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Outward bound

IN A WORLD OF AWESOME INEXPENSIVE PRODUCTION BUILT YACHTS CAN THE INDIVIDUAL BESPOKE BLUEWATER CRUISER STILL FIND A MARKETPLACE.

PHIL ROSS

In this era of mass production boat build whereas a new yacht rolls out the factory door at least once a week, it is amazing to see bespoke cruising yachts still finding the niche on the water.

While Australia has its own Bluewater Cruising Yachts out of Sydney, I must admit I had not heard of Outbound Yachts from the US, until being contacted earlier this year. So it was a welcome sail one April day with Australian owner Chris Daly on board his beloved Outbound 46.

There is something remarkably comforting about purpose-built yachts and the 46, as in all the Outbound range, is a perfect example. Phil Lambert has been building Outbound 46 for over 20 years, its sole purpose is to take a couple offshore cruising.

Designed by renowned yacht designer Carl Schumacher, the two appear to have the right mix, with hull #70 recently delivered to a new owner in Seattle, Washington.

Hull 57 was delivered three years ago to Chris and Susan, both experienced cruisers. Previously regular visitors to Tasmanian waters they had come across the owners of hull #10 down there and were immediately taken by the yacht.

LEFT: Sailing pleasure with high cabin top, hard bimini for added comfort. Note the roller furling leads on the stanchions.

"THE EXTENSIVE USE OF TEAK AND HOLLY REMINDS ONE OF CONSTRUCTION OF YESTERYEAR."

Schumacher had a long history with racing yacht design but he also worked with production cruising yacht builders as well, including the previous Oyster Lightwave 48, so was well-versed in the advantages and disadvantages of both design parameters to come up with the right mix for Phil and Outbound. Carl combined moderate displacement with an efficient underbody to provide comfortable but slick upwind and downwind speeds. A long waterline, a moderate beam and a good ballast ratio combine to provide a high righting moment. All added with smart interior placement of important water and fuel tanks directly over the keel.

These broad parameters lend towards a comfortable motion yacht with massive stowage and tankage required for a long and enjoyable offshore passage.

To ensure the yacht also makes its destination, Outbound have ensured the construction maintains the quality standard as well. The hull is hand-laid solid fiberglass and the deck is vacuum-bagged Divinylac, both using vinylester resin. A biaxial fiberglass lay provides extra reinforcements in the bow and bilge sections for impact resistance.

The keel is an elongated lead fin built into the mould, eliminating the need for keelbolts. A 1600 kilogram lead bulb is attached transversely, which Phil Lambert says is a unique system pioneered by Outbound Yachts 20 years ago.

As each Outbound is built manually, extra strengthening is included with longitudinals and stringers throughout the hull. Bulkheads are securely bonded to the hull and deck around the entire perimeter. Interior furnishings are tabbed in place to add strength and rigidity to the entire structure.

The finished product from a design standpoint is a robust sailboat capable of crossing oceans safely, comfortably and quickly.

Does the deck and interior complement this?

BELOW: Deep cockpit and high coamings makes for a secure, dry and warm living space. Note the hatch down to the workshop on the starboard bench.



RIGHT: It may be a standard deck layout but it is well proven.

OPPOSITE PAGE: Built for purpose.



OUT IN THE OPEN

With no need to appear sleek and low in the water the above water profile of the Outbound 46 is best described as utilitarian: fit for purpose. As is the whole deck layout.

For starters the aft cockpit begins with a hard top dodger with large wrap-around windows, providing the initial security and warmth out of the companionway. This leads down to the large, deep and safe T-shaped cockpit.

Two metre long cockpit seats allow for entertaining or lazing while on standby watch, the high coamings are angled for comfortable seat backs. The T-junction where the binnacle and wheel reside loses its high coaming sides to allow the skipper a comfortable outboard seat plus easy access out of the cockpit or from the sugar scoop transom bathing platform. A dedicated liferaft locker is just ahead of the swim platform, easily accessed in an emergency and in the right spot to launch.

All in all the deep cockpit is well-protected when underway while retaining necessary visibility. The expansive, hard dodger ensures warmth, comfort, dryness and shade from any tropical searing sun. This is a dry and comfortable cockpit, with good visibility and a forgiving motion. All essential for a safe and enjoyable passage.

Onboard our test yacht, *Discovery II*, the Daley's had a strong built, high bimini over the

stern section/wheel area that can be connected with clears to wrap around the entire cockpit. As this is the main living area when underway crossing oceans, Outbound recognise it is important to be both comfortable and safe.

The coamings are wide, allowing the Lewmar 64 self-tailing winches a solid base for the control lines, they lie within easy reach of the skipper or cockpit crew.

Halyard winches are set either side of the safe companionway.

"THE HULL SHAPE IS SPEEDY AND COMFORTABLE ENSURING MANY A MILE SAILED WITHOUT STRESS."

