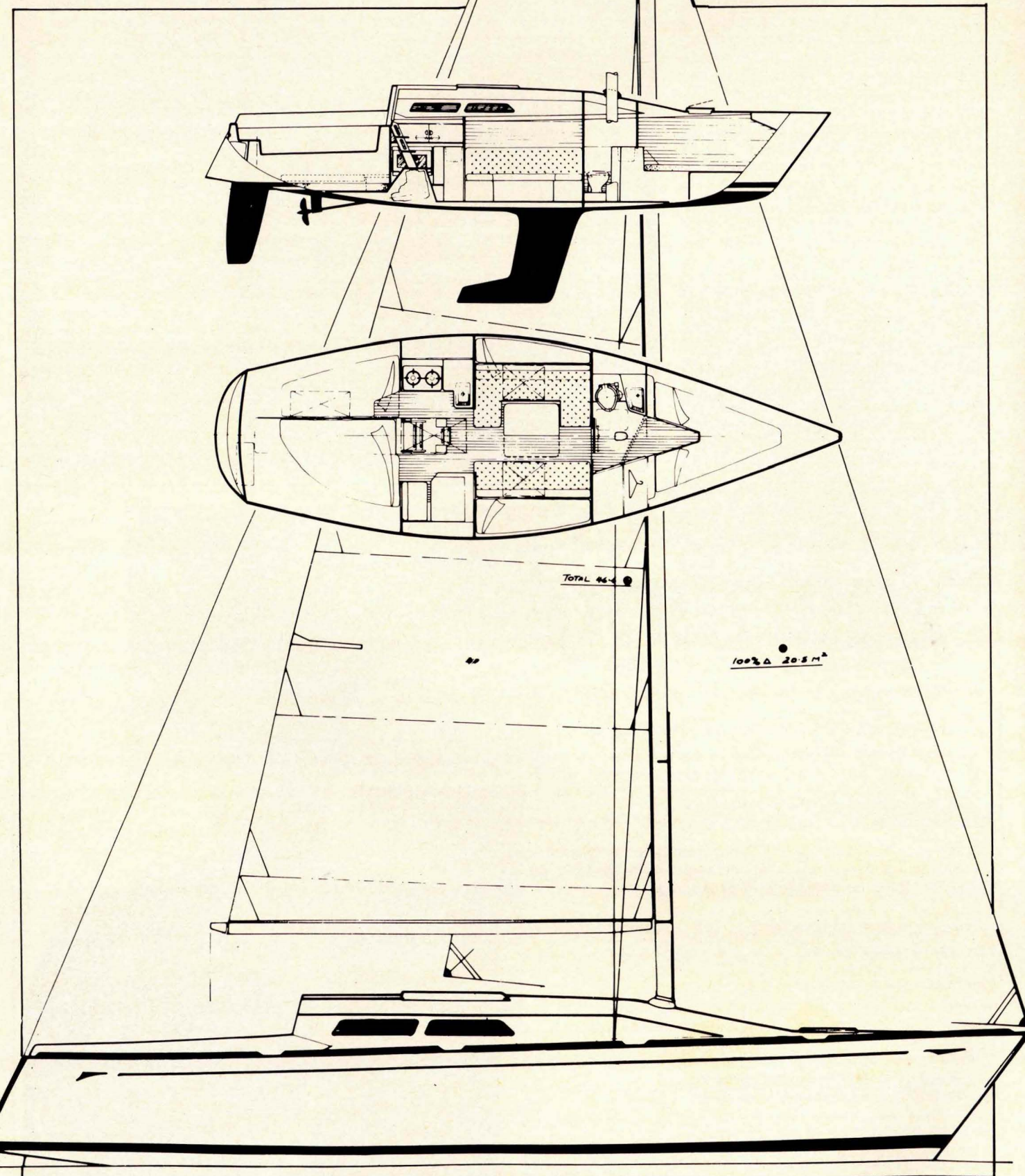


THE NEW L34

A BULLET ONE PROOF DESIGN



THE IOR divorce lawyer has always hovered like a vulture over any attempted marriage of racing and cruising minds. A doomed compromise which attempts to reconcile (in the pursuit of speed) the inimical elements of rule distorted hulls and rigs with the demands of seaworthy durability, the IOR-based racer/cruiser has seldom consummated its union to the complete satisfaction of its disparate bed-fellows.

