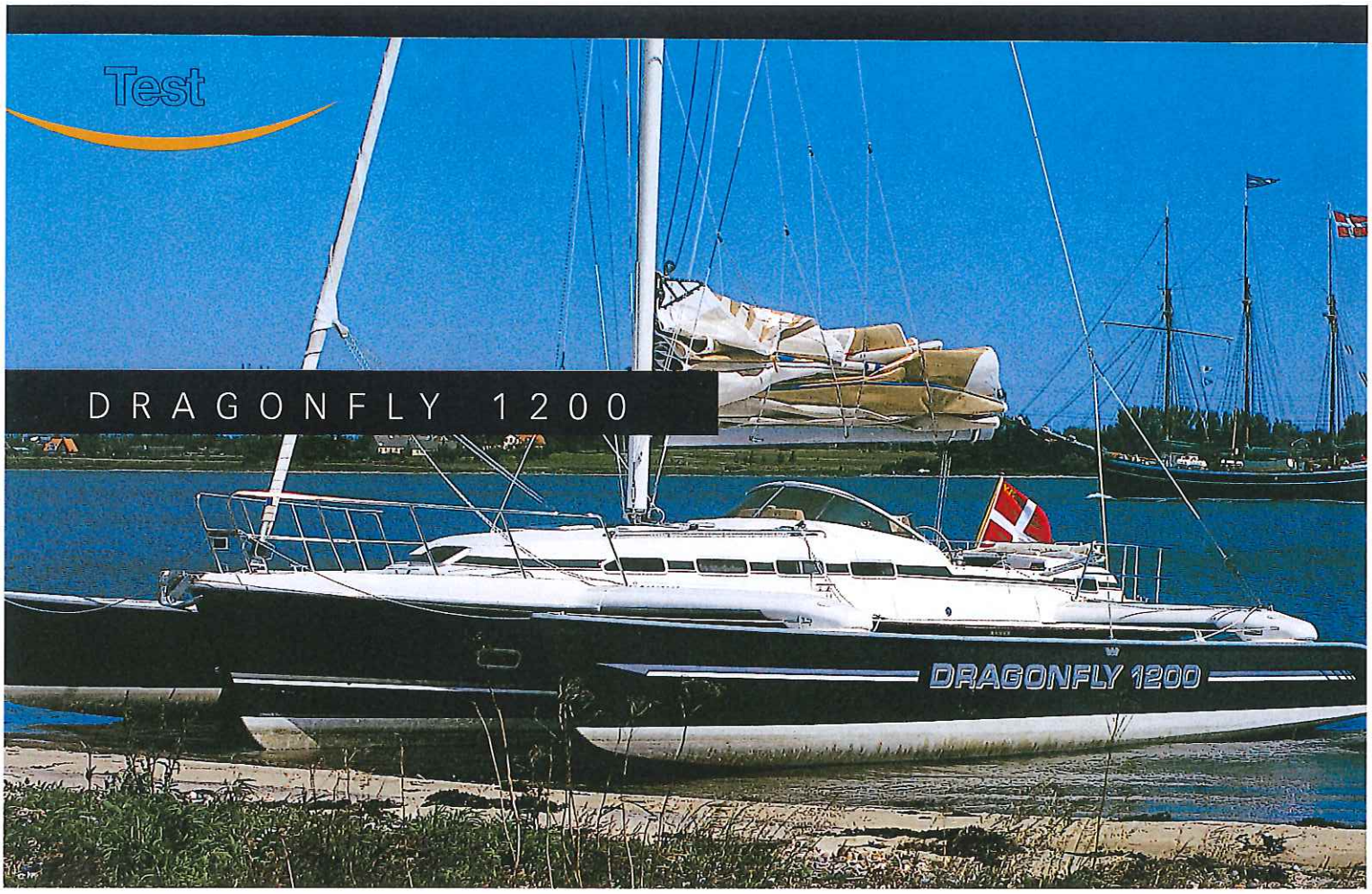
DRAGONFLY 1200



The Quorning shipyard's flagship, the Dragonfly 1200 is truly made for cruising on the high seas as well as for beaching...

