

# The L-34 PROJECT



## NUMBER ONE LAUNCHED

When it was first described (SAILING, October 1985) the Lavranos-designed L-34 was labelled "a real compromise... an optimised design which achieves the common objectives of speed, long-term competitiveness and safety..."

With the first off the mould now launched and, at the time of writing already on its maiden voyage to Durban, these qualities await only the ratification of experience – although a stop-press radio report from owner David Cox eulogised about the boat's very powerful windward performance in a 40-knot easterly.

What requires no ratification whatever, and what is certainly as far from compromise as you can get, is the quality of workmanship which has gone into tooling and producing

the L-34. It is, to my mind, undoubtedly the most sophisticated and professionally produced production yacht ever moulded in South Africa. The same feature in this magazine claimed the L-34 would promise a new impetus to South African yachting. It will certainly do this, and will also provide a highly visible example of the kind of quality that can be produced in this country.

With his obsession for protection matched only by his compulsion to manufacture efficiently, John Robertson has constructed just four primary moulds for the L-34: hull, deck, one-piece interior module, and a stem-to-stern headliner. This allows for incredibly quick production times – two per month when the line gets into full steam. The hull is moulded, interior module dropped in, bulk-



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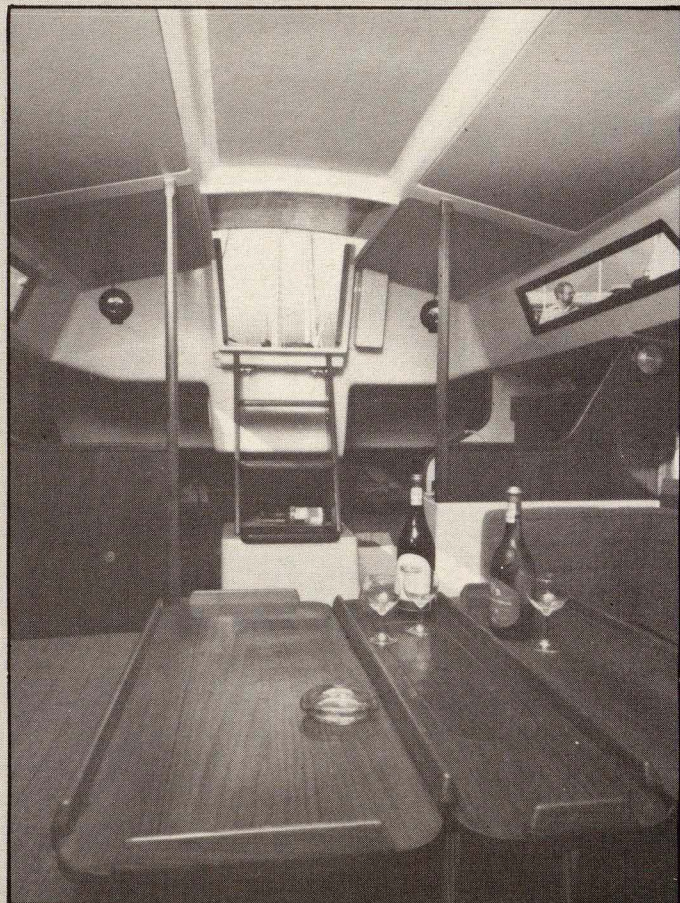


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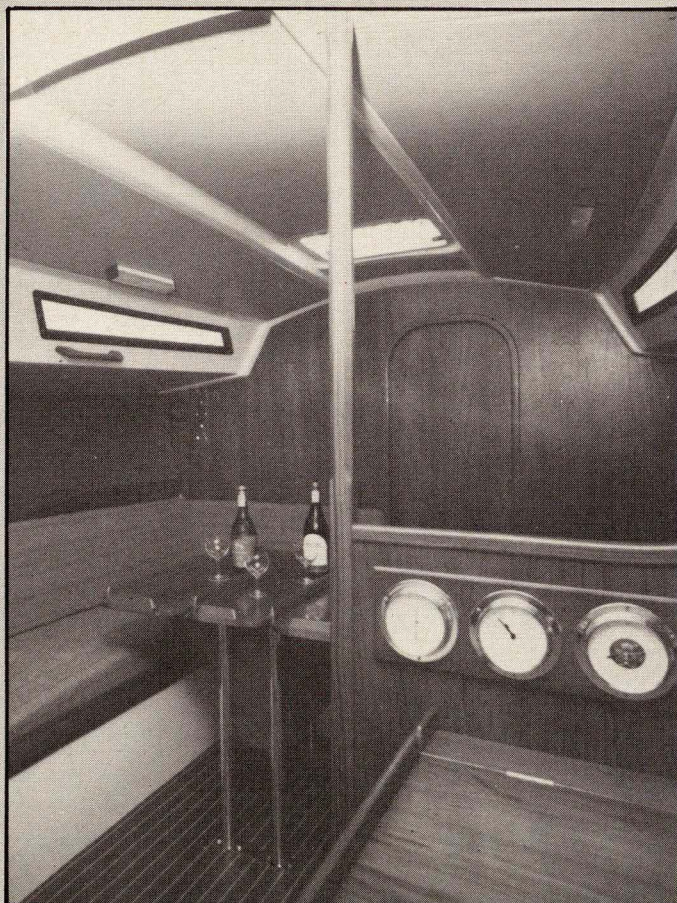


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*The saloon area looking aft.*



*Part of the chart and galley area looking forward into the saloon.*



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heads subsidiary mouldings bonded in (ice-box etc), and finally the deck is bonded and the headliner (already in place) finished off.

Matched removable headliner panels make for easy access to any and every deck fitting from underneath. There is a recessed locator moulded into the underside of the hull so the P-bracket slots automatically into position. Hatch and ventilator positions are moulded into the deck... the list of carefully thought-out detail in the mouldings is impressive indeed.

David Cox has promised a full performance report after his delivery passage to Durban - which will be featured in SAILING's September issue. An initial test-run in Table Bay, however, gave some very promising indications despite very light conditions. Angelo Lavranos, who monitored the trial himself, said he was very satisfied.

"We learned some things, we confirmed some things", he said. "I am very happy with the way the L-34 looks, the way she sails, and the way she handles. All I need now is a more comprehensive all-weather performance report. I think she does and will do everything she is designed to do."