

# Elliott 9m

**N**EW ZEALAND DESIGNER Greg Elliott is well-known to Australians for his fast performance racing yachts like the 12m *Peacemaker* and the 17m *Matua Future Shock* which featured in an epic battle for line honors in last year's Jupiters Sydney to Gold Coast race before being narrowly beaten by the 20m Kell Steinman design *Bobsled*.

But in Elliott's home port Auckland it is his production-built fast cruisers — the Elliott 1050 and Elliott 9m — that are setting the pace; as class racers and in the depressed market place.

In Sydney a new boatbuilding enterprise Pacesetter Yachts Ltd has been licensed by Elliott Yachts Ltd of Auckland to build the Elliott designs. Pacesetter completed its first yacht, a 9m, just in time to compete in the C.H.Heath Pittwater to Coffs Harbour race.

It is marketing and will probably do the finishing work and fitout, on the 1050s which can be shipped across the Tasman economically as hulls and decks.

**CLOCKWISE from below: Trimmer (to leeward) at primary sheet winch aft of the helmsman.**

**Rig is uncomplicated by backstay or runners; mainsail is loose-footed.**

**Firm turn to the bilge, heavy keel, give the yacht exceptional stability.**

**Cockpit is big, comfortable and workable.**

I have sailed on both yachts — the 1050 in Auckland and Pacesetter's 9m in Sydney — and was mightily impressed by the concept and execution of each (my review of the 1050 will appear in a future issue).

The hulls of both are more conventional-looking and higher in volume to permit good cruising interiors and furnishings than the Elliott custom yachts like *Peacemaker* and *Future Shock* and the racier models in the range built by Elliott Yachts. They have excellent stability, are simply rigged and equipped, without runners and backstays, but are still surprisingly good performers.

While they do not have the widely-flared topsides to get crew weight outboard — for useable interior space considerations — they do have to a moderate degree the reverse sheer and the plumb stem which are distinctive trademarks of Elliott designs. Greg Elliott explains that the reverse sheer helps to push cabin headroom forward and also reduces windage.

Elliott Yachts Ltd got its start building the Elliott 5.9m trailerable one design — taken up on a hobby basis by former 18ft skiff sailor Garry Banks after he built one for himself in wood and fell in love with the boat (more than 60 have been built). Then it produced a 7.4m trailerable.

Four years ago, Banks realised he had a full-time business on his hands — he was still

involved in his family's trucking business — and needed help. Ian Margan (*Future Shock's* owner) and Elliott came in as shareholders.

They built a variety of new Elliott designs — 10m, 9m, 12m, 10.5m — before deciding to concentrate on one production run to fill what they perceived in the market a need for class-racing cruiser-racer. So Elliott Yachts moved into full production with the 1050 and has sold 13 of them.

Meantime, Sydney Young 88 owner Tony Doyle was looking for a new yacht and was persuaded to go to Auckland and look at the Elliott 9. The yacht impressed him and he decided to have one built not only for himself but for others. Sailing with him on the Young 88 at the time was Darren Williams, one of the builders of Bernard Lewis' maxi *Sovereign* who went on to run *Sovereign* as paid hand for sailing master David Kellett for three years.

So Doyle and Williams formed Pacesetter Yachts. "We have given them a licence to build Elliott yachts," said Banks. "We have looked hard at them and seen what their quality is like. They have a licence to build any of our boats and if anyone wants to go there and have one built, that's fine. If they wanted to buy a complete boat they can still do that. But we are looking to Pacesetter Yachts to finish off the 1050s over there."

My sail aboard Pacesetter's 9m was virtually its only outing before the start of the Coff's race. Also aboard was Ian Margan of Elliott Yachts who said: "We are happy with the project. For a first time up, the boat is a good effort."

A puffy southerly breeze on Pittwater provided a good variety of sailing conditions; *Pacesetter* handled them all well.

The hull shape, with hard turn to the bilge, plus a big 1125kg lead bulb on the 1.75m deep keel, make the 9m extremely stable. The boat does heel quickly to gusts but then stiffens up on that firm bilge and drives off quickly and effortlessly. She does not demand an army of crew to provide weight on the rail. We were still fast and comfortable upwind with five on board in 18 knots of breeze.

The speedo showed 6.2-6.5kts in 13 knots of true wind at 27 degrees apparent wind angle and 7.2 in 18kts at the same angle. The boat remained well balanced, even when heeled a long way to a gust — Elliott's fore and aft distribution of volume seems just right.

Downwind, we did 8s easily and the boat,



## boat review



Interior is simply but neatly finished; furniture is lightweight, fibreglassed foam.

as it had been upwind, was easy to steer.

Simplicity and stability are the yacht's main characteristics. The mainsail is low aspect, with two full-length top battens helping to support a large roach and is loose-footed. There are no runners or backstay. The Goldspar section mast made by Greg Cavill is supported by caps and lowers over two sets of aft-swept spreaders. The sails are by North, Sydney.

The fixed rod vang is controlled by control lines split to lead aft to either side of the main companionway. The spinnaker pole kicker is split in a similar way and all halyards, reefing and control lines are led aft from the mast to a bank of six jammers on the cabin-top roof backed by a pair of Bariant 21 self-tailing winches. During races a small platform for the halyards handler is clipped in to the companionway ladder.

