

After owning a Stewart 34 for 13 years Alan Day and Gloria Locke decided it was time to move up into a bigger, and more comfortable boat, but one that would still perform well.

Elliott's new 13m is...

Simply the Best



The interior is open plan, and very comfortable.

The design brief called for a boat that was not a flat out racing machine, but it had to perform, and also rate reasonably well under the 1994 IMS Cruiser-racer rule. This is a slight variation on the rule that requires the boats to have a few more creature comforts than the flat out race craft.

They also wanted a boat that would be good for passage making yet not be hampered by a cruising payload.

These combinations of attributes seem to be what everyone wants in a yacht and what every designer is striving for. Designer Greg Elliott has met this challenge with his new 13m, and since its launching late last year it has exceeded Day's and Locke's expectations.

Built by timber experts Geary and

Interior inspection

With the boat just back from competing in the Air New Zealand IMS Regatta we meet Locke on the marina and quickly head below to check out the interior and escape the summer rain.

The combination of low profile cabin-top and moderately high topsides disguises the fact that there is a minimum of 1.85m of headroom throughout the cabin, this even extends into the shower/toilet compartment and forward cabin. Beginning aft we find two large quarterberths, each being a rather generous double. The starboard is all but enclosed in aft cabin style, the only difference is there is no door. "Privacy is not a huge issue when there is only the two of us on board cruising" says

one of the largest boat batteries we have seen for some time. There is never likely to be a power shortage aboard Simply the Best. The Yanmar drives a 450mm Maxprop, a three bladed folding model that gives the boat enormous thrust in both forward and reverse. The top speed under motor is 8.5 knots, while the economical cruise speed is around 7.5 knots. From full speed the Maxprop can stop the Elliott in a little over one boat length.

The galley to port has maximised the use of the space in this part of the boat. Under the sidedecks are a set of sliding lockers for plate and light storage. Built into the aft end of the galley is a hinge-out rubbish bin, with a set of drawers alongside for cutlery and other utensils.

The return on the galleys inboard edge is devoted to fridge and freezer space. A day fridge is fitted in the aft section of the return, just a hop down the stairs from the cockpit. In front of this, accessed from the centreline is an enormous freezer. This has a capacity larger than we have seen even on boats twice this size.

Opposite the galley is an athwartships nav station. This has a drawer for chart stowage rather than a hinge lid as it makes for easier access to the charts. On the bulkhead facing the chart table is the BEP master switch panel, VHF radio and Pioneer stereo.

A pair of lockers under the chart drawer is a cocktail locker, complete with custom cutouts for the various shaped bottles. Beside this there is a pair of mesh baskets on rails for ventilated yet dry storage.

It may sound like a bit of overkill but fitted into the U-shaped settee berth



A hanging locker opposite the toilet has an abundance of linen space.

a necessary feature of a boat with this much space. Across the cabin is a standard settee berth.

An interesting feature of the Elliott is the deck stepped mast, made obvious below by the fabricated compression post.

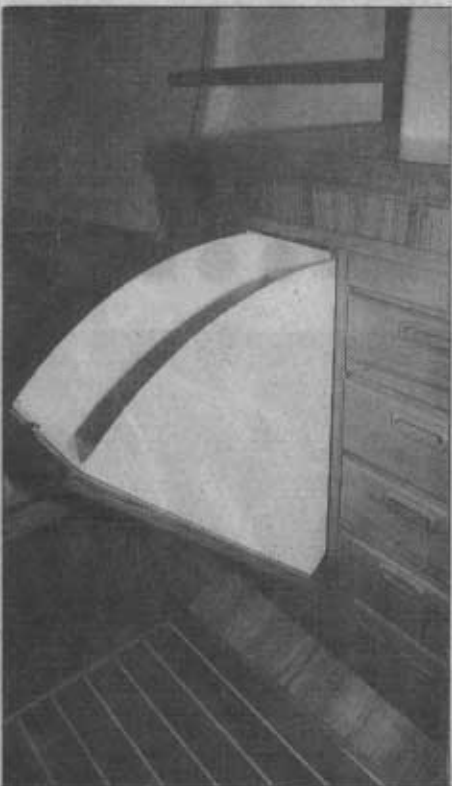
"Water getting inside the boat down the mast is always a problem," says builder Peter Geary, "and engineering the mast to this application is easy for the sparmakers, cheaper for the owners as the mast section is now exactly the

peccations.

