

# SEA Yachting

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"Bliss 2" (Stealth 13S)



Southeast Asia's yachting & marine industry magazine  
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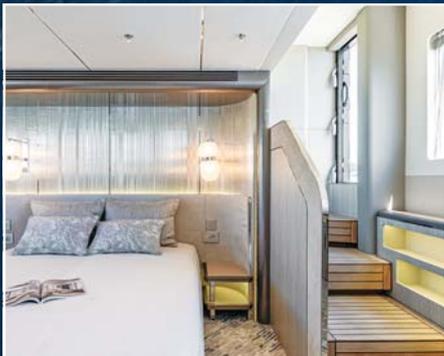
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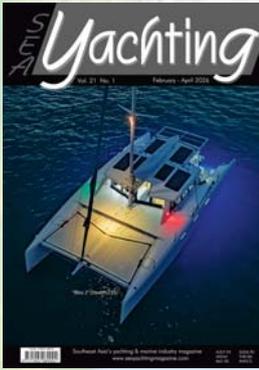


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SOUTH EAST ASIA



Bliss 2, a Stealth 13S (photo by Helicam), designed & built by Asia Catamarans graces our cover this issue as we profile one of their founders Roger Diggleman.



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## November - April NE trades

“Man has sailed from the day that a daring cave dweller first spread a ragged animal skin and harnessed the wind to move a log across the water. Man has raced from the time a caveman thought he could do it better,” Christopher Caswell



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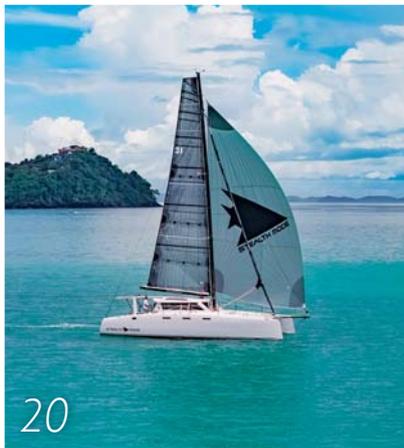
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SEA Yachting is Southeast Asia's regional marine industry magazine. We welcome your comments. Please feel free to send comments or letters to the editor at [scottm@dragonartmedia.com](mailto:scottm@dragonartmedia.com). Where possible your letters will be published.

### Marina Distribution



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## Albatross Marine Design Celebrates 20 Years of Excellence with Three International Design Awards in 2025

Thailand — January 2026 — *Albatross Marine Design* (AMD), an internationally recognized naval architecture and marine design studio, proudly celebrates its 20th anniversary at the beginning of 2026. Founded in 2006 by Dr. Albert Nazarov, the company has established itself as a trusted partner for innovative, efficient, and aesthetically refined vessel design across global markets.

Over two decades of continuous development, Albatross Marine Design has completed more than 140 realized designs. Vessels built to AMD designs are successfully operating on all continents, confirming the company's ability to deliver reliable, seaworthy, and market-ready solutions for diverse climatic, regulatory, and operational conditions.

### International Recognition in 2025

In 2025, Albatross Marine Design achieved a landmark year of global recognition, receiving three major international design awards, underscoring the studio's leadership in contemporary marine design.

- German Design Award 2025 – Winner

The *PENGUIN* passenger catamaran design was awarded for its modular, container-transportable catamaran concept, praised for its intelligent engineering, functional flexibility, and economic efficiency.

- MUSE Design Awards 2025 – Gold Winner

AMD received Gold recognition for design excellence, highlighting the studio's strong creative identity and international competitiveness.

- International Design Awards (IDA) 2025 – Gold Winner

The Oceanarian expedition catamaran yacht earned Gold in the *Automotive & Transport / Water Craft* category for its combination of long-range capability, advanced naval architecture, and refined onboard comfort.





“These awards reflect not only individual projects, but the maturity of our design approach developed over 20 years,” said Dr. Albert Nazarov, the Founder. “Our goal has always been to create vessels that are practical, efficient, and visually distinctive — and that perform reliably in real-world operation.”

## Core Expertise and Specialization

Albatross Marine Design specializes in the design of recreational, passenger, and professional vessels, offering a full spectrum of services from concept development to production-ready documentation. The company possesses strong engineering competencies in a wide range of materials, including: Composite materials, HDPE, Aluminum, Steel

This multidisciplinary expertise enables AMD to tailor each project to its specific operational profile, production technology, and regulatory requirements, while maintaining high standards of safety, performance, and design quality. Currently, the design office works on catamarans, full-carbon hydrofoil craft and hovercraft projects, and also luxury yachts and houseboats.

## 20 Years of Experience Shaping Our Values

Twenty years in business have made us who we are today. At Albatross Marine Design, our work is defined by a relentless perfectionism in form and functionality, combined with advanced marine engineering practices and deep technical expertise.

Over the years, the company has accumulated extensive experience in CE certification and classification with leading international classification societies, ensuring that every design meets the highest standards of safety, compliance, and operational reliability.

Approximately 80% of Albatross Marine Design’s projects are developed for international clients, a figure that is exceptional for a Thailand-based design office. AMD team collaborates with leading global brands, delivering projects tailored to diverse regulatory frameworks, operational profiles, and market expectations worldwide.

In the marine industry, some still attempt to build without a proper design — or promise to do it ‘same but cheaper’. Our business model has always been different. It is reflected in the quality of every surface, the integrity of each technical solution, the consistency of engineering logic, and the ability to achieve full certification and classification, with high re-sale value.

At Albatross Marine Design, every project is developed by a complete in-house team of 12 naval architects, designers, and engineers working as a single system — from concept to production-ready documentation.

Elegance, quality and safety, multiplied by global experience — this is the foundation of our design work for decades.

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BUILDING TRUST



## Oyster Selects Yanmar Solution for Larger Yachts in Strengthened Partnership



**A**mere, Netherlands (December 8, 2022) – Oyster Yachts has announced a strengthened partnership with propulsion specialist YANMAR Marine International with an emphatic endorsement of the YANMAR sail drive solution's reliability and quality in its benchmark Oyster 495.

Following installations in the 50ft bluewater cruiser, the British boatbuilder has now selected the YANMAR engine as standard fit for the Oyster 565 and 595 yachts, to further extend the companies' collaboration.

In a new video launched today, Oyster Yachts' Chief Commercial Officer, Paul Adamson, highlights the benefits and features of the YANMAR 110 hp unit, as well as the significant synergies between the partners. The film, shot in Palma de Mallorca, focuses on Oyster 495 hull number one, Carpe Diem, and hull number two, Tuga, owned by Formula 1 celebrity Eddie Jordan - both fitted with the YANMAR 4JH110 diesel engine, SD15 sail drive, and VC20 controls.

Paul Adamson commented: "Something really important to us as a brand is reliability, as is quality, craftsmanship, love, care, and attention that go into the yachts that we build. So, when we choose an engine partner for our yachts, we look for exactly the same qualities.

"As a sailor, there are a few things that I can tell you are absolutely superb about the YANMAR engine. Not only is it quiet, really fuel efficient, it's also hugely reliable. "We were thrilled to collaborate with YANMAR on the Oyster 495 and excited about plans to fit the YANMAR larger engine as standard on the Oyster 565 and 595."

A further testimonial followed from former Formula 1 team owner and experienced sailor, Eddie Jordan, who added: "Rob Humphreys and Oysters in-house design team did a great job designing the 495. It is the baby of the



Oyster fleet and for me, it is the little treasure. She's a dream to sail, but when the wind drops the super-efficient YANMAR engine takes her to her happy place of 9 knots effortlessly. She is the jewel in the crown which Oyster hasn't had for a little while and it is the perfect boat for young people to learn what it is like to go blue water sailing."

The YANMAR 4JH110 Common Rail, 4-cylinder, direct injection marine diesel inboard engine selected by Oyster is specifically produced for the marine environment. It surpasses strict global standards for virtually odor and smoke-free operation as well as keeping fuel consumption



to a minimum and optimizing performance with precise, digitally controlled fuel injection.

The engine is coupled to the SD15 sail drive solution, providing the boat owner with the experience of low vibration and noise on-board, low drag, improved propulsion efficiency, and fuel consumption with excellent hydrodynamic efficiency.

Included in the specification of the Oyster 495, the VC20 Vessel Control System offers dedicated control modes for all YANMAR control system functions, putting the user in complete control and providing several benefits that make a real difference for boat owners, and boat builders.

Floris Lettinga, Sales and Marketing Director, YANMAR Marine International (YMI), commented: "Oyster Yachts is recognized as the creator of the world's finest luxury bluewater sailboats which are designed with meticulous attention to detail, so YMI is delighted to align with these standards in our ongoing partnership. With a continued focus on supplying the most innovative marine propulsion systems with a commitment to sustainability and to protecting the environment, we look forward to working with Oyster to enhance the experience for owners, their crew, friends and family."

The first all-new Oyster under Richard Hadida's ownership, the Oyster 495 redefines proven design concepts and heralds a return to the 50-foot market where the brand made its name, offering a stunning combination of performance, comfort, and style, with a host of practical seamanlike features. Easy to handle for a family crew, the yacht opens the door to a new cohort of Oyster owners, whether it is for exploring coastal waters, crossing oceans, or circumnavigating the globe.

Backed by years of diesel innovation and the delivery of application-driven solutions for the recreational marine sector, YANMAR's engines are firmly established as the global standard in sailboat and small craft propulsion.



# YANMAR

## Pleasure Marine Model

Yanmar's marine diesel engines are in compliance with global emissions standards. Diesel engines emit less CO<sub>2</sub>



### Sail Boat

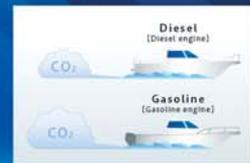
With a thermal efficiency of over 40%, diesel engines compare favorably to gasoline and can go a long way towards reducing the impact of engines on the environment. Unfortunately, diesel engines are also known for the exhaust they emit, which contains levels of particulate matter (PM) and nitrous oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>) that can contribute to air pollution. From the late 1990s, regulations on marine diesel exhaust emissions have been implemented and strengthened in countries all over the world. Yanmar has been active in conducting research towards clean emissions for diesel engines and early on cleared the strict US EPA (US Environmental Protection Agency) regulations as well as regulations from many other countries.



### Power Boat Propulsion

Due to its higher combustion efficiency, a diesel engine will emit 20-40% less of the greenhouse gas CO<sub>2</sub> than an equivalent gasoline engine, a significant reduction. In environmentally conscious Europe, diesel has captured more than 50% of the passenger vehicle market. Diesel use is increasing in the US and other regions too, and, with a focus on diesel as an environmentally friendly technology, this trend is set to continue.

In the maritime sector, the emissions standards from the US EPA mandate stricter restrictions on diesel engines than on gasoline outboard engines.



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## ILIAD Catamarans Launches New ILIAD 60



ILIAD Catamarans continues to lead the evolution of luxury long-range power catamarans with the launch of the all-new ILIAD 60.

Replacing the popular ILIAD 62 model, this next-generation design redefines offshore cruising with enhanced performance, efficiency and refinement, while maintaining the brand's hallmark of exceptional range and comfort.

The first ILIAD 60 has already been ordered for delivery to the United States, with strong international demand from buyers across the globe.

The new ILIAD 60 blends commanding power with remarkable fuel economy and a range exceeding 3,500 nautical miles, crafted for adventurers who demand both capability and comfort, as well as for discerning charter operators seeking a vessel of unparalleled versatility and style.

Every element of the ILIAD 60 reflects thoughtful design and innovation, from the expansive flybridge and spacious cockpit to the inviting foredeck lounges that capture the essence of life at sea. The main deck layout can be configured to suit each owner's lifestyle, with a beautifully equipped galley and expansive saloon that create a warm and social hub at sea.

A pantograph door offers direct access from the saloon to the foredeck, enhancing circulation and connection between living spaces while maximizing natural light and panoramic views.

Below deck, elegantly appointed cabins exude serenity and sophistication, each with private en-suites, generous natural light and a choice of custom layouts. The master suite is a sanctuary of refined luxury, complete with a king-sized island bed and exquisite finishes throughout.

For extended passages, the ILIAD 60 offers exceptional versatility with options for a laundry, workshop, private office and separate crew quarters with dedicated bow access.

The commanding flybridge, available open or fully enclosed, accommodates ten guests in supreme comfort and features an independent galley making it the perfect setting for dining and entertaining at anchor. The generous cockpit connects fluidly to the saloon and gourmet galley, while the foredeck provides a serene space for sunset lounging or casual relaxation.

Safety and comfort are integral to the design, with wide, uncluttered walkways and seamless indoor-outdoor flow.

Owners can also choose from multiple tender-handling solutions, including a hydraulic transom-lift platform that doubles as a beach club or a flybridge-mounted crane for effortless operation.

With extensive opportunities for bespoke customization and the availability of e-Motion Hybrid propulsion, the ILIAD 60 represents the ultimate in sustainable, long-range cruising — where every journey is as extraordinary as the destination.

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## Big changes in Andaman Islands: now a friendlier & easy to visit destination



Andaman Islands uninhabited white sand beaches.



Captains Meeting with Asia Pacific Superyachts at Yacht Haven Marina.

Major changes in regulations to visit the Andaman Islands have now made it much friendlier and significantly easier yachting destination to visit.

A recent meeting attended by captains held 8 at the "The Deck Restaurant" of the Yacht Haven Marina in Phuket, was an exciting occasion. Mr. R. Rathnam, owner-agent of Asia Pacific Superyachts Andaman Islands & India, traveled to Thailand to share important and positive changes in regulations along with news of the Andaman Islands transforming to a high-end tourism destination.

Gordon Fernandes, Asia Pacific Superyachts GM and based in Phuket, shared hosting duties with Mr. Rathnam. Mr. Rathnam announced and explained new and significant changes to yachting regulations, noting these changes are already proving to have a huge impact in creating new interest and bringing in yachting visitors. "Those attending were surprised to learn the 30-day restriction has been removed", said Rathnam, adding, "The visa process is hugely simplified and now can be done on-line. The process no longer requires an in-person/home country visa application.

Rathnam noted the changes shared with captains at the event were very well received, with many of the questions about availability of the fuel etc., how to apply for the visa, and charter regulations. He further explained the following new changes.

### Restricted Area Permit

- Andaman & Nicobar Islands are a restricted area. In earlier days when a foreigner would visit the Andaman Islands, they would be issued a permit called a Restricted Area Permit. This permit issued would be for a maximum of 30 days, extended by 15 days for emergency purposes.

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- Now with the new regulations, foreigners can visit the islands for tourism purposes without the requirement of Restricted Area Permit and visitors are allowed to stay as per the validity of the visa. The new regulations makes the entry smoother and allows yachts to stay for a longer duration.

### Visa

- In the past, one had to apply for a visa by visiting the India Embassy. Each applicant had to go to the embassy and apply in person; in most cases the applicant had to apply for the visa at the Indian Embassy in his home county. This regulation made getting a Visa a timely and challenging process.

- Now the entire visa process is online and the person can apply for a visa for a period for one month, one year and five years with visa approval emailed to the applicant in 3-5 days. To find out about eligibility and FAQ please visit the website [indianvisaonline.gov.in](http://indianvisaonline.gov.in)

### Activities onboard

In earlier days, it was confusing whether activities like scuba diving and game fishing would be allowed from the yacht. Now it is clearly explained scuba diving and sports fishing are allowed.

