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F A R F R O M T H E M A D D I N G C R O W D

The 24-metre Long Island 78 Power offers the resilience to roam and a design that makes long periods on board a joy. *Raphaël Montigneaux* steps aboard a very clever cat



ost of 2020 was one long slog of postponed or cancelled yacht tests – but one or two interesting appointments managed to get squeezed in towards the end of the year. It wasn't until late November that we finally got on board the first Long Island 78 Power catamaran, off Concarneau in Brittany, France.

It was a dry, bright day, eerily empty of the fishing boats that ordinarily ply these waters. Free of distractions, it was perfect for discovering the quiet pleasures of JFA Yachts' latest creation.

Photography Bernard Galaron

And conditions were much more like the wild, untouched destinations where this yacht is likely to spend much of her time.

Founded in 1993, JFA Yachts is one of the last French shipyards building full custom superyachts. Most of its creations are used extensively by their owners for remote navigation, a pity for the yard's staff since they rarely have the opportunity to show the high quality of their work at boat shows. Instead their clients, with their yachts all over the world, are their best ambassadors.

Originally specialising in sailing yachts, the yard has also produced seaworthy explorer yachts such as the Vripack-designed *Axantha* (now *Zeepaard*) and *Axantha II* (now *Sea Eagle*), and the 42-metre neoclassical yacht *Bystander*, before becoming a go-to yard for large, customised catamarans, following the launch of the 33-metre full-carbon *Mousetrap* in 2012.

Its latest creation, the first Long Island 78 Power *4 Ever*, is JFA Yachts' 28th project. With a length of 23.72 metres, she follows a strong new market trend: the power catamaran just under 24 metres. This new market is already busy with successful French and Polish series, but *4 Ever* stands out as a luxury semi-custom version, built in aluminium and composite.

The story starts in 2016 when Frédéric Jaouen,

CEO of JFA Yachts, and the naval architect Marc Lombard conceived a new series. "JFA wanted to develop an aluminium/composite catamaran shorter than the existing Long Island 85, available in power or sail version," says Lombard, "offering a yacht with JFA quality, far from the existing standards [on the market]."

This is not the pair's first successful collaboration. Jaouen and Lombard also came up with the Long Island 85 sailing catamaran series, of which two hulls have already been delivered – *WindQuest* in 2014 and *NDS Evolution* in 2018. The Long Island 78 was created for circumnavigation and her construction offers two advantages, according to Jaouen. "The strength of the aluminium hull is a guarantee of safety during navigation. This takes on

importance when we see the number of containers lost at sea each year. Aluminium has a great ability to bend and absorb shock where other materials would simply tear," he says. "The composite transverse and longitudinal structure, in addition to reducing the displacement, ensures an excellent rigidity to this platform, which is more than 11 metres wide. The composite deck and superstructure, as well as the interiors in light materials, also optimise the total displacement."

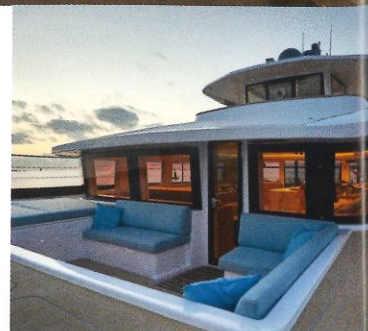
But a project only starts life upon the arrival of the client – and that client arrived in 2017. "The power version seduced the owner as soon as the draft was created," says Lombard. The owner is an experienced sailor who has owned several catamarans; *4 Ever* is his fourth, but the first without a mast. Construction started in mid-2018 and the first Long Island 78 Power was launched last summer.

From the exterior, Lombard's design is instantly recognisable: *4 Ever*'s elegant lines are picked out in Awlgrip "flag blue" for the hull and "snow white" for the superstructure. Stepping on board, the giant aft deck exemplifies one of the strengths of this catamaran – super-sized volumes for a yacht of its length.

The space is divided between a corner lounge and a dining area with a table for eight, with sunpads on both sides. Meanwhile, white and light blue furniture from Valdenassi and Tribù enhances the modern, casual feeling. A long seat separates the aft deck from the hydraulic platform that can lift a 4.6-metre tender of up to 650 kilograms. There is nothing revolutionary here, but the quality of construction makes the difference – take the staircase that connects this



Outdoor decks are huge for a yacht of this size and offer a large variety of relaxing areas for guests. A hidden rail all around the main aft deck means it can quickly be enclosed with covers



Aft deck and interior are in total connection. On entering, the feeling of space is striking



area with the upper deck, a giant piece of metal entirely designed and built in-house.

Like most catamarans, aft deck and interior are in total connection. On entering, the feeling of space is striking. The superstructure hardly creates any blind spots and the view is panoramic from wherever you are.