The starboard cockpit bench hides a fantastic inclusion, necessary for an ocean-going adventurer. By raising the hinged bench seat, which includes the coaming, there is a large workshop area where normally a starboard quarter berth cabin would be.

With the bench seat lid on hydraulic struts, anyone can stand upright in this area. There is a ton of bench space, a wet weather gear hanging locker and, on the inboard side, space for watermakers, gen sets, air conditioning or heating units. It can also accommodate a nice Pullman berth.





TOP TO BOTTOM: View aft from the main cabin; Large comfortable saloon; You cannot beat a dedicated navigation station.

OPPOSITE PAGE: Stock image provides an overview of the warm and inviting cabin.



The area can also be accessed via the aft bulkhead of the starboard side shower recess downstairs. Another access hatch at the aft bulkhead of the workshop provides entry to the aft sections of the yacht such as the steering and further storage.

Forward of the cockpit the deck layout is fairly standard. It is good to see four Dorade vents on the cabin top, three of which are strategically placed over the two heads cabins and the galley.

Halyards run along the high cabin top to the mast and solid handrails sit along the edge forward of the mast.

The roller furling leads run through some lovely turning blocks fitted around the staunchions. The forward hatch is recessed to stop toe-stubbing and the anchor roller bowsprit splits around the forward roller furler to give two anchor runs off the bow.

Just behind the hatch is the anchor point for the inner staysail. The foredeck locker provides stand-up access to the chain locker and roomy stowage for the asymmetrical spinnaker. There is a collision bulkhead two metres back from the bow.

The mast is a deck-stepped, double spreader, Solent rig. The inner forestay is set a foot aft of the headstay, allowing it to be used for upwind and heavy air sails. The headstay is rigged with Harken roller furling and a Hood furling genoa.

The yacht comes standard with low friction slides, a fully battened main and lazy jacks. There is the added options of a Leisurefurl in-boom mainsail furler or Selden in-mast furling. The mast is fitted with two Lewmar 40 self-tailing winches with Lewmar stoppers for the spinnaker and genoa halyards.

HOME SWEET

Older designs of bluewater cruising yachts, which outwardly have much the same hull profile view as the Outbound, usually ended up dark and dank down below. But modern naval architecture has been able to work around this with better hull shapes that allow better interior design. Schumacher and Outbound have taken this a step further.

By raising the cabin sole and the cabin top just a few inches the builders have been able to move both the diesel and water tanks to directly above the keelson. Low and central this weight produces many advantages: weight placed here increase righting moment; weight out of the ends reduces hobbyhorsing; and more storage is freed under benches and bunks, the traditional position for such tanks.

The raised cabin sole means it is a three steps companionway from cockpit to cabin floor;

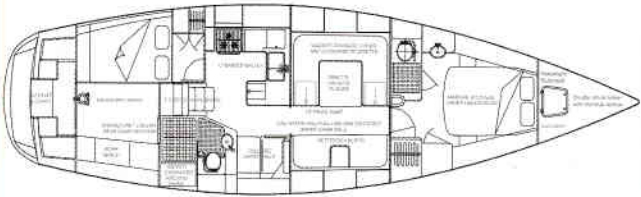
while the increased height of the cabin top raises the height of the windows to fill the cabin with lots of natural light. It also makes it easier on deck to grab the safety handrails.

Now we are down below it is a standard layout: galley to port, navigation table to starboard; as mentioned previously, alongside the engine to starboard is the head/shower cabin with its access to the workspace. To port is the guest cabin.

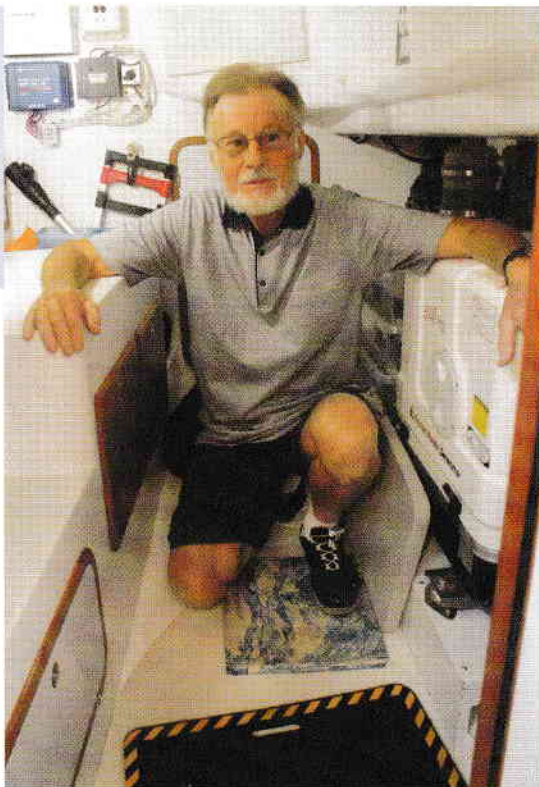
The companionway steps are lifted to get the best access to the 59 kilowatt engine, which purrs quietly in its well-insulated box.