### Inward clearances

Before the new changes in regulations there was no timeline available for completion of the inward clearances. Now it is clearly spelled out that if you arrive in the morning you will be cleared on the same day in the evening.

### Fuel availability

Before the new changes in regulations fuel availability was a problem, with mostly HSD available. Now there is LSLFHSD in the Andaman Islands. Asia Pacific Superyachts agency has checked the fuel specifications from several visiting yachts and found the yachts were satisfied with the quality of the fuel.

### Amazing Andaman Adventures

This remote island group offers some of the region's most peaceful cruising from pristine reefs to primeval rainforest and Barren Island volcano, the only confirmed active volcano in South Asia, estimated to be 1.8 million years old. The principal attraction lies in the beaches, exploring and diving / snorkeling in the pristine reefs that ring most of the islands. Through the Diligent Strait, Peel Island and Henry Lawrence Island offer secluded anchorages for snorkeling and interesting coastal outcrops to explore. Exciting and adventuresome island cruising for superyachts is accessible only by boat and include the islands of Inglis, Sister, Passage, Brother, Barren, Narcondum, Little Andaman, Interview, Neil, Cinque, Henry, Lawrence, and Button.

### Andaman Islands transforming to a high-end tourism destination

There is a continued effort by the Andaman & Nicobar Administration to transform the Andamans to a high-end tourism destination, major hospitality groups are entering the eco-friendly resort development in the islands.

Three leading hospitality groups have won bids to develop luxury eco-friendly resorts across prime locations in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, marking a major push for sustainable tourism in the region, reports Projects Today.

The resorts will be developed on Long Island, Aves Island and Shaheed Dweep (Neil Island), while another group will redevelop the existing Megapode Resort in Sri Vijaya Puram under a public-private partnership model. An official said, "In a major stride toward sustainable tourism-led growth, we have finalised successful tenders for four flagship eco-tourism projects across the Islands."

The resorts will focus on low-impact design and operate on self-sustaining systems powered largely by renewable energy such as solar. Revenue-sharing models and long concession periods have been finalised, ensuring long-term investment while preserving the fragile island ecosystem and promoting nature-centric, high-end tourism.

Catering to high-end tourists, the Taj Exotica Resort & Spa is already operative on the Andaman Islands.

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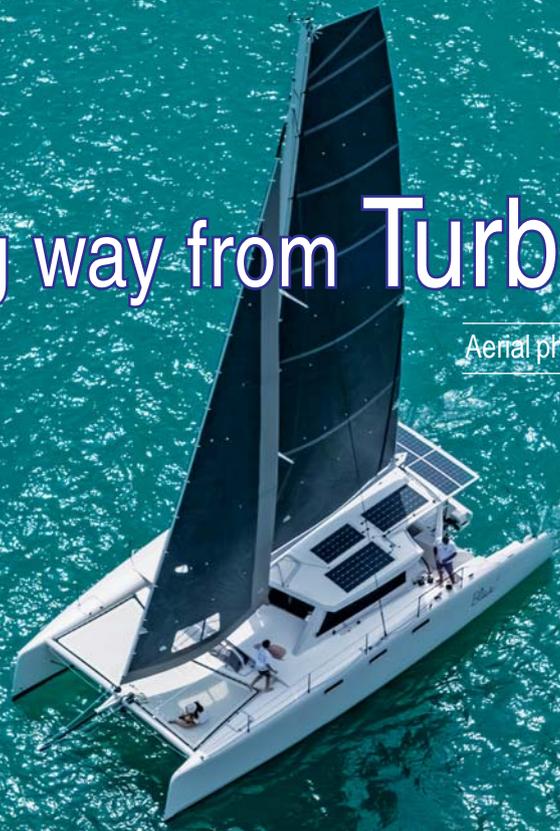
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Yacht Chandlery and Equipment Distribution Company

# It's a long way from Turbenthal

Aerial photography by Helicam



*Stealth 135, Bliss 2.*



*Duncanson 30 Nerida, which Roger salvaged off Koh Lon, & partially owned from 2005-2010.*



*Launching motor-cruiser Pitta.*

Asia Catamarans' Roger Diggelmann was born and grew up in Turbenthal, a small village 30km northeast of Zurich in Switzerland. He went to the local school and finished high school in April of 1984. Most of his free time, he spent doing various sports, a lot of gymnastics, ski racing, cross country skiing, mountain biking and more. He was lucky that his parents were always very supportive, despite not having money to waste.

Roger's uncle had a 28-foot sailing boat on Lake Zurich; he gave Roger his first sailing experience when he was about 11-years-old. He instantly knew sailing was a sport he liked and one day he wanted to work in the yachting industry, one way or another.

After high school he started an apprenticeship as a carpenter in a small carpentry shop in the neighboring village of Wila, which he finished in spring 1987. He then took a job as a carpenter in his

home village until he had to do his military service in 1989.

After 14 of 17 weeks of service in the Swiss army, it became clear that his superiors tried to force him to climb the ladder within the army, which for him was a definite NO! He hated every minute of it but back then, they could force a person to continue to service, or face jail time.

He was prepared for that and had a way out. Since he was born with an extra vertebra in his lower back and was lacking proper discs between the two adjacent vertebrae, it wasn't hard to pretend to have severe back pain, and after a week of walking as in serious pain, he was sent to the local hospital for x-rays. Back at the base, he presented the images to his superiors and was discharged from service without much fuss. He was a happy man!

When he was sixteen, he watched a couple of

older friends preparing for a one-year voyage with a VW van, and once again, he instantly knew, that he would start travelling the world, as soon as he saved some money.

He kept working in carpentry for another year, purchased a Toyota minivan and soon, he and a friend were on their way to explore Scandinavia.

Equipped with mountain bikes, windsurfers and even a dinghy with an outboard but a pretty low budget, they had big plans for great adventures in Norway, Sweden and Finland.

Soon it became obvious that Roger's travel partner was homesick and missing his girlfriend and therefore not much of a companion. They still managed to travel all the way up to the North Cape and enjoy the midnight sun in early May, but then he realized he had to continue on his own somehow. They then cruised back south and after two weeks arrived in Duesseldorf, Germany. Roger knew he couldn't afford the minivan on his own due to the lack of funds, so he grabbed his mountain bike off the rack, put all his essential stuff in a back pack, left his friend to drive the van home while Roger headed for Denmark. The weather wasn't on his side and having a pretty heavy pack on his back while travelling on a push bike wasn't ideal.

Once he got as far as Aarhus in Denmark, he decided to get rid of the bike. He just rode it to the train station and managed to send it back home for under US\$10.

He wanted to go back to Norway ASAP; he was sick of the windy flats of Denmark. So, he started walking towards Hirtshals, at the very top of the country to catch a ferry to Kristiansand in Norway. He then spent a couple of nights on a campground in Kristiansand and then took off through the mountains of southern Norway with Oslo as the next goal. A 10-day hike in the best weather possible, 19 hours of daylight, meeting only six people on the way, that became a very memorable journey.

But he needed to go back to work, and make more money to do more travelling.

In 1993, he decided it was time to leave the comforts of Europe and explore the more remote parts of the world. He always wanted to learn Spanish, so he figured Ecuador was a great place to do so. He managed to find a new travel buddy with very similar interests and so they boarded an Air France flight to Quito, Ecuador.

This time, they just had their mountain bikes with them. They lived with a local family in the Tumbaco valley at an altitude of 2,350 metres. Every morning, they got on the local bus, their bikes on the roof, and rode up to Quito to go to Spanish school from 8 to 12 am. Quito is at 2,850 metres, so every afternoon, they had a hell of a bike ride back down to Tumbaco. After doing homework they went back on the bikes and explored the surrounding mountains. Needless to say, this made them very fit, all that biking in the high altitude.



*Composite Yacht Constructions in 2000.*



*Roger at the top of Mount Chimborazo, 6265 meters above sea level.*



*Hurricane about to launch.*



Roger's first sailboat in the Lautoka Marina, Fiji, 1997.



Stealth 13.2, Stealth Mode.

They soon started hiking to 5,000 metres plus (with some serious headaches) on weekends and soon caught the bug to climb Cotopaxi (5,897m), one of the many volcanoes in the country, and probably the most famous.

After booking with a travel agent, renting all the gear, including boots, crampons, ice picks, ropes and so on, they jumped in a taxi and made their way up to base camp "Refugio del Cotopaxi" at about 4,800 metres. A stone hut, with a stone floor without a heat source welcomed them: they tried to get some sleep with no success, temperatures of -20 Celsius and the ongoing headaches just made it impossible to sleep.

At 1 am, they left the base camp with a guide and his helper. 100 metres below the summit the weather turned bad and it became obvious, that the guide was getting a degree of altitude sickness. As one does in the mountains, the group stays together at all times, they turned around and headed back for base camp.

Lesson learned. For his next attempt to summit a volcano, Roger was better prepared and found a real, certified mountain guide. This time he chose the Chimborazo, the highest mountain of Ecuador at 6,265 metres or thereabouts.

The weather was on his side this time and with a fantastic guide, they reached the top at 8am on a sunny day. The view was stunning and many of the high peaks in the Andes could be seen.

This convinced Roger that it was worth

heading further south, so after three months in Ecuador learning Spanish, they jumped on their mountain bikes and headed south for Peru, Bolivia, Argentina and Chile.

Biking and hiking through those countries was tough but nothing short of extraordinary. In October of 1993, they reached Puerto Mont in Patagonia on the Chilean side, and there once again Roger parted ways with his travel companion and jumped on a ferry from Puerto Mont to Puerto Natales. His plan was to hike around the Cordillera Paine in the Torres del Paine National park, which turned in to a fantastic 6-day hike around the beautiful peaks of said Cordillera.

Funds nearing zero once again, it was time to head back north to Ecuador to catch the flight back to Switzerland. Seemed an easy task, but at that moment all staff from Lan Chile, the Chilean Airlines, decided to go on strike! Because of this, the trip north turned into a zig-zagging race against time, using every possible way of public transport existing, including chartering a Chesna just to cross Lago General Carrera, to reach Quito by 23 December 1993.

He just made it in time and with US\$25 to spare for the airport tax, he boarded the plane back to Switzerland.

In January 1994, Roger started working at Schindler & Scheibling in Uster, a company that specialized in building custom prefabricated wooden houses. He only took the job to raise funds to travel more, so he told the company he just wanted a job as a carpenter for 16 months.

On his birthday, January 3rd, he walked into the office at 7am, but instead of starting to work with a building team, he was led to a desk with a computer, and given a folder detailing a villa to be built with 1.2 million Swiss francs. The boss wished him luck and left.

This was the first time he sat in front of a computer screen and he had no idea how to even turn the machine on. Luckily, his friend Tom, who got him the job in the first place, had his desk next door and saved Roger from embarrassment. So, he dug into the challenge. Starting at 5am every morning, trying to stay on top of everything while learning CAD-software at the same time, he somehow managed to successfully finish his first project with a great team of eight carpenters.

The two bosses were great and paid him for every minute of overtime, even when he was just learning CAD. Sixteen months later, he was all cashed up and ready for his next adventure.

Meanwhile, Peter, another good friend, had sailed his PAROS, a Van de Stadt WIBO 930, all the way to Fiji in the South Pacific and invited Roger to join him for the trip to Brisbane, Australia.

A dream came true; he was finally going offshore.

Somehow, Peter mixed up the best crossing times and Roger soon received a letter, saying they would have to postpone till April of 1996, because it was hurricane season in the South Pacific and that he needed to come back to Switzerland himself to do a bit more work to pay for repairs on the boat.

Roger and his girlfriend Sonja had already quit their jobs, cancelled their house-rental, and were eager to travel, so working for another six months was out of question. Roger was a bit lost and didn't know what to do next. One day, on his way home after a few beers with friends, (maybe a few too many!), he had the silly idea, that Fiji, even though it was somewhere in the middle of the South Pacific, could be reached by bicycle after doing some touring through Europe and the USA. He proposed the idea as a joke to his girlfriend, expecting her to say, "Get some sleep, you drunk idiot". Instead, her eyes lit up and she said: "What a great idea, let's do it!" He swallowed twice and went to bed, thinking she would change her mind overnight.

Next morning, Sonja was still convinced that it was a great idea. After sobering up, he also warmed to the idea and they began to plan. Within two weeks, they had their mountain bikes converted into mountain-touring bikes, shopped all the necessary gear, and on 6 Sept 1995, after a healthy breakfast with their parents and some friends, they left Turbenthal, with the goal of reaching San Diego.



Launching Hurricane for Asia Catamarans.

They had no idea what to expect and were kind of expecting to give up pretty soon. They made plans to start out slowly (40-60kms per day), but as always, nothing went according to plan. On day two, they decided it was time to pay a quick visit to some friends in southwestern Switzerland. There were only two mountain passes between them and they thought, sure, no worries, we can do that. 120km later, the 2 passes traversed, with their tongues hanging out, they reached their friend's house in Fully, a village in the province of Wallis.

This was a good lesson learned, they needed to pace themselves much better if they wanted to succeed with their plan. After two days of recovery and lots of delicious white wine and cheese fondue, putting power back into those muscles, they said goodbye to their friends and headed in the direction of Annecy in France. Pacing was improved and indeed at the end of November they reached Lisbon and dipped their front wheels into the Atlantic Ocean, after a great trip through France, Andorra, Spain and Portugal. 2900km in about 50 days including rest days – a very good and comfortable starting pace.

They chose Orlando, Florida, as their starting point to cross the United States. Once they arrived and after reassembling and repacking their bicycles, the challenge began, it was a different world!

After the quiet and slow, relaxing life of Southern Europe, getting used to the busy American Lifestyle with Disneyland, Universal Studios, 8-litre chevy trucks and huge trailer rigs was quite a switch. They felt like ants being attacked by an army of aardvarks! Quickly, they searched for an affordable place to stay and spent the next four days acclimatizing to the new surroundings.

Once more comfortable with the new surroundings they headed out of Orlando after

dipping their back wheels into the Atlantic Ocean for the second stretch all the way to San Diego.

What a trip! Eight states: Florida, Mississippi, Louisiana, Alabama, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona and California, over 8,000kms with all the detours, after who knows how many flat tires, near collisions with trucks, tons of smelly cadavers along the way, many encounters with local people, some smarter than others, endless straights in the Texan desert, plenty of fast-food meals, -16 degrees Celsius in the Black Mountains (even -6 degrees in New Orleans), and lots of unforgettable experiences with nice people, but not a drop of rain since Lisbon. They reached San Diego in April 1996, dipping their front wheels into the Pacific Ocean - of course!

What to do now? That was the big question! Cycling had become such a big part of their lives; it was hard to imagine not doing it every day. They had agreed to meet with Peter from PAROS on May 6 at Los Angeles Airport, so they decided to rent a car and slowly cruise up the coast. It was weird, a nice trip, but all they could think of was, "Wouldn't it be nice to do this on the push bike?" They thought they must have gone nuts!

The reunion with Peter was wonderful, stories were shared endlessly, they had so much to talk about that they almost forgot what they were here for. Shopping at West Marine! It was like kids in a toy store, except the parents' wallets were not there.