Built by timber experts Geary and Sherson, of Henderson, Simply the Best is built in 20mm cedar strip with E-glass and some localised reinforcing in kevlar. The hull is further reinforced in a more traditional manner, laminated timber ring frames. Careful placement of the bulkheads and frames has resulted in a very clean interior.

The deck is a foam and glass combination laminated over a male mould.

Simply the best boasts an open plan cruising oriented interior, designed principally for two people. Locke says most of their cruising is done without others on board, but when there are guests there is bunk space for another six, in comfort.



The fold out rubbish bin is a nice use of space in the galley.

not a huge issue when there is only the two of us on board cruising" says Locke. In the owner's cabin we also find a large dresser, a set of cupboards and enough shelf space for a large collection of cruising reading.

For additional light and ventilation in the quarterberths there is a Lewmar portlight set into the side of the cockpit.

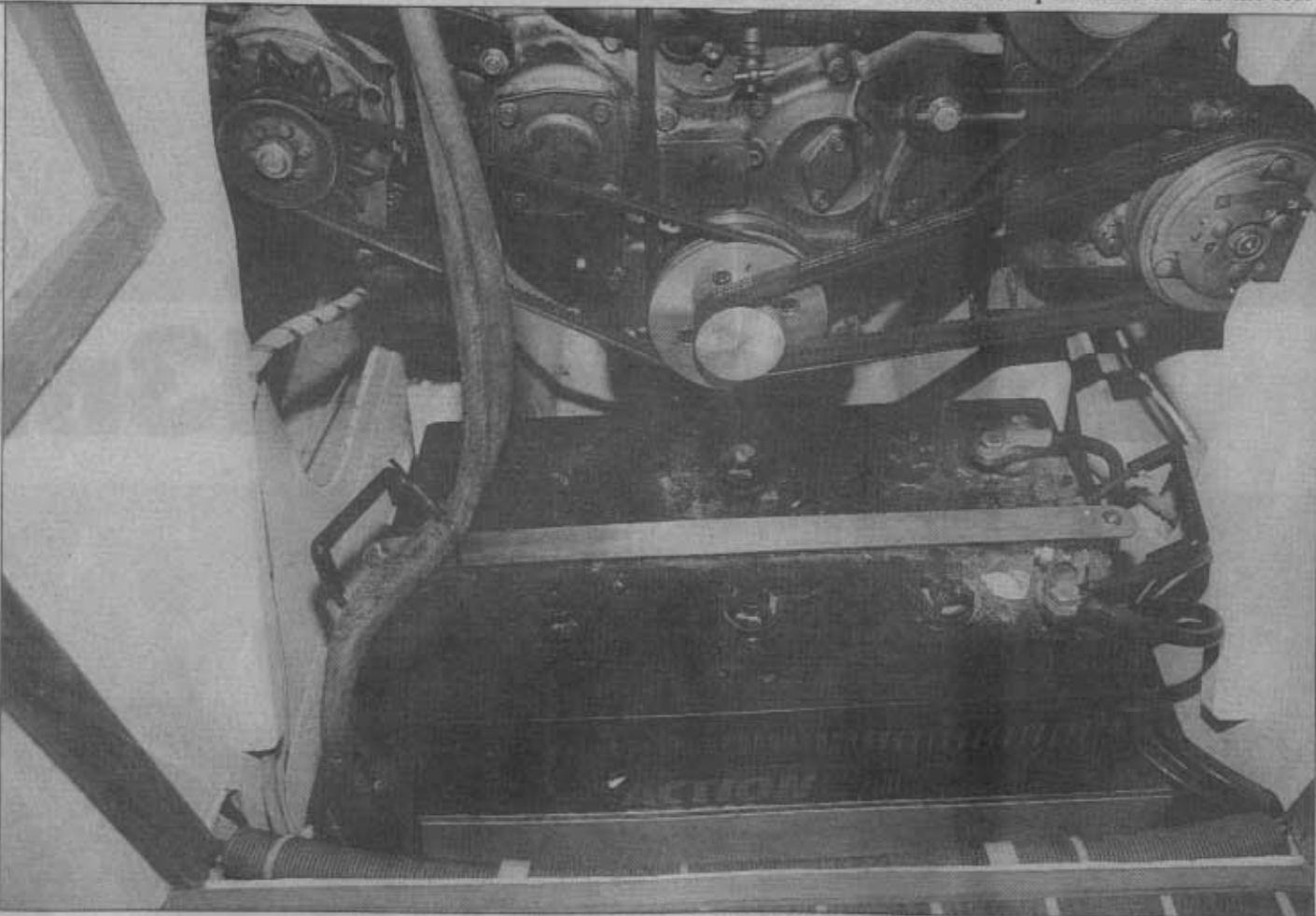
Beneath the steps we find a Yanmar 50hp saildrive, and in front of this is

filled into the U-shaped settee berth for'ard of the galley is yet another small fridge. This one is designed specifically as the beer fridge, it is a little over two cans deep and again has vast capacity. Cleverly placed alongside this, and taking advantage of the chilled space is a locker for softdrink stowage.

