

an ocean of apples

I was ready to jump on the first sailboat to live my childhood dream. My partner Christopher could not. Put on a boat by his grandpa Gus Kinzel so young that he can't remember, Chris, now 40, has a lifetime of sailing experiences. From traditional Schooners to Formula's 40s all made his days. But it's been clear to him that the most exciting sensations have come on board of multihulls...

by CLAIRE DUPRÉ



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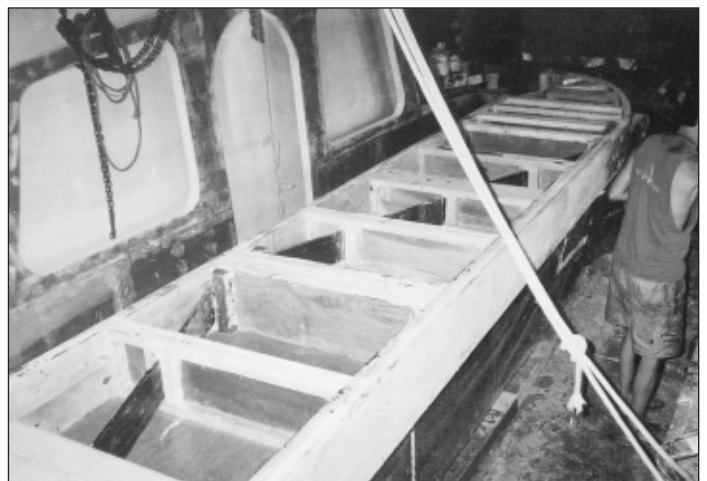
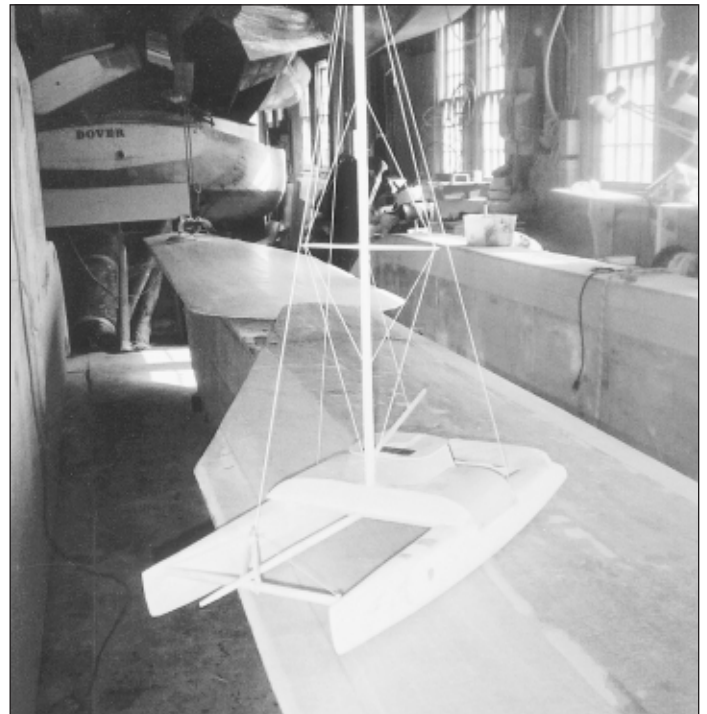
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So when it was time for us to decide what type of vessel would be the best for a family sailing life style, only one answer was possible. It HAD to be a multihull. As for me, the Parisian journalist girl who sailed two months all in all, and ran aground more than once,



I liked the idea that a multihull would draw only half a metre. Moreover this would give us the opportunity to anchor in non-crowded waters, and even to land on the white sanded-beaches of the South Pacific!

We were living on Martha's Vineyard (Massachusetts, USA.) at that time, early 2001. Lesly, our son, was six months old when the news arrived. Chris's piece of land had sold. Our

dream could come true. We just had to find the right boat. We first surfed on the Internet and made a couple of offers. We took a close look at the larger of the Farrier trimarans. Way too small for a year-round family home! "We have no other solution than building it ourselves!" said he, making the irreparable decision.