Equipped with just the most necessary items they boarded a plane to Papeete in Tahiti, where they visited local friends and had plenty of time to get used to the new lifestyle.

After three weeks of pirogue rowing, BBQs on the motus of Bora Bora, wasting a few dollars in the casino, drinking free booze all day, and meeting the most wonderful people, Raa, their local host and his family, organized a farewell party for them, which nearly made them miss their flight to Fiji - because it left at 2AM, not PM - they were finally on the way to PAROS, their home for the next 12 months.

What was meant to be a three-to-four-week refit on PAROS, turned into a nine-week nightmare including a 96-knot hurricane called "Ian", which ironically arrived the day after their friend named "Jan" flew in from Switzerland, to join them on the first cruise after re-launch. Instead of cruising, they cleaned up the mess and launched PAROS just as Jan had to leave again.

They were given five days by the authorities to get PAROS out of the country, since she was already on her third extension. So off they went in a hurry, heading for Port Vila in Vanu-

atu. But finally, Roger was offshore for the first time!

Crossing the South Pacific, or at least part of it; another unforgettable journey! All the islands and the people were just incredible. Three weeks in Tahiti and Bora Bora, 10 weeks in Fiji, three months in Vanuatu, three months in New Caledonia, and finally almost four months in Australia, another entire story to tell.

In Brisbane, Peter was given, together with his girlfriend Jenny, a 45-foot wooden sloop (teak on teak), called Blue Shadow as a present. So, he decided to sell PAROS in Brisbane. This happened fairly quickly, so Roger had to look for a new "home". Luckily, the now former owner of Blue Shadow, 62-year-old Christian from Belgium, was still on board, and since Jenny and Peter had to travel home to sort some stuff, Roger was welcome to join Christian on Blue Shadow for the time being. Together they sailed Blue Shadow down to Sydney; Christian wanted to keep on going, but Roger, who had wisely put a 10 AUD bet on the trifecta in the Melbourne Cup, and won, had other plans.

Cashed up again, he parted ways with Christian and flew back to New Caledonia, to once more, feel and live the magic of the South Pacific Islands. After two weeks living like a king in paradise, it was once again time to head back home to Switzerland.

Roger then worked again for a bit, but plans were already in place, that he would join Blue Shadow again in Phuket for the journey to Cape Town. So, on 9 September 1999 at 9am, a plane from Zurich landed at Phuket Airport with Roger on board. And that was the beginning of it all.

Plans change as usual, and Jenny in the meantime gave birth to a little boy named Jules. He was born in April 1999 in Phuket. The decision was made, that instead of sailing to Cape Town, they would leave Blue Shadow in Phuket for a year and have Roger look after her, giving him the freedom to take her anywhere he wanted, as long they would be back within a year.

Roger soon felt at home in Phuket, decided to stay in the area and started to get to know more people.

He got involved with the Ao Chalong Yacht club and started taking part in Club and Platu racing. Not having much else to do, other than taking care of Blue Shadow and taking her to Langkawi occasionally, he started to do some work on other boats. After a while it became clear, that this was his opportunity to fulfill his dream and start working in the yachting industry.

By the time the owners of Blue Shadow came back to Phuket, he made his mind up and



A young Roger on Blue Shadow in Boat Lagoon in 1997.



*Stealth 135, Bliss 2, under Code Zero.*

founded, with his last 60,000 baht, a company called “Composite Yacht Constructions”.

So, on 12 April 2001, he had company documents and a work permit in his hands, but a pretty empty bank account.

Being a carpenter by trade, but not a very good businessman, he was struggling to earn enough to make a decent living. He was lucky to be supported by his then girlfriend and lots of people from the local expat community.

He kept being persistent, since giving up was not an option, and even went back to Switzerland a couple of times to work for a few weeks, so he could finance his company in Phuket. Since there was no lack of work in Phuket, things started to look better, bit by bit.

In 2003, he was approached by a couple from South Africa, who asked him if he could actually “build” a boat. His answer was “yes, of course” and soon, with the help of yet another expat, with experience in the boat building area, a plan was drawn (on a paper towel at the Ao Chalong Yacht Club) to build a shallow draft motor cruiser, to do tours up in the Bay area.

This needed new premises, which Roger found in the Palai area of Phuket, renting the space for three years. He erected an 8 x 12 metre shed, laying the base for what became Asia Catamarans at a later stage. The motor cruiser was built and launched in July of 2004 and can still be seen, moored in Chalong Bay today, in pretty good nick.

After that, he was given the chance to build more and more boats:

- two 30ft James Wharram Tikis
- A 43-foot Jacques Fioleau designed cruising cat
- A 12-metre day dive boat
- A 40-foot Toni Grainger cruising cat
- Three Andaman Cabriolets

While building the Andaman Cabriolets, Roger was introduced to Alan Carwardine, as he was involved in the design of those boats. As time went by, Roger and Alan became good friends and Alan, who loved the idea of living in Phuket, became a partner in Roger’s business.

They changed the name to Asia Catamarans and never looked back: 32 Stealth Catamarans, both power and sail, have been launched to this date and the next one is due to hit the water at the end of February/early March.

Alan has now retired and Roger has brought in Zam Bevan, who he incidentally first met back in 2008, when the first Cabriolets were being built, to help keep Asia Catamarans moving into the future.

Roger would like to give a big THANK YOU to all of Asia Catamarans’ costumers and the countless people who have supported him on the way to where he is now. It’s a long way from Turbenthal, but may the story continue ([www.asiacatamarans.com](http://www.asiacatamarans.com)).

# Primus Marine: A Year of Breakthrough Growth

Primus Marine continues to gain momentum in Thailand's yachting industry. Now entering its second year, the company has steadily built recognition through growing market presence, customer trust, and consistent performance. Its progress reflects not only market demand, but also a focused commitment to quality, expertise, and long-term ownership support.

#### Award Recognition and Industry Standing

As the company moves into its second year, industry recognition has followed. The awards received highlight Primus Marine's standards across yacht sales, after-sales service, and customer experience, reinforcing its position within Thailand's developing yachting sector.

At the core of this success lies a carefully curated portfolio of world-class brands. Representing Aquila Power Catamarans, Beneteau, and Excess Catamarans, Primus Marine offers a diverse range of yachts that speak to different life-

styles—power, sail, cruising, performance, and contemporary design—while maintaining one common thread: uncompromising quality.

The Thailand International Boat Show 2026, held at Yacht Haven Marina, marked a defining milestone for Primus Marine. Returning for its second consecutive year, the company presented its most ambitious showcase to date—demonstrating both operational readiness and strategic vision.

This year, Primus Marine displayed an impressive fleet of six yachts, highlighting the breadth and strength of its portfolio:

- Aquila 32 Sport
- Aquila 44 Yacht
- Aquila 42 Coupe – Asia Premiere
- Beneteau Antares 11 Fly
- Beneteau Oceanis 40.1
- Excess 11

The highlight of the show was the Asia Premiere of the Aquila 42 Coupe. Featuring



AQUILA 42 COUPE



EXCESS-14



Howard Prime (right) receiving the Robb Report Best of the Best Yacht Dealer award 2025.

a sleek enclosed coupe design and a modern, innovative layout, the model attracted strong interest from both local and international visitors, reflecting market demand for refined power catamarans that balance comfort and performance.

Throughout the event, Primus Marine received positive feedback for both its yacht lineup and the professionalism of its team. Set against the backdrop of Yacht Haven Marina, the showcase further reinforced the compa-

ny's growing reputation as a trusted presence in Thailand's yachting industry.

Looking Ahead: Launches, Innovation, and a Strong Start to the Year

Building on the momentum from the Boat Show, Primus Marine enters the year with a packed calendar of major launches and milestones.

In February, the company will host the official launch of the Aquila 42 Coupe in Phuket, marking an important step in intro-



EXCESS-13



*All the Winners at the Robb Report Best of the Best awards 2025.*

ducing this highly anticipated model to the Thai market. Designed for owners who seek performance, protection, and modern aesthetics, the Aquila 42 Coupe represents a new direction in power catamaran design—perfectly aligned with Southeast Asia’s cruising lifestyle.

Momentum continues into March, with the upcoming premieres of Excess 13 and Excess 14. These next-generation sailing catamarans bring a fresh design language, enhanced performance, and increased onboard comfort—further strengthening Primus Marine’s position as a gateway to the latest global innovations in yachting.

Together, these launches reflect a clear

strategy: to continuously expand a portfolio that meets evolving market expectations while staying ahead of international trends.

As the year begins, Primus Marine stands on solid ground—supported by awards, successful events, strong client response, and an expanding fleet. More importantly, the company is helping shape the future of yachting in Thailand, setting new benchmarks for service, expertise, and lifestyle-driven ownership.

For Primus Marine, this is only the beginning. The journey ahead promises continued growth, new horizons, and a lasting impact on Thailand’s marine industry.

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# Bill Barry-Cotter:

Six decades at the helm — and why Southeast Asia is his next horizon



Few figures have shaped modern Australian boatbuilding as profoundly as Bill Barry-Cotter.

The founder of three influential boat brands throughout his six-decade career, Barry-Cotter's passion and philosophy have culminated in his latest venture: Maritimo, a luxury motor yacht brand that represents his bluewater philosophy, dedication to craftsmanship and decades of hard-earned experience.

But his impact extends beyond the factory floor and to the world of racing: his teams have secured 16 Australian Offshore Superboat Championships. Together, those achievements reflect a rare blend of commercial success, engineering credibility and real-world offshore performance.

## From apprenticeship to industry pioneer

While his story begins far from the tropics, in the small Australian town of Adelong, New South Wales, Barry-Cotter's influence increasingly extends into

Southeast Asia, where long-range capability, engineering integrity and climate-ready design are becoming non-negotiables for serious owners.

Raised by a farmer and a schoolteacher, Barry-Cotter's early foundation was one of discipline and practicality. A sailing trip on Sydney's Pittwater sparked his passion for the water, leading to a boat-building apprenticeship at just 16. By 19, he had already built his first boat. At 21, he founded Mariner Cruisers.

It was a mixture of luck and hard work — Barry-Cotter's employer retired, gifting him the jigs and tooling of the business that enabled him to launch his own company, producing both sailing yachts and motorboats. Just twelve years later, Mariner had become Australia's largest big-boat manufacturer.

Crucially, this era coincided with a material revolution. As the industry transitioned from timber to fibreglass, Barry-Cotter recognised its advantages early.

"In the early days, wooden hulls were the standard, but fibreglass was a game-changer," Barry-Cotter said. "It was more durable and far easier to maintain, while also allowing us to design stronger, more efficient hull forms. At Mariner, we made a deliberate decision to adopt fibreglass early to build boats that would endure. That focus on durability and performance is a philosophy that guides me to this day."

## Building brands beyond boats

After a turbulent period that saw Barry-Cotter selling Mariner, only to buy it back following liquidation, he relocated to Australia's Gold Coast — then an emerging marine hub. There, he founded Riviera in 1981 with the goal of not just building quality boats, but crafting Riviera's identity: a brand defined by scale, style and production discipline.

Starting with just five employees, the fledgling yard produced eight boats in its first year — a notable achievement at a time when Australia's boat-building industry was still fragmented.

But it also demonstrated Barry-Cotter's ability to establish structured manufacturing systems and brand confidence from the outset, while also applying key learnings to refine both product and process while responding to changing markets. It is this rare ability to create enduring brands that highlights Barry-Cotter's lasting influence on Australian boatbuilding.

## Racing as research and development

Barry-Cotter's engineering philosophy is informed not just by cruising but by competition. Extreme conditions expose weaknesses quickly, and offshore racing is Barry-Cotter's favourite proving ground. Over the years, his teams have secured 16 Australian Offshore Superboat Championships, including the 2019 UIM XCAT World Championship won by Barry-Cotter's son, Tom, and racing team member Ross Willaton.

But beyond accolades are critical insights into the craft and engineering of boat-building. Lessons learned on the racecourse are fed directly into production, improving the yachts Barry-Cotter builds for owners worldwide.

"Offshore racing is the ultimate test," Barry-Cotter says. "It's where innovations are tested at their limits, shaping yachts that are more reliable and perform better offshore."

That same pioneering mindset gave rise to Maritimo. Founded in 2003, it is a marque that synthesises decades of hard-earned knowledge into long-range luxury motor yachts engineered for bluewater cruising. Maritimo focuses on shaft-driven propulsion, robust hulls, serviceable systems and a refusal to over-complicate engineering.

This philosophy is embodied in what the company calls "Service Practicality": designing yachts that are easy to maintain and built so well they rarely need intervention at all.

## Why Southeast Asia fits Maritimo's DNA

As Maritimo expands globally, Southeast Asia has emerged as a region of strategic importance. The appeal is mutual. Owners across Thailand and the wider region are increasingly seeking yachts capable of extended cruising between locales like Koh Samui and Koh Phangan, operating reliably in heat and humidity while delivering expert offshore range.

Maritimo's enclosed, air-conditioned flybridges resonate strongly in tropical climates, offering protection from sun and monsoon rains without sacrificing visibility. With proven seaworthiness and efficient fuel systems, Maritimo yachts give owners the confidence to venture on longer passages — qualities essential for cruising grounds such as the Andaman Sea.

Models from the M-Series, including the latest M50 Flybridge, exemplify this balance of performance and comfort. Designed with real-world use in mind, they appeal to owners who value substance as much as aesthetics.



## Honouring legacy, expanding the portfolio

In 2024, Maritimo announced the acquisition of the Caribbean brand, an iconic Australian name originally associated with Bertram hulls before becoming independent. Rather than blending identities, the strategy is complementary: Maritimo will continue to focus on the 50–75-foot luxury segment, while Caribbean offers a smaller, hybrid fishing-and-cruising platform.

The move broadens Maritimo's reach while preserving the heritage of a respected brand, combining traditional fixes with modern engineering and elevated finishes.

## A life defined by the sea

In moments of reflection, Barry-Cotter describes his life as “a relentless pursuit of excellence,” guided by perseverance, loyalty and an unwavering respect for the sea.

Despite a career dominated by motor yachts, sailing remains deeply personal. Barry-Cotter continues to campaign classic and modern yachts alike, including the restored 32-foot Katwinchar and the Swan Maritimo 100, both of which serve as platforms for experimentation and innovation.

“In particular, the Katwinchar holds a special place in my heart,” Barry-Cotter says. “My father, Frank, owned her in the 1960s. After years of searching, I found her in a dilapidated state on Gumtree. We spent two years restoring her, and it was a great joy when she won the Grand Veterans class in the 2019 Sydney-Hobart race.”

Gearing up for the year ahead, Barry-Cotter's focus for Maritimo is firmly on Southeast Asia, where serious cruising culture is maturing, engineering integrity is increasingly valued and discerning owners are prioritising long-range capability.

For a new generation of owners with a deeper appreciation for yachts built with longevity, purpose and real-world performance, Australia's Maritimo is a kindred spirit, offering a life of discovery that extends far beyond the horizon.



