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Design № 72

FARR 11.6/FARR 38

The Farr 11.6 metre (38 ft) fast cruising sloop continues to gain popularity around the world. At present there are 85 boats sailing in 8 countries.

Designed in 1978, the yacht was inspired by a trend away from the IOR Rule restrictions towards a 'pure' design concept to produce a fast, comfortable, easily handled and relatively economical yacht. Changes to the IOR Rule in 1977 and 78 were obsoleting yachts the year following their launching as well as distorting hull shapes. It was time to look toward the one-design concept that offered security of investment and pleasureable sailing.

The Farr 11.6 metre has achieved these aims. It does not rate very favourably under IOR - but it was never intended to. It is simply a very fast cruising boat but will race boat for boat with the best of the 2 tonners.

In general terms, the style is for light (ish) displacement hull form, moderate beam by modern standards with powerful sections, a wide stern and fin bow. The powerful hull coupled with a good percentage of ballast set low in a high aspect keel with fine bow sections makes the boat stiff and ensures excellent performances to windward (particularly in rough water).

This rig is non-masthead swept spreader arrangement with no complicated runners. It has easy to handle headsails and a mainsail large enough to drive the boat by itself for 'nonchalant' cruising. The boat has a high sail area-to-displacement ratio to ensure downwind speed.

The interior design is definitely cruising oriented. It features wide safe companionway steps, 2 or 3 double berths, big galley with fridge and freezer, separate navigation area, separate head and shower. There is an abundance of storage space in the main cabin area and in the wide stern. The boat can cater comfortable for up to 9 people.

Initially the boat was designed for 2 Auckland yachtsmen who previously had owned and competitively sailed one of Bruce Farr's first cruising yachts, and who wanted a fast cruiser/racer to compete in 2nd division Royal New Zealand Yacht Squadron series. The first wooden boat, GOLDEN EAGLE, was launched in January 1979. By that time some 16 wooden boat plans had been sold and production for a one-design class yacht was underway in New Zealand and Australia, the first glass boat being launched in Auckland in August 1979. The Farr 11.6 metre was adopted by the Royal New Zealand Yacht Squadron as a class for one design racing. Highly competitive racing has developed in New Zealand and Australia with yachtsmen crossing the Tasman to compete in events. Owners Associations formed in both countries control class restrictions and racing.

Today 85 boats have been built in Australia, New Zealand, Holland, USA, South Africa, Japan, South America and Canada. Production building has now been set up in North America and South Africa as well as in New Zealand and Australia, and negotiations are nearing finalization for production in Europe and South America.

In New Zealand regular one-design races attract fleets of 14-18 boats in Auckland. The recent annual Feltex Regatta sailed on the Waitemata Harbour saw very competitive racing among the 14 boats sailing. These numbers however often drop during the summer months as many owners decide to simply go cruising.

Apart from class events, the yachts have raced very successfully in PHRF events offshore. In the 1980 Transpac race from San Francisco to Kauai, Hawaii, TIMBERWOLF was placed 1st in her class, 3rd overall on handicap and was 4th over the line.

Many of the Australian production yachts have been successful in various races. Bob Lamplough of Sydney recently recorded 5 fastest times in a 5 race series at the Royal Alfred Yacht Club in his near-new yacht. In January this year, a 11.6 metre competing in the Tasman West Coaster - a race sailed from Melbourne to Hobart, as distance of some 500 miles - won line honours and was placed 2nd on handicap under IOR.

The 1980 Round the North Island of New Zealand proved to be a very taxing race on both boats and crews. It was sailed in atrocious conditions with winds of up to 50 knots and rain so heavy that the crew on GOLDEN EAGLE "had difficulty seeing the bow of the yacht". GOLDEN EAGLE sailed the entire race and finished 2nd over the line and 12th on handicap. Her skipper remarked that she "felt safe and behaved beautifully" throughout the race.

Several 11.6 metres from New Zealand have also competed in races each year from Auckland to either Suva or Noumea and have been placed well in their divisions.

Despite the competitiveness in racing among the owners and crews of these yachts, there are many owners who simply cruise. Several boats have done extended cruises and ocean passages - 2 have sailed to Hong Kong, 1 to Hawaii and 1 to Vancouver, Canada. Several boats from New Zealand and the USA have explored the South Pacific Islands and one 11.6 metre is currently operated by a charter company of the north Queensland coast of Australia.

PHOTOS Click to enlarge.



SPECS

LOA: 11.66 m/38'3"
DWL: 9.50 m/31'2"
Beam: 3.66 m/12'
Draft: 1.94 m/6'4"
Displ: 4800 Kg/10600 Lbs
Ballast: 1850 Kg/4100 Lbs

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