

# ON THE WATER



The West Australian | **BOATS** NEW BREED OF HONDA FOUR-STROKES

## The Fusion 40 is a spacious and steady catamaran that's a cruising joy It's a top cat



**BOATS**

MIKE BROWN

Catamarans generally need plenty of breeze to give stimulating sailing, conditions we did not have on the review day, but most people who buy them are more interested in their other qualities than in stimulation. Space and steadiness stand out.

The Fusion 40 has plenty of both — 7.2m of beam to go with 12.2m of length provide a huge platform, while the deck area and hull volumes have been well used.

As for steadiness: my wife is reluctant to get on board sailing monohulls — they are far “too tippy” — and I suspect plenty of other spouses feel the same. Catamarans are the craft of choice for a great many serious, long-term cruising folk.

Fusions have been built purely as power cruisers, many propelled by the same twin 30hp Yanmar diesels of the review boat. This gives a good 9.5 knots and great range from the 400L tank. The

saildrive units have sophisticated Gori reversible-pitch propellers that can fully feather, deliver full thrust astern, and be set for overdrive when cruising. They would be ideal for motor sailing in headwinds — conditions cruising cats do not relish.

The cockpit is naturally vast, and its endearing cruising quality is that it is on the same level as the saloon. This doubles the social space, allowing easy passage between the two areas.

Fusions are all custom-built locally, meaning that layout is whatever you want it to be, and one of the crucial decisions is where to put the galley. The most popular location is in the saloon rather than in the starboard hull: it locates the work centre near the social centre.

This is also the spacious choice, giving the cook all the elbow room in the world. Illustrating the boat's stability, the stove does not sit in gimbals — its three-burner cooktop being located above a snug, built-in gas oven.

The fridge and freezer are the ideal kind for seagoing, using drawers instead of doors. There are plenty of other drawers and lots of preparation area.

The saloon seats its occupants on a monster, super-comfortable settee. Unlike monohulls, you can see out of the windows while you sit, and electronics are opposite the settee on the after bulkhead, while window area is vast and a good share of them can be opened.

There are permanent berths for six, and the whole of the port hull is devoted to one couple.

The sleeping cabin forward is very spacious because the queen-size bed occupies bridge deck space, leaving the hull volume clear and available for wardrobes and people movement.

At the after end of the hull is probably the biggest bathroom I have seen on a boat anywhere



Space ship: Cooks will love the Fusion's impressive galley.



All at sea: The classy cockpit can house a dozen people or more.



Looking good: Forward vision is excellent for the helmsman.

near this size, and between the two compartments part of the alley space is given over to the washing machine.

Starboard hull inhabitants are tourist class rather than steerage. The two double cabins and the bathroom are smaller, certainly, but far from cramped. And all surfaces are easily cleaned.

Most time, of course, will be spent on deck. The cockpit can take a dozen or more without crowding, and there are side and foredeck areas for at least that number again. The cockpit has an



Bold Fusion: The cats are custom-built.

Pictures: Mike Brown

### LOWDOWN

#### FUSION 40

**Price:** From \$750,000

**Length:** 12.2m overall

**Beam:** 7.2m

**Draught:** 0.8m

**Displacement:** 5.75 tonnes (loaded)

**Sail area:** 89sqm (main and jib)

**Fuel capacity:** 400 litres

**Freshwater:** 800 litres

**Motors:** Twin 30hp Yanmar saildrives

**Builder:** The Cat Factory, Unit 1/152 Sparks Road, Henderson

**Phone:** 0414 476 015

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