Maritimo Expands Its S-Series Line with the All-New S50:  
The Ideal Sedan Motor Yacht for Southeast Asia



Australia's world-class luxury motor yacht builder, is marking a new era for the brand's next-generation S-Series with the launch of its latest model: the S50 Sedan Motor Yacht, which will make its global debut at the 2026 Sanctuary Cove International Boat Show. Designed with modern luxury and functionality in mind, the S50 offers the perfect balance of performance, comfort and versatility — ideally suited for cruising in Southeast Asia's tropical waters.

The S50 is not simply a variation of the celebrated M50; it is a ground-up reimagining of the classic Maritimo sport yacht DNA. While it continues Maritimo's legacy of race-bred engineering and refined Australian craftsmanship, the S50 also incorporates new design elements inspired by the success of the M50 and S55 series, making it arguably the most refined luxury craft in Maritimo's popular S-series.

"We wanted the S50 to be more than just the M50's smaller sibling," said Neil McCabe, Maritimo's Design Manager. "It's a purpose-built sports motor yacht that's spacious, sleek and entirely focused on the owner's experience. With the S55 generation proving to be a landmark success for the brand, we saw an opportunity to take that design language even further, refining the profile, enhancing usability and delivering a vessel that feels every bit as progressive and luxurious, but in a more compact footprint."

### Refined Design Meets Practical Innovation

The S50 features a sleek, automotive-inspired silhouette, a slender hardtop and a redefined interior flow that maximises natural light and living space. Inside, a single-level saloon and cockpit layout enhances connectivity, while a full galley, generous lounge area and two luxurious staterooms create a sense of openness and comfort rarely found in a 50-foot yacht. Perfect for extended cruising and exploring the hidden gems of Southeast Asia's islands, the cockpit itself is larger, thanks to a new Euro-style boot that hinges from just in front of the curved seat and reveals the entire lazarette — a haven for all manner of water toys.

"Owners of S-Series craft tend to be hands-on operators," said Julian Villegas, Maritimo's Senior Designer. "They appreciate simplicity, space and style," "They want a boat that's easy to run, easy to maintain and doesn't compromise on luxury. This is precisely what the S50 delivers."

### Space Inside and Out

Drawing on extensive client feedback and the expertise of Maritimo's in-house team, the S50 was designed to not only maximise space efficiency but also to convey a sense of spaciousness within its streamlined dimensions. To achieve this, the cockpit, adjoining galley and lounge are on the same level, allowing for greater versatility. The galley's pantry and bureau can hold drawer fridges, wine storage or an ice maker, and an angled, two-seater settee positioned between the galley and the main lounge, which can easily convert into an extra double bed. The design aims to create a feeling of openness and seamless flow.

Prioritising comfort, the galley boasts a generous 2.4-metres of headroom, while the saloon enjoys 2 metres. Below deck, there is ample headroom of 1.94m, with the luxurious Owner's Stateroom. Each motor yacht also features abundant natural light through windows with slim frames, enhancing the sense of space and offering clear views from both the helm and galley. Opening ports and deck hatches also invite light and fresh air in, making every space feel open and inviting.

### A True Maritimo: Compact, Capable and Confident

Beneath the S50's streamlined exterior lies a deeper focus on functionality and proportion. The yacht's running platform builds on the proven engineering of the M50 while shedding unnecessary weight through refined laminates and infusion processes. Every structural component has been considered to enhance performance, seakeeping and efficiency.

The S50's blend of innovation and craftsmanship positions it as the perfect contender for the Southeast Asian market. With its new hardtop design, increased cockpit and storage space, and a master suite that rivals much larger yachts, it delivers on Maritimo's commitment to luxury cruising without compromising on performance, liveability, and comfort.

Neil McCabe also said, "It's the perfect package. Large enough to offer real luxury and range, but still manageable for an owner-operator. With the S50, we've distilled everything that makes the S-Series special into its purest form." With its blend of cutting-edge design, expanded functionality and unmistakable Maritimo craftsmanship, the S50 stands as a symbol of the brand's forward momentum. It honours its heritage while evolving the brand's appeal, creating a genuinely unique member of the ever-expanding Maritimo S-Series family.

**Follow Maritimo:** Website: [maritimo.com.au](http://maritimo.com.au); Facebook: [@maritimoyachts](https://www.facebook.com/maritimoyachts); Instagram: [@maritimoyachts](https://www.instagram.com/maritimoyachts)



## *SEA Yachting* Q & A with *East Marine Asia's* *Scott Duncanson*

# WORKING AT EAST MARINE ASIA

**P**lease tell us what your role is at East Marine Asia and how you came to work for the chandlery/shipyard?

I joined East Marine in a sales role, bringing with me nearly two decades of experience as a loyal customer. While retail is a new field for me, I'm excited and motivated by the challenge. My background in sailing/yacht racing and as a long-term customer gives me a unique perspective—I understand the needs and expectations of boat owners first-hand. I've already found great satisfaction in working with customers, guiding them toward the right products, and helping them make confident purchase decisions.

**What is special about East Marine Asia compared to other chandleries in the region?**

East Marine Asia stands out as Southeast Asia's largest and most complete yacht chandlery, combining an unmatched product range, specialized services like an AWLGRIP - AWLMIX paint mixing center, and a strategic location inside Phuket Boat Lagoon. Unlike many regional chandleries, it offers both retail convenience and technical expertise, making it a one-stop hub for coatings, rigging, and marine equipment.

East Marine Asia is unique in Thailand mainly due to its central location at the Phuket Boat Lagoon and the huge range of stock and equipment carried. It's e-commerce capabilities are equally impressive and offers one of the best online shopping experiences around.

**Please tell us about the inventory/stock you have on-hand?** East Marine Asia carries a large range of Boat Building equipment, tools and materials. West System, ATL Composites, Ronstan, Antal, Muir, Awlgrip, Donaghys the list of major marine suppliers represented is very impressive.

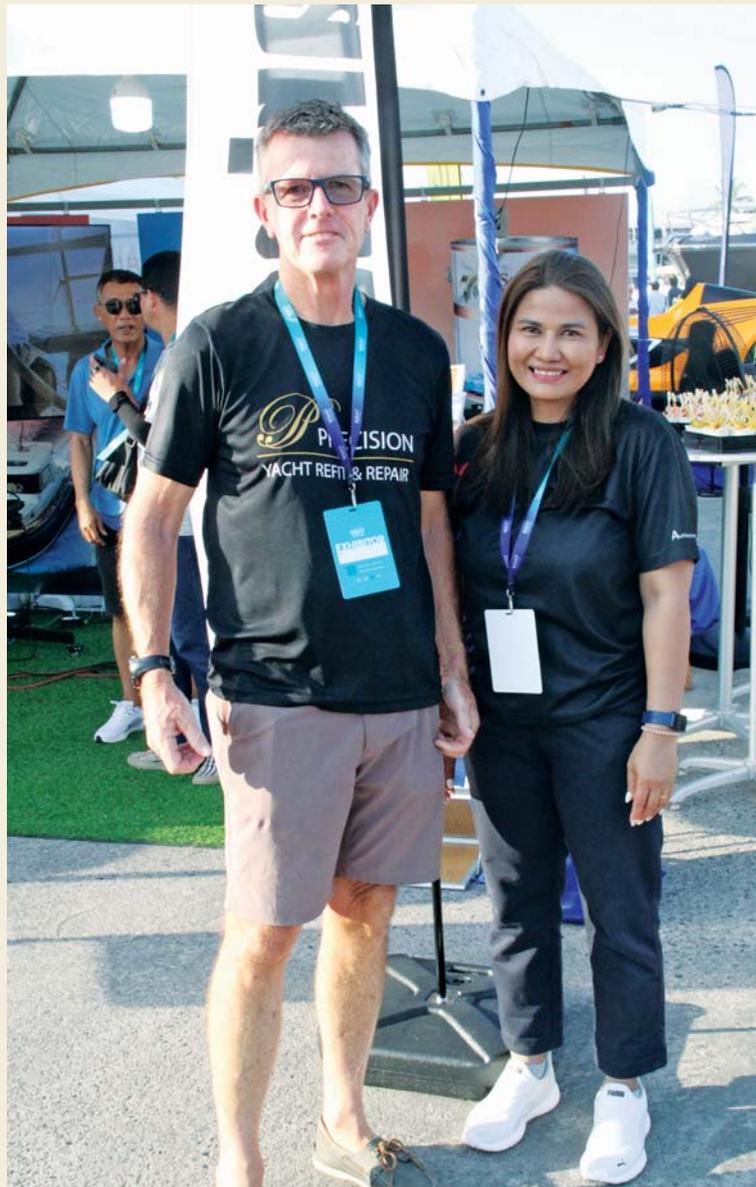
**Please tell us a little about Precision Shipwright Services, your sister company.** Precision Shipwright Services features a team of highly trained marine trades people skilled in all types of surface refinishing, from full hull and deck resprays to the most detailed interior carpentry and varnishing. All boat building and repair services are represented as well as a fully equipped rigging shop. No job is too big or too small whether it be a simple eye-splice to full and complete refits. Where East Marine Asia provides the materials (coatings, gear, rigging hardware), Precision Shipwright Services provides the hands-on expertise to apply and integrate them.

**How important is it for the Phuket boating community to have a shop like East Marine Asia close at hand?** Having East Marine Asia close at hand is extremely important for Phuket's boating community because it provides immediate access to high-quality marine equipment, coatings, rigging, and repair supplies—critical in a region where the tropical conditions, and heavy usage demand constant maintenance. Its convenient location makes it a cornerstone for both local operators and visiting yachts, reducing downtime and ensuring vessels remain seaworthy.

## **SAILING BACKGROUND**

**Favourite Marina?** My home club he Cruising Yacht Club of South Australia (CYCSA), located on the Le Fevre Peninsula at North Haven outside Adelaide – it has brilliant marina and hard-stand facilities.

**Favourite Anchorage?** Koh Yao Noi during the Bay Regatta.



*Scott with Jiraporn Na Pankaew, Precision's Business Administrator.*



*Scott with Supraanee "Pan" Kotphun, East Marine Asia's Senior Sales Executive.*



**Favourite Chandlery?** East Marine Asia.

**Favourite Sailing Film?** Aussie Assault, which documents the first-ever winning of the America's Cup by a non-US country; shows the background story of the preparation, design, construction, testing, and trials of Australia's winning yacht, Australia II, including the elimination of British yacht Victory '83 and the final main race itself where Australia is victorious over the Americans on 26 September 1983.

**Favourite Sailing Book?** Born to Win by John Bertrand; against very-long odds, the Melbourne-born Bertrand skippered Australia II to victory in the 1983 America's Cup, ending 132 years of American supremacy.

**Favourite Sailing Hero?** Terry Hutchinson, there are not many sailors more successful in multiple classes sailing everything from Melges 24s, Farr 40s, TP52s up to foiling in the America's Cup.

**Favourite Boat Show?** The Japan International Boat Show in Tokyo.

**Favourite type of sailing boat?** At this stage in life the ILCA 7, as it's sailing in its most simple, purist form. Larger boats most all from the design office of Kiwi, Rob Shaw.

**Favourite Regatta?** Any ILCA Lasers Masters Event.

## **SAILING ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

Scott has been a member of the Cruising Yacht Club of South Australia (CYCSA) since 1985. In Phuket he first joined the Ao Chalong Yacht Club in 1999 serving on the Race Committee before becoming Commodore in 2005 – 2007 and 2014 – 2021. His more notable yacht racing successes include:

1986-89 National and International Junior Off-shore Group champion, Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide.

1988-89 South Australian Yachtsman of the year.

2000, 2007, 2008, 2012 - 1st place Phuket King's Cup Regatta

2004, 2006 2007 – 1st place Phuket Raceweek

2005, 2008, 2011 - 1st place Royal Langkawi International Regatta

2002, 2008, 2010, 2014, 2015, 2016 - 1st place TOTG Coronation Cup Regatta, Pattaya.



Scott Duncanson, always at home on the water (photo by Guy Nowell).



# Boatworks Phuket

ticks all the boxes when it comes to service and repairs



**B**oatworks Phuket opened in 2020 and is located at the former Latitude 8 Workshop site in Chalong along the road up to the Big Buddha. Boatworks provides a wide range of services to its marine customers, including but not limited to marine repairs and restoration, rigging, race boat management, rubber dinghy repairs, and yacht delivery. Boatworks has established partnerships with pedigree marine brands such as All Yacht Spars, Australia and Colligo Marine.

General Manager Nick Gutry started his career serving as an apprentice shipwright in New Zealand before moving abroad to Asia. Nick has an extensive history in working with composites, rigging and all manner of marine build and repairs. Locally, he is also the boat manager for the Fuzazi Racing team and is actively involved in local cruising and racing activities. Feel free to contact Nick for any enquiries you might have about your boat, dinghy or project!

[nick@boatworksp Phuket.com](mailto:nick@boatworksp Phuket.com) (<https://www.facebook.com/boatworksp Phuket>)



Photography by Scott Murray

## The Next Factor does it again, winning second straight Raja Muda Cup



As has become standard practice in the last three Raja Muda regattas, the Raja Muda Cup was decided on the final race by one point with Rolf Heemskerck's *The Next Factor* edging out Ray Roberts' *Hollywood Samurai*.

Nick Burns' *Blitz* was third followed by Sarab Jeet Singh's *Windshikher*, Steve McCornaghy's *Aftershock* and Ahmad behind Fakrizan bin Deraman's *Uranus*, in the elite six-boat class.

*Windshikher* had a tough regatta as on the second last day they ran aground although no serious damage was done to the boat and on the final day, they had a mishap that saw half a dozen crew go overboard. All were recovered safely thanks to the help of *Team Hollywood*, who were granted six minutes on redress and the only thing damaged was the crew's egos.

The 2023 event saw what was the closest ever Raja Muda Cup (Class 1) final

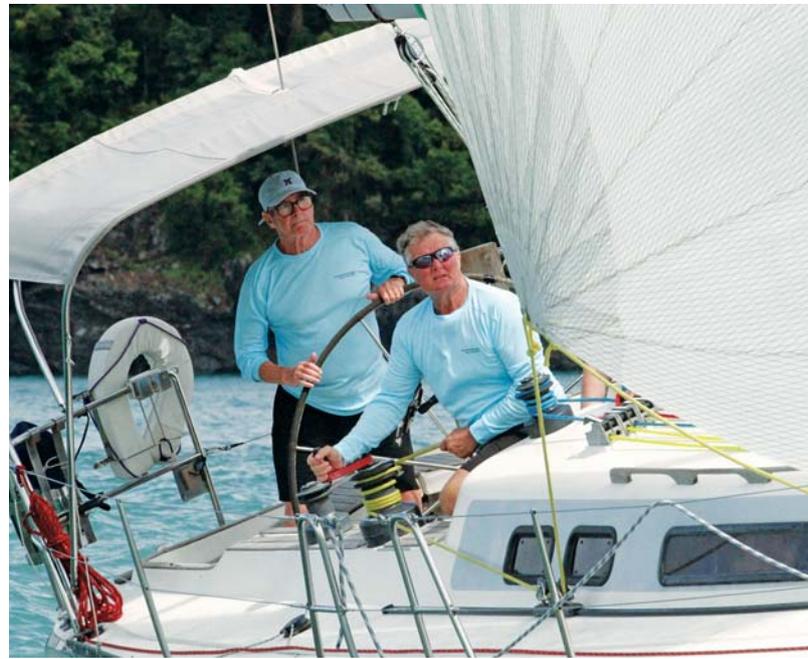
in history, as Nick Burns' *Witchcraft* defeated Rolf Heemskerk's *The Next Factor* by just two seconds on corrected time in the final race and one second on corrected time in the penultimate race, winning the cherished Raja Muda Trophy by one point overall and giving Burns his fourth "Raja Muda" title.