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY BERNARD LELIÈVRE

Dragonfly 1200

Casting off for the 3rd dimension

TO OUR FRIENDS WHO ENJOY SAILING ON THE HIGH SEAS: IN THE CATEGORY OF TRIMARANS, YOU WILL NOW HAVE TO REFRAIN FROM ASSERTING THAT THERE IS NOT TRUE "OCEAN CRUISER" IN THE 12-METER RANGE. IN THIS YEAR 2000, YOUR WISH HAS BEEN GRANTED: THE DRAGONFLY 1200 IS BORN, AND WORTHY OF THE NAME.

S52-055 - ESSAI DRAGONFLY USOn the shores of the Baltic Sea, it has been lovingly brought up, like a vintage wine, by the entire team at the Danish shipyard Quorning Boats Aps. It is quite a sailboat for a new dimension in upscale travel, a previous cross between a large ocean-going bird and a coastal rover...

Preamble:

In the Quorning family, you have to say that the taste for shipbuilding is a virus transmitted from father to son. Since 1947, Börge Quorning, the father, an aficionado of sporting sailing and loyal friend of Paul Elvström's, has been building all kinds of boats in Denmark and Canada: sailboats for fishing, ancillary electrical systems and "yachting".

In 1967, he created his own shipyard bearing his name: Dragonfly. The boat that made him famous outside Denmark is a fantastic little 8-meter craft that occupies the best places in all the many multihulls races in Europe: the Dragonfly 800 MKII. Until 1989, 135 units of the trailer trimaran came out of the Quorning shipyard. In the past five years, the shipyard has been run by Jens, one of his sons. Innovative ideas continue being developed there in the same spirit of the very finest craftsmanship, with each boat unique.

Presentation of the "Swing Wing Process"

The success of the Dragonfly on all the seas in the world is surely due to the seaworthiness of the keels - we'll get back to that - as well as the ingeniousness of the system for folding the wings developed by this family of sailing devotees, Quorning, father and sons. Today, the Dragonfly name is always associated with its "folding wings" This was not the case, however, for the first boats. The development of this process took many long years, until it was perfected in 1987 with the ingenious Quorning system dubbed "Swing Wing" This Swing-Wing version makes it possible to reach a broader audience and ensure the development of a consistent range. Thus was born the Dragonfly 1000 at the end of 1991 (36 units produced). 1996 was the year of the Dragonfly 920, officially presented at the boat show in Düsseldorf. Public response was immediate: the 920, like the 1000, offers excellent livability, a more aggressive silhouette, lower slung on the water in a more carefully worked out design. After this success, Jens Quorning, pursuing his idea on the development of the range, began thinking about a future "flagship": the Dragonfly 1200, a true cruiser that can carry at high speed in all safety an entire family or just a couple in more generous living space, integrated at last two completely separate cabin areas. The series was launched two years after the inception of the project. On June 8, 2000, the second unit of the Dragonfly 1200 was launched and her owner came from Austria with his wife, luggage and friends to take possession of her on Pentecost weekend. The day before, Jens has shown us his manufacturing workshops. We tested the first unit here, before she sailed off with her owner for a journey of several months to Norway.

Under sail

We had barely arrived from France when Jens invited us on board for a first afternoon outing. The sunny weather produced a brisk breeze of 15 to 22 knots on this protected body of water in the Baltic Sea. A few strong gusts rose to 25 knots, enough to give us a glimpse of this comfortable trimaran's mettle.

