

ocean

BLUE WATER BLISS

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ISSUE 47

\$12.95 (inc. gst)
PP: 255003/07458



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THE WORLD IS YOUR OYSTER

THE VERY FIRST OYSTER 885, *LUSH*, HAS ALREADY IMPRESSED ON LAND AND SEA.
FRANCES AND MICHAEL HOWORTH UNCOVER HER CONSIDERABLE CHARMS.





The name of Eddie Jordan is synonymous with Formula One motor-car racing and his face is pretty well known in yachting circles as the helping hand at Sunseeker. He is nearly always the first to sign up for the British powerboat builder's next new and ever larger model. Having just sold *The Snapper*, the first 39-metre from Sunseeker, he is now waiting to take delivery of his new 45-metre Sunseeker, which will undoubtedly also be called *The Snapper* when it is launched in 2014.

What many people do not normally associate Eddie Jordan with is sailing yachts, but as was revealed at the Southampton Boat Show last September, he is the commissioning owner of the very first Oyster 885, the grey-hulled yacht that he has christened *Lush*.

Jordan has traded up from his previous Oyster 655 and before that an Elan 450. This new yacht represents his third successive Rob Humphreys-designed sailing yacht and his second from Oyster. Having already sailed across the Atlantic, she spent the tail end of 2012 preparing to set sail for the Oyster World Rally, which leaves Antigua in the Caribbean early in the New Year.

Primarily known for their comfortable live-aboard cruising yachts, many of which have completed circumnavigations, Oysters have a good track record in ocean racing, surmounting tough rivals to snatch class honours in both the Rolex Fastnet Race and the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race.

Formed in 1973, Oyster is one of Britain's biggest boating brands. The company's success stems from marketing aspirational cruising yachts especially designed for it and selling them to customers who seldom questioned where the boat had been built.

Sold in 2008 to Balmoral Capital by its founder, Richard Matthews, the cash-rich company went about buying up the yards that built the yachts. The new marketing plan is to enhance the brand's rich cruising heritage by building bigger cruising yachts, mostly in Britain. The market for selling them remains strong with a seemingly never-ending supply of cruising folk seeking to shrug off the tiresome shackles of global recession and set sail for horizons new.

WORLD RALLY

Conceived as an event to celebrate Oyster's 40th Anniversary, the 2013 Around the World Rally promises Oyster owners endless adventure, camaraderie and plenty of unforgettable experiences. Destined to return to the Caribbean in April 2014, it has already attracted entries from more than 30 owners.

Departing from Antigua, *Lush* and the other yachts will pass quickly through the Panama Canal and into the Pacific, maximising time for visiting the Galapagos Islands and the beautiful Society Islands.

They will arrive in Tahiti in April before then sailing on to Bora Bora and Moorea. From the Pacific, the fleet will head towards the Great Barrier Reef where Hamilton Island will host the fleet in August. Parties are planned in Bali before the yachts head west for Cape Town where they plan to spend Christmas. Then it is on to Brazil for Carnival, before joining up for a final grand party at the Oyster Caribbean Regatta in April 2014.



LUSH WATERS
Lush, the first Oyster 885, is the first of a new style of hull for Oyster, and sea trials suggest they're onto something good.



ON DECK

The working foredeck is uncluttered and features pop-up deck cleats, a clever pop-up warping drum and two man-sized bow rollers that are so essential for anchor handling in yachts planning to cruise off the beaten track. Her powerful carbon sloop rig has a headsail that's easy to tack and a powerful fully battened main that is trimmed using a captive reel mainsheet winch. The rig is simple and could easily be handled by a two-man crew – no mean feat on 24 metres of yacht.

A second headsail on its own furler can be rigged but somehow the yacht looks cleaner and somewhat uncluttered with just one headsail on its hydraulic furling system from Reckman. Discontinuous stainless-steel rod rigging supports the three-spreader, carbon rig that is keel stepped. Frederiksen ball-raced mast cars allow for easy hoisting of the fully battened mainsail.

The powered hydraulic backstay, vang and outhaul, along with the backstay tensioner, are all operated from the remote panel mounted in cockpit.