In 2024, the tables were turned. Going into the final day, only three points separated the top three yachts, with Nick Burns now sailing *Blitz* leading Rolf Heemskerk's *The Next Factor* by one point and Ray Roberts' *Hollywood Samurai* by two points. However, *Blitz* was OCS for the start of the second race and this resulted in a close fought win on points for *The Next Factor*.

PRO Simon James gave class one (Racing) two windward-leewards on the final day while sending the other four classes (Premier, Sports, Club & Cruising) on an around-the-islands course.

The two-boat Premier Class (class two) saw Peter Cremers' sleek *Shatoosh*, win all seven races defeating RSYC Commodore Ramasamay Menon's *Rama Rama VG*. The beautiful Warwick 75 repeated as the Jugra Challenge Cup winner, clinching its fifth title in this class.





Thee Raja Muda of Selangor, Tengku Amir Shah (thumbs up), sailing on *Maduzi*.

The Dato' Abdul Aziz Ismail Challenge Trophy was awarded to the winner of the three-boat Sports class (class three) and this year it was won by Singapore's Lee Yi Min's *Jolt* who defeated Matt Whittingham's *Insanity* by seven points and Amir Zohri's *Malabar* by eleven points. Whittingham colourfully had a spinnaker made of him smoking a cigar so he captured the award for artistic merit.

The Jeff Harris Challenge Trophy was awarded to the winner of the six-boat Club class (class four). It was captured by James Duke and his ebullient crew on *Kimikimi*. They defeated Keith Garry's *Beaux Espirits* by three points, who in turn holds a three-point lead over Peter Jong's *Kesini*. Rounding out the class were *Maduzi* with the Raja Muda of Selangor Tengku Amir Shah on board, Steve Manning's *Black Baza* and Dennis Chan & Joon Ming's *Duan Duan*.

The Royal Langkawi Yacht Club Award was the prize for the six-boat Cruising Class (class five) and it was won by Amir Zohri's *Dash* by three points over Keith Miller's *Sade*. *Red G* (formerly *VG Offshore*) skipped by Azlan was third, followed by Husaini bin Mohd R's Marikh, Ken Yap's *Millennium* and Yukinori

Kirihara's *Lucky Marlin*. By the way, Ken is usually the first person to register for every Raja Muda regatta.

Rear Commodore of the RSYC was aboard *Beaux Espirits* for this race while Past Commodore Dato' Richard Curtis sailed on Rama's *Rama Rama VG* making for a fun and interesting rival on the final, albeit in different classes.

Regatta Chairman Isyrad Ismail and Ms Chua Yee Ling, CEO of Tourism Selangor, gave out the awards for the Mun Wai Langkawi Harbour Series (Lee Mun Wai being a former committee who passed away in 2022). And then, to cap it all off the Raja Muda of Selangor Tengku Amir Shah and RSYC Commodore Ramasamay Menon gave out the final awards.

At night, in the Straits of Malacca, in the darkness, you get a sense of what the sailors of yore had to endure during their expeditions. Imagine being out there without any form of electronic gadgetry, caught in a raging thunderstorm without any visible landmarks, not knowing what was lurking in wait for you.

The regatta has been hailed as a "tactician's regatta" as the strong currents, tides, sea and land breezes demand the utmost

concentration and planning. Years past, pirates made the Straits of Malacca one of the most dangerous passages on earth. But today, it's not pirates that sailors fear, but container vessels, fishing trawlers, and floating debris. The regatta's night passages can be particularly hazardous as many of the fishing vessels use the "Bic" system for illumination (flicking their lighter on just before a yacht's bow is set to cut them into two). However, the very visible presence of both the Malaysian Maritime Police and the Malaysian Coast Guard make maneuverability much easier for the regatta's participants.

Coastal conditions in the Straits of Malacca set this event apart. Strong tides, unpredictable winds, shallow mud banks, fishing nets strung out across the course and "Sumatra" storms that appear from nowhere all contribute to making the three-night passages races uniquely challenging. Local knowledge certainly helps the navigator but it takes a combination of skill and luck to successfully decide if it's best to hug the coast, sail out offshore or take a more or less straight line up the middle. Most skippers also have to deal with very light winds at some point, and this is the time when concentration and stamina really come into play. On the upside, the sun shines regularly, the water is warm, and shorts and tee-shirts are the order of the day.

Known for its unpredictable winds, weather and tide, the RMSIR provides excitement for even the most experienced of sailors, along with an interesting challenge. Add



*Raja Muda Cup Winners*

to that a little bit of sightseeing and fun social events at every stop and you have a regatta with everything.

A huge shout-out must go to regatta coordinator Norhamizah "Miza" Amiruddin. Moving this regatta, all its participants, their belongings, and all the equipment needed to keep the event running from Port Klang to Pangkor, Pangkor to Penang and finally Penang on to Langkawi is no easy task and Miza and her team do a fabulous job with the logistics of this event.

Finally, enough can't be said for Technical Director Malcolm Elliott, the glue that holds the regatta together – without his hard work, intelligence and improvisation it would be impossible for the regatta to run as smoothly as it does.





# DERANI YACHTS SECURES DEALERSHIP FOR MAJESTY, NOMAD, AND ORYX BRANDS IN THAILAND AND MALAYSIA

*Oryx 47 LX.*



*Majesty 100 Terrace.*

Derani Yachts, a leading yachting company serving South-East Asia's premium marine sector, is proud to announce its appointment as the Thailand and Malaysia dealer for three brands of Gulf Craft – the UAE shipyard known for its fully integrated composite yacht and leisure boat manufacturing.

This expanded partnership introduces Majesty and Nomad yachts and superyachts, together with Oryx cabin cruisers, into the Derani Yachts portfolio, marking a significant milestone as Thailand and Malaysia continue to strengthen their positions as two of Asia's most dynamic yachting destinations. Owners across both markets will now benefit from direct access to a comprehensive range of vessels from 10 metres (32 ft) to 55 metres (180 ft), each engineered for comfort, stability, and warm-water performance – qualities that perfectly support year-round cruising across the coastlines, archipelagos, and protected island waters of Thailand and neighbouring Malaysia.

Majesty yachts and superyachts represent the pinnacle of Gulf Craft's luxury craftsmanship, offering spacious layouts, seamless indoor-outdoor connections, and class-leading comfort for owners seeking a Life of Excellence on the water. Complementing the Majesty line, Nomad brings a philosophy of extended onboard living, climate-adaptive interiors, and exceptional sea-keeping – attributes ideally



Nomad 101 - top page two

*Nomad 101.*

suiting to South-East Asian conditions where humidity, variable sea states, and multi-day cruising are common. Completing the portfolio, Oryx delivers performance, versatility, and contemporary styling for day cruising, island hopping, and social boating.

“South-East Asia continues to be one of the world’s most exciting growth regions for yachting, and partnering with Derani Yachts allows us to serve these markets with the level of expertise and local knowledge they deserve. Derani Yachts’ reputation, professionalism, and long-standing commitment to premium boating make them an ideal representative for Majesty, Nomad, and Oryx in Thailand and Malaysia,” – said Abdul Gaffar Saiyed, Regional Sales Manager at Gulf Craft.

“We are thrilled to represent Majesty, Nomad, and Oryx lines in Thailand and Malaysia. These yachts and boats are exceptionally well suited to how people cruise in South-East Asia – from family trips among the islands to extended passagemaking. Our team is committed to providing owners with the highest standards of service, support, and guidance throughout their ownership journey,” – shared Hakan Lange, Managing Director of Derani Yachts.

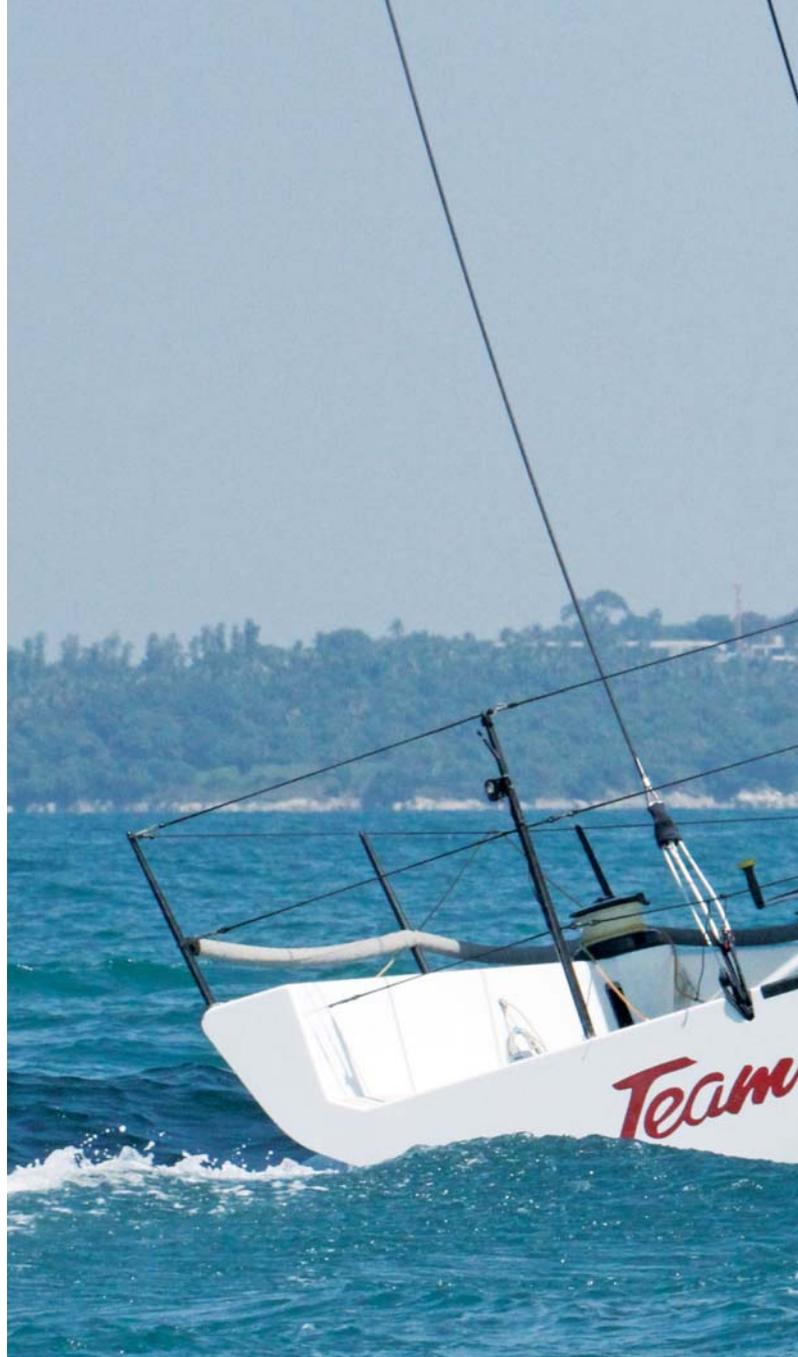
The diverse product lines of Majesty, Nomad, and Oryx make them a compelling choice for Thailand’s active boating communities across Phuket and Krabi, Pattaya, and the wider Gulf of Thailand,



as well as Malaysia’s established marine destinations including Langkawi, Penang, Lumut, Port Dickson, and the marinas along Johor’s southern coastline, complemented by outstanding cruising grounds throughout the eastern seaboard and its islands. The collaboration with Derani Yachts broadens the options available to discerning owners, raises industry benchmarks through world-class product offerings, and reinforces the region’s growing appetite for luxury, capability, and refined craftsmanship on the water ([www.derani-yachts.com](http://www.derani-yachts.com)).

# Team Hollywood

narrowly wins IRC Zero class  
at 37<sup>th</sup> Phuket King's Cup



It all came down to the last race on the last day to decide the winner in four of the classes competing in the 37th Phuket King's Cup. Even though *THA 72 Vayu* did win the eighth and final race in their series — both on corrected and elapsed time — and even though *THA 72 Vayu* had the same number of points as *Team Hollywood*, Ray Roberts' boat took home the coveted IRC Zero class based on one more first-place finish in the series as they won four races while *THA 72 Vayu* won three.

*THA 72 Vayu*, and the regatta, were blessed to have Queen Suthida Bajrasudhabimalalakshana on board for three days of racing as she prepares for next week's SEA Games. King Maha Vajiralongkorn Phra Vajiraklaochaoyuhua kindly escorted her to *THA 72 Vayu* today.

Heading into this morning's action, *Team Hollywood* and *THA 72 Vayu* were tied with eight points each, factoring in a drop race, as the class readied for two final windward-leeward races. The other yacht in the class *Aftershock*, finished seven points back when sailing wrapped up.



PRO Simon James gave IRC Zero and IRC 1 two windward-leewards today, while giving everyone else just one. Rolf Heemskerck's *The Next Factor* had a great final day on the water and won the seven-boat IRC 1 class based on their second and first-place showings today. Nick Burns' *Blitz* had two third-place finishes on the final day, helping them secure second overall, four points back of *The Next Factor*.

Craig Nicholls's *Alright* didn't have a great day on the water today, finishing sixth in both races, but their strong performance early in the regatta enabled them to lock down third spot in the IRC 1 class. J. Masuda & S. Kida's *Grand Turtle (Char Chan)* did have a very strong showing today, winning the first race and finishing second in the other, enabling them to grab fourth overall in IRC 1.

The Premier class was already decided before racing started today because of an unfortunate incident that occurred on the start line of the first race yesterday. Hans Rahmann's *Yasooda*





Queen Suthida Bajrasudhabimalalakshana (second from left) with crew sailing on VAYU THA72.



bumped Thailand's Ithinai Yingsiri's *Pine Pacific*. Neither boat could race today and as the only other boat in the class, *Shahtoosh*, had no chance of winning they didn't race either. Final results had Thailand's *Pine Pacific* winning this class again with *Shahtoosh* in second and *Yasooda* in third.

The seven-boat IRC class 2 saw Sergei Muskhin's *Madame Butterfly* edge Match Racing star Mati Sepp & his Estonian crew on *RTS-Baltic* by one point overall, even though *RTS-Baltic* won both races on the final day. Igor Puzanov's *Jolt* placed third in this class.

The four-boat Bareboat Charter A class saw Andrei Novikov's *Gloria* win the last three races in the series defeating Feng Chen's *Isabella* and Aleksei Brunov's *Moonshine* by four points overall to win the title in the class.

The Bareboat Charter B class, also with four boats, was ever so tight as well as one point separated the top three finishers. Hideyuki Miyachi's *Amigo II* and Takashi Ito's Team Miyakomuru (*Sariya*) finished tied on points with *Amigo II* claiming the title based on one more first-place finish. Maximillian Soh's *Piccolo* was third, just one point back, though they did win today's race on corrected and elapsed time.

