



Party Pro — Auckland's new fast-mover

Every now and again Auckland produces a yacht that sets the rest back on their heels. This time young designer Greg Elliott has everyone talking with his sensational new timber-built ocean racing express. Ena Hutchinson reports.

“THAT mongrel,” says Greg Elliott, referring to his latest design, the radical in-the-extreme 45-footer *Party Pro* which he recently built for himself. Performance-wise, however, it's pure thoroughbred and hot gossip around town since its sensational race debut in Auckland's Anniversary regatta when it left the first division keeler fleet in its wake.

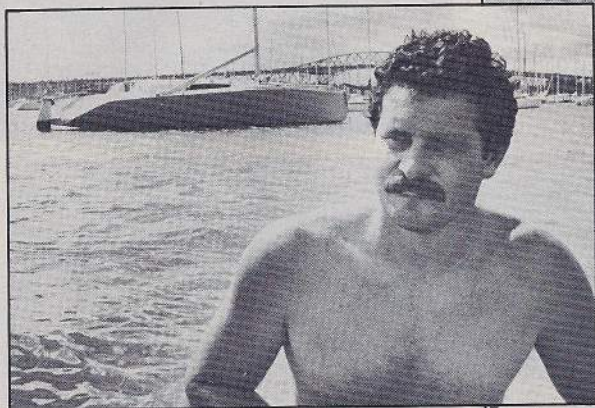
Party Pro is a high performance design with no concessions to rating rules. Elliott's main objectives are to cruise and

Banks and Tom McCall of E Type Yachts in Newmarket where Elliott also has his drawing office.

Elliott prefers building in timber. He served his boatbuilding apprenticeship with Chas Bailey and Sons, who had a hundred years of wooden boatbuilding

tradition. A month working with fibreglass at Cookson's yard was more than enough and since then he's worked for himself and taken time off to crew in ocean races to the Pacific Islands and Australia.