In South Africa, particularly, where poor cruising grounds and shallow racing budgets create a fertile climate for the "arranged marriage" IOR racer/cruiser compromise, the call for "separate beds or new partners" has, in recent years and in some quarters, become increasingly strident.

The repeated failure of pure (usually imported) IOR racers in the boisterous South African coastal conditions has tainted their reputations with words like "unseamanlike", and sometimes even "inadequate". Conversely, the inability of suitably robust craft to perform competit-

ively in IOR-dominated contests has demotivated their skippers and stagnated competition.

This reasoning has led men like David Cox and John Gordon-Thomson — developers with Angelo Lavranos of the L26 concept — to the conclusion that for South African minds, pockets and offshore conditions, a fast, "bullet-proof" one-design cruiser-racer — in which the short-term competitiveness (and diminishing resale value) inherent in IOR bias is eliminated — constitutes the only compromise capable of sustaining long-term commitment.

Ratifying both his thinking and the final rule nisi in his latest L34 one-design concept, the man behind it all said recently: "I want to

race a yacht in which the cheque book is not a paramount consideration in deciding the result. I want to cruise a boat I know can take, with ease, virtually anything the South African offshore conditions can throw at it. I want a go-anywhere, do-anything boat which will still be 'up-to-date' in ten year's time without vast capital injections for improved sails, winches or mast, one which will still be competitive, still have the investment and appreciation value boats once had. And I want a boat that is a pleasure to look at, to sail, and to live in!"

These thoughts were basic to the development of the L34 concept, and apparently common to a large slice of the South African yacht racing and cruising

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Check list of comparative features



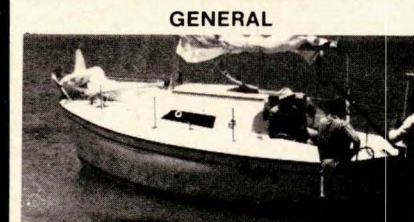
THE FAMILY

- | | Holiday | Others |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| • SPACE AND STAND-UP HEADROOM | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • FIVE BUNKS AND TOILET | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • GALLEY SINK FRIDGE STOWAGE | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • QUALITY UPHOLSTERY + TEAK TRIM | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • TABLE | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |



THE MAN

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| • IDEAL FOR DAMS AND SHALLOWS | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • SEAWORTHY AND STABLE | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • QUICK TO RIG | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • CLEARED FOR SEA SAILING | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • FAST AND RESPONSIVE | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • ONLY BEST KNOWN EQUIPMENT USED | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |



GENERAL

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| • KEEL RAISING SIMPLE | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • LAUNCH + RECOVERS EASILY | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • NO NEED FOR DINGHY | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • ROAD TOWS FAST | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • RAISE MAST ALONE | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • IN KIT FORM OR SAILAWAY AT R19 750 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

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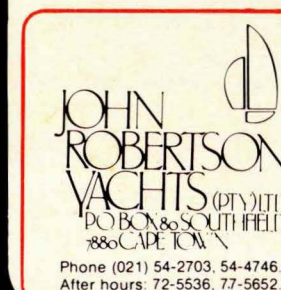
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fraternity if initial orders are anything to go by. Of 16 prospective customers who attended a market-probe presentation in Durban in July, eight signed orders and paid their deposits on the spot. Another followed suit a few days later.