The eight-boat monohull cruising class was also close and even though Igor Ginzberg's *Wind of Change* and Oleksly Borysov's *Ronin* finished tied on points — they both had one win in the class — the tie-breaker went to *Wind of Change* who had one more second-place finish than *Ronin*. Philippe Dalle's *Swan II* was next in the class, three points back.

Ryan Merrill's *Compass Rose*, the only boat racing in the multihull class, had a minor collision with the start boat at the beginning of the day and did not race, although as the only boat in its class, it did win all the places on the podium.

Eighty-one dinghy sailors battled it out early in the regatta, striving for honours in the eight titles up for grabs: Boy's and Girl's Optimists, ILCA4 U18 (mixed), the ILCA 7 class, the ILCA6 Open Class, the International 420 class, the Open Skiff U18 class and the Inclusive S/V14 class.

Forty-one sailors competed in the boy's and girl's Optimist classes. YRAT's Surapa Muangngam had an outstanding regatta winning four of the eight races in the class and finishing second three times. She beat her closest competitor China's Youjia Xu by 17 points while YRAT's Pakornkiat Chaiya-o-cha placed third, a further six points behind Youjia.

In the ILCA 4 class, there were 14 sailors (8 male, 6 female) competing, and Samut Prakan Provincial Sports Authority's (SPPSA) Pinchanok Klaysomboon also had an outstanding regatta winning five of the eight races and finishing second twice to finish 12 points ahead of YRAT's Kitchakhun Somkhanngoen, and 15 points ahead of Karit Phramanee.

The ILCA6 Open, ILCA7, and the 420s were scored together and by winning four races Voravong Rachtannak of the RTNA edged Gass Anton of Kazakh-



stan by two points to capture the class with fellow-Thai Thorfun Boonnak in third spot, five points back of Gaas.

The nine-boat Open Skiff U-18 class saw another outstanding performance, this time by UWC's Punthita Werotjanakul as she has won six of the eight races in the class to finish eight points ahead of UWC's Andries Kosuge & 14 points ahead of UWC Owen Wong-Forhart: a clean sweep by UWC. Congratulations to Seahorse Sailing School's Scott Duncanson and Garfield Meeysamsen for the role they played in developing these sailors.

Disabled Sailing Thailand (DAT) finished on the east coast of the island, just off of Ao Po Grand Marina. After four days of racing, last year's winners' Suraphong Chitkhong (helm) & Mak Sarawat (crew), defended their title finishing two points ahead of Tanat Upatising (helm) & Tatiana Kaurova (crew), with the crew of Thitapa Saelime (helm) and Martin Holmes (crew) taking third, eight points back of Tanat/Tatiana. Garfield's father, Thammasak Meeysamsen was the racing official, presiding over these races.

After racing was finished, the royal awards ceremony was held and King Maha Vajiralongkorn Phra Vajiraklaochaoyuhua and Queen Suthida Bajrasudhimalalakshana presided over the ceremony held at the Kanda Ballroom in the Beyond Kata hotel.

Sponsors for the regatta include the Kata Group of Hotels (host), Amazing Thailand, Centara Hotel & Resorts, the RMA Group, Coca Cola Haad Thip PCL, Bangkok Airways, Garmin Thailand, Ford Thailand, RICOH (Thailand), the National Telecom Public Company Limited, Primus Marine, Ao Po Grand Marina, B & G Marine Electronics, Bangkok Hospital, and Singha.

For more information and result, please visit [www.kingscup.com](http://www.kingscup.com).



## About the Phuket King's Cup Regatta – Asia's legendary yacht race under Royal Patronage

Under Royal Patronage, the Phuket King's Cup Regatta was founded in 1987, organized by the Phuket King's Cup Regatta Organizing Committee under the auspices of the Royal Varuna Yacht Club, in conjunction with the Yacht Racing Association of Thailand, the Royal Thai Navy and the Province of Phuket.

# FIRE AT SEA:

## PRACTICAL FIRE PROTECTION FOR YACHTS AND SMALL PASSENGER CRAFT

By Albert Nazarov, PhD FRINA CEng MSNANE. Albatross Marine Design (Thailand)



Since 2006, Thailand-based naval architecture and design firm Albatross Marine Design has worked internationally with shipyards, designing yachts and other vessels. In parallel, the company collaborates closely with authorities and industry stakeholders to improve the safety of boat operations across Southeast Asia. Following the fire accident that spread in Phuket, on January 7, 2026, I will look at the importance of fire safety, emphasizing the need for a systematic approach that combines sound design, proper installation, and safe operational practices.

Fire remains one of the most serious hazards aboard yachts and small passenger vessels. Unlike larger ships, small craft have limited space, fewer escape routes, and very little margin for error. A minor galley flare-up or an engine-room fuel leak can escalate in minutes, turning a comfortable yacht into an emergency. Recent speedboats fire in Phuket is a clear indication – fire safety standards should be followed!

### What is your boat?

This defines measures for fire protection. We will touch on two types of boats:

- recreational craft (including charter) below 24m in length; most imported yachts belong to this category. Fire safety on these boats is covered by ISO9094 standards, or similar national standards.
- small passenger boat, e.g. carrying more than 12 passengers commercially. Sample: Thai speedboats and local ferries. Fire safety on passenger ships is covered by SOLAS, however not often applied on small craft not making international voyages. There are various Small Commercial Craft Codes (SCV Codes) or national standards; if there are none it is best to follow well established codes.

They might look the same but risks, and thus requirements, are different. Recreational boats are basically for owners and guests, to be used at their own risks. On a passenger boat, a crowd of passengers can show unpredictable behavior; they take time to evacuate.

Fire safety consists of few elements:

- Prevention
- Detection
- Suppression
- Evacuation

Modern fire-protection standards for small craft are not just regulatory checklists—they represent hard-earned lessons from real incidents. When understood and applied correctly, they form a layered safety system that protects lives first and vessels second.

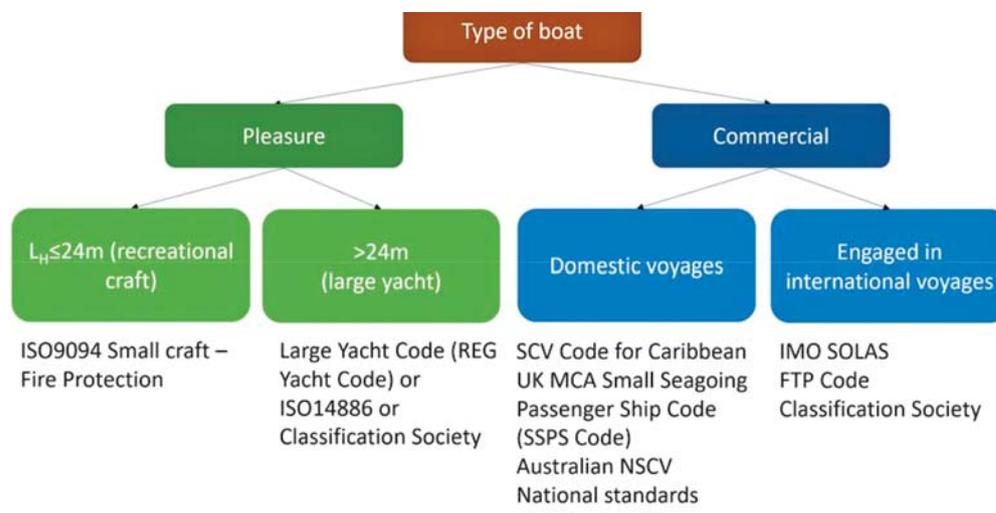


Figure 1 – Application of fire safety standards to pleasure and commercial craft

## Fire Prevention

Hull and finishing materials, insulation.

Here we come to the fire rating of boat structures and insulation. SOLAS requires hulls to be built of steel or equivalent material that usually means non-combustible materials. Of course, this can't be followed on small passenger craft on local routes, just because they are often built with fiberglass, or timber. On a passenger craft, SCV Codes are usually designated as A30 or A60 class (or 30 and 60-minute ratings) for fire insulation for the engine room contour. This will create a barrier in case of an engine room fire and give time for passengers to assemble and safely evacuate into life rafts.

Interior finishing material on passenger craft are strictly limited to “low fire spread” ones. This would usually be certified laminate, linoleum, paint, but no wood or plastic which will produce toxic fumes. Also, if the amount of combustible finishing materials is limited, per 1m<sup>2</sup> of interior space – say, it could be 5kg/m<sup>2</sup> for the control station and 30kg/m<sup>2</sup> for the passenger saloon.

In particular, most Thai speedboats will place gasoline tanks in the same space as batteries, and fuel hoses are of “garden” type. This is completely incorrect and has nothing to do with safety.

On recreational boats, there are few people on board and evacuation time is limited and the consequences of fire will not have severe social impact. Thus, the structure itself is deemed enough to provide basic fire rating. Interior finishing materials are not really limited, unlike commercial craft. However, ISO Small Craft standards impose these requirements:

- Restricted use of combustible material near cookers and heaters.
- Installation of gasoline tanks – compartments separated from the engine room, using proper ventilation, avoiding any electrical equipment (except the fuel sensor).
- Use of certified fireproof fuel hoses (marine hoses to ISO 7840 or similar) or steel pipes – almost never seen in Thailand on domestic craft. Mind double clamps on fuel hoses, if the diameter is 25mm or less.
- Structure of fuel tanks and their mounts.

Fuel systems themselves require careful design. Tanks must be protected from heat sources (separation from engines, too), fuel lines properly secured, and shut-off valves clearly marked and accessible. Many serious fires begin not with engines, but with poor fuel housekeeping. The same refers to re-fueling – often fuel spill is leads to fire.

## Fire Detection

On a small vessel, time is everything. Fire detection systems—especially smoke alarms in sleeping spaces—provide the crucial early warning that allows crew and passengers to react before escape routes are compromised.

Detection of fire on small boats has often been neglected. Yes, on some boats, especially open boats, everything can be seen visually. In a new version of ISO9094 standards, the detection system is required in the engine room, and in the cabins if there is more than one habitable space foreseen on a boat (not including toilets or showers). Note that fire detection sensors can be linked to “smart home” systems and monitored remotely.

In our designs, we use heat and smoke detectors in passenger spaces, cabins, galley, engine room, sometimes in fuel tank compartments. On larger recreational boats with multiple accommodations, we use them as well.

## Fire suppression

Passenger craft with an enclosed saloon might have sprinkler or water mist system installed – it really depends on size of craft and regulations.

For a recreational boat, most common and clear requirements are listed in ISO9044.

### Portable Fire Extinguishers: Where and How Many

Portable fire extinguishers must be placed so they can be reached immediately, without moving through a fire-risk area. They should be located:

- Within 2m of the main helm position, so the operator can respond without leaving the controls
- Within 2m of any cooking or heating appliance or open flame, but positioned so they remain reachable if that appliance is on fire
- Within 5m of sleeping bunks, measured horizontally
- Within 3m of outboard engines or engine-room fire ports, where these are fitted

Owners are responsible for ensuring that any extinguisher intended for use through a fire port is correctly rated and compatible with that fire port.

Minimum extinguisher capacity – at least one extinguisher rated 5A/34B is required for every 20m<sup>2</sup> of habitable space. If a habitable space is protected by a fixed fire-extinguishing system, only one portable extinguisher is required for that space

Practical takeaway: extinguishers must be close to people, close to risk areas, and powerful enough to stop a fire in its early stages—before escape routes are affected. Portable fire extinguishers may be stowed in dedicated boxes or lockers, provided their location is clearly marked with the appropriate IMO fire-extinguisher symbol.

## Protection of engine or engine room

Depending on the type and power of engine, the engine room should be protected by either fire extinguishers or fixed firefighting system. In our experience, for a typical engine room with inboard diesel engine an aerosol firefighting system is appropriate. On a commercial craft, it is common from classification society to require system capable to withstand two subsequent discharges.

On commercial vessels, some classification societies and national administrations require a dedicated fire pump and fire main, even on relatively small craft. While this equipment can be effective for boundary cooling or deck fires, its role must be understood in context. On passenger-carrying vessels, the crew size is often limited, and in a developing fire the crew's primary responsibility is the safe evacuation of passengers, not prolonged firefighting. If an initial, rapid attack using portable fire extinguishers is unsuccessful, continued manual firefighting may place both crew and passengers at greater risk. In such cases, the correct response is to focus on evacuation, rather than attempting sustained fire suppression with hoses.

Table 1 - ISO9094 Engine Room Fire Protection – Summary of Requirements

Engine type & location	Power / compartment size	Minimum fire protection required
Outboard engine(s)	≤ 25kW	No extinguisher required
	> 25kW and ≤ 220kW	1 portable extinguisher rated 34B
	> 220kW	2 portable extinguishers rated 34B
Petrol engine(s) (in engine box or above deck)	Any power	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Portable extinguisher(s) via fire port or</li> <li>• Fixed fire-extinguishing system</li> </ul>
Petrol engine(s) (below deck compartment)	Any power	Fixed fire-extinguishing system required
Diesel engine(s)	Compartment ≤ 3.5 m <sup>3</sup> and ≤ 120kW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Portable extinguisher(s) via fire port or</li> <li>• Fixed fire-extinguishing</li> </ul>

## Electrical drives and batteries

We design boats with electrical propulsion, both recreational and commercial. Most of them now would use lithium-ion batteries.

Use of lithium-ion batteries on small craft is covered by ISO 23625. They differ from traditional lead-acid batteries in two critical ways that directly affect fire safety. First, the electrolyte used in most lithium-ion batteries is flammable. This means that once a cell is damaged or overheated, it can contribute fuel to a fire rather than merely being affected by it. Second, under certain fault conditions, lithium-ion batteries can enter a phenomenon known as thermal runaway. During thermal runaway, internal cell reactions generate heat faster than it can be dissipated. Once initiated, this process becomes a self-sustaining exothermic reaction, leading to a rapid rise in temperature that is extremely difficult to stop. These differences explain why some lithium-ion battery fires escalate more violently than others. The ISO requirement is to provide temperature alarms in compartments where such batteries are installed, and provide proper ventilation. Fire suppression strategies should also be planned at the design stage.

## Evacuation

When a fire can no longer be controlled, escape becomes the overriding priority.

For recreational craft, ISO 9094 defines minimum requirements for fire exits and escape hatches, including their dimensions, accessibility, and location. Exits must be located away from major heat and fire sources wherever possible. As a general design principle, any space intended to accommodate more than four persons should provide at least two independent escape routes, ensuring that occupants are not trapped if one route is compromised.

For passenger-carrying vessels, evacuation planning is significantly more complex. Passengers are often unfamiliar with the vessel, may panic under stress, and rely entirely on crew guidance. For this reason, clear marking of passageways, doors, and escape routes is essential, along with designated muster stations where passengers can safely assemble for loading into life-rafts or rescue craft. Simple layouts, adequate emergency lighting, and unambiguous signage greatly reduce confusion during an emergency.

Commercial passenger vessels also carry a defined inventory of fire-safety equipment, typically including breathing apparatus, fire-fighter outfits, tools, fire buckets, and fire blankets. However, equipment alone is not enough—its location must be clearly marked, and crew must be trained in its correct use.

