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DESTINATION

COME SEPTEMBER, THE 34TH AMERICA'S CUP CIRCUS BEGINS IN SAN FRANCISCO

Competition among yacht builders from around the world is intensifying in the battle to attract owners' attention for the many and varied new models for racing and cruising alike. Although cruising yachts account for the vast majority of new yacht sales, many of the major global yards have a stake in the performance-sailing niche, best represented by the aptly named C/R 'cruiser/racer' category, of which ten standout examples have been listed earlier this issue in our "Yacht Comparison" feature.

A new splash that we've recently sailed in Australia is French yard Dufour's 36E Performance cruiser racer. This 36-foot model, effectively replacing the previous 34E launched in 2008, is the most recent addition to Dufour Yachts performance range that also currently includes the larger but heavier 40E and 45E.

As a smaller, less powerful boat than the mainstream 40-something footers that comprise much of the C/R fleets racing out there, I was most impressed by the smaller boat's all round boat speeds, coupled with a wonderfully light, always balanced feel and feedback coming through the helm in all aspects of sailing the 36E, whether upwind or down. The lines of the new model are still characteristically Dufour, however this new design signals a more contemporary styling with tighter, more angular, modern lines focused on maximising the waterline for the 36-footer, and carrying beam way aft with a beamy deck plan.

Being smaller can have its advantages though and with the 36 Performance it appears the yard has delivered a model that's well tailored to suit the C/R mid-market. Firstly, as a 'jib boat' it's easy to sail without undue physical demands on a small crew, aided by a sail plan featuring a non-overlapping headsail and a German mainsheet system, trimmed easily with Lewmar winches from either port or starboard. When sailing downwind the boat can easily be set up to fly an asymmetric spinnaker from a retractable bowsprit (although you can also sail square with an optional carbon racing pole and symmetrical kite). It is surprisingly quick to race with its light displacement aiding acceleration out of tacks and close quarters maneuvers, particularly good for congested starts.

It's as a club racer that the new 36E will ideally hit the sweet spot with many would-be new Cruiser

ON THE HOP
Dufour 36 *Frogz*
on its way to
a Div. 2 series
win in the 2013
Sydney Harbour
Regatta.

ANDREA FRANCOLINI

JUST RIGHT

ARE YOU ON THE LOOKOUT FOR A NEW BOAT TO RACE COMPETITIVELY IN LOCAL CLUB RACES AND REGATTA WEEK GETAWAYS, COUPLED WITH COMFORTABLE FAMILY CRUISING IN AN AFFORDABLE, MID-SIZED 'CRUISER/RACING' PACKAGE? ANTHONY TWIBILL FINDS THE FRENCH DUF0UR 36 PERFORMANCE YACHT ISN'T TOO LITTLE, AND ISN'T TOO BIG. IN FACT IT'S JUST ABOUT RIGHT!



Racer owners. It is a satisfyingly fast boat for racing around the cans, with all the right gear and plenty of deck space designed for easy maneuvering with removable storage/seats and its wide open cockpit adaptable to all kinds of sailing, whether in race or cruise mode. Below deck, there's just as much room for easy cruising with family and friends. The interior is surprisingly capacious when compared to some other mid-30's, more like a 40-footer below decks is fair to say, and the fit-out is in keeping with the Euro quality and finishes of Dufour's larger yachts. So, as an all-rounder for a typical family, the 36E offers plenty of room for cruising too, featuring

CRUISE IN COMFORT
Right: Two large doubles fore and aft. Below: The surprisingly large interior is appointed to high Dufour standards.



two large doubles (one a forward vee behind double doors and the other an aft cabin portside). A large, comfortable saloon with bench seats around a large drop-leaf table is front and centre, with a well-sized galley portside and nav-station plus an obligatory head and shower to starboard, behind which is a large, useful storage area.

As the boat's so freshly minted, it's only now starting to develop a popular following, but I can assure you that the Dufour 36 Performance is a cruiser racer to watch as it climbs its way up the results boards of the club racing and regatta scene in the Med and now also showing winning form in Australia.

A good example is in the recent Sydney Harbour Regatta raced in March with 220 participating yachts competing in some 26 classes. *Frogz*, a Dufour 36 skippered by Australian

Dufour distributor Jason Antill, comprehensively won PHS Div 2 of the weekend series against an impressive fleet of generally larger, longer waterlines. Racking up a 1st place in race one, and 2nd in race two on the first day's racing, the svelte new 36-footer left many larger yachts in its wake with an impressive gap to second. The next day, *Frogz* kept hopping along with solid results in the final races for a series-leading win on handicap. The new boat is also expected to be very competitive under IRC racing, as the 36 Performance has been rated with a relatively low TCC of 1.034, given the performance potential of this 'little' cruiser/racer, which is delivering boat speed numbers both up and downwind that would appear to punch 'well above its weight' as a 36-footer.

The Dufour 36 Performance

has already impressed the sailing fraternity in Europe, being elected European Yacht of the Year for 2013, among a credentialed fleet of worthy competitors such as the Grand Soleil 39, the XP 50, the Sly 38 and the MC34 Patton. The new yacht also won the Boat of the Year (Best Crossover) award in the USA (from Sailing World).

Since it's Paris launch in 2011, the 36 has since laid down an impressive track record, winning major regattas in France, the US, Sweden, and now showing its mettle down under. Later this year she will also participate in the IRC ORC World Championship in Ancona this June.

Dufour describe the design of the 36 as 'sporty and fun', a 'speed boat' focused on a quality hull and powerful sail plan to deliver performance.

Some of the key design features of the boat include hull lines



OFFSHORE ADVENTURES
The boat is fitted with a good sized chart table for those offshore racing escapes.

developed with the latest computer aided design and manufacturing technology; an uncluttered deck for easy and safe maneuvering on board; shroud attachments on the 36 are on the outside of the hull for safe maneuvering on deck allowing a larger headsail for light airs and

JEAN-MARIE LIOT



ideal jib sheeting (and in the case of the 36E that I sailed, sheeting angles and hence pointing ability upwind was further improved with barber haulers); and all winches readily accessible from the helmsman's seat.

The Dufour brand has a rich history approaching fifty years and a reputation for quality boat building and sailing performance that's particularly well known in Europe.

It all started with Michel Dufour, an engineer with a love of sailing, who founded his shipyard in La Rochelle, France way back in 1964. He owed his success to a keen intuition and conviction that new technologies and new materials would continue to transform sailing. So, Dufour has always been seen as an innovator in the use of lighter, stronger materials in yacht construction, thus delivering excellent sailing performance. But sailing has always continued to be the embodiment of Dufour's pioneering, adventurous spirit; the pinnacle of pleasure. ⚓

www.antillmarine.com.au

It's as a club racer that the new 36E will ideally hit the sweet spot with many would-be new Cruiser Racer owners.



BUILT TO RACE
Top: The Dufour 36 Performance is a satisfyingly balanced yacht to sail. Centre: Removable lockers and seat transform the cockpit from race to cruise mode. Right: Twin helm wheels, cantilevered from the hull, are a good setup.



MODEL	Dufour 36E Performance
LENGTH OVERALL	10.99 m / 36'
LENGTH AT WATERLINE	10.21 m / 33' 6"
BEAM	3.61 m / 11' 10"
DRAFT	2.20 m / 7' 2"
DISPLACEMENT	6,400 kg / 14,109 lbs
WATER	220 litres / 53 gallons
FUEL	90 litres / 24 gallons
SAIL AREAS	72.1 m ² / 776 feet ²
ENGINE	40 KW / 30 HP
CERTIFICATION	CE Category A
PRICE	From AUD\$240,000 (base boat)