

Aspen Power Catamaran

You can't have been in the marine business very long if the name Larry Graf doesn't make you sit up and pay close attention. Certainly one of the most innovative of the thinkers and designers in the business and when he calls, you listen.

Such was the case on a cold day in mid-November where I got to see the latest from Larry: a 26' proof of concept power catamaran like no other power cat you've ever seen. Yes it does have two hulls, but that's where any similarity with any other power cat you've ever seen absolutely screeches to a halt, so listen carefully. It's really more of a proa with the starboard hull slightly wider than the port hull. The starboard hull also carries the single Yanmar diesel that powers this amazing craft.

The beam of each hull is not the only difference, the line drawings also reveals that the forward sections are different and slightly toed to port. This counters the prop rotation and results in the vessel having remarkable straight line tracking at any speed.

Having only a single engine means not only lower construction costs but also incredible fuel economy without sacrificing a high top end speed. The beam of the vessel also allows for huge interior volumes meaning creative interior layouts with lots of storage.

Enough from me, here is what Larry Graf has to say about his remarkable new craft. You can see the Aspen at the 2009 Seattle Boat Show in the North Hall Booth 140, or you can call 360-668-4347, the Aspen office.

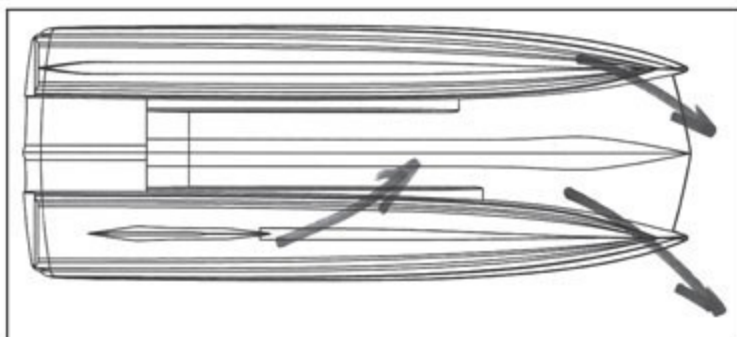
Comments from Larry Graf, president and founder of Aspen:

September 16 our 26' hull splashed for the first time - how sweet it is. The 26's first run was good, but as is normal, the boat had a few glitches-a hose clamp here, a drip there, but about 30 minutes the team had her running well and ran preliminary performance numbers. Here's what we found:

Straight Line tracking with hands off the wheel is balanced and true. This was the biggest unknown in the design as there were so many variables involved to get this just right at each speed. Aspen's patent pending Self Balancing Power Proa hull design works delightfully. Total helm correction is just 3 degrees

and it's consistent from 5mph to 24mph. Few mono hulls are this close. The helm is light and balanced at all speeds. Slow speed tracking and high are direct, predictable and natural. While running at any speed you have no sensation at all that it is a single engine cat.

Top Speed Heavy Ship with the single Yanmar 110 engine (104 SAE HP) and a test weight of 7,900 pounds carrying 4 people, 450 gallons of water ballast, tools and gear was 21mph. This equates to a 39' Aspen with all tanks full and all gear and people on board. The 39' will be 1-2 mph faster yet in this heavy ship condition due to its proportionally longer waterline length and proportionately larger 380HP engine. Fuel economy was exceptionally good, we used 1.28 gallons to run a measured 6 mile course



which equates to 4.8 mpg running at 17.5 mph. The heavy 26 burns just a little over 3gph, which is truly exceptional for a 10-ft beam, 7,800 pound all sea capable 26.

Top Speed Light ship (6,700 pounds) was 24.5 mph, fuel economy at 75% power, cruising at 18.8mph was 6 mpg, burning about 3 gph. As many of you know, this is exceptional performance. The typi-

cal 26-28'er would burn 9-12 gph or more.

Fuel Economy at trawler speeds 7.5 mph preliminary testing shows 9-12 mpg depending on load, we have several adjustments and tests that could extend this even farther.

When viewing the charts there are some very unusual efficiencies available. If you're willing to go 4.5 mph then 18-22mpg is feasible.

