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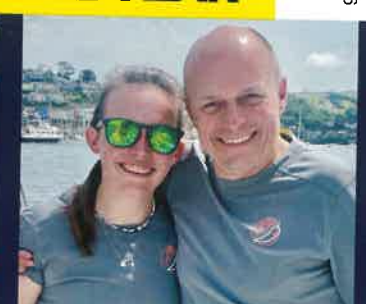
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Forward Thinking

Jeanneau's all new 380 takes the high volume low bow hull form to the next level and the result is an amazingly roomy 35 footer





One thing that it is important to understand when it comes to talking about the design of cruising yachts is that many of the designers come from a world of racing. This means they are often inclined to apply lessons taken from racing boats and put them into cruising yachts. At the end, many 1980s cruisers were designed to conform to the International Offshore Rule. It's a tradition that continues although these days it more logic seems to be driving the design. Fairly recent examples would be the Vendee racer which provided increased volume in a racing yacht. That is fine – just not for anyone who wants to improve performance.

Anyway, the latest trend to be taken from the racing world is the scow bow, which came to prominence in the Mini Transat fleet when David Raison's bathtub-shaped racer swept all before it, before slightly refined versions started to dominate the Fast 40 circuit among others, with Sam Manuard leading the charge of blunt bow section yachts. Of course, this is not a new concept at all. American designers such as Nat Herreshoff were pushing this 'skimming dish' hull form well over a century ago with the America's Cup yacht *Reliance* being the most striking and extreme example of a yacht that has relatively fine waterlines and an upper body that ballooned out to very full sections above. In a racer, the result is power when the breeze is on with light air performance unimpeded. Switch that to a cruising yacht design and what do you have? Increased volume. Hallelujah.

All of which brings me to the new Jeanneau 380 designed by Marc Lombard. This is a pure



ABOVE LEFT
The looks are dramatic even when the boat is at rest – note the forefoot which is immersed in light airs

ABOVE RIGHT
This aerial shot gives a hint at how the bow flares out above the waterline

BELOW LEFT AND RIGHT
The aft sections are broad but not extreme

cruising yacht that has borrowed a fair amount from the racing scene including, yes, very full bow sections for increased volume. It's not the first of the Sun Odyssey range to adopt this design – most boats across the Jeanneau and sister company Beneteau range now boast full forward sections – but Lombard, who also designed the Sun Odyssey 410, seems to have been willing to go the extra yard to make his boats look extreme. Perhaps the most striking feature being the immersed forefoot which sits a few centimetres clear of the water when the boat is at rest and only becomes immersed when there is a bit of pressure on the sails. This is all very clever as it keeps the wetted surface area low in light airs and boosts it as the wind pipes up.

The result is a voluminous and thoroughly modern looking yacht that promises a lot. The boat looks dramatic with its dreadnought bow, long fixed sprit for the Code 0/ anchor roller and angular styling. This may be an out and out cruising boat but it certainly looks sporty, with a chine that runs from the stern almost right to the bow. Freeboard is reasonable but is offset by a chine running just below the toe rail which takes the eye away from the overall height. The coachroof is high, rounded and stretches a long way forward. There are several keel options with a deep swing keel being of particular interest for cruisers in tidal waters. The standard keel is a 2m deep L shaped cast iron job which is coupled with twin rudders.



The rig is a backstayless with twin aft raked spreaders. This provides the option of a square-headed mainsail for the sportier sailor, without the grief of adjustable backstays. The result is a boat that, despite a length on deck of 35ft, promises to provide masses of volume combined with sprightly performance.

On deck

Step aboard and the first thing you're confronted with is the rather clever deck arrangement which slopes downwards as you head aft making for a raised toerail that protects from spray and provides a good sense of security. The cockpit feels very large for a 35ft yacht (yes I know that the integrated bowsprit makes it a 38 footer but for practical purposes, this is a 35 footer). The transom features a full width bathing platform that partially encloses the transom when raised. The bathing platform is lifted and lowered using a pulley system and there is a liferaft tucked behind this and

ABOVE
Plenty of breeze and the bow is forced down, immersing the fuller hull sections and giving the boat extra power

