



BOAT  
TEST

# Elliott Seven — popular one design racer

Ten years on from the Elliott 5.9, and looking to be just as successful comes the latest production yacht from local designer Greg Elliott — the Elliott Seven.



*Not quite enough breeze to get the little Elliott up and planing on a reach.*



*On the wind the Elliott tracked well.*

With 15 sailing in Japan, four in Australia and four locally, in less than 12 months the Elliott Seven is already beginning to make its mark on the racing scene.

When *Boating* finally had the opportunity to test this new little flyer we were not aware how new it actually was — we had to assemble it before launching!

We set about this giant jigsaw puzzle with gusto and have the whole thing ready to launch inside an hour.

With the extendable drawbar trailer the launching process is an easy one. The boat sits in a fibreglass cradle rather than on rollers and, as a result of it being a light boat, floats off without any fuss — an easy, dry foot operation.

With all the sails on deck ready we



*The helm position just forward of the traveller puts everything within easy reach.*

finally begin sailing from the ramp at Auckland's Westhaven marina into a 10 knot northwesterly breeze that is promising to freshen.

Sailing with just the mainsail, the Elliott handles much like a cat-rigged dinghy, responding very well to the helm.

Once clear of the breakwater we hoist the number one heavy genoa. This extra horsepower makes quite a difference to our speed upwind. The helm remains light and very responsive

and the boat tracks well, unfortunately we have no competition on the harbour and the crew are too busy to stay out and compete in the mandatory Thursday rum race.

There are dinghy style toestraps fitted on each side of the cockpit floor but, with the lifelines as a backrest

they are not necessary for the day's windspeed.

By using the long tiller extension, the helmsman can sit slightly forward of the traveller, yet still operate the mainsheet and traveller controls easily. The mainsheet is a 4-1 purchase finishing at a Ronstan ratchet block one end, with a 4-1 fine trim system on the other end. This is cleated on the cockpit side just aft of the traveller cleat.

This combination of systems made the mainsail very easy to trim.

Just forward of the helm seat is a Barient 8P single speed winch. This is used for the spinnaker brace and sheet, more as a ratchet block application than a winch.

There is just enough room forward of this for the trimmer to sit, and have easy access to all of the cabin top sail controls.

The main and jib halyards are held by Spinlock rope clutches, while the rest of the sail controls and the split vang all use Ronstan carbon clamcleats.

With the fore and aft jib tracks on the cabin top, the third crew member has a comfortable side deck perch with the cabin as a backrest, keelboat style.

Two-handed the little Elliott is definitely not a problem to sail, the layout being very well planned.

With a third crewman aboard things would not be cluttered.

Tacking is a no fuss affair and, even in the 10 knot breeze winch handles aren't necessary. The boat spins very quickly and loses little speed from one tack to the other.





Having no instruments on board the speed is accurately measured by Team Guess — we feel we are sailing upwind at around five knots, with the boat showing no vices in the small puffs that come through.

Bearing off onto a reach all we notice is more speed, and the helm is always fingertip control.

Hoisting the spinnaker is an easy task on such a small yacht. The spinnaker pole is stored on the main boom and is simply slipped forward and clipped to the mast with the brace preloaded into the outer end. Spinnaker reaching back toward Westhaven there is not quite enough wind to get the Elliott Seven up and planing but we manage to do over seven knots with little effort.

Gybing the spinnaker proves just as easy as the rest of the operations. The fordeck crew stands inside the forward hatch and has the pole just below chest height for the entire operation.