The project eventually started in June. But after three months, we had filled up

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the workshop with dagger boards, rudders, crossbeams and the pilothouse floor. We needed more space and nothing was affordable on the Island. Then what happened is all Hamish Dickson's fault. The son of Dickson Marine former owners in Nelson, NZ, put it in those enthusiastic words: "Great place to raise kids, beautiful, lots of skilled people, good exchange rate"... In short, our friend persuaded us that his beloved country was the right place. So, instead of loading a truck we packed up a container and made the big move around the globe.

Here we are now, in an ex-apple packing shed, ensconced by a sea of apple trees near Nelson, South Island, New Zealand. It's been over a year since we arrived, and every so often I hear



Chris lamenting, "If I had realized the scale I wouldn't have started!" Though I don't really believe him. Hadn't he done the same thing at 21 years old, starting a 48-foot steel Pinky Schooner, without any building experience of any sort... Wives of sailors, beware of the construction virus. The condition doesn't improve with time.

This time, Chris designed a 63-foot catamaran! That's how I found myself

surrounded by fibreglass and epoxy resin instead of octopus and clown fish. Lesly's language describes quite well our daily environment for almost two years: "nasty dust and sticky glue". The vessel is indeed a glass over strip-planked sandwich construction. The core is one-inch thick cedar in the bilges and foam everywhere else with 1200g triax/post-cure epoxy inside and out.

In the 90's, Chris had already design-



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built a 6.5m carbon/cedar catamaran with an excessive rig and wide hiking racks. Friend Walter Greene from Greene Marine, Yarmouth, Maine, USA, was his guide then and continues to grace us with a constant flow of advice. Now, the current project aims to marry Chris' taste for acceleration and our need for a cozy home. Therefore it's a compromise between a race cat and a family cruising boat. After much argument, I eventually convinced him to have a pilothouse. Though he actually changed his mind after reading an article about a father enjoying steering and being dry.

● It's a compromise between a race cat and a family cruising boat ●

However the result, 10ft x 12ft, is smaller than any wing deck cabin you have ever seen on a cat this size, especially considering it will do duty as the saloon-galley-helm station. The hulls are as narrow as possible (3.3ft at WL). When it was time to do the fibreglass taping inside the focsle, the entry was so tight one's head would get stuck. As a result, we have the accommodation space of a 40-foot cat on 63-foot hulls and our interior definitely looks like an

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egg-shaped submarine. Most of the space in between the hulls will be spanned with recycled trawl netting.

I have learnt something: not only women are obsessed with weight! Chris won't go over 11 tonnes. Therefore the interior is quite bare. I negotiated for months to get three shelves and a toy trunk! "Everything should be stored in hammocks and nets". The obsession for losing weight went as far as sacrificing the toilet. We almost had a hole in the middle of the pilothouse. I have to confess that I got really mad at him! I got my bathroom with bulkhead and proper door. Though I did give up the oven and accepted the general rough finish.

Today we're currently punchlisting. Soon we will be assembling the big puzzle together. It will happen among the apple bins first; and a second time at the launching spot (as we are too wide to travel on the NZ roads). There the final glassing of hulls to beams will take place. We don't know where and when

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yet. After all these episodes we've stopped trying to figure it out. As for after, we have no detailed plans. But we are, at least, closer to the South Pacific and fortunately we enjoy eating apples. ❖

SPECIFICATIONS:

LOA	63'
Beam	30'
WL Beam/Length	17
Sail area up wind	180m ²
Sail area down wind	350m ²
Mast height off water	87.5'
Estimated weight fully loaded	11 tonnes

Two 30 hp Lombardini diesel engines with Briski 2 blade folding propellers.

Adhesive Technology post cure and Gougeon ambient cure epoxies.

ATC core cell 500 and Herex (deck areas) foams.

Timber/plywood/glass 'Box' crossbeams.

Internal-carbon-truss beneath the mast.

Approximate hours to complete: 8000.



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