Timber may be considered by some to

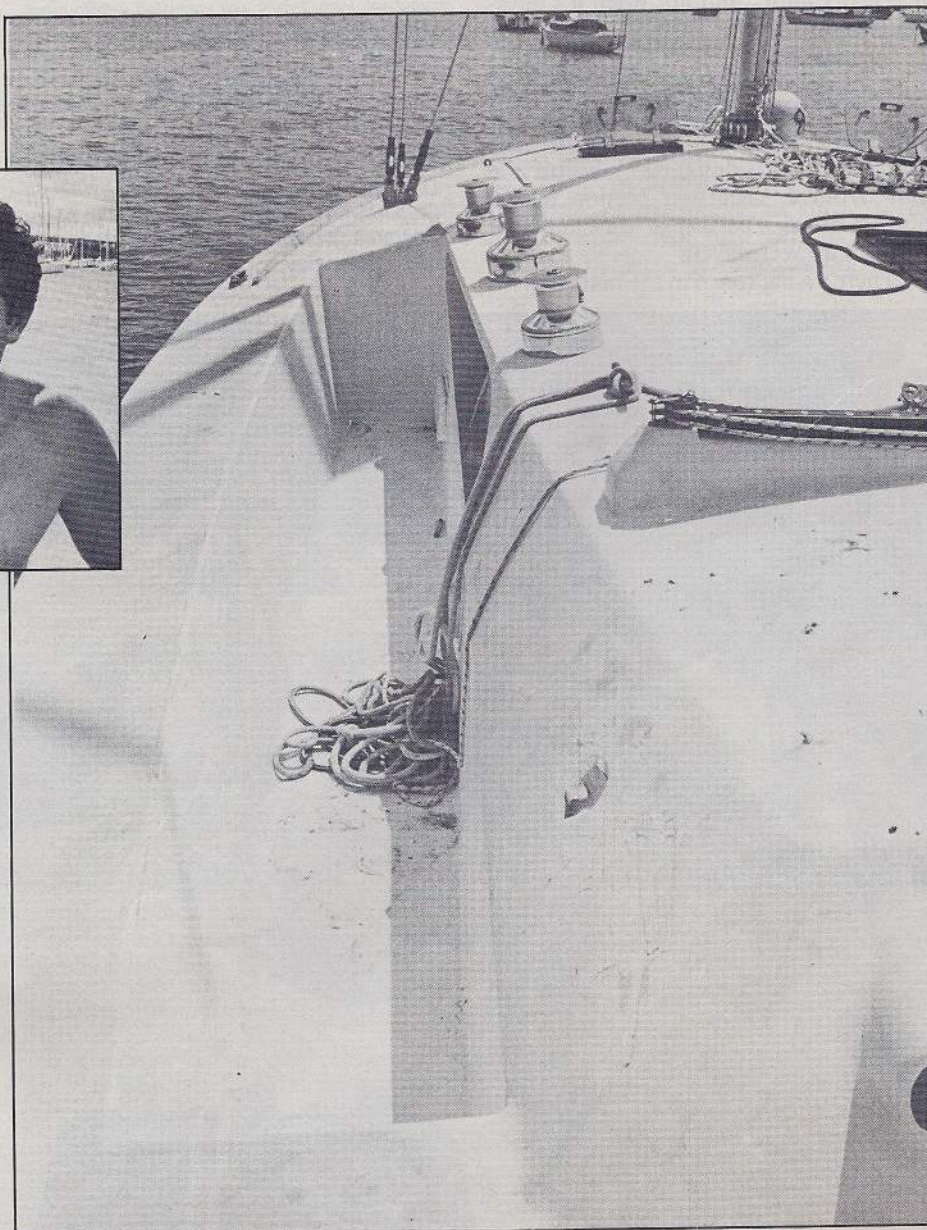


race it offshore, particularly in the TransPac and possibly the next Sydney/Hobart.

Twenty-nine-year-old Elliott is already well known for his fibreglass E 5.9 trailer yacht and not as well known as he should be for the 7.9 *Outsider* which he designed for his brother Bruce 10 years ago. Elliott reckons it's won more races than any other small boat in Auckland but that it is hard to interest people in backyard building when fibreglass boats are readily available. *Outsider* still performs well and six others are now being built, all in timber.

His latest fibreglass trailer yacht, the E 7.4 is getting ready for production by Gary

Opposite, Top: Party Pro has a squat rig with a lot of roach in the main and moves quickly (left) in the light airs on Regatta day. Above: Greg Elliott. Right: An innovative feature is the trenches on either side of the deck. The crew work from the windward trench and everything is weather sheeted. Sail and rig controls are also led back to the trenches and instrument panels will be duplicated.



Party Pro

be a conservative material in these high tech days, but the way Elliott has put *Party Pro* together is anything but traditional. It's three skins of 6mm kauri over stringers checked into 19 12mm plywood frames. There's an integral fore and aft girder consisting of a plywood intercostal and galvanised steel channel with four athwartships steel frames over the top of the keel. The grid system transfers the loading of rig, mast and keel throughout the hull. It compounds the fore and aft rigidity and combines strength and lightness. Further strength is gained from every line being curved in the hull and deck.

The deck is two skins of 6mm ply over laminated beams and fore and aft stringers. Four aluminium hanging knees support the winches, as well as strengthening the cabin top and trench sides.

"It's very, very strong, overkill actually," says Elliott, "but not when it's blowing 40 knots in the Tasman."

The mast is stepped on the keel and has a height of 17.38m (57ft) from the deck. The rig is different, too. There are no backstays but it has swept double spreaders. It was designed by Elliott and built from a Yachtspars section by his brother Bruce, a partner in Mast and Spar Services at Westhaven.

"There's a big roach in the main and it's

a squat rig with a low centre of effort, which is good for offshore boats," says Elliott. "It saves putting a reef in. With a big, tall rig you spend too much time sailing with reefs in."

Party Pro, very much an individualist's boat, is completely tailored to Elliott's requirements. From his offshore racing experiences he knew what he wanted — a simple, practical boat with the emphasis on crew comfort. The interior is open plan and vast — there were 60 below after the launching and we could still move, says partyman Elliott.

The main access hatch is in the centre of the cabintop but the two aft cabins, each with a full-size double berth, have

their own separate access from the cockpit. Elliott's starboard cabin will double as the navigation area.

