



*Sailing images: Jem, Andrea Francolini; Interiors: Gomez, Sydney Yachts*



# AND THE WINNER IS ...SYDNEY!

"IT'S NOT VERY OFTEN IN LIFE THAT THINGS EXCEED YOUR EXPECTATIONS,  
BUT THIS BOAT HAS CERTAINLY DONE THAT FOR ME"

— JOHN BALDERSTONE, *JEM* OWNER, WINNER AT HAMILTON ISLAND RACE WEEK 2005



Those famous words echoed around Australia to sounds of jubilation when it was announced that Australia had won the right to host the Olympic Games. Now it is a boat called *JEM*, a Sydney 47CR, that is making headlines by winning the Premier Cruising Class at the Hahn Premium Hamilton Island Race Week.

We were fortunate enough to be at Race Week to cover the racing and keep you up to date with the latest news from the racing scene. Day One and we were afforded the rare opportunity of boarding *MDBS Koomooloo*, a boat that always raises the comment: 'She looks Great'. Her timber hull is finished in a high gloss that is impeccably maintained. On this first day of racing, we were sailing upwind when along came two Sydney 47's. In a tacking duel of grand proportions, these two boats looked very competitive. One in particular looked stunning, with her midnight blue hull offset with teak decks. The crew of *Koomooloo* even commented on her good looks - high praise indeed from those more used to receiving the accolades. A great battle ensued as the two boats closed in on the point, only to tack away at the last minute. A little envy crept in as they cruised past, but this old classic provided a thoroughly enjoyable ride no less. That evening, the team at Sydney Yachts made contact, inviting us to join them onboard *JEM* - the very vessel we'd envied earlier that afternoon. *JEM* was launched during the Sydney International Boat Show and then sailed directly to Hamilton Island for Race Week - she was pretty much 'out of the box'. So new, in fact, that the interior images used here are of *Gomez*, the original 47CR.





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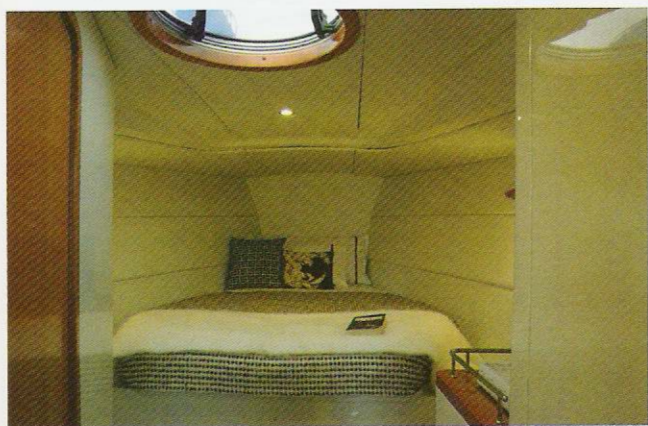
Photos: Ron Israeli, NEG Micon, Joss Developments

We had seen *Gomez* at last year's Sydney show. She had just been launched and was perfect for racing, yet with the comforts for cruising. *Gomez* had a white hull and decks and was fitted with a carbon rig. At Race Week 2004, she won the Premier Cruising division. This year it was *JEM*'s turn. However, it should be pointed out that these two boats are very different from each other. *JEM* is heavier due to the teak decks and a few additional cruising items. In addition, she was fitted with an aluminium rig and carbon bowsprit, hence she was designed for asymmetrical spinnakers rather than *GOMEZ*'s symmetrical set up.

All week long, a grand battle ensued between the two boats but they weren't the only ones in the fleet. Also contesting were a host of Beneteau 47.7's, a Warwick 66, the old Lion NZ, a Farr 52, Dubois 80 and even a Sydney 60. On board *JEM* was the new owner, John Balderstone, with various family members including his mum, dad, sister, brother-in-law and some fly-in friends from England. None of the UK contingent had ever seen the Whitsundays and, over the following days, you couldn't get the smiles off their faces. Supporting John was the team from Sydney Yachts, with Martin 'Tacka' Thompson, Sales Manager, assisting John in coming to grips with the finer points of helming his new baby. Tacka's customer service towards John and other Sydney Yacht owners at Hamilton Island stood his reputation as one of the most professional blokes in the industry in good stead. With this very strong afterguard, this was always going to be the boat to beat – this crew would extract every ounce of power and speed from her, and more!







WE WERE ON A WINNING BOAT –  
THE BEST PLACE TO BE, ESPECIALLY JOURNALISTS  
WHO ARE KEEN SAILORS.

Our first day on *JEM* was the long race, 60 nautical miles down to the Smith Group and then all over the Whitsundays. Light conditions greeted us and the start delayed. When we did get a start, Martin gave us what we needed and, under spinnaker, we ran away from the pack. The Premier Cruising Class started 30 minutes after the IRC's, 20 minutes after the Sydney 38's and 10 minutes after the Performance Handicappers. We headed around the top of Dent Island before rounding up into the wind for the long beat towards the Smith Group. Winds were light but we were tracking along nicely. It was a perfect day for a sail. Boats were tacking all over the place and there were private battles going on everywhere. Slowly and steadily we clawed our way up into the classes ahead. It was when we sailed past *Seriously Ten*, a Volvo 60, that the realisation struck of just how well this boat performed. We had sailed away from the larger boats in our fleet, caught up with boats that had left 30 minutes prior to us and were tracking down the Sydney 38's. Rounding the Smith Group, the spinnaker went up. What a beautiful sight - a big masthead blue spinnaker. As the wind continued to build to around 10 knots, the boat hit speeds up around 8-9 knots, and did it easily. This was an afternoon 'cruise' with most of the crew, led by Tacka, falling asleep on the bow. Some nine and a half hours later we crossed the line just after sun down. It would be morning before we knew the full results, but we knew we had to have won. Bigger boats, meant to finish a long way in front of us, had not passed by. We also knew that *Gomez* was second and they weren't in sight when the sun went down. Sure enough, we actually won by over 20 minutes on line honours and over half an hour on corrected time.

