

Are Two Hulls



better than One?





■ by ANDREW YOUNG

The day had finally arrived! The first *Cumberland 44* was unloaded from a container ship in Brisbane after travelling halfway round the world from Southampton. *The Cumberland 44* is manufactured by Fountaine-Pajot in Le Rochelle, France, and had already proved worthy in very severe sea conditions on her 400nm delivery voyage from La Rochelle in France to Southampton in the UK.

After two years of mono versus cat deliberations I had finally settled on the latter. The search had taken me to three continents and had ultimately included two visits to the Fountaine-Pajot factory. Production has historically been sailing cats, but in recent years the Trawler range of power cats has been introduced incorporating all the experience gained in becoming “the largest cruising cat factory in the world!”.

Basic details are 44’ (13.40m) long, 21’6” (6.55m) beam, and 14 tonnes dry. A big boat for someone who has only ever owned ski boats!



The short trip from Brisbane to her home port of Mooloolaba was made and then begun the process of fitting the little extras to make life easier. Water maker, generator, holding tanks were added to complete the cruising package along with plotter and radar. We were now ready to travel. Frantic loading of provisions and then we were off to the Whitsunday's.

The trip north was spectacular. Smooth seas and over-night stops at Lady Musgrave lagoon and the Percy's. We were soon in Airlie Beach reprovisioning for two weeks meandering through the islands. Weather over the two weeks was mixed and gave us our first real taste of the *Cumberland's* sea keeping ability. After a full day's fishing on the reef, where no-one wanted to cut the day short and make our overnight destination on Hook Island before dark, we found ourselves facing rising wind and seas for the long dark trip back. With seas building to three metres and coming from the port quarter, we merely adjusted the boat speed to match. The *Cumberland*



Luxury Master Suite (Port Hull). (above)



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Gourmet Galley (3 sinks). (above)



Master Suite. (above)



Hidden full size refrigerator. (above)

handled it brilliantly and never gave the impression she would do otherwise! Compared to other cats we had observed, the *Cumberland* was a standout.

All good things come to an end, and with the decision made to exhibit the boat at the Sydney Boat Show, we were all too soon heading south. Two to three metre long rolling swells, cruising at 21 knots, and returning fuel consumption of 66 litres per hour total! We were soon in Mooloolaba, and then on to Sydney. If necessary you've always got the maximum speed of 30 knots at your disposal!

A little more about the boat. The owner's version (Maestro) devotes the port hull to the owner's suite incorporating a huge bathroom / shower - real luxury. Forward of the shower is a large area accessed through the deck hatch that can be fitted as crew quarters or used for storage. The starboard hull contains two double cabins each with their own heads.

The saloon is huge and a great "gathering" location. With the galley on the same level, but discreetly separated by the island bar, no-one is left out. The lower helm station also forms a useful part of the saloon space with its separate lounge area. The cockpit proved more than adequate for seven fishermen and includes two over-sized lazarettes that swallow up all those little (and not so little) extras that make blue water cruising that much more enjoyable.

On a clear day the only place to be is the fly bridge. It is huge, with permanent seating for 15! Great visibility underway and the ideal spot for entertaining at anchor. Being 4 metres above the water really gives the skipper confidence when underway and berthing. From the upper helm station it is possible to see the rear port position through the well located spiral staircase.

The *Cumberland* is now located in the Pittwater for a few months. On a fine day you may see her cruising. Come over, come on board, and see for yourself why this French maiden has won the hearts of her new Aussie friends!

For more information on the *Cumberland 44* or any of Fountaine Pajot's Sail or Trawler range, contact EC Marine Pty Ltd on (07) 5457 3223 or visit www.fountaine pajot.com.au ❖