ACCOMMODATION

Among her many attractions is the huge, ergonomically designed split cockpit – perfect for al fresco dining and relaxation on passage – and her large, open deck areas, and a large flap-down bathing platform.

This has been fitted with a patented anti-slam device which has a ram that pushes up, rather than down, to stop wave noise becoming a distraction.

The saloon is accessed from the cockpit via a wide glass sliding door and power-assisted hatch, creating a feeling of connection between these two main living areas. To port, just inside the door, is the navigation station, which is well equipped and features mostly Raymarine electronics.

The light and airy deck saloon is more loft than yachtie in theme and has been finished in washed oak, one of the very subtle décor twists employed by Sallyanne Holmes, who has not only designed all of Jordan's yacht interiors, but also designs the interiors of his homes around the world. Through her vision and deft touch, the accommodation décor blends seamlessly and stylishly, and the effect creates a real home away from home.

Overall, we found the accommodation aboard *Lush* to be magnificently spacious for a sailing boat of this size, as well as being attractively fitted out. It has a practical live-aboard air about it and crossing oceans in such comfort would not be too difficult!

Both the owner's cabin and the two cabins aft benefit from tall triple seascape windows that give these rooms a bright and spacious feel. The full-beam master suite boasts especially commissioned artwork, and the suite appears to be larger than it is, with the addition of a small well-designed sofa while the doubles further aft are custom finished in a colour palette that includes greys, mauves, pinks and cream. Oceanair is the supplier of the electronically controlled window blinds that are used throughout.



SEABORNE SOLACE
Lush's interior was designed to be peaceful and uplifting, with the matt washed-oak finish a defining feature.

A fourth ensuite guest cabin, at the forward end of the saloon on the port side, can also be configured as a study or lower saloon area in future yachts. Opposite this cabin is the galley, which is well laid out and lavishly equipped. High-quality German brands have been sourced for dishwashers, washing machines, electric cooking hobs, plate warmers, fridges and freezers. The galley also allows access into the engine room that is well laid out in a user-friendly fashion, which is so important in long-range cruising yachts.

The four-person crew share two impressively spacious cabins, one of which is a double-bedded room, the other has over and under bunk beds. Crew also have their own galley and crew mess area.

PERFORMANCE

The new boat has been designed as a high-performance, high-volume yacht. It offers four cabins plus two crew cabins to provide a package that has been optimised for owners looking to charter her when they are not using the boat. Because the 885 has been designed to stay under the MCA 24-metre load line length, the more onerous and costly requirements involved before offering any larger yacht for charter are not applicable.

The hull design shows off a balanced and powerful line that displays a fairly fine entry. This undoubtedly helps her cleave through a seaway with excellent VMG (velocity made good), while her relatively chunky stern section delivers a high level of stability.

Add the two together, and you have an off-wind potential that will rattle away the miles in any trade-wind passage – something proven by Paul Adamson, her skipper as he shot across the Atlantic in November 2012.

“Performance-wise, she is hitting some impressive speeds,” he reports. “Upwind in 12-14 knots true, she has been sailing comfortably at around 10 knots of boat speed and I think that is pretty impressive.”

Twin rudders allow him to demonstrate some slick manoeuvring in harbour, aided and abetted with hydraulic stern and bowthrusters, both of which can retract inside the hull when not in use.

The World Rally will prove an interesting test bed for many of the innovative ideas and concepts. Not only that, it is also the chance of a lifetime for Oyster owners to set sail around the world in comfort and security as part of a tight-knit and justifiably proud community. The world is theirs to shuck and savour. ○



FINE LINES

With her powerful and balanced hull, the Oyster 885 cleaves her way through a seaway.

Interview with Rob Humphreys of Humphreys Yacht Design

Humphreys Yacht Design boasts a portfolio of work as diverse as it is successful. Founded in 1974 by Rob Humphreys, whose roots lie in the design of racing yachts and small custom sailing yachts, the studio combines the latest in design technology and techniques with a team of experienced designers. Considered by many to be at the cutting edge of yacht design, Humphreys keeps his ideas fresh and allows the skills and knowledge of his design team to filter across into the end result.

Ocean: The Southampton Boat Show marked the launch of two new Humphreys designed models for Oyster Marine, the 885 and the 725. Tell us a little more about *Lush*, the first of the 885s.