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*JEM's* racing career was off to a great start with two bullets. We were invited back for every race – something we believe has to do with the size of *SeaSpray's* Australian Manager, Ian Thomson, and his usefulness and eagerness on the grinders! Over the coming days, we would race in all manner of conditions. The last day saw 37 knots, rain squalls and then sunshine. Top speed reached in the regatta was 17.5 knots under a full masthead spinnaker. *JEM* was impressive – from six races there were three bullets, a third, a fifth and a sixth. Not bad for a boat out of the box. It has to be noted that there were times when *Gomez* had the speed and height on us. Their carbon rig was great upwind in choppy water and, on the square runs downwind, the symmetrical kite was definitely better. However, *JEM* will also cruise Sydney harbour with John and his family onboard. For cruising, he'll use the #4 headsail (and use a bag on the deck to store it) and the mainsail will remain the same (with the sail cover going on probably at the dock).

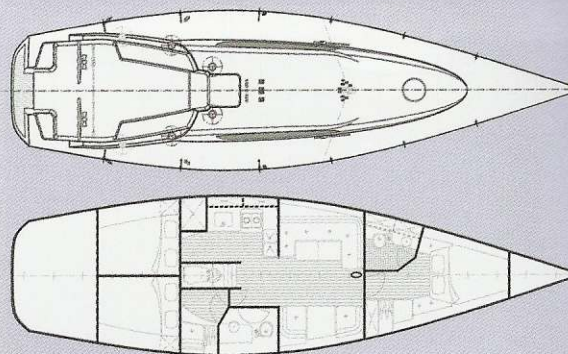
#### WE KNOW SHE IS FAST, BUT WHAT ABOUT THE CRUISING ASPECT?

Boarding from the back is simple with the walk through transom and two carbon wheels allowing for easy access between them. There are two seats on the stern, one on either side, and these have good storage underneath. Both helms have a raised section to step on when the boat is heeling to one side. There is a huge chartplotter mounted in the cockpit seating in front of the starboard wheel, as well as a B&G multi-display on either side of the companionway plus three large mast-mounted B&G displays capable of showing all manner of data. The cockpit seating is contoured making for a very comfortable seat. Whilst the cockpit table wasn't fitted for racing, it would make a great cruising addition. To top it all off, there is a hydraulic seat across the cockpit that raises when the cockpit table is in place. All lines are led aft. There are two coach-house winches, two primary and two electric winches along the side of the cockpit. Heading down the companionway, the steps are teak, the bottom two providing storage – a great use of space. There are two quarterberths aft and a head to port. Staying on port, there is the dinette with a U-shaped lounge. To starboard there is a forward facing navigation table with the galley, with large fridge and gas stove/oven, running along the rest of the saloon. Going forward lies a V-berth and second head, creating a generous owners' cabin.

There were a few items that needed to be attended to upon return to Sydney, such as a very tiny leak through the mast and another one through the bowsprit. However, considering that this "out of the box" boat had competed so voraciously, she'd come out on top in our opinion. It's only a matter of time before you'll see a large fleet of these vessels racing internationally. The owner of Hull #3 had been onboard for the last two days of racing. His boat, due to be launched in October, is being set up for the Sydney to Hobart. Hull #4 is also due for launching later this year.

#### THIS PROVED TO BE THE ULTIMATE BOAT TEST AND THE SYDNEY 47CR PROVED HER WORTH

Sydney Yachts have created a great all-round boat that can handle the racing scene and yet is very suitable for cruising. They're happy to customise to individual preferences – in fact, none of the first four will have the same interior layout. If you are in the market for a Racer/Cruiser, look no further than Sydney Yachts. Maybe, just maybe, if you are very lucky, you might get Martin Thompson and his team onboard your new Sydney 47CR for Race Week 2006 and it might be you holding the trophy. ■



#### SPECS: SYDNEY 47CR

LOA	14.2m
BEAM at deck	4.07m
Draft	3.15m
Displacement	8,500kg
Hull	Fully cored, laminated
Deck	E-Glass laminate, non-slip surface
Keel	Cast SGI steel fin, lead bulb
Fuel capacity	120 litres
Water capacity	240 litres
Motor	Yanmar 4JH3CE 56hp 4-cylinder diesel and sail drive
Propeller	2 blade folding

#### Spars and rigging

Custom whalespar aluminium anodised double spreader tapered rig complete with dyform rigging, tangs, sheaves and rigging screws, spreaders and custom metalwork clear anodised aluminium boom, complete with reef lines and outhaul systems, telescopic adjustable boom vang, alloy spinnaker pole, adjustable hydraulic backstay ram with control console, tuff luff custom running rigging of Vectran, Spectra and braided polyester spinnaker pole track on mast with car winch

#### Running Rigging

1 x main halyard, 1 x genoa halyard, 2 x spinnaker halyards, 1 x spinnaker top fitting, 1 x spinnaker butt lift, 2 x twicker systems, 1 x reef line, 1 x mainsheet, 1 x mainsheet traveller, 2 x genoa sheets, 2 x spinnaker sheets, 2 x spinnaker braces, 1 x foreguy

For full details on the Sydney Yachts range you can visit [www.sydneyyachts.com.au](http://www.sydneyyachts.com.au) or contact Martin Thompson at [mthompson@sydneyyachts.com.au](mailto:mthompson@sydneyyachts.com.au)