



With 5.26m of beam, there is room in the transom for a dinghy. The garage is slightly offset, with space at the side for dedicated liferaft stowage

FC3 53

Finot-Conq's fast cruiser

This beamy design takes its inspiration from Vendée Globe racers

Can monohull sailors cruise fast, yet comfortably offshore? There is certainly a growing enthusiasm among those inspired by the exploits of yeamy, planing racing designs such as Mini Transat boats or VO65s. A potential solution lies with this new FC3 53 from offshore aceboat designers Finot-Conq.

The FC3 53 takes its inspiration from the Vendée Globe. So as well as a wedgy, flat-bottomed hull and ruler-edged chines, it has a square-top main, a fixed sprit for flying jibs and a cockpit protected by a boxy coachroof. Also, note how far aft the mast is sited, with a long boom sheeted IMOCA-style to a traveller on the transom. The main is sheeted to a central winch right aft, out of the way of the cockpit.

The 53 is obviously similar in style to the fastest cruising shapes Finot-Conq has recently designed for Pogo Structures, as well as the sensational 100-footer *Normad IV*, which we featured in the August issue.

The client who has ordered this 53 is after a "fast cruising yacht, comfortable, safe, very easy to handle double-handed and very stylish, both outside and inside," explains Pascal Conq.

The designer cites speed as a vital criterion, hence her construction also leans towards high-end raceboat techniques: full pre-preg carbon with a Nomex and Corecell core to generate a superlight displacement of just 10.5 tonnes. She will be able to set 340m² of downwind sail. Factor in the ultra-deep keel and a tonne of water ballast and you can expect the type of sleighrides normally reserved for grand-prix racers.

The rigidity of the 53's hull is critical to providing potential speed safely, hence there are numerous transverse stiffeners, including three bulkheads forward of the accommodation alone.

A real benefit over racing hulls is the 53's lifting keel, which reduces draught from 3.75m to 1.6m, using a similar method to

Expect downwind speeds normally reserved for grand-prix racers. But her lifting keel, reducing draught to 1.6m, sets her apart

that of the cruising Pogos. And the arrangement below looks promising for a couple cruising long distances. There is plenty of stowage, including a hefty sail locker, plus over 700lt of both fuel and water.

Such a beamy design could normally pose problems when heeled, with open spaces to fall across. But Finot-Conq has used the keel to break up the saloon space wisely, the keel box doubling as a central seat for the saloon table.

Conq has been surprised by the positive interest in the design, which begins construction in November. Launch is expected to be in around a year's time and it is hoped that a mould may be taken off the first boat in order to produce some more affordable offspring.

Price on application.
www.finot-conq.com/en



DIMENSIONS

LOA 17.33m/56ft 10in
Beam 5.26m/17ft 3in
Draught 3.75m-1.60m/12ft 4in-5ft 3in
Disp 10,500kg/23,148lb



The interior, styled by Pierre Forgia, makes clever use of the central keel box. Left: huge sailplan