

Goldfish

32 SPORTCRUISER

Boat Report

Like racehorses and mistresses, boats have to look right to be right. This sporty Norwegian newcomer stood out from the crowd in Oslofjord, so we hopped aboard to find out more.



Oslo's Grand Prix for Class I offshore racers attracted a floating festival of fun-lovers, afloat in everything from inflatable tenders to stately yachts. But through the mayhem, the classic lines of a locally built cruiser somehow managed to stand out. Further investigation revealed that this mixture of usable layout and elegant styling bore the unlikely name of the Goldfish 32 Sportcruiser, built in exclusively small numbers just along the coast at



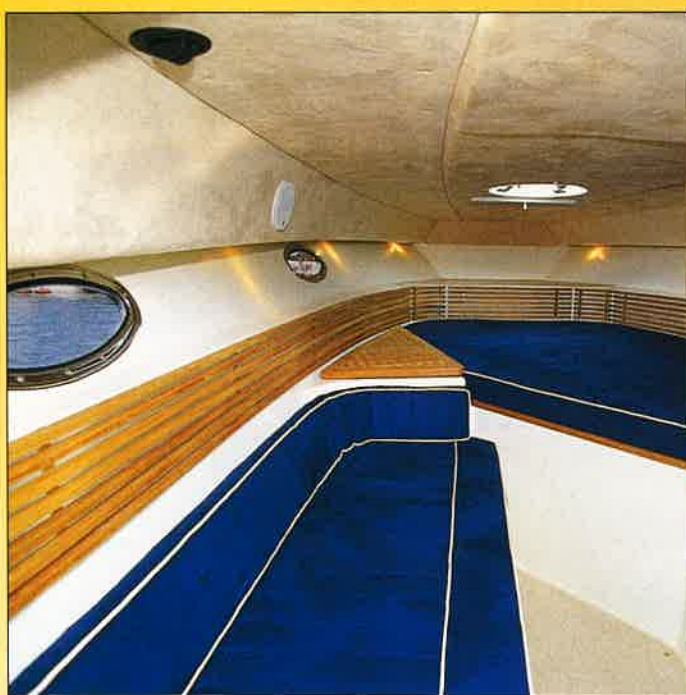
Cabin

Forward accommodation in smallish fast boats tends to be vestigial and cramped, but the Goldfish disguises the constraints very elegantly.

Besides hiding a water heater, the pressure pump and a greywater catch tank, the commodious double berth in the bow has some stowage underneath. And there is a further single settee/berth to port, opposite the WC.

Alcantara is favoured for the overheads and a light open-weave carpet covers the sole, all colour-coordinated with the cushions and the exterior.

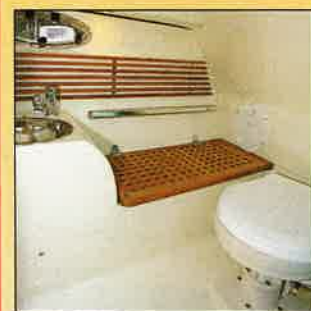
The main switch panel and circuit breakers nestle on the aft bulkhead, and there is a surprisingly large amount of stowage available.



Toilet

To starboard in the cabin is a separate and noticeably spacious toilet/shower compartment, with teak trim to offset white GRP mouldings.

The area is closed off by a green-tinted plexiglass sliding door on a stainless steel tubular frame, matching the sliding door between cockpit and accommodation areas.



Helm

At the two-seater helm position, the smart single-spoke aluminium Versari steering wheel is offset to starboard, and separate stainless steel Teleflex gear-selectors and throttles fall naturally and comfortably to hand outboard of it. Washer/wipers clean the windscreen.

White-faced Faria instrumentation in gunmetal bezels is grouped forward of the wheel and below the screen, with the remainder of the console occupied by a compass, engine monitoring systems, trim indicators, a lifting plexiglass chart cover, a Sony stereo system and the switchpanel.

All of this comes as standard and our test boat also featured a depth-sounder and Simrad CE40 chart-plotter.



Drøbak on Oslofjord.

And it does have something of a racer's pedigree, being the creation of Pål Sollie, an erstwhile Class III 4-Litre offshore competitor who six years ago turned his prototype mould-making business into Goldfish Boats and began producing a range of small centre-console monohulls between 16ft and 21ft.

Sollie might not be well known outside Norway yet, but he has already demonstrated an eye for pure lines and practical solutions that has

attracted a coterie of dedicated owners seeking something a bit different. The sterndrive 32 is his largest design yet, in production since April 1999.

Design & layout

The hull is built to the standards set by the Det Norske Veritas small-boat code, constructed from triaxial and unidirectional e-glass and polyester resins, with a single skin below the waterline and

Divinycel foam core above it. Its deep-vee form features two parallel sprayrails each side of the centreline and a transom deadrise of 24°. The integral

bathing platform overhangs the sterndrive units and flows into a transom cut-out in the hull to aid pick-up and planing.