In the design of small fiberglass passenger craft, we place particular emphasis on direct evacuation to open air wherever possible. Burning fiberglass structures can generate dense, highly toxic smoke, rapidly reducing visibility and survivability in enclosed spaces. Where stairways form part of an escape route, they should be constructed from non-combustible materials, including surrounding bulkheads, to prevent collapse or fire spread during evacuation.

As part of onboard fire-safety information, fire safety plans must be displayed in clearly visible locations, allowing crew and passengers to quickly understand escape routes and emergency arrangements. Commercial operators recognize that crew training is as critical as vessel design and equipment.

## Thai requirements to domestic passenger boats

Fire safety requirements for domestic passenger boats in Thailand are enforced by the Marine Department through national regulations and practical inspection checklists. Although international conventions such as SOLAS formally apply to ships on international voyages, Thailand applies SOLAS-based principles to domestic passenger vessels, adapted to their size and operation. The focus is on preventing fires, detecting them early, and ensuring the crew can respond immediately to protect passengers.

For small passenger boats and speedboats, inspections concentrate on high-risk areas: engines, fuel systems, and electrical installations. Boats are required to carry an adequate number of approved portable fire extinguishers, located near machinery spaces and accessible from passenger areas. Fuel lines, tanks, and fittings must be in good condition and properly routed, engine compartments must be ventilated, and electrical systems must be of marine standard and protected against overheating and short circuits. Unapproved modifications, especially to engines or electrical systems, are a common cause of fires and are treated as serious non-compliance.

It is important to note that, unlike in more highly regulated jurisdictions, there are no specific mandatory requirements for hull or interior finishing materials on domestic passenger boats in Thailand. In particular, canopies, tents, and upholstery are not required to be made of low fire-spread materials. This may have been a decisive factor in the speedboat fire accident in Phuket mentioned above.

### Fire Extinguisher Class

		<b>Class A</b> (Ordinary Combustibles)	Used for general solid fuels Wood, paper, cloth, plastic, rubber
		<b>Class B</b> (Flammable Liquids)	Used for flammable liquid fuels Gasoline, diesel, cooking gas
		<b>Class C</b> (Electrical Equipment)	Used for electrical pannles fuels Electrical appliances, motors
		<b>Class D</b> (Combustible Metals)	Used for metal fuels Magnesium, Titanium, Aluminum
		<b>Class K</b> (Combustible Cooking)	Used for household oil fuels Vegetable oil, Animal oil, Animal fat

Fire extinguishers in Thailand are classified by the type of fire they can extinguish (Classes A, B, C, D, K) and by their agent (Dry Chemical, CO2, Foam, Water), with standards set by Thai Industrial Standards (TIS), TIS 332-2531. These cover ABC Dry Powder units for general use, CO2 for electrical/liquid fires, and specialized foams/powders for specific hazards like cooking oils (Class K). Typically, on a boat, one would use an ABS type of extinguisher with powder, type CO2 for electrical equipment.

#### Our 'red boat' experience

Our approach to fire safety is informed not only by standards, but by hands-on experience designing dedicated firefighting boats. Over the years, we have completed several such projects, each presenting unique challenges and solutions. One of the most notable is the “Beluga 18”, an unconventional but highly effective 18m design built using a carbon-fibre hull structure. The reduced structural weight allows the installation of substantial firefighting equipment, including onboard foam tanks and high-capacity systems. The vessel is classed with Lloyd’s Register.

Another recent and equally interesting project is the DP10 aluminum 10m powerboat. Together, these projects underline how material choice, weight management, and early system integration are key enablers of effective firefighting vessel design.



Figure 3 - FiFi catamaran 'Beluga-18' – designed by AMD, built in Sri Lanka/UAE.

Figure 4 - DP10 – fire and rescue boat, designed by AMD, built in UAE

#### From Regulation to Seamanship

Fire-protection standards for small craft are often seen as regulatory burdens. In reality, they reflect good seamanship. They recognize that yachts and small passenger vessels operate close to shore, carry non-professional passengers, and rely heavily on the competence of a small crew.

For owners and designers, the message is clear: fire safety must be built into vessels from the earliest design stage. For skippers and operators, regular inspection, maintenance, and crew training are non-negotiable.

Fire at sea is unforgiving—but with thoughtful design following proven standards, proper equipment, and disciplined operation, it is a risk that can be managed.

Fire safety is a system that involves management, training, design, and rescue.

## Sir Thomas Lipton Challenge Trophy to Be Presented at the 5th Singapore Regatta



### SINGAPORE

The 5th Singapore Regatta marks another milestone in the revival of one of the region's most anticipated sailing events. First organised by the Singapore Sailing Federation as a reimagined successor to the iconic Singapore Straits Regatta of the early 2000s, the event has been fully organised by the picturesque Changi Sailing Club (CSC) since 2025.

Traditionally held during the northeast monsoon, the Singapore Regatta takes place in the best sailing season of the year, offering consistently favourable wind conditions in local waters. This year's regatta will be held on 7–8 February 2026, typically the windiest and driest period of the season.

Supported by the Republic of Singapore Yacht Club and sanctioned by Singapore Sailing Federation, the event is borne from a vision to celebrate the very best of keelboat and multihull sailing in Singapore and the region. The Singapore Regatta is also the final qualifying event for the prestigious Sir Thomas Lipton Challenge Trophy, with the presentation of this historic Cup being a key highlight of the weekend.

First presented 103 years ago, the Sir Thomas Lipton Challenge Trophy is awarded to the best-performing IRC yacht in Southeast Asia. The qualifying events for the 2025/26 series are:

- Raja Muda Selangor International Regatta (RMSIR) 2025
- Phuket King's Cup Regatta (PKCR) 2025
- Royal Langkawi International Regatta (RLIR) 2026
- Singapore Regatta 2026

The trophy remains the only sailing series to unite the major regattas across mainland Southeast Asia. Congratulations go to CSC General Manager Choy Yi Hong for resurrecting this cherished chalice and for staging an event that has attracted more entries than any other regional regatta since COVID.

Rolf Heemskerk's The Next Factor has already secured the 2025/26 Sir Thomas Lipton Challenge Trophy, having won three of the four qualifying events. Rolf will appoint a crew member to attend the awards ceremony on 8 February 2026.

Racing at the Singapore Regatta includes a scenic passage race along the East Johor Straits, offering panoramic coastal views. Following Saturday's passage race, competitors will contest shorter windward-leeward races between Pulau Ubin and Pulau Tekong, two of Singapore's most iconic islands. It is truly "head-on-a-swivel" racing, as sailors must remain constantly alert for oil tankers and container ships navigating one of the busiest ports in the world.

The 2026 edition has attracted a strong and diverse fleet, with 37 boats registered — 28 keelboats and 9 multihulls — racing across six classes. Skippers represent 14 nationalities, underscoring the regatta's growing international profile.

One-design racing continues to gain momentum, with the J/24 fleet doubling in size compared to the 2025 edition, highlighting the strength and appeal of competitive one-design sailing in the region.

### Who to Watch

#### Jolt

Last season's Sir Thomas Lipton Cup winner and defending IRC Division champion, returning to face stiff competition from local veterans Adona (J/29) and Born in Fire (X-99) from the Netherlands and Germany respectively.

#### Schönst Sailing Club

A sailing club from Jiangsu, China, competing in both the J/24 and Platu One-Design classes. After finishing second in the J/24 class last year, they return in 2026 with two teams across both fleets.

#### Phoenix

An M23 skippered by CSC sailor Freddy Fam, the defending Multihull champion, returning to defend her title.

#### Black Baza

Steve Manning's new Oceanis 45 returns home from Langkawi after competing in RMSIR and RLIR, racing in the PY Class.

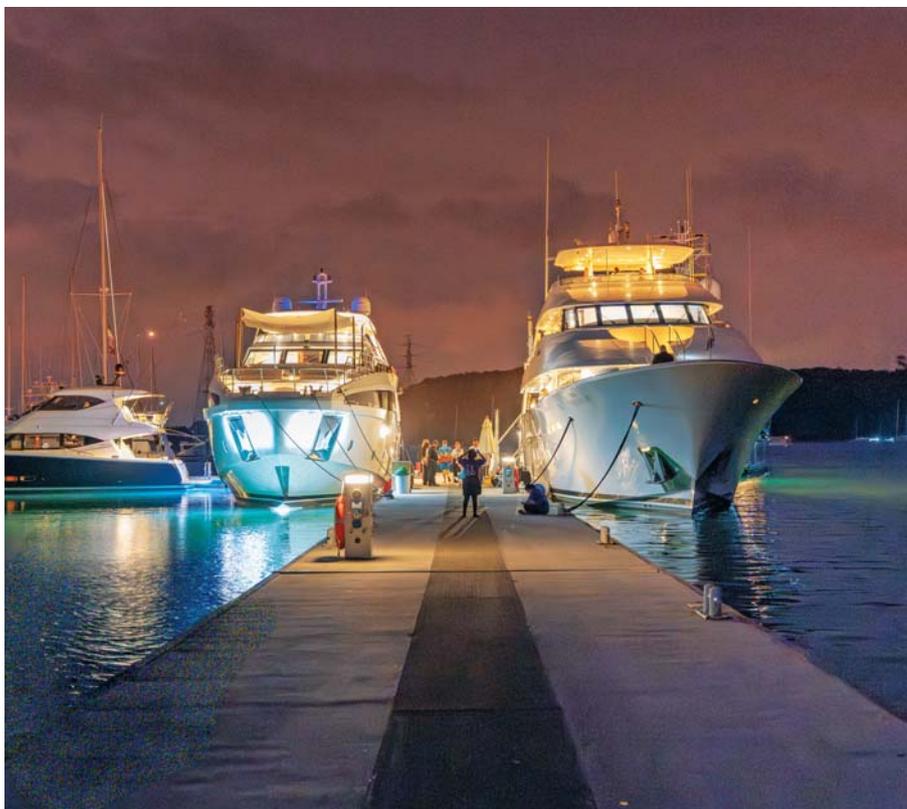
#### SMU Sailing Club

The prominent university team will be represented by two boats in the J/24 class and two boats in the Platu class: SMUve, SMUmad, Shengli and Quarterdeck.



# TIBS showcases beauty of the Andaman region





The Thailand International Boat Show, a Luxury Lifestyle Event 2026 was held for the second straight year in mid-January at Phuket's Yacht Haven Marina. It brought together senior government representatives and leaders from the marine and tourism industries to mark the start of one of Southeast Asia's key yachting and waterfront lifestyle events.

The opening ceremony was presided over by Ms. Natthriya Thaweewong, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Tourism and Sports, alongside Mr. Nirat Phongsittithaworn, Governor of Phuket Province, and representatives from local authorities and Thailand's tourism and marine sectors.

"Our focus has always been on delivering a high-quality event and a compelling experience for visitors," said David Hayes, CEO of JAND Events, organizers of the Thailand International Boat Show. "There was plenty to discover for families and first-time attendees, as well as serious buyers, as we had thousands of domestic and international visitors over four days. The show plays an essential role in supporting Thailand's marine and lifestyle industries and serves as a timely opening to Phuket's high season."

Now in its fourth year, the Thailand International Boat Show ran from 15–18 January 2026 and is recognized as Thailand's flagship platform for the marine industry and luxury waterfront living. The event followed a successful Thailand Yachting Conference held a day earlier, which brought together industry leaders and policymakers to discuss the

future of boating and marine tourism in the country. Together, they highlight the growing strategic importance of the sector to Thailand's tourism and investment landscape.

Visitors explored a curated selection of luxury yachts, marine services, waterfront properties and premium lifestyle brands, alongside marina-side dining, entertainment and social spaces designed for networking and leisure, offering a complete on-water-on-shore experience for both industry professionals and the public.

With Thailand continuing to attract high-spending travelers and yacht owners, the show plays a role in strengthening the country's reputation as a regional gateway for marine tourism, while supporting local businesses, marinas and hospitality operators in Phuket and beyond.

The show returned at a time when the Asia-Pacific region is recording some of the fastest growth in boating and water-based leisure globally. Forecasts point to an annual expansion of around 5% through 2030 in the global yacht charter market and more than 11% annual growth in the Asia-Pacific luxury yacht segment, with Thailand increasingly positioned to benefit from rising demand for marine recreation and coastal experiences.

Aligned with the Tourism Authority of Thailand's "The New Thailand" strategy, visitor spending on coastal destinations and water-led activities continues to grow, supported by long-haul travel recovery and the rising appeal of experience-based



tourism. This momentum is contributing to increased interest in marine recreation, chartering and coastal lifestyles — areas where Thailand is seeing particularly strong engagement.

As these demand patterns evolve, marine businesses, international yacht brands and lifestyle companies are responding by expanding their presence in Thailand, a shift reflected in the strong exhibitor lineup confirmed for the 2026 show.

Leading yacht brands such as Beneteau, Prestige Yachts, Sunreef Yachts, Gulf Craft, Excess and more, were joined with multihulls from Fountaine Pajot, Leopard Catamarans and Lagoon as well as a Max 48 SC. Making its Asian Premiere was the Aquila 42 Coupe, displayed by Primus Marine, while the 40-metre superyacht SeaBear — formerly owned by golf legend Jack Nicklaus — was the venue for the Superyacht Lounge, sponsored by Kata Rocks Superyacht Rendezvous.

This combination of global builders, regional distributors and Thai marine businesses is complemented by real estate developers such as Redwood Luxury Development, Above

Patong and Reignwood Park among others, and premium lifestyle brands, illustrating the depth of commercial activity now underpinning Thailand's water-driven tourism economy.

“Water-leisure and coastal tourism are now significant contributors to Thailand's visitor economy, and the commercial impact around the marine sector is broader than many people realize,” said Mr. Hayes. “Growth in recreation, equipment, coastal property and marine services reflects changing consumer behavior across the region, and the response from exhibitors this year has been strong — with on-land exhibition space already close to full. In-water, many of last year's leading brands have returned, and the superyacht presence at the show signals the confidence exhibitors have in maintaining a strong market position in Asia.

“As the Asia-Pacific boating market expands, Thailand has the potential to increase its share of marine-related spending,” Hayes added. “The range of businesses exhibiting at the 2026 show demonstrated the extent of economic activity occurring around the sector, and the opportunity for further development.”

## Thailand Yachting Conference focuses on “Sailing Towards the Future”



The Thailand Yachting Conference (TYC), the lead-in event for the Thailand International Boat Show 2026, was held January 14th at the Slate Nai Yang Beach in Phuket. The conference brought together government officials and leading industry professionals from across Thailand and the world to share insights on regulations, cruising grounds, infrastructure, superyachts, charter, management, technology and sustainability.

Jojo Singhmanee (Asia Pacific Superyachts) spoke about the magical superyacht cruising grounds of the Mergui Archipelago, which comprise over 800 islands sprinkled in the Andaman Sea. Fitri Tresnawida (Marina Development Indonesia/Bali Gapura Marina) presented Indonesia’s new flagship development Bali Gapura Marina, and outlined why Indonesia has a strong maritime culture. Nina Lee Boudoul (Sunreef Yachts) was not able to present in person, but provided a slide show showing how China is embracing the boating culture, and how quickly the expansion of the pleasure boat industry is taking place in this region.