Moored at her berth in the small marina, her wings folded, the Dragonfly 1200 looks no wider than her neighbors, classic monohulls, her beam being then only 4.25 m. Her length, however, seems quite great for a 12-meter boat. Indeed, Jens, while preparing to cast off, explained to me the rotation of the crossarms, inducing an aft translation of the hulls and therefore an overall length, when folded, of 13.90 m. I was impatient to see and test the maneuver for setting up the wings, trampolines, automatic tension of the structural cables and the outer backstays. My surprise was very soon satisfied, perhaps even too fast. Just think! the ingenious system, manned by Jens' experienced hands, is activated from the electric winches in the cockpit (2 Andersen 46 STE). It took precisely 32 seconds to open each wing, with just one person performing the maneuver. During the three days of testing on these astounding sea birds, whether at the start or finish, we could see every time how easy it is to maneuver these Swing Wings. Besides the large network of control lines, clamps, back windings requiring some learning and soon taking up room in the cockpit, this system explains the popularity of the adepts of these trimarans who thus know how to cut down their size when needed, without enslaving their crew.

The fittings, very well dimensioned and essentially Danish (Andersen for the winches, Frederiksen for the travelers and blocks, EasyLock Midi for the clamps), make it possible to hoist the very fine 60-m2 Elvström fullbatten mainsail to the top of its 17 meters of mast, without any major difficulty, the purchase halyard returning to one of the two 46 STE winches in the front of the cockpit. The deck arrangement is designed for an ocean-going agenda with a crew of two or even one, and that is obvious.

With all her sails hoisted, the Dragonfly 1200 showed her excellent balance at the helm. With the puffs of wind, the stability was maintained effortlessly. Without being fickle, the keel easily accepts accelerations without however lifting the windward float too high out of the water. It probably requires very much more for this offshore racer to taken on a dangerous posture. The feeling of the helm is gentle, almost too much so, inducing a certain lack of sensitivity more often experienced with larger units. On a tacking course, the Dragonfly 1200 disclosed an ability to come round equivalent or even superior to an excellent monohull. Tack on tack, the dead angle is 85°, which enabled us with a true wind of 18/20 knots to head 33° of apparent wind: very close to the limit! The advantage of this type of trimaran is obvious, demonstrating how much this ability to maintain heading upwind without losing too much speed is essential for an extended cruising agenda. During these stringent tacking trials, our dragonfly 1200

The 920 and 1200 share a family resemblance.

Pros

- Reliability and speed of "Swing Wing" system
- Excellent quality of construction and finishing
- Fine performance both under sail and with the motor
- The very safe cockpit, protected for long-distance sailing

cons

- The many running rigging circuits to manage
- Circulation toward the front, very narrow catwalks
- The rather "conventional" layout of features
- The livability:price ratio compared to 40' catamarans

The ingenious retractable beam system enables the 1200 to be as comfortable at anchorage as in crowded marinas.

It takes precisely 32 seconds to fold or unfold each beam.

SPECIFICATIONS

Designers: Börge & Jens Quorning
Interior decoration: BE Quorning Boats
Builder: Quorning Boats Aps. DK
Materials: Hulls of 80-kg vacuum foam sandwich, polyester vinylester resin
Overall length: 11.96 m
Waterline length: 11.20 m
Overall beam: 8.60 m
Folded beam: 4.25 m
Folded length: 13.90 m
Draft: 0.80 m/2.00 m
Height clearance: 18.80 m
Light displacement: 4.5 T
Load displacement: 6.0 T
Fullbatten mainsail: 55 m2 (3 reefs)
Furler genoa jib: 35 m2
Light genoa jib: 55 m2
Symmetrical spinnaker: 120 m2

COMFORT:

Berths: 2 double cabins + saloon
Freshwater: 150 l
Diesel fuel: 150 l
Motors: 1 50 HP Volvo as standard equipment (78 HP optional)
Shaft transmission + folding tow-bladed propeller
Mid-speed motor: 2500 rpm
for a cruising speed of: 7.5 knots

CE Categories (CE94/25): Category A for 8 people

The well-designed galley is very pleasant.

offered herself average speeds of 8.5 to 9 knots!