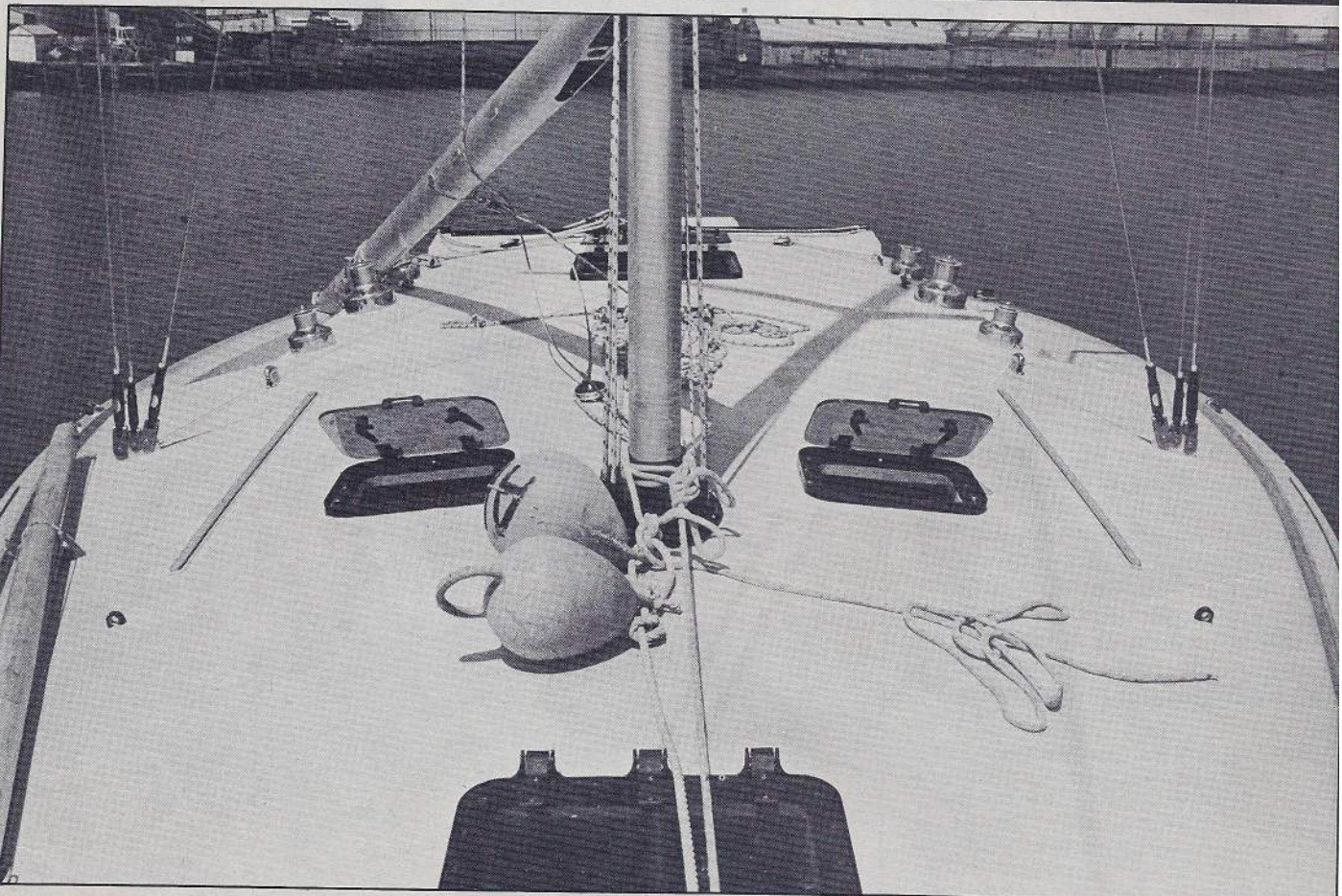
There are four bunks aside in the main cabin and they go almost out to the side of the hull so that the centre of gravity of the sleeping crew is virtually on the same line as the crew on the rail. "It's crew ballast rather than water ballast at the stage."

