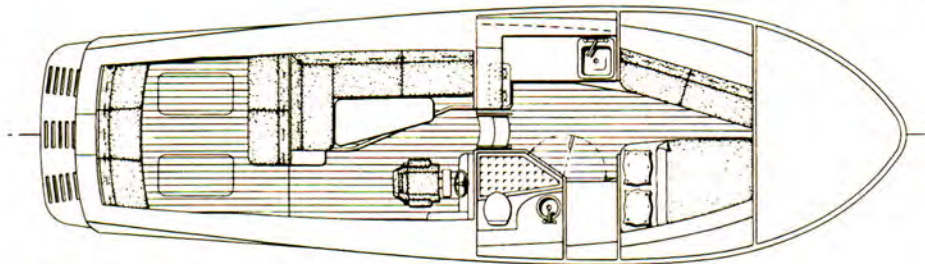




# Yachting DESIGN

BY DENNIS CAPRIO/dcaprio@yachtingnet.com



## COASTAL FLYER 39

**O**f all the sailboat builders in the world, I'll wager that only Santa Cruz Yachts would attack the personal powerboat market with a design that has this much character. Maybe only Santa Cruz and designer Dave Gerr have the chutzpah to step outside the lines to give us something different and totally charming. I love this design.

Truth is, I fell for this boat before I knew it had the Gerr V Hull—this bottom configuration merely sweetens the pot. You may remember it from my On Board of the Westbourne 44 (August 1999). The Coastal Flyer shares the Westbourne's bell-shape sections, chine tunnels and fabulous rough-water ride, but Gerr reduced the depth of the forefoot to accommodate the 322 Hamilton Jet drive. Most jet boats don't have any lateral plane back aft—keel, rudders, props—so the boat would rotate around the deep forefoot, especially in following seas. Gerr and Santa Cruz expect the Coastal Flyer to steer as dead nuts accurately as other Gerr V Hulls. The low-velocity, high-volume Hamilton Jet promises excellent maneuverability at all speeds. Under slow way, she'll spin within LOA, run sideways and stop on a dime.

Performance and handling of the 39 notwithstanding, Santa Cruz is going out on a limb with this commuter launch. Boats of strong styling character generally require buyers who appreciate the statement they make. When the 39 appears in public for the first time this fall, I think SC Yachts will find two camps—folks who love it and folks who don't; and maybe a few tweeners. The ones who fall in love with the Coastal Flyer will see in her reverse sheer and tumblehome stern an unmistakable resemblance to certain mahogany runabouts of the 1940s and 1950s. The wonderful cast stainless steel stem head alone is enough to make some people swoon. That shiny crown tops a gracefully curved stem, which differs from most of the commuter yachts in my memory. They have a plumb, or nearly plumb, stem. I'm pleased that Gerr didn't try the same on the 39—resisting the temptation to make her look like an Elco or other period piece. This curved stem also

complements the reverse sheer.

Reverse sheer is more than a styling exercise—it increases interior volume and reduces windage topside. This boat has a maximum headroom below of 6'4". To get this height in boat with a straight or sweeping sheer would make the trunk cabin too high. The higher the superstructure, the more windage

the boat has. The lower section of the superstructure of the 39 echoes the curvature of the sheer, then dips at both ends to terminate at the after and forward cockpits. The curves are slick and don't fight one another. The same goes for the house, until you get up to the hardtop. It seems out of character to me, partly because I've seen a rendering of the soft-top express-bridge boat. The line described by the frame of the side windows of the open version drops gently, elegantly, to meet the coaming. The height of the house and the more abrupt curve of the after end were necessary to get comfortable standing headroom inside.

These accommodations appear to be cozy, and comfortable enough for two adults on a week-long cruise. The settee opposite the double makes up into a single berth for a *ménage à trois*. The L-shape dinette looks to me like a four-seater, and it's raised a step to give seated guests a view out.

Powered by a 420 hp Yanmar diesel, the Coastal Flyer ought to reach a top speed of about 30 knots and a cruising speed of 25. Gerr's calculations predict a range of 500 nm from 250 gallons of fuel at a 16 knot cruise. The combination of the jet drive and the Yanmar's inherent smoothness hint at quiet times under way. I can't wait to see for myself. □

*Santa Cruz Yachts, Dept. Y, 3700B Hilltop Road, Soquel, CA 95073. (831) 475-9627; fax (831) 475-0867; www.santacruz-yachts.com. Gerr Marine, Dept. Y, 838 West End Ave., Suite BB, New York, NY 10025. (212) 864-7030; fax (212) 932-0872.*

LOA	.....40'	ENGINE	.....1x 420 hp Yanmar
BEAM	.....12'6"		w/322 Hamilton Jet drive
DRAFT	.....1.12'	DESIGNER	.....Gerr Marine
DISPL.	.....15,800 lb. (full load)	INTERIOR	.....Gerr Marine
WATER	.....65 gal.	STYLING	.....Gerr Marine
FUEL	.....150 gal.	BUILDER	.....Santa Cruz Yachts
MAX. SPEED	.....30+ knots		

The Art Deco look of the Coastal Flyer 39 is not a copy of anything, but it certainly recalls designs of the past. The bottom takes cues from the past, too.