Tacking is greatly facilitated by the electric winch which makes it possible to tack without fatigue, the mainsail passing easily on its central rail arranged at the back of the cockpit.

Our test boat was equipped with a 120-m2 symmetric spinnaker. With the wind set in at 15/17 knots, once the spinnaker was hoisted from the leeward trampoline, the speed logged revealed performances increased by 25% to 30%: 12 knots at 135° of wind in the greatest cruising comfort. Taking advantage of a gust of wind stronger than the others, I even took the liberty of accompanying the Dragonfly 1200 at the helm to take full advantage of the acceleration and study her behavior: perfect cruising stability, long streaks of foam on either side of the hulls. In the blink of an eye, we were propelled at 19.6/20 knots. Just before this gust of wind, we were at 11 knots... The ergonomics of the cockpit and deck is reminiscent of what we know on all traditional monohulls: side benches, companionway in front, wheel column placed (almost) in the middle. Everything is in its place, easily accessible to the person at the helm. There is sufficient visibility at the helm, whether on the windward or the leeward side. At times, for better visibility of the fore triangle, I surprised myself seeking a stick to move away more from the longitudinal axis...

The following measurements* were recorded:
With mainsail + genoa on furler:

Points of sailing Angle	True wind	Speeds Logged
Close-hauled	33° wind	15/16 knots 8 . 3 knots
Close reach 45° wind	18 knots	10.6 knots
At 60/70° wind	20 knots	11 knots
Abeam 90° wind	26 knots	12.5 knots
Broad reach 120°	17 knots	9.8 knots
Reach1 140° 7 knots	8 knots	
Broad reach 160°	17 knots	6.6 knots

(*boat tested: new, with no other equipment that the regulation safety equipment = fullrigged light displacement according to EC standards

Weather: Barely agitated sea, slightly choppy. Easterly winds at 15 to 20 knots with gusts at 25/30 knots. Clear weather, clear with a few clouds)

With mainsail + Spinnaker:

Angles	Wind	Speeds
135°	15/17 knots	12 knots
160°	idem	11 knots
180°	Idem	10 knots
160°	28/30 knots	20 knots

Motors

The boat we tested is equipped with a special motor: a 78-HP Volvo with shaft transmission and folding two-bladed propeller. With such power for a maximum displacement of 6 to 6.5 metric tons, there would really have to be very bad contrary wind and sea conditions not to be able to gain speed. Thus equipped, the Dragonfly 1200 becomes an authentic avant-garde "fifty" capable of reaching amazing average speeds in calm weather. With a stem propeller mounted as standard equipment, you will never remain stuck in a berth in a very narrow marina or exposed to a strong crosswind.

With 78-HP Volvo TMD22 (*Motor Performances logged):

Motor speed	Speed (knots)	Cons. l/h (2 motors)	
1500 rpm		4 knots	3 l/h
2500 rpm		7.5 knots	5 l/h
4100 rpm	1	2 knots	9.5 l/h

With 50-HP Volvo MD22L (maker's data):

Motor speed	Speed (knots)	Cons. l/h (2 motors)
1500 rpm	3.5 knots	2.5 l/h
2500 rpm	7.4 knots	4 l/h
3500 rpm	9 knots	6 l/h

The stainless-steel fuel tank with a capacity of 150 liters should provide for stretches of 200 nautical miles, which represents reasonable autonomy, though lower than average in this 12-meter sector.

