

NEW BOATS Launched at the Düsseldorf Boat Show

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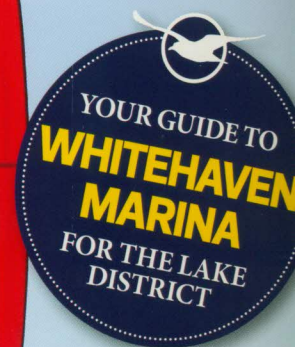
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MINI TEST

CONTEST 67CS

€2.6m

Two years ago, Holland's best-known bluewater builder Contest Yachts announced a design partnership with leading German studio judel/vrolijk.

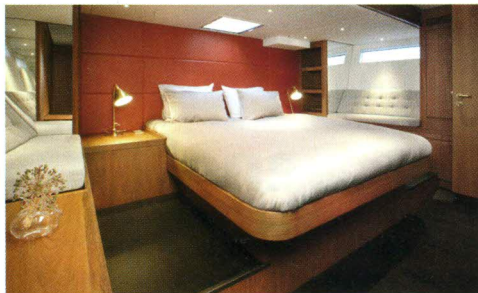
Its newly launched Contest 67CS proves how shrewd a move this was, *Mike Owen writes*.

Retaining the brand's visual cues of flush foredeck, wraparound window and coachroof overhang as start point, judel/vrolijk has introduced more dynamic shaping. First, bulwark height was lowered and freeboard lifted a little, then the bow slimmed, the stern broadened, and the under-hull aft flattened. This increased form stability, aided further by a new L-keel profile, while also lowering the centre of gravity and growing interior volume substantially.

Reflecting Contest's high-end customisation, the arrangement inside is very flexible – primarily a four cabin plan with many versions between master suite aft or forward, galley midships or aft and crew, if wished, forward or midships. The styling and fitting is to impeccable standards both in clever, fine interior design by Wetzels Brown and the yard's own expert craftsmanship.

Construction combines Contest's renowned, Lloyd's certified, vacuum-infused, cored composites methodology with j/v's new lay-up matrix and grid system increasing stiffness while lightening weight. Again improving CoG, engine and generator have been brought further into the boat underfloor and silenced under the specialist guidance of Van Cappellen. This expertise applies throughout, from custom V-bracket in place of vibration-prone P, to fastening and ducting methodologies and frequency-driven ventilation for accommodation and machinery spaces. This is an exceptionally quiet boat.

Further demonstrating the extreme attention to engineering, there's a dedicated, full height



technical room centralising the balanced inverter /charger energy system and all other key electronic componentry. With this space insulated and temperature controlled, operation is optimised, management simplified. And in case of PLC failure, conventionally leading to a dead boat, a further failsafe system maintains services essential to getting back to harbour, such as nav lights, comms and pumps.

Again for safety, feeding back to a single-point pump, the bilge has a stern-to-stern central

line with outboard spurs in the five watertight compartments, each monitored and alarmed on the yacht's touchscreen, full management system. There are two further pumps should sensors indicate blockage and potential impeller burn out. There are also vacuum hoses running full length to remove other overflow or spills.

Tank management is simplified with automated swap-over valves; levels and pump activation again via touchscreen control. Reducing the risk and impact of contamination, the two fuel tanks have suction lines to evacuate surface water and each of engine, generator and heater has a separate height-staged feed point, so protecting priorities. With Contest's policy of full redundancy, fuel and water filters are doubled and instantly accessible in the galley step for swift swap-over and immediate restarting.

This ease of access, operation and on-the-go maintenance typifies Contest's meticulous approach to simplifying sophisticated systems, and there's far too much to detail here.

So how does she sail? Like a dream, even in the 30, gusting 40, knots of our test sail.

Single ruddered (twinned would be a disadvantage here with the 67CS sailing so flat) and with Jefa steering system, the helm is near-finger-light yet full of feel, and the seakeeping very comfortable with good forward buoyancy.

Tell-tale view forward is good and with her Hall carbon spars and North 3Di sails, we reached along at 13kt-plus, then a healthy 10, close hauled at a remarkable 22° apparent.

A very impressive bluewater game-changer and a clear expression of the almost boundless difference between production and top end, semi-custom yachting.

● parkstonebayyachts.com