The structure includes timber cores in the engine-bearers and a GRP floor-pan moulding, vacuumed into the hull mould for enhanced rigidity. Unusually, there are no watertight bulkheads in the vessel, and everything that gets into the bilges gravitates aft.

The deck moulding is pre-trimmed before being offered up to the hull, and the forecabin is a two-piece moulding.

The layout is conventional for small day-cruisers and weekenders, with a fully trimmed en-suite double cabin forward, a multi-functional

cockpit with a small galley unit amidships, and a big sun-cushion over the lifting enginehatch aft.

But the execution is very different. Wide side decks link the minimally radiused foredeck to the cockpit, and a low-line curvilinear screen and curved side screens make for a pleasing and unusual profile.

Hot-and-cold water and a 220V shore supply are part of the standard inventory, and power comes from a choice of twin engines up to 415hp Mercruiser V8 petrols. Our test boat, the fourth of only five built thus far, featured twin 225hp Mercruiser D-Tronic Bravo 1 diesels, although 270hp Yanmars are another option.

Performance & handling

You don't expect a 3.5-ton dayboat with this amount of horsepower to go slowly, and the Goldfish does not disappoint. Maximum speeds of between 48-65 knots are claimed, depending on the choice of engines.

The D-Tronics on test dug the boat out of its displacement hole and popped it onto the plane at around 18 knots with no delays, and the boat felt stable and responsive in the mid-range speeds as it accelerated seamlessly up to a limit of better than 50 knots.

Cockpit

The cockpit has its seating to starboard and its galley to port, all ahead of a sunlounger and the bathing platform.

A well-engineered flip-over bolster converts the helm seat into an aft-facing seat for two, facing the three-quarter width aft settee. In between is a smart and functional teak table, which folds up from and stows inside the starboard coaming.

To port, alongside a fridge, is a single spirit burner and sink in stainless steel, this whole unit being electrohydraulically raised and lowered.

All deck hardware is from



Versari, and perfectly complements the stainless steel pulpit, grab rails and other trim, in round and oval section.

A pram-frame cover and tonneau come as standard; the test boat had teak decking, which, along with coloured topsides and an aft-mounted electric anchor winch, is an optional extra.

The bathing platform accommodates a boarding ladder, a shower and a ski-hitch.





Engine room

The three-quarter-width sunbed raises on an electrohydraulic ram to reveal the enginebay, where the engineering is simple but efficient.

Bilge blowers, automatic fire-extinguishers, automatic bilge pumps and two 120A batteries are grouped synergically around the

main machinery, which is quite accessible for basic checks. A stainless steel tie-bar connects the two sterndrives.

The builders favour plastic tanks for their diesel installations, but stainless steel ones for petrol-powered boats. The hatch is acoustically insulated, and there is an integrally moulded stowage tray extending beneath the aft seat.

Trim is achieved solely and very effectively via the sterndrive units, and full-power turns demonstrated an efficient hull that clung on well as the radius of the turn decreased and g-forces increased, showing no sign of

cavitation or spinning out.

Rough water testing revealed that the hull copes manfully with confused water at speed, naturally adopting a slight bow-up attitude that engenders immense confidence.

Taking advantage of this performance was aided considerably by the helm layout, which demonstrates its designer's racing experience. The screen does a good job in deflecting the wind, and the boat may be driven sitting or standing, though purists will probably not use the bolster seats too much.

Low-speed handling and manoeuvrability are of a very high order, ahead or astern, even without the benefit of the 4hp bow-thruster specified by the buyer of the boat we tested.

Conclusions

In a class of boats renowned for majoring on performance or accommodation, but rarely both, the Goldfish 32 Sportcruiser is a well equipped and beautifully executed design that goes like a refined if scalded cat when required. Dealers outside Norway would be welcome, as it deserves wider recognition.

Why Goldfish? Don't ask, but the name is absolutely in keeping with the designer's slightly off-the-wall approach. □



BUILD

glass-reinforced plastic

DIMENSIONS

LOA

32ft 6in (9.85m)

BEAM

8ft 10in (2.70m)

DRAUGHT

2ft 9in (0.85m)

DISPLACEMENT

3.5 tonnes

FUEL CAPACITY

155gal (700lt)

WATER CAPACITY

31gal (140lt)

ENGINES

twin 225hp Mercruiser
D-Tronic/Bravo 1 diesels

PRICE

£77,865 ex VAT

BUILDERS

Goldfish Boats AS,
Tomtaveien 11,
1440 Drøbak, Norway.
Tel: (47) 64 93 17 93.