"What we've produced is a real compromise — in other words, an optimised design which achieves the common objectives of speed, long-term competitiveness, and safety — without turning it into a hump-backed camel. The L34 is designed for very fast round-the-cans racing (Angelo believes it will be faster than the three-quarter tonners now on the circuit), for safe and pleasant family cruising whether this be coastal or cross-ocean, for passage racing, comfortable living and easy handling. The skipper will not have to be a racing helmsman to maintain control or to keep the mast up in rapidly changing wind or wave patterns!"

The interior has been strongly influenced by the French "ergonomic" approach — while keeping the imperatives of racing and cruising clearly in mind. For instance, the layout permits three crew to sleep on the windward side whatever the tack — a big plus for racing skippers. The galley is large and well equipped, the chart table sized for the biggest chart; the engine is readily accessible and the low, double quarter-berth — there is a single quarter-berth to port — is optimised for comfort and utility.

A three-quarter rig was chosen for its docility downwind, but it will have no

runners and this will marginally influence pointing ability — but again, the intention is not to race under the rule, so fleet performance will be equitable. The rig will also cut down on sail size and price.

As a one-design concept, the L34 will race under strict class rules which are already in formulation. With the hull lines, basic interior and displacement fixed, these "Thou shalt not . . ." regulations will inhibit the expansion of sail wardrobes and instrumentation, a matching of equipment which has proved its success in the big turnouts for L26 competitions. Rick Nankin, for one, has expressed far greater enjoyment of the "man-to-man" racing characteristic of one-design competitions.

"What we've tried for," Cox said, "is an undisturbed hull with very good stability, achieved by a reasonable beam carried over a long waterline, hard bilge and centre of gravity far down in the keel bulb. We opted for a spade rudder because the balance you can achieve with these makes for more docile steering. Statistics and history have proved them very safe and effective. Speed and manageability, strength and enjoyment of sailing — this is what the L34 is all about."

And it is more than just "a stretched L26". It is a pleasure craft with superb seaworthiness and racing ability. Under John Robertson and Jerry Caine, both hull and deck will be built in balsa-core GRP, interior modules meticulously toiled and moulded. The L34 promises a new impetus for South African yachting.



DESIGNERS COMMENTS:

"THIS IS one of the most exciting projects I have worked on for a long time," Angelo Lavranos said. "The L34 will be very light, very fast, a utility family boat that will sail like a one-tonner downwind and in a good breeze should stay with the three-quarter tonners upwind."

"As a comparison the Lavranos 36, which is a cruiser, weighs in at 16 500 lbs; the Lavranos 35 just built by J.J. Provoyeur and due for production by Two Oceans Marine, also a commercial cruiser, comes in at just over 11 000 lbs. The L34 will weigh just 8 000 lbs, yet will have only marginally less interior volume."

"It is a spacious craft with a lot of dynamic waterline length — in fact this will be closer to the length of an old one-tonner — but without the pulled stern of an IOR boat. She has excellent righting moments, like a production three-quarter tonner, but will do this with less ballast because the ballast is so far down."

"The horsepower to weight ratio is extremely good — the rig size is roughly that of a three-quarter tonner — but handling characteristics will be much better. For instance the powerful stern and end buoyancy will stop her screwing up when overpressed and she'll handle slop very well indeed — much more fun in a breeze. And she will not cost as much as a three-quarter tonner!"

"The concept, of course, arose from an original design done five years ago, when development indicated something more like a half-tonner. Times have changed now, and the market calls for more amenities than it did before, so the interior has been improved to fall in line with demand. Headroom is a full 6ft 1in, accommodation and facilities like heads and galley are luxurious compared to other racers and to our 1980 ideas — all somewhat influenced by developments in France — although we haven't gone the full hog with private aft 'playpen' cabin."

"She will be a good cruiser, and a fresh performer for the racing man — provided he sails only in the one design competitions. She will sail to her rating on a reach in fresh winds, but the hull lines and rig size will put her at a disadvantage otherwise."



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