

THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS

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Liara, the beautiful 100-footer from Performance Yachts, gives her owner pleasure and pace in equal measure





► **LIARA, THE FIRST HULL IN THE PY-100 SERIES FROM PERFORMANCE YACHTS, MADE HER RACING DEBUT IN ONE OF THE WORLDS BIGGEST ANNUAL RACES WHICH, THIS YEAR, ATTRACTED NEARLY 1800 ENTRANTS.** Not only did she take on some of the world's top stripped-down-for-speed racing yachts and their speedster skippers, but also she came home ahead of the crowd holding her head up high. That's quite an achievement given that the company is marketing *Liara* and her bigger sisters as luxury cruising yachts.

The venue for this extraordinary happening was this year's Round the Island Race – a gruelling 55-mile course that circumnavigates the Isle of Wight in Britain's Solent. *ICAP Leopard*, a canting-keel, full-on racing boat that took line honours in the last running of the Fastnet, was expected to cross the line two hours ahead of *Liara*. But in the end, *Liara* was just ten minutes behind the superfast racer. She was the second monohull to complete the race and as if that weren't enough to justify her incredible light air credentials, she beat every one of the TP 52's and Open 60's on the water, and left many other purely racing yachts in her wake. As of this writing, *Liara* will be competing in the Fastnet Race 2009 and naturally, the expectations surrounding her performance have grown.

Not surprisingly, Tony Todd, *Liara's* owner, is delighted with the results: "I wanted a yacht which would be supremely comfortable to cruise with my family and friends and for those who charter the yacht. But which, with my racing head on, would also be very competitive. Most people said I was asking for too much, but these results prove that I have a very special yacht, and one that really is giving me the best of both worlds."

NEW TO MARKET

Liara is the debut yacht from the new marketing team at Performance Yachts, who are introducing a range of five large sailing yachts all designed to be part of an identifiable family. Headed up by lifetime sailor Adrian Nicolle, Performance Yachts has taken the yacht brand out of the shipyard and placed it very much to the fore, in a management company format in much the same way that Richard Mathews did when he created the Oyster range of yachts.

Nicolle enters the market with designs starting at 26 metres and working their way up to 38 metres. The five yachts will be sold as the PY-90, 100, 109, 115 and 125, with the smaller sizes built by Southern Ocean Marine in New Zealand and the larger two built in the Azzurra yard in Australia, owned by Iain Murray the renowned America's Cup and Olympic sailor. *Liara*,

the first to be built, will debut at the Monaco International Yacht Show this year and will no doubt cause quite a stir among the shows visitors.

Speaking exclusively to *Asia-Pacific Boating*, Nicolle said: "Our philosophy is very simple, we offer very high specification yachts built at true yard pricing to world class standards, for owners that want to go sailing. Our first boat is turning heads wherever she goes and early market feedback recognises the whole team's investment and passion."

HANDLING LIARA

Liara's sailing ability is nothing short of remarkable. She manages to take maximum advantage of even the lightest of airs and glides across the surface of the water. During our test in the Solent, we quickly had her sailing upwind at 11 knots in a very light breeze, and that was with Michael at the helm. When Captain Ross Applebey took the wheel, he really made her sing. Her ultra-light hull with its slippery shape and rig give her many advantages. But not a single cruising comfort has been sacrificed.

Designed by Bill Dixon and his team at Dixon Yacht Design, the yacht is thoroughly modern, light and immensely strong. Her spacious interior offers a well-thought out accommodation plan for owners, guests,

and crew. Her unusual but highly effective telescopic lifting keel option is not an ordinary feature on such a yacht, and rather ingeniously does not intrude into, or compromise, *Liara's* living accommodation. But it does succeed in minimising her draft to a shallow 3.5 metres with keel up, and a hydro-dynamically efficient five metres with keel down.

DOWN BELOW

Below decks, the yacht is fully equipped and finished to a high standard. Here is a yacht that offers guests three ensuite cabins with either six or nine berths and two additional ensuite cabins with berths for a four-man crew. While the furniture does utilise honeycomb and foam





construction, the yacht still manages to use solid marble in bathrooms rather than use slivers of stone shaved off and fixed to honeycomb. It is this clever combination of weight saving design techniques and sensible outfitting that allow her to truly use the often-misapplied term of a performance cruising yacht.

Surprisingly large for a yacht of this overall length, the saloon has a light, airy feel. To port, there is a large lounging area with comfortable corner sofa and a huge flat screen TV. To starboard, a dining area more than capable of seating eight comes complete with a stunning cut class and decanter cabinet.

The cabins forward come with a queen size double to starboard and a single to port. The pleasantly furnished rooms remind you

that you are on-board a superyacht. At the same time, you never forget that you are aboard a sailing machine. The ample storage area includes superyacht touches, such as cedar-lined drawers and lockers and a large high definition flat screen TV that is hidden away beneath a marble counter top and pops up automatically on command.