The cars on the main headsail tracks are positioned by tackles. Tracks are fastened to the sloping sides of the cabin top for inboard sheeting and to carry blocks for tweakers on the sheets when they are on the outer tracks.

Unusually, the Bariant 22 primary winches for headsail sheeting are located aft of the helmsman. Williams explains that on Doyle's Young 88 it had been found that this made tacking more efficient with less crowding in the dash across the cabin top and cockpit and with less distraction to the helmsman. Thanks to the beam of the boat aft, the trimmer still gets a good view of the sail.

There is abundant room for the trimmer aft of the helmsman in the open-transom cockpit. Sitting out for helmsman and trimmer, who often transfers the sheet to the windward winch, is comfortable over the outward slope

of the broad-topped cockpit coaming.

The mainsheet is six part with fine tune tackle and the traveller car position is controlled by three part tackles on a track which bridges the cockpit. The deck gear is Ronstan and the engine a Yanmar 5hp with saildrive.

There is no anchor locker; the forehatch is located on the forward cabin top slope.

The exterior hull finish is superbly fair. The non skid pattern on deck, cockpit floor and seats is excellent.

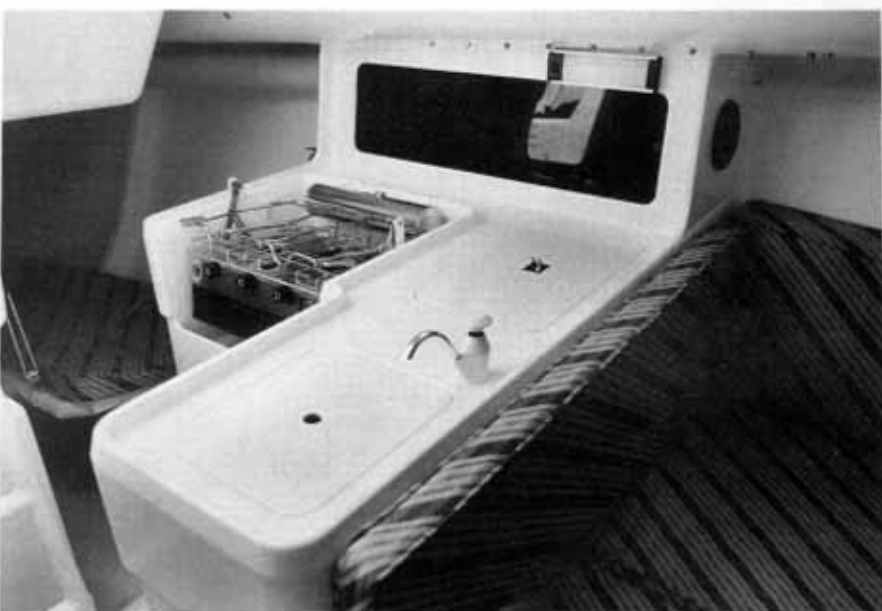
Construction, with American Bureau of Shipping approval, is of triaxial, biaxial and unidirectional fibreglass with Vinylester resins (claimed to be osmosis free) over Ter-manto and Divinycell foam cores, designed by High Modulus, New Zealand.

Inside, the hull looks extremely strong with

Nav table has comfortable seat.



Galley unit with gimballed stove ahead of pipe berth.



## boat review



Rig is supported by aft-set caps and lowers over aft-swept spreaders.

an abundance of ring frames and half frames. Bulkheads, bunk faces and floors are of plywood, all painted white as are the exposed topsides, deckhead, floor and deck-head areas. The furniture is of lightly-glassed foam.

The layout is open plan with a doorway in the main bulkhead separating the forepeak, where the toilet and a hanging locker are located, for International Measurement System requirements. There is 6ft headroom all the way to the bulkhead.

A U-shaped dinette to port has a table which can be dropped to form a double berth. The galley aft of that has a two-burner Maxie gimbaled stove, a sink in the galley top with in-fill to extend bench space and an ice box.

To starboard is a long settee and a sizeable navigation table with seat. The freezer is located under the table top. Two fuel tanks and two water tanks are built in under the settee and dinette.

Aft of the companionway steps are pipe berths port and starboard. There is room here for a pair of double quarter berths.

Although the Pittwater-Coffs race did not have prolonged running conditions which would have suited the Elliott 9, Tony Doyle was more than happy with her performance.

"Nothing broke and it was very dry," he said.

"It's a fantastic little boat."

He said that until a few miles from Coffs, *Pacesetter* was up with 38- and 40-footers. "For most of the two days in 25 knots on the wind to Coffs we sailed with full main and the number two headsail. The boat handled it beautifully, it is very stiff." — **Bob Ross**

### ELLIOTT 9

<b>Length overall</b> .....	9.00m
<b>Length waterline</b> .....	8.40m
<b>Beam</b> .....	3.20m
<b>Draft</b> .....	1.75m
<b>Displacement</b> .....	2700kg
<b>Ballast</b> .....	1125kg

#### Sail area

(main and foretriangle) .... 41sq m

**Auxiliary power** Yanmar 5hp with Saildrive

**Price: Launched,**

**sailaway** ..... approx \$110,000

With Yanmar Saildrive, North main and jib, ABS approval, IMS fitout.

**Designer** ..... Greg Elliott

**Builder:** *Pacesetter Yachts Pty Ltd*, 16 Jinchilla Rd, Terrey Hills, NSW 2084.