Moderator Suzy Rayment (APSA Executive Director) covered the new marina developments in Hong Kong, and outlined the “maritime tourism” developments in Hong Kong and the Greater Bay Area of China. A second panel presentation by four superyacht industry experts: Gordon Fernandes (Asia Pacific Superyachts), Benjamin Tabuteau (Fraser Yachts/ASIAMARINE), Scott Finsten CMM (Ocean Marina) and Balan R Aramagan (Royal Phuket Marina), covered new superyacht facilities and developments in Thailand. On the west coast of Thailand Ocean Marina has increased capacity for larger superyachts up to 95m.

The panel then discussed improvements that could be made to the Thailand Superyacht Charter License in order to attract more superyachts to the region and allow for more streamlined charter operations. Green initiatives at Royal Phuket Marine highlighted the need for more sustainable practices within the industry, and the new developments in the Andaman Islands, and the re-opening of the Red Sea route concluded the panel discussions (credit The Asia-Pacific Superyacht Association (APSA)).



# Whale Dreamer — Sydney



Just launched, Whale Dreamer is a purpose-built 23-metre aluminium whale-watching catamaran designed and constructed by Sea Cat Ships, located at Ocean Marina, Thailand, for commercial operations in Sydney's open-coastal environment.

The vessel has been developed to operate along Australia's east coast humpback migration route, where reliability beyond Sydney Heads must be balanced with precise, low-impact maneuvering in proximity to marine wildlife. An aluminium catamaran platform was selected to deliver high transverse stability, predictable seakeeping, and low wake characteristics critical for passenger comfort and responsible whale-watching operations.

The hull form supports efficient cruising in variable sea states while allowing controlled speed reduction and effective station-keeping during observation. This operational profile minimizes unnecessary engine loading and disturbance to marine life, while maintaining strong safety and handling margins during extended time on location.

Passenger circulation and deck layouts have been arranged to maximize sightlines and situational awareness, reducing congestion during encounters and supporting calm, orderly operations. Construction



and systems selection reflect commercial duty requirements, with an emphasis on durability, accessibility for maintenance, and long-term reliability in salt-exposed coastal service.

The name Whale Dreamer reflects the vessel's intended role, not as a pursuit craft, but as a stable observation platform designed to operate in rhythm with the animals it encounters.

Launched at Ocean Marina, Thailand, and now preparing for delivery to Australia on her own hull, to entering service in Sydney, Whale Dreamer represents SeaCat Ships' disciplined, seamanlike approach to specialist passenger vessel design, balancing regulatory compliance, operational efficiency, and performance in demanding coastal conditions.

#### Principal Particulars

- **Length Overall:** 23.6 m
- **Beam:** 8.0 m
- **Depth:** 2.26 m
- **Draft (Loaded):** 1.55 m
- **Construction:** Aluminium
- **Passengers:** 150 pax
- **Speed:** 26 knots light, 20 knots cruising,
- **Capacities:** 2 x 3600 L fuel, 800 L freshwater, 800 L sullage



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# Remembering Freddie Kinmonth



Freddie was certainly a man for all seasons and all people where the action began on the sea and continued even harder on land. Some stories are just better left to the individuals involved, but there are a few stories that always bring a smile that should be shared amongst his many friends.

Freddie's successes were wide and varied in numerous offshore races and regattas around the Asian region, mostly in a long line of Mandrake boats that he jointly owned with Nick Burns, but also onboard Stella, Antipodes and Witchcraft to name a few. The most memorable highlights include pretty much winning overall most of the inshore regattas throughout Asia, with the crowning glory winning multiple China Sea races and culminating in him being named "Asian Skipper of the Year" in 2018 and Mandrake III winning the prestigious yacht of the year, a fitting reward for decades of competing at the highest level. He was also a very accomplished Etchell sailor in Hong Kong, winning many class championships. All of these events opening the door to countless crew and providing many opportunities that otherwise wouldn't have been afforded to mere mortals.

His other great passion was to build a replica of the *Saoirse*, an Irish top sail ketch. This was undertaken at Hegarty's Boatyard in Baltimore, Ireland. The original was first launched in 1922. She would go onto circumnavigate the world not long after. Such was Freddie's fascination with the story that he commissioned a replica be built, which took the best part of a decade to complete and hit the water nearly 100 years to the day from the original *Saoirse's* launch. Sadly, for Freddie, all the great plans of wooden boat festivals, cruises, rum drinks and storytelling onboard will have to be fulfilled by someone else. But the replica will certainly be an asset for the waterfront of his beloved Baltimore for many years to come. Hopefully, his family will enjoy this legacy and create their own stories.

That's the serious stuff. There was also plenty of hilarity when it came to some of the daily tasks on the offshore races, none more so than the activities in the water closet. There was something about Freddie and blocking the head. On the small *Mandrake* there was a vent which apart from the obvious, was also invaluable when calling for help. On one particular race to Vietnam, Freddie was calling for help just as we buried the bow into a big wave. It was hilarious to see him emerge sometime later soaked to the skin, much to the laughter of all on deck. Needless to say, he regaled in full details the incident in his big posh booming English voice.

One Koh Samui regatta, the two owners were having discussions as to the angle the boat should be sailed at. With some help from the crew as the discussion wasn't working out for either owner the crew decided to encourage Freddie to get the boat more on the wind, to which he replied in his best pompous British voice, "I might not want too" to raucous laughter. He certainly did things on his terms.

Then there was always the fun mocking of any crew that messed up and the countless hours of to-and-fro discussion of the said incidents. In fact, this lightheartedness often took the edge of the occasional stressful moment.

Then onshore there was the many excursions to many far-flung places around where the events took place. The geography lessons, and for that matter, life lessons continue to bring a smile when thinking of the antics, and regularly light up a social occasion when regaling them. In fact, he became almost the

dynamic duo with his great mate Clem Hill, who bought more to the shoreside activities than the racing. But Freddie loved having a solid reliable core crew. The fact we have raced together for more than two decades is a testament to, firstly Fred's choice of sailors, but more importantly his mates in life.

The other thing that he shared with a far wider audience than that of his immediate crew, was his booming voice, regularly entertaining the willing audience at various events that we attended, notably his renditions of his favourites, *The House of the Rising Sun* and *Sweet Caroline* at the many Raja Muda regattas he sailed. Luckily, he was present, as the singing gene pool was particularly weak.

There are far too many stories to put into words for this occasion, suffice to say, Freddie was a man for all seasons, incredibly loyal to his vast array of friends and loved by many far and wide. He will be sadly missed, but we all smile knowing that he was here.



RIP my friend.  
Peter "Fletch" Fletcher

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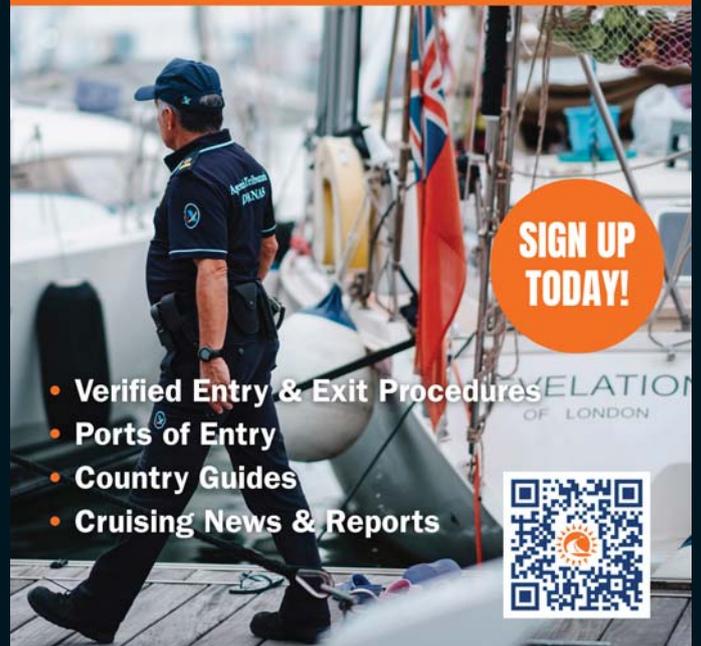


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## Great gusts, great scenery, great competition

Photography by Scott Murray



The Royal Langkawi International Regatta (RLIR) returned from January 19 to 24, 2026, reaffirming Langkawi's place on the regional sailing map and marking another milestone for one of Asia's most established yacht racing events. Hosted at the Royal Langkawi Yacht Club (RLYC) in Kuah, the regatta continues a tradition that began in 2003, combining competitive racing with Langkawi's reputation as a relaxed yet world-class cruising destination while promoting sports tourism in the country.

Since its inception, RLIR has played a quiet but important role in positioning Malaysia, and Langkawi in particular, as a credible sailing hub in Southeast Asia. Taking place at the start of the regional regatta season, it has long been seen as a natural warm-up for crews moving on to events in Thailand and beyond. Its timing, reliable wind conditions, and sheltered island setting have made it especially appealing to both serious racing teams and cruising sailors looking to test themselves in a competitive but approachable environment.

The 2026 edition attracted 34 yachts from a wide cross-section of sailing nations, including Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, Singapore, Japan, South Korea, Hong Kong, China, Chinese Taipei, India, Australia, the United Kingdom. Over 250 sailors participated, reinforcing RLIR's reputation as a genuinely international regatta despite its relatively intimate scale.

While the numbers may be modest compared to Europe's largest sailing events, RLIR's appeal lies in its balance. The regatta has consistently drawn a mix of pro-



professionally crewed racing yachts, owner-driven IRC boats, multihulls, and club-level entries. This diversity has allowed RLIR to maintain a competitive edge without losing the social and community atmosphere that has defined it for more than two decades.

For 2026, sailors competed across seven classes: Racing, IRC 1, IRC 2, Multihull Racing, Multihull Cruising, Sports Boat, and Club. Each category was designed to ensure fair competition across different yacht designs and crew profiles, a structure that has evolved over the years in line with international racing standards.

Winners in each class were awarded a series of established challenge trophies. These include the Prime Minister's Challenge Trophy for the Racing Class, the LADA-IRC Challenge Trophy for IRC 1, the PSC-IRC 2 Challenge Trophy for IRC 2, the Langkawi Sports Trophy for Sports Boats, the Malaysia Multihull Challenge Cup for the Multihull Class, and the RLYC Commodore's Challenge Cup for the Club Class.

Beyond podium finishes, RLIR continues to place strong emphasis on sportsmanship, both on the water and ashore. The Tunku Abdullah Sportsmanship Award remains one of the regatta's most respected honours, voted on by fellow competitors and awarded to the individual or team seen to best embody fair play, cooperation, and professionalism throughout the event. Over the years, this award has become a meaningful recognition within the RLIR





## RLIR 2026 Winners

### **Prime Minister's Challenge Trophy (Racing Class)**

Winner: The Next Factor  
Skipper: Rolf Heemskerck

### **LADA-IRC Challenge Trophy (IRC 1 Class)**

Winner: Char Chan  
Skipper: Kazuki Kihara

### **Langkawi Sports Challenge Trophy (Sportsboat Class)**

Winner: ATM Sailing Team  
Skipper: Asmawi bin Azman

### **Malaysian Multihull Challenge Trophy**

Winner: Parabellum  
Skipper: Dan Fidock

### **PSC-IRC 2 Challenge Trophy**

Winner: Dynamite  
Skipper: Maksim Lisun

### **RLYC Commodore's Challenge Trophy (Club Class)**

Winner: Wind of Change  
Skipper: Igor Ginzburg

### **Multihull Cruising Class**

Winner: Serendipity  
Skipper: Jeff Harris



community, reinforcing the regatta's values beyond pure results.

Off the water, the regatta maintained its established social program, with daily prizegivings, sponsor-hosted events, and informal gatherings at RLYC. These elements have long been part of RLIR's appeal, offering crews and owners opportunities to connect across classes and nationalities in a setting that feels more personal than many larger regattas.

As Langkawi continues to develop its marine and tourism infrastructure, RLIR remains one of the island's most consistent international sporting events. For sailors, it offers competitive racing in tropical conditions. For Langkawi, it provides continued visibility as a destination where sport, tourism, and maritime culture intersect in a measured, sustainable way.

Flag honors at the start of the regatta were presented by distinguished guests from the Langkawi Development Authority (LADA): Mr. Wan Kamarul Faisal bin Wan Kamardin, Deputy Chief Executive Officer (Planning & Development) and Dr. Azmil Munif Mohd Bukhari, Manager of Tourism Division and Head of the Langkawi UNESCO Global Geopark. They were accompanied by Mr. Azlan Abdullah, RLIR Regatta Director and Executive Director of Royal Langkawi Yacht Club.

## On the water

The racing was fantastic: the winds can be fickle at this time of the year, but the northeasterlies held strong and Race Officer Simon James was able to get in a variety of courses ranging from coastal and “around the islands” routes to a number of windward-leeward races in Kuah Harbour.

Returning to the regatta after an absence of a few years was two-time Rolex Sydney-to-Hobart winner *Alive*, skipped by Duncan Hine. *Alive* was supposed to compete in last November’s Raja Muda Selangor International Regatta, but was hit by lightning an hour-and-a-half out of Langkawi. Luckily skipper Hine and his fellow crewmate, who were delivering the boat, were unharmed, but the boat had been on the hard in Langkawi being repaired since and only hit the water 36 hours before the Langkawi regatta.

Obviously with their pedigree, *Alive* was favoured to win the coveted Prime Minister’s Challenge Trophy, but as it has done so many times before Rolf Heemskerk’s team on *The Next Factor* dug in and emerged with their third straight crown in the racing class. *Alive*’s spinnaker line stuck in a clutch on the very first race earning them a DNF, and that ended up being the difference between first and second place as *The Next Factor* won the racing division for the third year running by one point over *Alive* with Nick Burns’ *Blitz* finishing third and Rama Menom’s *Rama Rama VG* taking the final spot in this class, though they were beset by issues during the event and unable to compete for two days. Their sportsmanship did not go unnoticed and they were awarded the Tunku Abdullah Sportsmanship Award.

The regatta started with a set of windward-leeward races in Kuah Harbour with sunny blue skies and good gusts, and the conditions held true for the rest of the event. The course, on that first day, was shifted slightly to avoid contact with a recently sunken ferry which burned and sank the night before.

Day four provided the only real controversy of the regatta as four boats (*Alive*, *First Light*, *Haruki* and *Malabar*) missed gate one in the race and were originally given an NSC. Upon redress, however, it was discovered that the boat listed as a mark in the race was not listed in the sailing instructions, so their original times were kept after the jury led by Leonard Chin deliberated for close to four-and-a-half hours.

The “round the islands” race on day four skirted the south side of Pulau Tuba and Dayang Bunting providing a challenge for yachts built for distance racing as the varying wind conditions test every crew’s agility to trim sails and adapt to the varied sea breezes.

Having the Royal Langkawi Yacht Club as an anchor for the event plays a huge role in the regatta’s success. The club’s Ocean’s E1 even and Charlie’s Bar with their convivial atmosphere serve as meeting and rally points for all competitors, helping to create a magical buzz. Throw in a great social media presence, a group of pro-active and young volunteers, great scenery, good wind, an excellent race committee, a caring group of organizers and a mix of good Malay and foreign sailors, both male and female, and you have the ingredients for a very successful regatta.

[www.langkawiregatta.com](http://www.langkawiregatta.com)



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