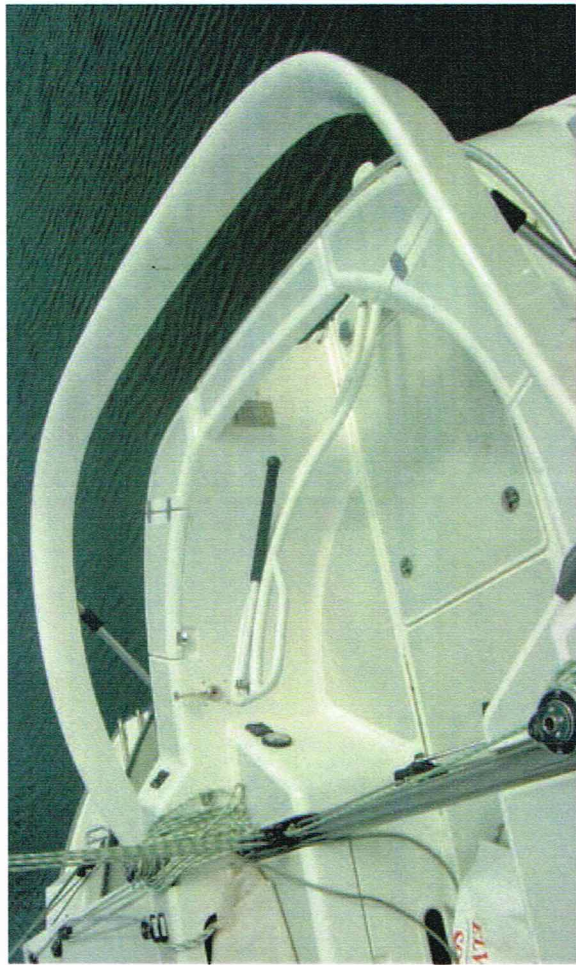




A 35 fitted with a tiller which is the standard equipment. This opens up the cockpit, makes movement forward more straightforward and access to the stern much easier.

imaginative cockpit enclosure enabling the cockpit to be used in winter or for shelter to be provided whilst at anchor or when on a mooring.

Sailing

The boat is designed to be a performance cruiser and this it certainly is. The helm position is excellent for sailing with good all round visibility. The helm has easy access to the mainsheet and main traveller controls. The genoa sheet winches are either side of the companionway so beyond the helmsman's reach but two steps away. The spinnaker sheet is led to the mainsheet winches so again close to the helm. The test boat had an optional carbon wheel but a tiller is standard.

The options list includes barber haulers for the genoa and outboards for the mainsail to ensure optimal sail trim off the wind. The sailors' needs are well catered for and one can spend a happy time trimming for speed!

However the boat above deck is offered in two versions, the Ultimate which comes with a 17.5m carbon mast and 90 sqm of upwind sail area and the Touring which has a 16m carbon mast and 115sqm less sail area. Spinnaker areas are also proportionately less. There is no doubt the Ultimate has performance written all over it but I would suggest that experience is needed to sail this and the Touring will make a very good fast cruiser.

The boat is very easy to handle, tacks and gybes with impeccable manners and accelerates easily. We put a reef in the mainsail and two rolls into the genoa as the wind rose and both were easily done from the cockpit. What helps is good equipment and this all has a Danish feel; Andersen winches, Ronstan tracks, blocks, roller furling gear and high quality rope means that everything feels right.

Dominating the boat is the very powerful fully battened mainsail which is a work of art from Elvstrom. It has three reef points with two permanently rigged with blocks to ensure the single line reefing

runs smoothly. The mainsail leech can be closed with a bit of sweat on the double ended mainsheet enabling adjustment by the helmsman and when done the boat takes off.

We sailed around the Solent on a windy, blustery day with at times quite lumpy waves. We pushed the boat hard and had a great sail. The boat tacked easily and remained in control throughout the test sail. At times we had to ease the mainsheet in the gusts but it was probably more my caution than it being absolutely necessary. The traveller control is on an endless line system controlled by rotation of a winch handle with the socket facing the wheel. It is awkward and not that easy to adjust under load. I would have preferred a more conventional system, albeit that it would have been highly loaded and would have needed the mainsheet winch to be used to adjust it.

The boat was surprisingly stiff and sure footed. At high speed the rudder was definitely in control and did not cavitate. The helm nicely loaded up as power went on but never locked and fought the helmsman. It was a sailor's boat.

Performance (knots)(measured by GPS) wind speed fluctuated from 21 – 25 knots true wind

- Main and headsail close hauled - 9.6kts
- Main and headsail fine reach (45%) - 14.4 kts
- Main and headsail reach (90%) - 18.0 kts
- Main and headsail broad reach (120%) - 11.5 kts
- Main and headsail run (150%) - 8.4kts

The genmaker was not yet delivered but I am sure that if we had set one speeds would have been considerable as the apparent wind would have moved forward and we would have taken off.

In open water with a true wind we undertook a series of five tacks to see the average tacking angle which was 95 degrees. Now I have to say that I do not think this is representative of true tacking ability.

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