Rob Humphreys: The design of this yacht included a comprehensive tank test program and incorporates a number of significant advancements. *Lush* is a bit of a step-change for Oyster, with very committed hull form and appendage changes from the earlier models in the range. We had been pushing for this development with David Tydeman, the CEO of Oyster. With his naval architectural background he was more than simply receptive.

Ocean: How did you work the boat up?

Rob Humphreys: The perfect way to get a new boat set up is to work her up through the wind range, letting things bed-in, as it were. This is particularly true for a first-in-class, but September in the Solent took things to another level of inclemency altogether. For various reasons *Lush*, the first of the breed, had to go out on the morning after the Met office had issued severe weather warnings for the UK!

Ocean: What did you do?

Rob Humphreys: Needs must, and a crew of 16 duly set off into the Solent from Ocean Village, comprising a cross-section of builders, riggers, sailmakers, mast makers and, of course, designers, accompanied by a core group from the Oyster team.

Ocean: How did it go?

Rob Humphreys: We trickled down Southampton Water with a building breeze, and had to go up with the main before bringing it back down to its reefed configuration. Then, out into the Solent itself, we started to come on to the wind with mainsail only initially. The designer's immediate concern is the balance and power of a boat, and – with evidence being offered piece by piece – it was clear that the helm angle looked good even with an unbalanced sail plan. Out came a few rolls of the headsail and up into the breeze we lifted, and she felt pretty wonderful in my hands, with the helm angle in the range of two to four degrees, but responding in a really vigorous way, standing up to her sail well. The twin rudders were working really well, away from the downwash of the keel, and even when really pressed, she was easy to direct.

Ocean: Standing at the helm, what were your thoughts?

Rob Humphreys: Surprising though it may seem, it only takes seconds to get a sense of the character of a boat and a few minutes upwind in these conditions is in the same category as that other chestnut – a picture being worth a thousand words. For a designer, it is a huge download of information, in this instance, all very welcome and good. Which is maybe just as well, because the rig in particular could have done without such conditions for a first-time-out; dock-tune in itself is not quite enough and tweaking after sailing is inevitable. Thirty knots true is a big gulp for a fresh rig and we felt we needed to make such adjustments, so we stayed fully powered only for long enough for me to get the basic feedback and it gave me a big smile on my face. Sometimes it's good to be forced out on to the water when prudence might have dictated otherwise.

Ocean: Does she handle well in lighter winds?

Rob Humphreys: That is what is interesting. Later, as we ran off with our two-reefed main only, we were sitting on 11-12 knots with very little fuss, and a pretty clean wake running off the back. Then, later, as we headed into Southampton Water trying to reeve the lazy-jacks to accept a tidy flake of the main we were up to full main again for a prolonged period, and when we had a sustained breeze at 35 knots true she still felt docile in my hands, with very little cajoling required to keep her on track despite the unbalanced aft offset of the sail plan's centre of effort.

Interview with Sallyanne Holmes of Holmes Interiors

Sallyanne Holmes of Holmes Interiors has just completed the interior of the new Oyster 885 – *Lush* – for her clients, owners Mr and Mrs Eddie Jordan. We spoke with her in her London Studios.

Ocean: How would you best describe *Lush*?

Sallyanne Holmes: The project has been exciting and innovative. Overall she has a contemporary, calm and uplifting mood. We had enormously good reaction at the boat show when she was displayed.

Ocean: What was your starting point?

Sallyanne Holmes: Choosing the wood for the interiors. I did not feel that any of the standard wood finishes offered by Oyster did the boat justice. I didn't want a dark, shiny finish because this would have created a totally different ambience from the one I was aiming for. What I wanted was to create a peaceful and uplifting environment for the boat. I found a matte ivory washed-oak finish and gave it to the shipyard to match up. Initially, I think they thought I was mad!

Oyster came up trumps and I introduced them to a fantastic product, which gave a matte finish and was waterproof. The result is gorgeous and everyone loves the wood finish.

Ocean: With wood set as your benchmark, creating a light, airy and relaxed vibe, how did you continue?