Life on board

The layout of course involves a hull, and the recollections of the "classic" arrangement are obvious. The clientele for this model, explains Jens, whether British, German, French or other, is above all of a certain age, having already owned one or several boats. They enjoy nice cozy comfort, the warmth of

wood always being associated with the old navy. Here, the mahogany woodwork recalls such upscale units as Swan or HallbergRassy. No detail is missing: whether in the central saloon or the cabins, fine quality is everywhere. The interior design is delicately highlighted by a modern touch, like the elegant folding table in the saloon, which can accommodate 6 people on the soft foam padding of benches. The galley seems well thought out for this maximum number of guests, since the counter and single sink will be quickly used up. These are the kind of details that remind us that this "ocean cruiser" is 12 m long. In this size craft, the success comes from having integrated a second double cabin without spoiling the boat's general line. Having such a separate living area to have some privacy, invite guests or family means real comfort on board, a major asset for the new Dragonfly 1200. The general ventilation is well distributed in each living area, each with one or two opening portholes and a deck panel.

In conclusion

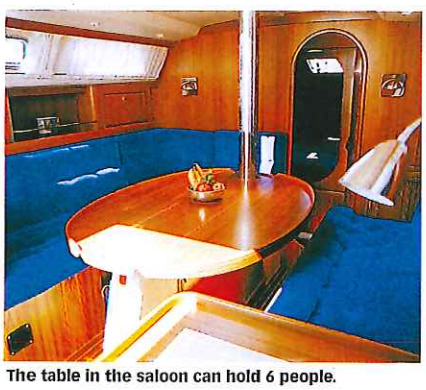
What a beautiful lesson in wisdom from this maker! Although the shipyard is small, a closer look, through its past, the number of boats built and sailing all over the world makes it clear: this shipyard is more a great "master of sailing", one of those rare shipyards enamored of fine workmanship. In fact, it has put out over 300 Quorning trimarans. The latest born, with lines that are intentionally not overly futuristic, will remain discreet, even tiny, in a marina and a pleasure in its performances that far outshine a very good monohull, with her variable draft and major active safety features. All these advantages have a cost, as you can well imagine. This is no industrial mass production, but the use of the finest quality materials and accessories (17-m carbon mast profile). Comparisons would be deceptive, particularly since there is actually very little competition in this range of 12-m trimarans at present... and here, at Multihulls World, we can feel the wave rise, and keep on rising.

Some figures: in cm

Berths (fore cabin): 213 x (187/ 89)
Berths (aft cabin): 2 x (201 x 73)
Table seating capacity: 6 + 2
Galley: 110 x 63
Cockpit area: > 3.85 m2

HEADROOM

Entrance to central hull: 195
Middle of saloon: 182
Front of saloon: 192
Galley: 192
Chart table: 192
Galleries: 192
Fore cabin: 195
Aft cabin: 167
Washroom/shower: 195
Max. beam of central hull: 3.03 m



The table in the saloon can hold 6 people.

The aft cabin and its little washbasin.

Like all the other features, the charter table deserves nothing but praise.

Comparisons:

CRITERIA	DRAGONFLY 1200	CHALLENGE 37	FASTBOATS 38	EXCEPTION 40	NEWICK 42
Overall length	11.96 m	10.99 m	11.58 m	12.15 m	12.80 m
Waterline length.	11.20 m	10.40 m	11.40 m	11.70 m	12.00 m
Max beam	8.60 m	8,10 m	9.68 m	8.40 m	8.60 m
Light displacement*	4.8 t	2.5 t	3.1 t	3.6 t	3.1
Sail area, upwind, std sails	96 m2	72,4 m2	72 m2	85 m2	90 m2
Skin friction coefficient**	6.694	7,726	7.883	7.697	8.345
Propulsion coefficient***	5,856	6,321	5.868	6.065	6.597

* = Maker's data = Weight displacement = Light displacement
** = Wll / ÷ cube of volume — light displacement (— = D / 1.025) = Skin friction coefficient
*** = ÷ Square of sail area / ÷ cube of volume — light displacement

SELLING PRICE

A) Ex works: 281,293 euros
B) "Full Pack", according to equipment: approx. E 346,053 with 78 HP motors, stem propeller, fully equipped and launched in the shipyard marina