



GT35

Designer's Notes

Identifying the requirement for a slightly different approach, another stroke of colour in the leisure yacht spectrum, is an activity to which all designers apply themselves.

GT Yachts established by Conrad Cockburn, a qualified Naval Architect from the commercial shipping world, has forwarded a lot of thought to the world of both weekend family cruising and also more ambitious voyaging requirements. Recent commentary on the ARC fleet confirms that people and boats commonly do combine the two extremes.

The modern owner generally now expects the boat to be able to perform satisfactorily in both guises and the success of the builder lies in his ability to offer a boat for a many faceted role. In many cases the owner may aspire to the more ambitious but never have the opportunity to embrace it; he or she wishes to be confident enough the vessel will be able to realise the full potential should the opportunity arise.

The first boat in the range is the GT35. This will be closely followed by the GT39 and GT45, both with the same underlying philosophy as the 35. The design requirement is not intended to be wholly revolutionary, but to provide a secure feeling, steady range of yachts that are strong fast and sensible.

In common with the range in general, the styling of the GT35 is modern whilst moderate; sharply defined and sporting generous freeboard, beam and importantly displacement. The latter is unashamedly provided by simply supplying the boat with more lead ballast low down, requiring a commensurate increase in structure and sail area. This greater displacement with high ballast ratio will give a steadier platform as well as ultimate safety and in many conditions more speed. In fact for a very comfortable ride sail reduction in a vessel that possesses more momentum is more efficacious than in the lighter vessel as she is less at the mercy of her windage in extremis.

The rig is a 15/16ths fractional with a non-overlap jib either self-tacking or allowing larger LP on fore and aft tracks. There is structure to allow the deployment of an inner forestay.

The cockpit is arranged to provide security and comfort with high backrests and a closed transom underway including full width helm seating which also enjoys high backrest support, rare in a 35 footer these days. The helm is able to deploy a stowable auxiliary side seat, hence has all round seating and when stowed in place facilitates stepping forward around the wheel. For standing steering to leeward this seat can be speedily rotated and stowed away in its own convenient slot.

In order to open up the cockpit onto the transom drop-down door arrangement, the central part of the helm seat and backrest geometry is removed, reoriented and dropped to form a step. This allows easy bathing and straightforward dinghy boarding.

Below decks is a layout offering seagoing practicality in total comfort. A proper forward facing navigator station with a generous wide seat is complemented by a U shape galley that secures the cook in trying conditions and

there are three pillars in this aft working area; pillars being, ergonomically speaking, the best form of hand hold yet often omitted.

Forward, the forecabin is broad without the usual severe taper at the forward end as it is placed further aft to allow a forward bosun's locker accessible from a deck hatch. This locker is practically unique at this size of yacht and allows more gear to be stowed forward to optimise trim and de-clutter the cockpit locker. Roominess in the forecabin is also helped by full and buoyant forward topsides which are there to maintain level trim when heeled and augment reserve buoyancy in extreme offwind conditions.

This is matched aft by a modern full stern to provide stability, offwind speed and of course a voluminous aft cabin and heads. The wide stern means wide decks all the way aft permitting pushpit corner seats and allowing the crew to walk right aft without being forced to step into the cockpit, an irritating feature of some designs. Moreover the decks are enclosed all round with integral bulwarks deepening towards the bow.

The beam and freeboard have afforded the opportunity to optionally furnish the saloon with a permanent pilot berth on the port side which is a great place to sleep at sea and not be disturbed by crew off watch. As an added bonus and regardless of whether or not the pilot berth option is selected, the geometry to create this berth vastly increases the amount of below-berth stowage available as it has much clear space below it being higher up. Alternatively, a very deep outboard lockorage combined with a wide shelf can be selected, retaining the aforementioned stowage volume below this shelf. A permanent table is integrated with the mast pillar.

On deck all controls are led back to seven clutches per side of the companionway including the furling line and optional gennaker tack line. The furling line so led avoids the awkward and tenuous practice of clutching-off at the leeward rail in usual lean over mode. The main sheet is led German style to port and starboard winches close to the helm, a popular choice particularly for shorthanded sailing.

The sprayhood stows within a wrap-around double coaming arrangement for neatness and the outer coaming can accept a windscreen for those who like a certain amount of windbreak without deploying a sprayhood. The inner coaming conventionally houses the navigation instruments.

Stemhead arrangements are substantial with twin rollers which are able to accommodate anchor plus an easily deployed assembly for flying a sprit for a gennaker or code 0. Neatness and efficiency are ensured by an underdeck furler. The chain locker is accessible from the forward bosun's locker through its deck hatch.

The hull form in general has evolved from my earlier designs in this particular field and these have been developed over many years from the mid-seventies to the present day. A lead keel with a flared base to keep the centre of gravity low is attached below an integral stub keel for maximum stability; a lead keel of this configuration is simply unmatched for its effect on performance.



It should be apparent from the above that the paths taken in the design are chosen for performance, security, comfort and seaworthiness in all its senses and not least equal effort has been expended in forming a great looking boat.

Stephen Jones, 23 January 2013