Sallyanne Holmes: My clients did not want white finishes in the heads, so I specified Arpa distressed metal laminates that were mixed with Black Pearl Avonite to create a contemporary and certainly not boring look. I used a brushed stainless-steel look with the Black Avonite vanities and shower columns for some bathrooms and in the others I used a Taupe Arpa finish mixed in with the Avonite for a more restrained feel.

Ocean: Would you describe the interiors as solely completed by you?

Sallyanne Holmes: No, I worked closely with Oyster to create a simple, streamlined finish and took away quite a lot of detailing. The result is that it flows and gives the yacht a feeling of height and space because your eye is not taken with broken lines of different materials.

Ocean: And for the soft furnishings?

Sallyanne Holmes: I worked closely with the upholsterers to make sure that the seating unit in the saloon was very comfortable and used a fabulous Zimmer and Rohde fabric, which is luxurious yet completely practical and the mood-enhancing mauve, aubergine and taupe greys pull the scheme in this area together. I used a soft mauve metallic vinyl on the nab seat, which adds character and is, yet again, practical. The mood in the main saloon is pulled together with a mixture of scatter cushions and simple polished aluminium accessories, some filled with white flowers.

Ocean: Tell us about the bedrooms.

Sallyanne Holmes: In the cabins, I kept a mellow mood by using soft lilac, and silvery taupe in the master cabin, using the sofa fabric in here to pull it all together. The other cabins took on a similar feel because I kept with the taupe, silvers and soft lilacs to create a luxurious yet mellow, understated mood. I worked with Heirloom to produce custom-made bed linen for each cabin co-ordinated with the fabrics in the cabin and soft metallic vinyls that we used for the headboards. I think the results are gorgeous.

Ocean: What about the crew areas?

Sallyanne Holmes: In the mess, I continued with the Black Pearl Avonite and stainless-steel vibe and created a simple contemporary feel to it. The crew cabins, again, use soft metallic silver vinyls.

Ocean: How did you tackle on-deck living?

Sallyanne Holmes: Here I kept with the soft stone taupe vibe for the bimini and fixed upholstery. I livened it all up using scatter cushions in fuchsia pink, mauve and silver. When the tender is offloaded, the well it leaves is turned into a chilled-out relaxing area with huge cushions to lounge around on in the sun. I used a fabulous French outdoor fabric that again incorporates fuchsia, mauve and silver and I used a black-and-fuchsia fabric to pull it all together. A gazebo-style cover goes over this area to ensure the chilling-out space is complete.



ROOM TO MOVE
Large, uncluttered deck areas are just one of the Oyster 885's many attractions.



| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| MODEL | Oyster 885 |
| BUILDER | Oyster Marine |
| COUNTRY OF BUILD | Great Britain |
| YEAR OF BUILD | 2012 |
| DESIGNER | Rob Humphreys |
| NAVAL ARCHITECT | Rob Humphreys |
| INTERIOR DESIGN | Sallyanne Holmes |
| OWNER'S PROJECT MANAGER | Stefan Whitmarsh Alpha Marine Consultancy |
| LENGTH OVERALL | 27.08 metres |
| LWL | 24.18 metres |
| BEAM | 6.33 metres |
| DRAFT | 3.50 metres |
| DISPLACEMENT | 74 tonnes |
| HULL | GRP with Kevlar and Carbon fibre |
| SUPERSTRUCTURE | GRP with Kevlar and Carbon fibre |
| ENGINE | Cummins QSB 9.0 |
| OUTPUT | 246kW |
| PROPELLER | 4-bladed folding Brunton 'Varifold' propeller |
| GENERATORS | Onan 22.5 MDKBS (220V at 50 Hz) |
| NAVIGATION ELECTRONICS | Raymarine |
| SAIL AREA | 448.03m ² |
| SAILS | North Sails UK |
| CARBON MAST | Formula Spars France |
| AIR DRAUGHT | 37.60 metres |
| FUEL CAPACITY | 3500 litres |
| FRESHWATER CAPACITY | 2000 litres |
| OWNER'S & GUEST BERTHS | Owners stateroom and 3 guest staterooms (accommodating 8) |
| CREW | 4 crew members |
| PRICE AS TESTED | POA |