

THE SPIRITED CRUISING EXPERIENCE

| story **CRAIG SCHIONNING**

Let's face it, it all starts with the design of choice. It must tick all or most of the boxes to do the job in mind. There are always compromises to be made but hopefully these can be kept to a minimum and the end result is close to the original goal.

The Spirited 480 Roam displaying the design's efficient speed.

In most cases our clientele are relatively educated in terms of their end-goal and have come from owning in most cases a production boat, either a cat or a mono but typically they have learned that they want something 'next level'. Production boats fill an important and major portion of the market and can offer an easy and often cost-effective way for new comers to enter the boating way of life.

WHAT IS PERFORMANCE?

Performance is probably the key point for most of these buyers who have found their former boat to be lacking.

Performance is not all about speed, performance encompasses many things such as handling, carrying capacity and motion at sea to name a few considerations.

Speed is definitely the most talked about when discussing performance with buyers and this is paramount



A 5m plate-alloy trailerable design.

for making quick passages within a chosen weather window or avoiding unfavourable weather systems when required. The difference can be quite dramatic if compared to a monohull or a production catamaran on a passage of a few days or longer.

Performance under power is another important point that shouldn't be under estimated. Gone are the days

of tiny auxiliary engines incapable of pushing into even a slight headwind. Without 'over-powering' the boat, having a healthy amount of reserve power is an important safety feature of any boat. These days engines are becoming smaller and lighter for their horsepower making them well-suited to light weight catamarans. All of our designs are well-powered



'I CHOSE THE SPIRITED 480 AS IT POSSESSES THE PERFECT BALANCE OF PERFORMANCE, BUILD SYSTEM, COMFORT AND AESTHETICS. TO DATE I HAVE NOT COME ACROSS A DESIGN THAT SURPASSES IT AND 'ROAM' IS THE ULTIMATE GLOBAL ADVENTURE VEHICLE FOR US'.
- MICK HOULT

- Performance cruising
- Spacious interior
- Open flat decks
- Bluewater capable
- Well appointed
- Modern design

The Spirited Assembly System (SAS) provides a fast and simple build platform enabling even the DIY builder to achieve their dream. The comprehensive kit package includes resin-infused light-weight epoxy hull and deck sections, Duflex structure and furniture as well as smaller moulded parts.

'The Spirit of success is simplicity... and intelligent design!'



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Spirited 380 design showing the advantages of the SAS process.

and intended for that unforeseen situation when in a tight spot and some reserve horse power is welcomed. It also makes good sense that a larger engine will be run at lower revs for most of its working life essentially extending its life. The balance between sail and power as mentioned has changed from the 'old' days of being frowned at for starting your engine (or having an engine!). However over-powering a boat to the point where you may as well motor because the boat can't perform under sail is another extreme. As an example, the Spirited 380 and 480 designs sail extremely well although are well-powered when the motor is required.

THE 'BUILD'

For those who have done their detailed and extensive research on which design suits them, it's then time to build it or get it built because this is not something that can be bought off the shelf. For those that still can't find exactly what they're after, the closest design could be customised to suit. Probably 95% of our customers have asked for customisation, from adding a shelf to major structural and internal changes. If building from a kit then these changes are incorporated into the kit package for a streamlined build process.



Three 4.2m Ripple designs under construction.

Talking 'build process', this is something that is also rated very highly on the DIY builder's tick box list. After sometimes years of research, it makes no sense to add another few years to the build time because it is not an efficient system. Our larger designs include pre-made parts to further increase the build speed and reduce the hours. Building round-bilged strip-planked sections is challenging enough for a tradesman but this can be the DIY builder's worst nightmare and blow out the hours astronomically.

In this day and age, combining pre-made parts, pre-laminated computer-cut panels, high strength

epoxy and time-saving techniques makes for a relatively quick and efficient build system. In most cases the design of the boat is carefully paired with the most appropriate material to ensure the best outcome. This is the case with our designs and using different material can have detrimental results. A general rule of thumb is that 'the more expensive the material, the lighter it is', and this is quite accurate. Stemming from a boat-building background, this experience is put into our designs to streamline building processes for the builder and save not only time but 'build stress'. Our SAS (Spirited Assembly System) building process

is guaranteed to save time and complexity, delivering a first-class product without the 'kit boat' look.

THE EVER-IMPORTANT BUDGET

We haven't mentioned budget yet and this is sometimes the deciding factor which dictates the size of the boat and also the material used to build it. This loops back to the type of buyer because if it's their second boat then this is usually a more substantial investment based on their prior experience and they would normally have sold their other boat and putting those funds into their new project. For the first-timer, a sensible decision would be to start with a smaller boat anyway to gather some experience. Everything is a trade-off, and this applies to the choice of building material or level of kit package. As mentioned, pre-made parts can be included in the package which adds cost but saves time. What we ask people to consider is what their time is worth, would you be better off doing your own job and invest in either a higher-level kit saving you time; or even paying a boatbuilder to build the boat. For some they are doing it for the love of it, and there is something to be said about that (doing something you love is not work some would say...).

I think most people have heard about the abandoned back yard boat building projects that never see the water and most buyers are trying to avoid this. We tend to find that the customer choosing the higher-level kit is the most likely to finish the project. For one thing they have all their structural material in the first delivery which will keep them going for at least the first couple of years depending on how many hours are put in, without any major purchases. The component style kit also means that the higher speed assembly keeps the builder more motivated with high visual reward for the hours applied.

KNOWING YOUR BOAT

The intimate knowledge of their boat once launched is a major advantage to building your own boat. Systems, service routing and being familiar with the gear fitted all contribute to easier maintenance or repairs,

DESIGN CHOICE

The Spirited 480 *Roam* is a good example of a successful marriage of the design customised for the client, efficient build process, staying on budget and a high-class finish. With thousands of cruising miles under the belt and at fully loaded cruising displacement the design achieves fast passage speeds with all the comforts on board. Designed for blue water cruising the long slim hulls ensure efficient and comfortable sailing offshore. The popular Spirited 380 design offers similar performance and carrying capacity for its size.

You are sure to find a design that suits you in our diverse range of designs. We have power-sailers, highly efficient power designs, trailerable sailing and power designs, and our range of tenders. The material options vary also according to preference or budget,



Ripple 3.6m.

especially in an emergency situation. Hand picking the equipment and systems are part of why a builder chooses to build themselves. These choices can be instrumental to the success of the boat's performance and cruising ability on a day to day basis. Most production boats are supplied with limited options both in terms of design changes and equipment choices. Fitting out your own boat is one of the fun tasks and involves many hours of research and decision-making, but this can make a world of difference to the finished product and its useability.

the kits can be supplied in various configurations whether as full comprehensive packages or flat panel kits. We can also supply core kits where the builder performs their own laminating. We can tailor a kit package to suit your needs and if sourcing your own material is more for you, we have plan sets designed for this option. Because the majority of our customers are DIY builders we include unlimited build support with every project. This gives the customer confidence that someone is there with them every step of the way.

Check out our range of designs at: www.spiriteddesigns.com.au