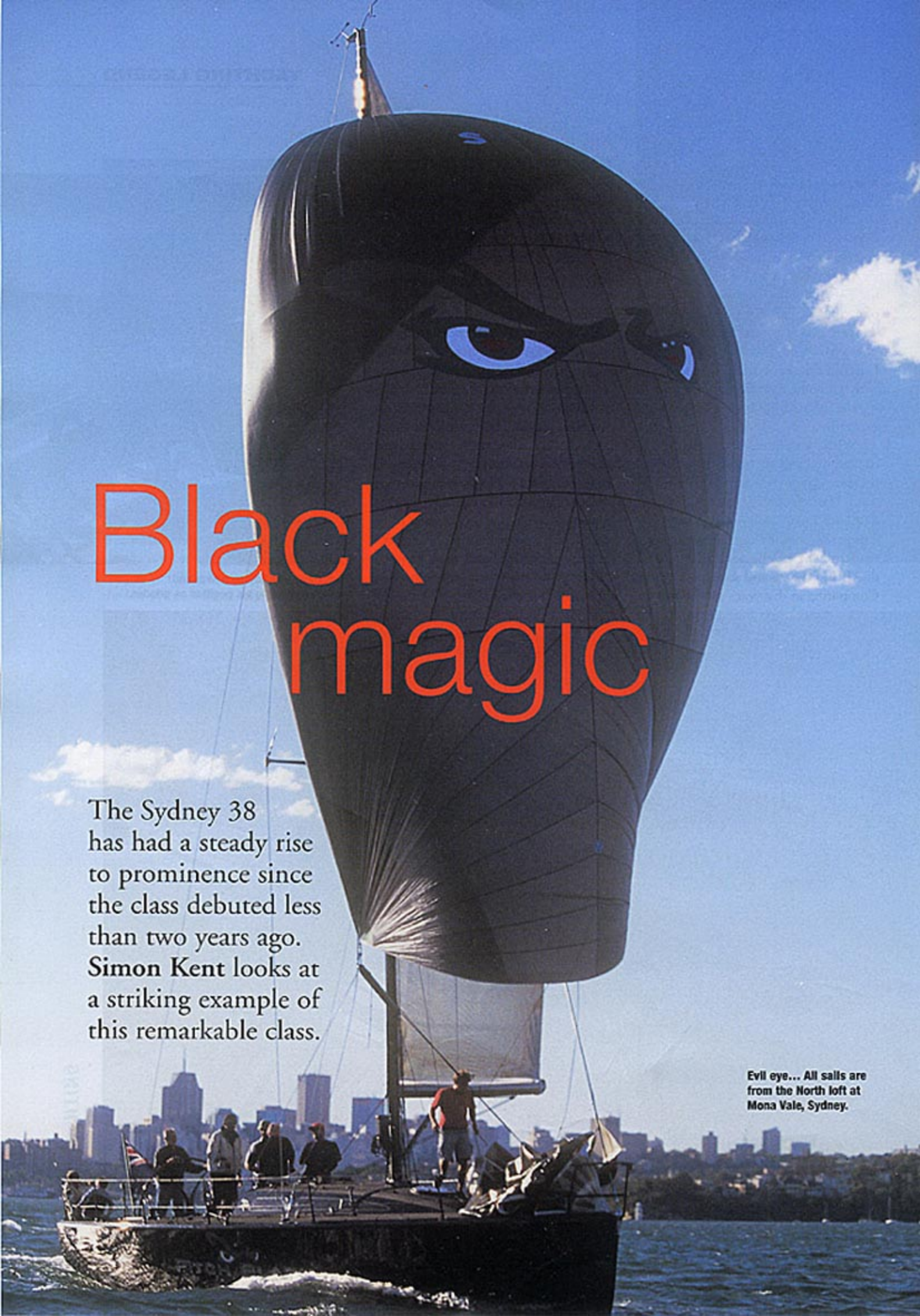




Black magic

The Sydney 38 has had a steady rise to prominence since the class debuted less than two years ago. **Simon Kent** looks at a striking example of this remarkable class.

Evil eye... All sails are from the North loft at Mona Vale, Sydney.

Fine entry is the hallmark of all Sydney Yachts' creations.

The summer of 2001/2002 will go down in the history of Sydney Yachts as one of the finest on record. Just look at the scoreboard.

Bumblebee 5, the Sydney Custom 62, followed her British Trophy series win back in December by claiming the Sydney to Hobart 2001 IMS overall. She was steered in that race by co-designer Iain Murray on behalf of the owner John Kahlbetzer.

The yacht then stayed in southern waters for the inaugural Sailing South Regatta organised by the Royal Yacht Club of Tasmania. This series featured a number of short and long course races on the often stormy waters of the Derwent River and attracted a class fleet of local and inter-state racers.

Again *Bumblebee 5* was victorious with a strong IMS win.

At the beginning of December Sydney Yachts was able to dominate a strong fleet in the JP Morgan IRC division. That regatta saw eight Sydney 38's, a Sydney 36 and a Sydney 40 taking ten out of the top 12 places.