BELOW LEFT
A decently dimensioned cockpit

BELOW RIGHT
The integrated sprit and anchor roller boosts the length of the boat to 38ft loa

perfectly located if the worst came to the worst. In addition, there is a nice big chunky stainless bathing ladder set into the bathing platform. There are also aft lazarettes with access to the rudder quadrants which also offer a good amount of storage combined with more modest storage under the cockpit seats. There are twin helms and the sail controls feature two winches on the coachroof for raising and lowering sails plus two winches led back along the cockpit coamings. Things are kept simple but clever with the mainsheet traveller being nothing more than a Dyneema bridle on the coachroof, and thimbles are used for the jib sheets to provide a really good sheeting angle. There was no self tacker on the test boat but this is an option. All in all, the cockpit was a convivial space and felt larger than on some 40 footers. If I could find fault it was the throttle control which is well sited for the helmsman but is outboard of the starboard side wheel binnacle meaning





It could easily be knocked meane hurrying forward.pping on to the side decks, achroof feels high but there nty of space to walk and good holds. The lower shrouds rather rross as you walk forward 's not the end of the world. If cockpit feels like it belongs to oot yacht, the bow belongs 0 footer. It feels small and ; no bad thing given that, by rge, this is dead space and it dlines how cleverly Lombard sed the space available.

Under sail

le doors as opposed to oards open up to beckon own below. The steps down cely angled and there is f natural light thanks to portlights combined with achroof windows. There o good headroom and ll a real sense of space. To s an L-shaped galley with lest amount of space and a idge. The main saloon is well rtioned with heads/shower o starboard and chart table ettee berth forward of that. e two doubles, the port side f which features a neat sliding olding door that gives good s without impeding on the r space. Up forward is a really ous double berth offset to ard making it easy to get in ut of, and full width all the way : bow. This is a really impressive nice space that underlines just eful those fuller bow sections ouble doors into this forward add to a feeling of space and There are USB ports fitted in e cabins, which is a thoughtful

detail that is still often overlooked on yachts a touch lower down ranges. As you'd expect, there is a choice of layouts; you can have an ensuite in the forward cabin and only one double berth aft to port which allows for a separate shower room and storage to starboard aft which can be accessed from the cockpit locker.

Under sail

The day of the test sail offered a very docile 8kt breeze which was galling given that the boat had been zipping about the previous day in 30kts of breeze. This had led to further problems as the in mast furling – an option on the test boat – was broken and this largely nixed our test sail. I am going to hand over to a fellow journalist who tested the boat in 30kts of breeze to give you an assessment of the performance but can at least give you my impressions of the boats



ABOVE LEFT
A light, spacious saloon with the heads/shower to the right of the shot

ABOVE RIGHT
Plenty of room in the fore cabin

BELOW
There is a standard rig as pictured or a larger performance rig with a square headed mainsail

performance under genoa. This was actually altogether more impressive than it merited and paid tribute to Lombard's low wetted surface area mantra as the boat tickled along quite nicely despite the handicap of no mainsail. The steering was nice and light and, from what I saw of the boat careering around in 30kts the previous day, also had more than adequate grip. But anyway, I will hand over to Silke Springer, who works for a German magazine and kindly shared her conclusions from her test sail: "The boat was extremely well balanced despite the wild conditions; at times I let go of the wheel, chatted with the crew and forgot that I was in charge of keeping the boat on course. The boat steered itself. "During the course of my test sail, the wind dropped a touch but was still hitting Force 4-5 to three force levels after the photo session, which was still fresh at 4-5 and the boat was occasionally hitting her top speed of over seven knots.

"On average though, we run between 5 and 6.5 kts close-hauled or on a beam reach. For an 11 metre yacht designed purely for cruising, the manufacturers can be very satisfied with these values, especially when you consider that she is equipped with the smallest wardrobe that is offered – some 4sq/m smaller than the maximum rig size for this boat.

"Performance in heavy breezes was superb but If you want more power in light airs, you should order the performance large sail with a square top. For my taste, the SO 380 should be equipped with this variant, because the increased sail area would look good and, of course, increase her performance."



SAM'S VERDICT

Marc Lombard has taken a radical concept somewhat further along the line towards its natural conclusion with the 380 and, in doing so, has produced a yacht that feels much bigger than its waterline length. The forward cabin is a particular triumph in terms of space and comfort. All in all this is a yacht that marries

practicality with fun. Perhaps the radical looks won't be to everyone's taste but they certainly attract attention and the overall level of innovation is impressive.

LOOKS: ★★★★★

BLUE WATER ABILITY: ★★★★★

PERFORMANCE: ★★★★★

THE SPEC

Hull length: 10.77m (35'4")

Beam: 3.76m (12'3")

Draught: Fixed keel: 1.56m or 2m (5'3" or 6'6")
Swing keel: 1.29m–2.7m (4'2" – 8'10")

Displacement: 6,896kg (15,203lbs)

Engine: Yanmar 29hp

Contact: Jeanneau.com

Base price: €206,280

As tested: €295,492