Teak wood decking and a sumptuous bathroom with marble tops and splash backs come complete with an amply-sized shower. Here, as in other parts of the yacht, natural light floods in using prisms of glass that have been cleverly set into the decks.

Two guest cabins lie to port and starboard forward of the saloon. To port, a double bedded cabin has all the creature comforts a cruising boat can wish for. There's plenty of storage space that's well laid out. The fully-equipped bathrooms come with toilets that feature bidets. To starboard, a comfortable twin cabin takes on a dual role in that it converts into a four-man cabin using a somewhat cunningly designed pipe cot mechanism for children or when the yacht is in racing mode. It too features its own bathroom.

Racing or cruising, all on-board will relish good food, and the galley here can keep up with the best. Weight-saving mantras seem to have been thrown through the porthole when you look at the equipment this sea-going kitchen is loaded with. Five burner induction hobs, gimbal oven, microwaves, ice makers, dish washers, trash compactors and waste disposal units – galleys like this are a crew-chef's dream. There is even an instant hot water boiler to get drinks to those that need them quickly – a particularly handy feature on cold nights. Such



SPECIFICATIONS – PY-100 *LIARA*

LOA	32.0 m (with 2m bowsprit)
LWL	27.0 m
Beam	7.0 m
Draught (keel down)	5.0 m
Draught (keel up)	3.5 m
Displacement	65 tonnes (Lightship)
Ballast (keel including bulb)	19.58 tonnes
Ballast (bulb)	13.75 tonnes
Engine	Cummins QSB 305 hp
Propeller	Bruntons 32" 4 blade Varifold
Speed (max) under power	12 knots
Speed (cruise)	8 knots
Fuel capacity	4000 litres in three tanks
Range at 8 kts knots under power	3,400 nm
Bow thruster (retractable)	Max Power 32.5 hp Hydraulic power
Stern thruster (retractable)	Max Power 32.5 hp Hydraulic power
Generators (main)	2 x Mastervolt 25kW
Invertors	2 x Mastervolt 7.5kW total
Mast and boom	Southern Spars
Air Draught	44.0 m
Hull Speed	14 knots
Sail area upwind	504 m ²
Sail area racing	616 m ²
Sail area downwind	1,143 m ²
Sailmaker	Quantum
Furling systems	Bamar
Handling Winches	Harken
Watermakers	2 x Spectra 158 lph
Freshwater capacity	2000 litres
Black water (capacity)	600 litres
Grey water (capacity)	600 litres
Navigation electronics	Furuno, Simrad, Brookes & Gatehouse
Owner and guests (number)	6-9
Crew (number)	4
Tender(s)	Zodiac 340 FR & Williams 445
Tender-launching system	Performance Yachts Magic Davit
Passerelle	Custom
Construction	Carbon E Glass and Kevlar
Classification	RINA Charter Class C
Compliance	MCA LY2
Naval architect	Dixon Yacht Design
Exterior styling	Dixon Yacht Design
Interior designer	Dixon Yacht Design
Year of build	2009
Builder	Southern Ocean Marine Limited
Selling Broker	Performance Yachts

a device has the added advantage that it reduces condensation.

The crew quarters are situated aft and are accessed from either the main saloon through the galley or by using a dedicated passageway aft. It is a nice and simple touch that gives both guests and crews their own spaces. Clever design from those who have thought about what crews, captains and owners need include such features as a drying room for heavy weather gear that even has drainage sumps, a pleasant crew mess area for off-duty moments and easy access to the engine room. Crew sleeping accommodation is in small but pleasant two-berth ensuite cabins.

ON DECK

The hull and deck is approximately 85 percent carbon, and includes other lightweight features, such as a Southern Spars High Modulus carbon rig and PBO rigging. On deck, the racing ergonomics are well represented. And yet, even with the racing gear, the deck is left clean and uncluttered, giving ample opportunity to top up a tan. A captive reel winch, consisting of case, car and drum, controls the mainsheet. Known as a WRC70-C, this hydraulic line management system comes from Onboard Systems and features a four-speed drive in two automatic or selectable ranges to achieve a better speed range. At maximum speeds, this winch can pull in over 60 metres of mainsheet per minute in first gear. Clever rollover cleats give the deck line a clean-cut look and make a great talking point when they are deployed. We particularly liked the yacht's magic davits space saving and lightweight method of carrying a substantial tender.

The spacious engine room houses a 5.9-litre Cummins diesel which is tough enough for what is thrown at it. The area that accommodates the water makers, power packs and



generators has been designed for ease of service. There is no doubt in our minds that this is a well-accomplished, all rounder that will give double satisfaction for those who like to cruise, but also want to get to their destination quickly. Of considerable value to any potential owner is the fact that each yacht in this series will be designed and built to comply with class construction and flag regulations enabling it to satisfy all charter requirements. This is perhaps of little value to the first owner of a vessel until it comes to the time that it is sold on to someone who wants to charter. This quantifiable build standard could then mean the difference between sale and, no sale.

In all, *Liara* manages to do with what many other sailing yachts claim to do – combine the best of a cruiser with the heart of a racer. ■■■

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