

PREPARED BY CHESAPEAKE BAY MAGAZINE'S MARKETING DEPARTMENT



John Martino holds a USCG 500-Ton, All Oceans captain's license and is the founder and president of Annapolis Yacht Management and Annapolis School of Seamanship. He develops and teaches hands-on training courses for recreational boaters and professional mariners and offers yacht delivery and onboard training services for powerboaters as well as sailors.

UP TO SPEED...

what's new on the waterfront

by John Martino



Leopard 39

Early spring on the Chesapeake Bay can certainly offer a sailor a mixed bag when it comes to weather. Less than two weeks after our last snow storm, I found myself boarding a Leopard 39 catamaran along with Allen Murphy from Leopard Catamarans and Jason Pinter from the Moorings charter base in Annapolis. Luckily for us, it was a beautiful, sunny, 80 degree day. The breeze was light but we were grateful to finally have some warm weather.

As I arrived, Allen was lowering the dinghy to leave it at the dock. I immediately took note of how elegantly simple and clever the davit system is aboard the Leopard. By pressing a button, the dinghy, which had been hanging across the back of the bridge deck, swung down into the water where it was easily boarded from the swim platform of either hull. As I watched this remarkably easy process, I was reminded of the hundreds of times I struggled with launching and stowing dinghies from many different davits on many different boats.



With the dinghy tied off to the dock, we got underway and headed for the Severn River. On the way out of Back Creek under power, I took the opportunity to have a look around. On deck, the Leopard has a functional and comfortable layout. The cockpit area has a hard top which keeps it shady and provides some cover on those less than sunny days. It also provides a convenient platform for reaching the boom. The seating around a table faces aft and is well designed for entertaining. Access to the side decks is easy and secure.

Up forward there is plenty of deck space and a well thought-out trampoline. The tramp material is a flat mesh that allows sunbathers to lie out without the discomfort of having light line digging into their backs and leaving that attractive waffle pattern. Just aft of the trampoline there are two large storage compartments. One of these compartments houses a generator. The anchor and windlass are tucked away in a compartment that allows for good access for handling the ground tackle while keeping the foredeck area streamlined the rest of the time.

The belowdecks accommodations are generous for a boat that is less than 38 feet overall. The boat comes with either a three or four stateroom layout. Our test boat had the three stateroom plan which uses one hull as the master suite with a very large head and stall shower. The saloon is roomy as well

and has a settee/dinette area that can be equipped with a high-low table that allows this to be used as an extra bunk.

Under sail, the Leopard glided along despite the light breeze. From the helm, I had a 360-degree view above the cockpit hard top while still having my own mini-hard top overhead. All of the sheetlines lead directly to the helm position so I could literally single-hand this boat without getting out of my chair.

After a while, we spotted another catamaran of a similar size that was also under sail and traveling in the same direction as we were. Anyone familiar with sailing will immediately recognize that this can only mean one thing . . . our boat review just turned into a yacht race. With new determination and narrowed gaze, we trimmed our sails and I am happy to report . . . we prevailed! ■

SPECIFICATIONS

LENGTH OVER ALL.....	37' 6"
BEAM	19' 9"
DRAFT	3' 8"
DISPLACEMENT.....	20,120 lb
ENGINE.....	Yanmar 3YM30, 29hp
FUEL CAPACITY	92 gal
WATER CAPACITY.....	206 gal
SAIL AREA.....	991 sq ft
MAST HEIGHT.....	62' 8"
PRICE AS TESTED	\$429,000

FOR DEALER INFO

LEOPARD CATAMARANS

Dania Beach, FL
<http://www.leopardcatamarans.com/>