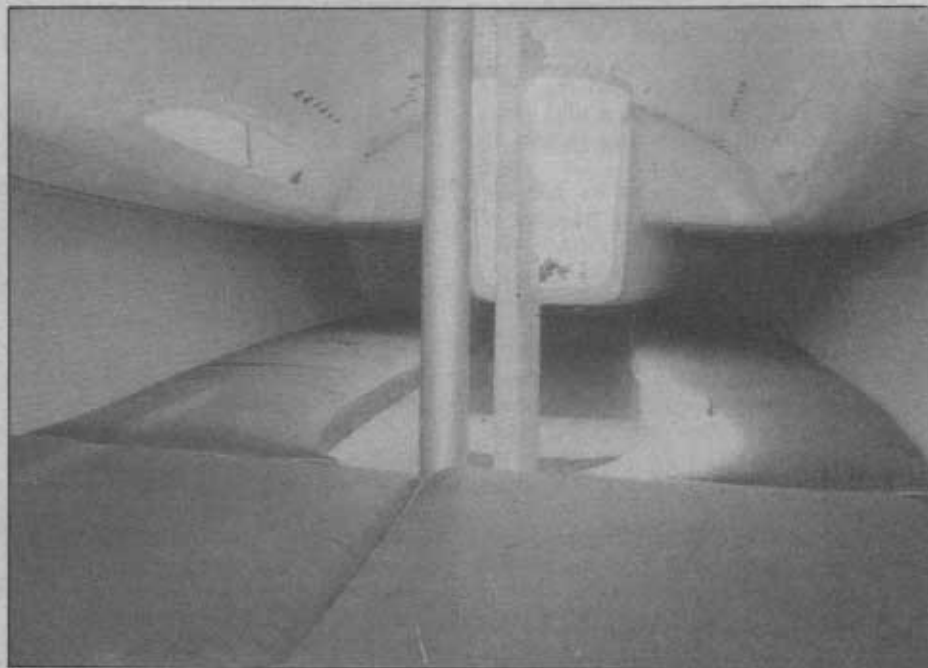
The promised northwesterly is definitely not going to show and, by the time we have traversed the harbour several times it has died away to virtually nothing, bringing a premature end to an enjoyable test.

#### *One design interior*

The Elliott Seven was originally conceived as a one design boat that can be class raced and also cruised by a couple and the interior reflects this.

Forward is a large vee berth which simply continues aft under the cockpit to form two quarterberths. There is full sitting headroom throughout the cabin area.

The centrecase and mast compression post are the only encumbrances internally. There is plenty of storage space under the berths and cockpit floor.



*Interior view forward, and aft.*

A nice combination of frontrunner and multiflek complement the interior, with the only fibreglass visible being the bunk fronts.

The Elliott Seven is produced by Elliott Marine Ltd as a strict one design class and as a result won't cost a fortune for buyers wanting to participate in class and open division racing and will retain a high resale value.

The layup of the boat is non exotic, the hull, deck and internal bunk structure being E glass, Coremat and PVC foam in polyester resin, all to Greg Elliott's specifications.

All the Elliott Seven keels consist of a one piece fibreglass moulding with a

lead interior, ensuring they are all identical.

The rudder is also a fibreglass laminate.

Mast and Spar services constructed the centreboard raising equipment, rudder case and gudgeons and the very typically Elliott swept spreader rig with no backstays. The rig is kept very simple, the sidestays attaching to the gunwale — Elliott says this is a good way to keep both the rig loads to a minimum and stop people using overlarge genoas as they cannot be sheeted through the lower stays.

#### Summary

Designer Greg Elliott has come a long way since his Elliott 5.9 design hit the water 10 years ago.

His design philosophy has changed from "big dinghy on a trailer" to small performance yacht that serves as a good entry level into keelboat sailing.

The changing trailer regulations were carefully considered and, as a result the entire all up weight on the trailer is less than 1000kgs and the boat can be legally towed with a mid sized car and requires no braking system on the trailer.

The Elliott Seven, with its one design rule lets owners buy a number of different packages. These begin with hull, decks, keel and rudder and go through to the completely finished factory specification boat we tested.

The Elliott Seven has generated a great deal of interest since first appearing in the *Boating Design* section some time ago and, even while we were assembling the boat on the ramp we had several people stop and ask about it.

This is definitely a class that we will be seeing a great deal more of on the water.



Making the most of the breeze reaching back to Westhaven.

## The vitals

LOA .....	7m (22ft 11ins)
LWL .....	6.6m (21ft 7ins)
Beam .....	2.45m (8ft 2 1/2ins)
Draft (board down) .....	1.6m (5ft 4ins)
Draft (board up) .....	350mm (1ft 1in)
Displacement.....	590kgs (1298lbs)
Ballast.....	250kgs (550lbs)
Designer.....	Greg Elliott
Builder .....	Elliott Marine
Rig .....	Mast and Spar Services
Sails.....	North Sails
Deck gear .....	Ronstan
Upholstery.....	Trudy Wilson