The galley amidships is simply equipped with a two-burner Primus stove. Dry i

Right: The transom hung rudder is braced by alloy pipes, the small cockpit is used by the helmsman and tactician and compasses will be mounted on either side of the aft bulkhead. Access to the aft cabins is from the cockpit. Below: The main access hatch is in the centre of the cabin top aft of the mast. The traveller runs athwartships with a 6:1 split mainsheet. Party Pro is well ventilated with four hatches and twin ports into each trench.

PARTY PRO

LOA	13.8m	45ft
LWL	12.2m	40ft
Beam	4.8m	15ft 7in
Draught	2.5m	8ft
Displacement	857.6kg	16,000lb
Sail area (working)	83.5m ²	900sq ft
No. 1 spinnaker	140m ²	1500sq ft



will be used for keeping food at sea rather than a freezer. For'ard of the galley are the heads and two washtubs for washing and rinsing clothes at sea. Sail stowage is right for'ard behind a watertight bulkhead with an aluminium door.

The floors are glassed and completely sealed off from the bilges. Any water on the floor will run for'ard into a sump and be pumped over the side.

"It's a great way to get rid of the peanuts and raisins after a party," jokes Elliott.



Like the decks, the floor will be finished with an anti-skid dose of Epsom Salts.

There's 6ft 4in headroom throughout and the interior is well ventilated with twin ports into each trench and four Weaver hatches.

The innovative deck layout features two trenches which run fore and aft on either side of the deck. The crew work from the windward trench and everything is weather sheeted (there are two Barlow 44 winches and 1 55 per side) so no one has to go to leeward, not even to reef.

Sail and rig adjustments run to the centre of the cabin top from where they can be led out to either trench, and the Suntek wind, instruments, log, etc, will be duplicated too.

The helmsman and tactician will be the only crew in the aft cockpit.

Party Pro bears a resemblance to his 5.9 trailer yacht. The ideas in the rig are similar and, in common with all his other designs, it has a bulb on its fin keel. The rudder is stern hung.

Its beam, all 4.8m of it, tends more towards flared topsides, like the 5.9. It's designed so that when sailing to windward, the centre of the buoyancy of the hull moves far enough to leeward to keep the leeward rail out of the water.

"It's getting more towards the multihull concept," explains Elliott. "The centre of buoyancy is right on the centreline of the hull, but because the boat's so beamy it has

the ability to move so far to leeward that it's like having another hull out there."

Multihull design interests Elliott, and the next boat he designs for himself will be a multi.

Meanwhile he says: "You can say all the usual things about *Party Pro* — it's beamy, has powerful aft sections, fine bows, but the real thing is that it was designed to go across the top of the water rather than through it." On a reach the water doesn't break till 5-6ft back from the stem and even going to windward there's a similar effect.

"We can only get it going faster," he concludes. "It still isn't finished and we haven't got our big spinnaker yet or really tuned it up.

"It seems to go better on the wind than other boats. In the regatta we were 4½ minutes behind *Atlantic Privateer* when we rounded Motuihe Buoy but they put only another minute on us when we were hard on the wind from there to Motukorea Beacon but then they doubled their lead on us two-sail reaching."

Party Pro did a constant eight knots in the light airs and took just three hours to complete the First Division 24 mile course. They finished just 14min 42sec behind *Atlantic Privateer*, and 17m 11sec ahead of *Innismara* and 20min 7sec ahead of *Urban Cowboy*. Not bad for a boat that wasn't designed to be an around-the-buoys racer. □



AND NOW COMES TRANSFORMER

TRANSFORMER, the first Elliott 12.5m cruiser-racer, was launched at Half Moon Bay at the end of January. Built in NZ kauri and treated kahikatea and immaculately finished by the owner, Mick Neale, it's a development of the 7.9m *Outsider*. The design features full topsides with 4.3m beam (3.4m on the

waterline) and a flat bottom. Neale specifically requested a drop keel so that he could raise the draught from 2.4m to 1.5m to allow him to keep the boat at a shallow mooring off Bucklands Beach.

Displacement is 13,000lb and working sail area 850sq ft. Like *Party Pro*, it has a particularly spacious interior and 6ft 3in headroom throughout.

A second 12.5 is presently being built at E Type Yachts. □



Transformer's superb finish is a credit to owner/builder, Mick Neale.