The light, modern scheme is mainly composed of oak and walnut in a design by Franck Darnet, who joined the team when the layout was already created by the naval architect and shipyard. "We are here in continuity of *NDS Evolution*," says Darnet. That project, also designed by Lombard, was Darnet's previous collaboration

with JFA Yachts. "The owner was confident when he arrived at the shipyard because he knew the construction quality of JFA Yachts. He had also just visited *NDS Evolution*. His requests were mainly for the final colour palette and the choice of some loose furniture like small Moroso stools and coffee tables." The final result is effortlessly stylish, with playful splashes of colour in leather chairs from Poltrona Frau and Cassina.

On the port side, the galley is imposing with its large central island in granite. To preserve the panoramic view here, some pop-up storage elements can be hidden, offering surfaces free of any objects. To starboard there is a large dining

The foredeck seating area (above) offers a sunken, sheltered spot next to the pool, yet still connected to the main saloon. The naval architecture of 4 Ever, by Marc Lombard, ensures incredible comfort both at anchor or while under way



The main deck layout is designed to optimise the storage capacity and give a sensation of volume (opposite page). And you feel the same in the cabins, the master suite (bottom) and the VIP, which offer all the comfort of a larger superyacht



The final result is effortlessly stylish, with playful splashes of colour in leather chairs from Poltrona Frau and Cassina





area with a table for eight guests, while the front part of the space consists of an office facing the sea, and a lounge area with direct access to the foredeck. This saloon is slightly raised, allowing passengers to appreciate the view from the sofa made by Berto Salotti.

Both hulls are dedicated to cabins. To port, a single staircase gives access to a twin cabin and the master suite – a masterpiece in this catamaran size category. “The master cabin was slightly lengthened compared to the initial design, and the height of the portholes was slightly increased,” says Lombard, to follow the owner’s wishes.

The effect is striking as soon as you walk through the door. An extraordinary window of 3.24 square metres (4.155 x 0.78 metres) runs the length of the cabin, offering an incredible view of the sea. All cladding of the window frames is in aluminium, offering a better finish and greater longevity than fibreglass or wood. “Significant work has been done in fitting the portholes to optimise the outward view,” says Jaouen. “All this work is particularly visible in the owner’s cabin, which offers exceptional visibility.”

The layout of the cabin is also well conceived. The king-size bed faces the sea, with an office area and a large bathroom with a broad opening on to the cabin. Once again, details make the difference: the bathroom’s sliding door is entirely retractable, as are mirrors on the wall, revealing a hidden porthole opening on to the aft deck. When all is opened, the effect of volume and brightness is impressive. Finally, a separate toilet is located at the entrance of the suite.

The starboard hull has two access points. One at the front serves a double cabin with a bathroom that offers the same volume as the twin cabin. The second staircase gives access to the VIP cabin and the crew area. The VIP cabin follows the ideas that make the master a success: a large king-size bed facing the sea, a giant porthole offering an exceptional view, and a large bathroom using the entire width of the hull.

In aft position is the children’s cabin, composed of two bunk beds, a table and a bathroom. The yacht was conceived for owner-operation, with 10 guests in five cabins, but this area could also become crew quarters. In addition, extra crew cabins could be created

in the forward section of each hull. All of the cabins have the same equipment, including televisions, wireless chargers, USB plugs and Sonos speakers.

On the performance side, the Long Island 78 Power is also impressive. “The idea,” says Lombard, “was to create a transatlantic/transpacific yacht, with a good ratio of consumption to performance – and it succeeded, with a top speed slightly above expectations, while keeping modest, lower-consumption engines.” Indeed, *4 Ever*’s twin 500 horsepower Cummins engines allow a top speed of 18 knots at mid-load. And she reaches the impressive range of 3,500 nautical miles at the economical speed of eight knots. At this speed, the two engines have a total consumption of only 16.4 litres per hour.

During our test, we reach the cruising speed of 12 knots as soon as we leave Concarneau. Good weather is expected but we do have a wind force of three on the Beaufort scale, with a few waves. It doesn’t seem to make a difference to *4 Ever*, which cuts through smoothly and quietly. For lunch, we drop anchor off the beautiful Glénan

Like a Portuguese bridge, the fore part of the upper deck offers a protected sitting area for guests. The atypical wheelhouse design provides all-around visibility for the captain. Large sofas made by Tribù make for a relaxing spot on the upper aft deck



“The idea was to create a transatlantic/transpacific yacht with good consumption and performance. It succeeded”

archipelago with the boat perfectly stable (a reduced draught of 1.24 metres, meanwhile, allows her to get into most creeks).

