CODECASA GAZZELLA
VITTERS SHIPYARD UNFURLED
BAGLIETTO UNICORN
MAIORA 33 FB
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DESIGN YACHTS FOR THE POLES
DESIGNER PHILIPPE BRIAND
TECHNICAL THE NEW D2P BY
BENETTI HULL UNVEILED
MEETINGS MONACO YACHT SHOW 2016
SHIPYARDS SOUTHERN WIND:
CELEBRATES 1ST QUARTER OF A CENTURY
Southern Wind shipyards has recently celebrated its 25th anniversary and has been building large highly performing sailing yachts thanks to its proven building capacity, quality of build and prestige. At Pegasus’ HQ in Genoa a service company and home to the South African yard’s sales division and customer care branch is where we met up with Willy Perasso, founder and CEO who’s also a keen yachtsman and observer of the market’s evolving trends.

What made you opt for South Africa?
It all started twenty five years ago, when I was very involved in sailing yacht events and wanted to have a faster boat built, you see at the time I had a classic 20-metre ketch so I contacted a project designer, bought a project for a 22 metre sloop and shopped around for a yard that could build it. I chose South Africa because the price was right for reasonable quality. To be honest the boats were two one for me the other for a friend of mine. After about eight months the shipyard went on the rocks and at that point I was left with a big decision to take. I could throw everything away but instead I decided to acquire the yard and to complete the two yachts.

The situation was very different then by comparison to today. Mandela had recently been released from prison we were in the mid nineties but the Country wasn’t prepared nor organised after the apartheid in fact it took another four years for the first form of a mixed government to come into being. Anyway since I had already taken on 32 people and some of them were from the preceding yard I decided to build a third yacht and then a fourth. I brought them over to the Genoa International Boat Show and sold them all.

A few years later I sold the shares I possessed in an Italian petroleum company and decided to dedicate myself to building performing sailing yachts.

How has the production towards design, technology and performing sailing yachts evolved?
We began to build larger vessels at the end of the 1990s when projects I liked in that same period I met Nauta Yachts with which we produced the first 95’ and a 93’. Both of those derived from the same project we have never interrupted our working relationship and we’re both still happy to work together.

Then came the change in construction materials and the first boats built in carbon, which started with a miniserie of the 76’ and then the 80’. The very first 100’ we built was vacuum bagged up then the technique was deployed to build small motor and small sailing yachts and with the 110’cor, flagship we kept on producing a family yacht in three sections which allows you to work on a horizontal plane. Following the 100’ measures we built another thirteen, nine of which 105’ (deck saloon) models and four (sloop deck) RS models – we went further and drew up preliminaries for a 102’ which is really a 103’ sporting more modern lines and can host up to a 7 meters hill in the garage. The sixth of the 102 metres has the water a few weeks ago and has been widely appreciated.

The change in direction from very performing sailing yachts with which we got to be known internationally happened by chance, when one of our returning clients asked for a faster yacht for whom we had RendelPhigl studio design a 92’. It was the first time we produced a customised carbon sailboat, but this project got us involved in a more complex world which foresees...
Southern Wind Celebrates 1st quarter of a century

How many are you building on a yearly basis? Southern Wind is averaging three boats each year depending on size so were restructuring slowly and steadily whilst verifying the quality of what we do. Anyway we build the 115’ and possibly the 120 that are still in the ball game for us, larger I don’t know; it’s not about technical limitations but company policy – we drive to carry on doing well what we already know how to do.

Are there any drawbacks in building in a place which is far away from international buyers’ areas? And are you thinking to remain in Southern Africa? Well building in South Africa is not easy; costs run high because there’s a lack of raw materials, not even wood and everything has to be imported. Furthermore for clients coming to South Africa to follow up on the work in progress on their yachts, often enough entails time consuming long flights. In spite of this, we are planning to stay on in Cape Town. We have good efficient workers on site and also some of the ones that we began with a quarter of a century ago. The shipyard is training apprenticeship in boat building and over the past two years, we have student that successfully completed the course. On the other hand, we do everything in-house as there are no companies around as we can delegate or sub contract. Currently there are 320 people in the yard and we do everything from steel works, electric plants on board, to interiors and painting.