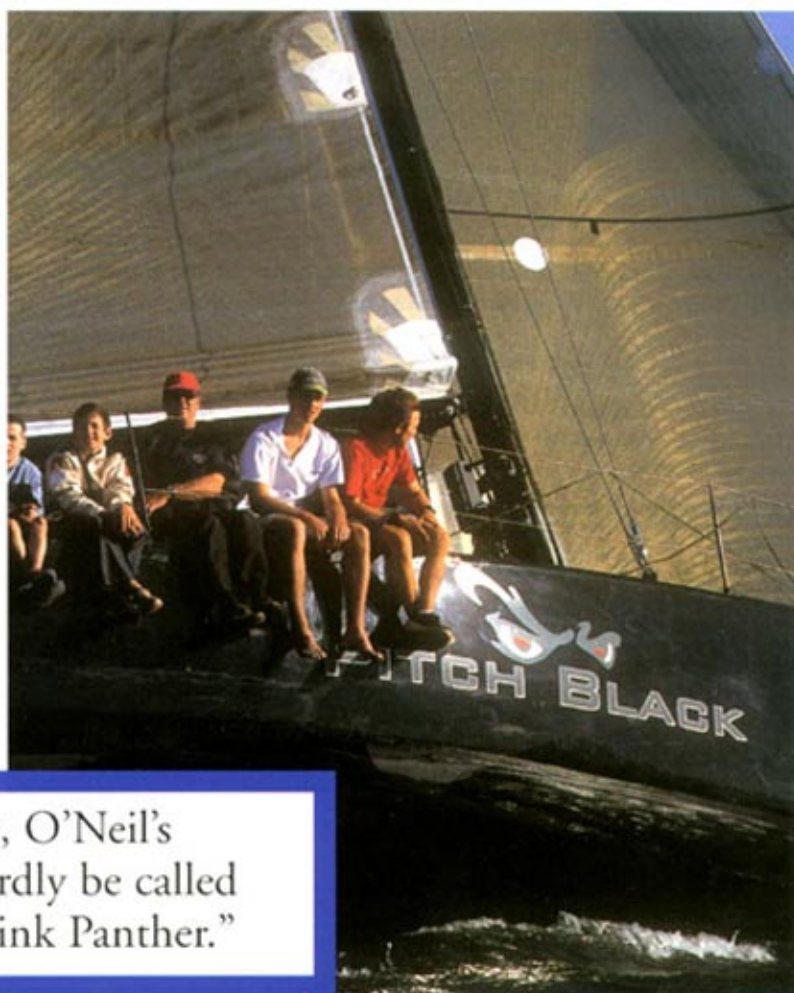
Demanding series

Then came the Strathfield Pittwater & Coffs Harbour Offshore Series (see pages 22 to 27 in this edition). Here Sydney Yachts had another

strong result in the IRC division with seven Sydney 38's and a Sydney 40 in the top dozen of this fun but demanding series.

At the same time CEO David Kellett was sail-

BELOW: On the breeze and *Pitch Black* is unmissable.



"On the evidence, O'Neil's creation could hardly be called Snow White or Pink Panther."



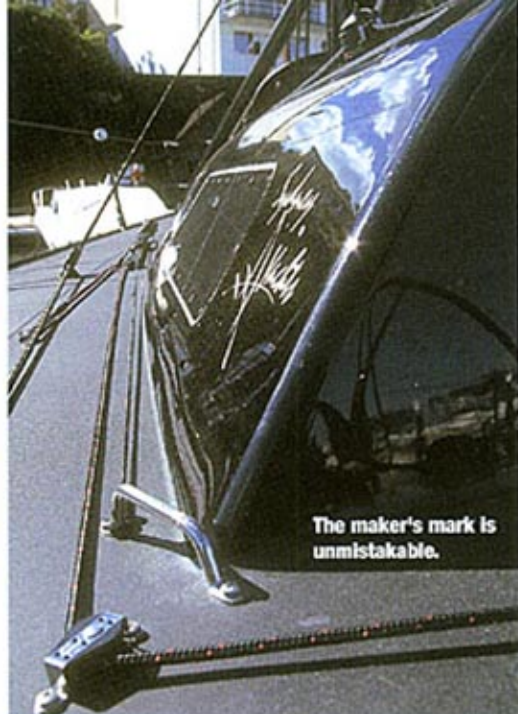
The only splash of colour comes from the Australian flag.

ing his first series in a Sydney 38 in Tasmania. He helmed *Next* to an IRC victory in the Sailing South Series and afterwards gave credence to the claim that the company is now experiencing its busiest period since its foundation.

"This has been another great month in a great year for Sydney Yachts. We are now the largest volume yacht manufacturer in the Southern Hemisphere and with offshore results like this, we are showing the world what great boats we are building."

One example of these "great boats" is the new Sydney 38 *Pitch Black* for veteran Sydney yachtsman Denis O'Neil.

Wood and black gelcoat meet below decks.



The maker's mark is unmistakable.

All black

Why the name? Why not. On the evidence, O'Neil's creation could hardly be called Snow White or Pink Panther.

The hull and rig are standard-issue Sydney 38 but the finish is all black on black on (still more) black. Although many designers in the past have hypothesised about the relative merits of painting a deck and topsides black to encourage vertical convection currents of hot air — yes, some people do have too much time on their hands — the decision by O'Neil was a simple one.

Black looked good and it made the boat unique. In both instances he was right. Since it was launched last December, *Pitch Black* has been turning heads on Sydney Harbour where it races around the cans with the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron. It joins a global fleet of 47 Sydney 38's, a class that spreads from Australia through Asia and on to North America. But back to the local product.

Below decks aboard *Pitch Black* the black theme has been carried through in the gelcoat finish to a logical conclusion. All surfaces that are not completed in wood grain take black. Although some might argue that this makes the area unnecessarily gloomy, our pictures indicate otherwise.

Whatever the merits of the colour scheme, there is one thing that's certain. *Pitch black* is a boat that simply can't be missed. It demands to be noticed. 

More Information

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PRINCIPAL DIMENSIONS

LOA	38'6"
Beam	12'4"
Draft	2.05m
Sail area	8'8"
Disp.	5,250kgs