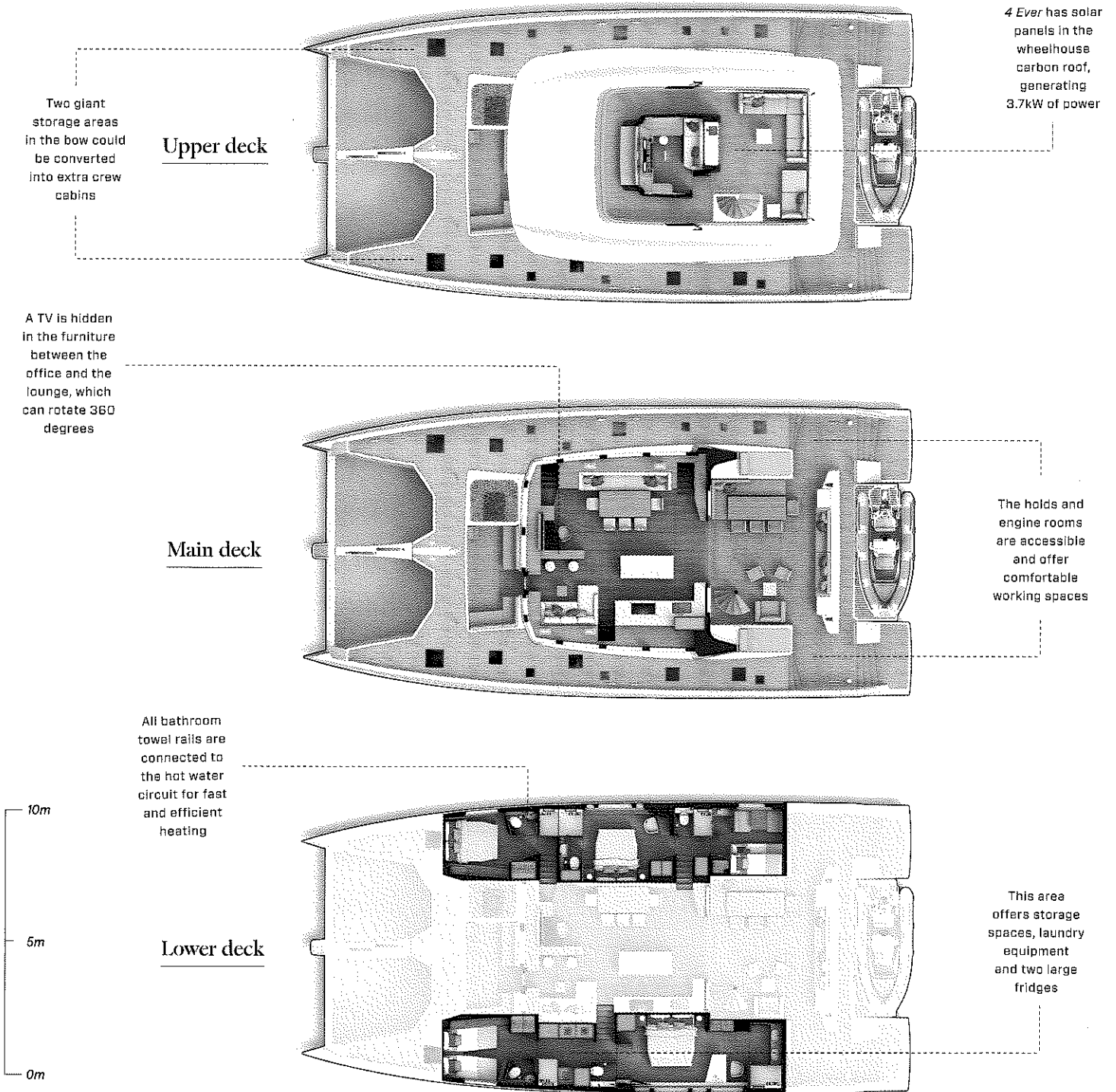
Pottering around on the foredeck, I discover an area for guests with a lounging space, direct access to the saloon inside and a tub. It has the dimensions of a spa pool but is a simple basin of seawater, which is easily filled with a pump and emptied in a couple of minutes – a good solution, easy to maintain. A large bimini can also be quickly assembled to protect guests, while forward, many hatches give access to large storage areas.

Just as relaxing is the upper deck, with a large lounge aft, protected by a bimini, and a small kitchen for guests that is well integrated into the superstructure. We also discover the main modification requested by the owner. “The owner has requested an enclosed wheelhouse, which is very pleasant,” says Lombard. This unusual choice offers a captain ample comfort for long cruises. The view at 360 degrees is ideal, and a small office and lounge corner allow passengers to enjoy the space as much as the captain. Like many aspects of this catamaran, it’s a simple, intelligent idea, beautifully executed. ■



4 Ever

JFA Yachts



LOA 23.72m
LWL 23.06m
Beam 11.17m
Draught (full load)
 1.24m
Displacement (light)
 64 tonnes

Engines
 2 x 500hp Cummins
 QSC 6.3M
Speed (max/cruise)
 18/12 knots
Range at 8 knots
 3,500nm
Generators
 2 x Onan 17.5kW

Fuel capacity
 2 x 4,000 litres
Freshwater capacity
 2 x 800 litres
Tender
 Highfield OM500 with
 70cv engine

Owners/guests 8
Crew 2
Construction
 Aluminium hull; composite
 superstructure
Classification
 CE and MGN 280 compliant

Naval architecture
 Marc Lombard
 Yacht Design
Exterior styling
 Marc Lombard
 Yacht Design
Interior design
 Darnet Design

Builder/year
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