The portside aft cabin is a standard double bed size with the bonus of spacious headroom, which allows room to sit up and read. There are opening hatches into the cockpit sides and the cabin is fitted with plenty of wood trim cupboards and drawers.

The U-shaped galley is just outside the door with roller doors for big pot storage or even a microwave. A deep refrigerator with both top and front access hides a sneaky freezer compartment underneath for economic refrigeration. Corian countertops and two burner stove make this an efficient and safe working space.

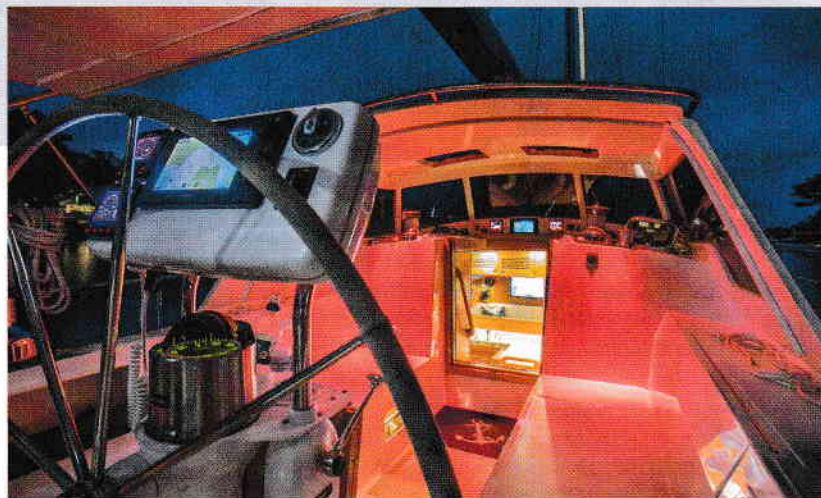
SPECIFICATIONS	
Length (m)	14.02
Waterline (m)	12.19
Beam (m)	4.15
Draft (m)	1.98
Displacement (kg)	12700
Ballast (kg)	4536
Air draft (m)	19.35
E (m)	5.6
Sail area (m ²)	100
Base boat price (US\$)	575,000
My thanks to Chris Daly, owner of Discovery II outboundyachts.com/outbound-46/introduction-46/	
	





LEFT: Owner Chris found the workspace area a game changer.

BELOW: Picture yourself ...



**"ITS SOLE PURPOSE IS TO TAKE A
COUPLE OFFSHORE CRUISING."**

To starboard is the two-person navigation station and this is well-kitted out. Like a lot of the interior it is old school style but with modern effectiveness. Whereas nowadays most yachts have small, or even no, navigation tables incorporated into the yacht's seating arrangements; the Outbound goes back to the future: a proper seating area with all the instruments at arms reach, even the battery switches are nearby; facing forward and close to the companionway for easy communication or to double as the standby watch seat; plus a large table that will fit charts, but is also deep to accommodate the latest in technological wizardry. Nicely and simply thought out and executed.

Forward of the galley is a large U-shape dinette saloon that could seat six, plus the option to double as a double berth. To starboard is a two metre settee that has been widened to feel more like a couch than a traditional yacht settee. The settee and outboard side of the dinette make excellent sea berths with lee cloths provided standard.

Forward of the mast is the owner's stateroom, a large double berth for comfort while at anchor or at the dock. A wash basin sits just outside the second head. A hanging locker and storage lockers complete the cabin. The centerline bunk is

hinged to provide easy access to massive stowage for off-season clothing and gear and the space above the drawers is perfect for folded charts.

Both head/shower cabins are moulded fibreglass with Corian countertops for easy cleaning.

The entire interior exudes a warmth that instantly relaxes. The extensive use of teak and holly reminds one of construction of yesteryear: homely and welcoming.

All up it is obvious as soon as you see the yacht in the marina: it is built for serious bluewater sailing. It looks strongly built, which it is, but the hull shape is speedy and comfortable ensuring many a mile sailed without stress: a major goal of the Outbound Yachts company.

Base boat is pricey as you would expect, but what you do not expect is the standard equipment that comes with every yacht. It is substantial, then there is an added substantial list of options to add on if you desire.

For a large outlay early you will have a 'drive away, no more to pay', ocean-crossing delight, ready to go. Its handling and speed ensure many adventures to come.

Outbound Yachts also build a 52 footer, a 56' and intend to start a pilothouse 52' shortly.

My thanks to owner Chris Daly for his time and a delightful sail. ≈