A large table fits snugly into the U-shaped settee berth. This is not a low-erable model as that is not considered

as the mast section is now exactly the length of a stock extrusion and no water gets below, everyone is happy."

For'ard of the main bulkhead is a large shower/toilet compartment. Upon entering this we have to do a quick double take, it is a rather bright shade of pink, and not one we would want to face the morning after a "post match function". The whole interior was to have been this colour but the owners were persuaded to tone the rest



Under the companionway steps is the Yanmar 50hp saildrive and a huge house battery.



The cockpit is spacious enough for even the largest of crew to spread out and make themselves comfortable.

of the interior down to a very subtle pinkish white, with the emphasis on the white. Opposite this is a large set of hanging lockers and linen stowage, the seat alongside being a good place to put clothes while using the shower.

Further for'ard there is a large V berth in a private double cabin.

Large cockpit

A feature both Day and Locke wanted in their new boat was a large cockpit with enough space to recline in comfort while cruising and still be reasonably efficient for racing. What they finished up with certainly fits those requirements. There is a pair of cockpit seats 1.8m long with a traveller spanning between them. This has the tiller emerging from under it leaving a wide open space across the back of the cockpit, this space flows through onto the transom platform via a narrow op-

ening in the transom. The mainsheet is an endless system that only has a 2:1 purchase on it, but it does have its own pair of Lewmar selftailing winches to do all of the hard work. The primary sheeting winches are located at the for'ard end of the IMS required coamings.

Simply the Best's rig is a twin spreader set up from Matrix Masts, and the sail wardrobe is a mix of dacron cruising sails and kevlar/mylar racing sails from North Sails in Auckland.

With the duly delegated *Boating* representative aboard Simply the Best for the Air New Zealand IMS Regatta we have built up a good overall view of the Elliott's performances in quite a variation of windspeeds.

The strengths of the boat are definitely in the over 12 knot windrange, particularly with slightly eased sheets. The kevlar/mylar number one genoa

has a broad windrange and as a result is not at its optimum in the very light. The target figure upwind is 7.3 knots, and the boat is very easy to slip into the groove and keep both pointing and speed maximised. The number three genoa, another kevlar/mylar concoction has an equally wide range going from around 15 knots through to 30 knots.

Reaching, the Elliott performs at its best, quickly attaining 10-11 knots and maintaining high average speeds easily.

This Elliott 13m design has another variation, that of a flat out IMS racer. The "GT" version sports a much larger and more optimised fractional rig and a

more racing oriented cockpit. Elliott says one of these has just been launched in Japan and there is another under construction in Tasmania.

Gloria Locke says the name comes from the Tina Turner song, and was decided on only days before the signwriter was due to arrive at the factory. Desperate for ideas she resorted to the time honoured method of choosing boat names — scanning the Top 40 for album titles and band names. The choice quickly became unanimous and after some successful racing and plenty of good Christmas cruising Locke and Day agree, that for what they originally set out to get in a boat, their choice is Simply the Best.





*Sailing upwind during a Thursday afternoon Rum-race
Simply the Best has the 20m Innismara tucked away astern.*

The vitals

<i>LOA</i>	<i>13m</i>
<i>LWL</i>	<i>12m</i>
<i>Beam</i>	<i>4m</i>
<i>Draft</i>	<i>2.5m</i>
<i>Displacement</i>	<i>6500kgs</i>
<i>Designer</i>	<i>Elliott Boat Design</i>
<i>Builder</i>	<i>Geary and Sherson Boatbuilders</i>
<i>Engine</i>	<i>Yanmar 50hp Saildrive</i>
<i>Spars</i>	<i>Matrix Masts</i>
<i>Sails</i>	<i>North Sails</i>
<i>Instruments</i>	<i>Brookes and Gatehouse</i>
<i>Deckgear</i>	<i>Lewmar</i>
<i>Winches</i>	<i>Lewmar</i>
<i>Resins</i>	<i>Epiglass</i>
<i>Paint Systems</i>	<i>Epiglass</i>
<i>Upholstery</i>	<i>Wayne Holmes Upholstery</i>