And what’s in store for Southern Wind in terms of prospects? After me the yard’s future is my management, which is made up of dynamic young people. Right now I’m the only owner but already in Pago’s the branch I created to dialogue with the market and project designers, there are a number of working stakeholders involved. Through Pago, in addition to commercial and which certainly constitutes part of this yard’s success, you have two backgrounds or different cultures, one is technical and the other is that of a yachtsman. How did you knit them together to do what you do? Certainly a yachtman’s knowledge has helped me a lot, above all because clients see in me someone like them, first and foremost a yachtsman, before being the CEO of a shipyard. I personally go on the boats I’ve built during sea trials and have slept on many of them to check out noise levels, the sensation they can transmit, the smell. I think this is a component which makes the difference. What really makes the company so unique is that the owner is a discerning yachtsman who gets something in common with the client he is talking with. Where do your clients, and they’re supposedly demanding ones since they’re looking for the use of more sophisticated technological materials and equipment. Lengthy feasibility studies convinced us we could successfully take on this new course and so we developed other projects as well. The first one is Bruce Farr 96 with a modern lifting keel. Meanwhile another client was negotiating with us for a 102’ and urged us to produce the 115’ of which we’ve recently finished the hull this is a truly comfortable yacht which is also very performing and is just a shade heavier than a 100’ while offering about 20% more exploitable volume. This had already occurred with the first boats in carbon; in a sense we evolved also on the basis of our clients’ request. You’ve now been producing consistently for twenty-six years. Do you feel optimistic about the market for larger highly performing sailing yachts?

Certainly yes where large high end yachts are concerned, including the ones we haven’t produced yet. We always used to think the 72’ was the smallest and often refused to deliver anything smaller while now we’re not building anything under 82’ and have developed a project design of 115’ for which we are waiting the right client. We’re still building 82’ to satisfy owners’ requests (the owner buying a yacht of that size will probably return to purchase a 115’) but you see we are putting up the “benchmark” because there are few shipyards around that can build large and sound sailing yachts with composites well.

Conclusion: We have been making a name for ourselves in the world of superyachts, but the real test of our skills lies in the future. With the ever-growing demand for high-performance sailing yachts, we are ready to take on the challenge and produce more innovative designs that meet our clients’ expectations. Our commitment to quality, customer satisfaction, and innovation is what sets us apart in the superyacht industry, and we look forward to continuing to exceed our clients’ expectations for years to come.
Southern Wind: Celebrates 1st quarter of a century

highly performing cruising sailing yachts, mainly come from? In the main they come from Europe but we have owners from Canada to Brazil as well. The first 95 was purchased by an Indian who sailed twice round the world with our yacht. We delivered it to him in 2000 and he's still very happy with it. We also have an Australian owner, and Australians are great yachtmen when it comes to sailing in the true sense. They're very demanding when it comes to performance. Our yachts are comfortable ones but also fast and with good sails and capable crews they do well in most prestigious racing events.

To a lover of the sea as yourself the next question is a "must": What kind of boat have you got? Right now I haven't got one, but my ideal one is a 78', which is the right size in terms of comfort, fast, easy to handle and responds quickly to the helm. I once sold one and then bought it back soon after it was Southern Star she won in numerous events and the Giraglia to Saint Tropez offshore racing event this year arriving first of her class.

Are you thinking to expand into custom builds as well?

For the time being it is not envisaged, then who knows. Building customised个性化 yachts is very demanding from a project design viewpoint and slows mass series production down. The yard is used to working to full potential and we've got several of our own projects well on the way. However, if Southern Wind is, putting it into a nutshell a mini series company, the custom built yacht we built was an exception, an opportunity to get more acquainted with the world of highly performing super yachts.

Which boats will you be exhibiting at the next MYBA?

Crossbow, a 102' which is currently undergoing sea trials in Cape Town and Ammonite which is the latest 82' installed by Farr Yacht Design studio featuring loads of very high quality materials and technology. It's above all a truly comfortable lifting keel sailboat cruiser which makes it highly performing up and down wind a good example of a boat destined to long cruises and to race in international events dedicated to maxi yachts.

We'll be in Cannes as well this year with the 102'. We feel that the Cannes Festival de la Pausse is growing and can become a great show case for the boats of our segment; it's only a matter of time. For further information: Pegaso – Sales and Marketing Representative, Raza della Vittoria 1502, 16121 Genoa, Italy, tel: +39 010 5704035, fax: +39 010 5704066, www.southernwind.com - info@pegasoysd.com

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