

OUT THE BACK



The West Australian | **BOATING** STESSCO 420 SKIPPER

Life on the ocean waves

An Esperance seafaring identity, wife and new cat sail off into retirement. Mike Brown reports.



Setting sail: Fudd Mackenzie's Fusion 40 catamaran. Picture Mike Brown

If you have ever been sightseeing off Esperance, you will know Fudd Mackenzie, one of the partners who own the cruise boats as well as the local harbour tugs.

Fudd has now called barleys to working, and what does the retiring mariner do? He buys a boat. But this time, one with sails.

His plans for his new Fusion 40 catamaran, *Fayze Too II*, include a few weeks in the Kimberley, the Mandurah Boat Show, summer in Esperance, then crossing the bight and cruising the east coast. When that drags, it will be up to Papua New Guinea. The plans stop there but not the cruising.

The boat has the kind of fittings and equipment a professional mariner wants, but the more occasional sailor might not think of. Radar, which is close to vital in the Kimberley, a triple-function display system for it and the plotter and sounder, and forward-looking sonar for uncharted lumps.

There is even the ultimate safety device for a catamaran: an escape hatch in one hull in the unlikely event it turns turtle. For more everyday use than that, there are three solar panels backed up by a wind generator, a desalinator, electric sheet winches and a good-sized RIB tender in davits.

The Fusion is locally built by The Cat Factory from an imported hull kit. The kit reduces building time to six to eight weeks, followed by four or five months fit-out time. This boat is well and truly fitted out: three big double cabins, one huge and one medium bathroom, a storeroom and a laundry. And that is before you move upstairs.

Ahead of the huge cockpit (a 7.2m beam has to make it huge) is the deck saloon spanning the bridge between the hulls. There is a sofa worthy of the name, a big table, bookshelves and lockers to one side, and a spacious galley on the other. A domestic-size fridge and freezer, ditto for the oven and cooktop, microwave and double-bowl sink make cooking as simple as at home.



Wheel boss Fay Mackenzie at the helm of *Fayze Too II*.

The lounge room moves outdoors in most weather and the cockpit, whose whole area is shaded by the hardtop and its fabric extension, can absorb large numbers of people. Sail handling happens round the edge of it, so deckchairs can be set up as an alternative to the moulded locker tops.

A barbecue is permanently mounted at the rear edge and a staircase leads to the water.

This is purposely a simple boat to sail: it has to suit a person like Fudd, who is not in the first flush of youth and mostly will have only wife Fay with him. The working rig of main and self-tacking jib is easily furled by the near-universal cruising set-up of roller furling on the jib, and lazy jacks and bag on the main.

An extra self-furling sail ahead of the jib is the screecher or reaching headsail. It adds 48sqm of sail area to the rig but has all the controllability absent from typical kites. The sails are locally made by WA Sailmakers.

The helm position is a delight. An infinitely adjustable seat faces a large wheel. There is excellent vision, forwards and upwards to the sails.

The position is handy to a pair of winches that can be tended while the boat moves on autopilot.

Displacement is 5.6 tonnes, so the



Inner space: The deck saloon spans the bridge between the hulls.



No galley slave: Cooking afloat is as simple as at home.

working sail area of 93sqm gives good acceleration and light-wind performance. On the review day, we had a wind speed between 15 and 18 knots, and reached an easy nine knots under main and jib. For a cruising boat, it sailed flat.

All aboard wanted to keep sailing, but Fudd and Fay were the only lucky ones. Dampier next stop.

LOWDOWN

FUSION 40 CATAMARAN

Price:	From \$650,000
Length:	12.2m overall
Beam:	7.2m
Fuel capacity:	800 litres
Freshwater:	800 litres
Sail area:	Main and jib 93sqm
Screecher:	48sqm
Engines:	Twin 29hp Yanmars
Builder:	The Cat Factory
Phone:	0414 476 015

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