



Sea trial
Contest 85CS

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SEA TRIAL OF THE CONTEST YACHTS' FLAGSHIP

by Luca D'Ambrosio

The Contest 85CS we're about to sea trial is a very particular maxi yacht. Contest Yachts, indeed, has built her on the basis of the specifications provided by Alessio Cannoni, the famous and experienced captain who, after a sudden keel fall while sailing on board an Oyster 825, managed to rescue himself and his crew.

It is, therefore, no coincidence that Alessio and his shipowner turned to what is probably one among the best shipyards in the world to build their new sail-powered maxi yacht. You'll understand that we were really eager to climb on board this boat that, in addition to being beautiful and fast, was also built by Contest Yachts with the highest safety standards available on the market today.

In short, just like all the other Contest yachts, this, too, is a unique boat.

CONTEST 85CS SEA TRIAL

Prelude

This is already clear from the sky that it will be a big day, the wind is strong and gusty, as is often the case in the Gulf of Follonica.

Because of her size, the Contest 85CS is waiting for us, docked at the jetty situated in the inner breakwater. This area of the Marina of Scarlino, indeed, hosts many among the most beautiful maxi yachts currently in the



water and the Polina Star IV, which is the object of our test, is certainly no exception.

The team deployed by Contest Yachts for the construction of its flagship is a remarkable one. The design department of the shipyard, in fact, was assisted by the historical collaboration with Judel Vrolijk & Co. for hull, sail plan and exterior design while Wetzels Brown Partners handled the interior design.

The result is a luxury and sporty blue water cruiser that feels perfectly comfortable both when traveling the world at double-digit speed and during the elegant glamorous events that can be held in the huge cockpit.

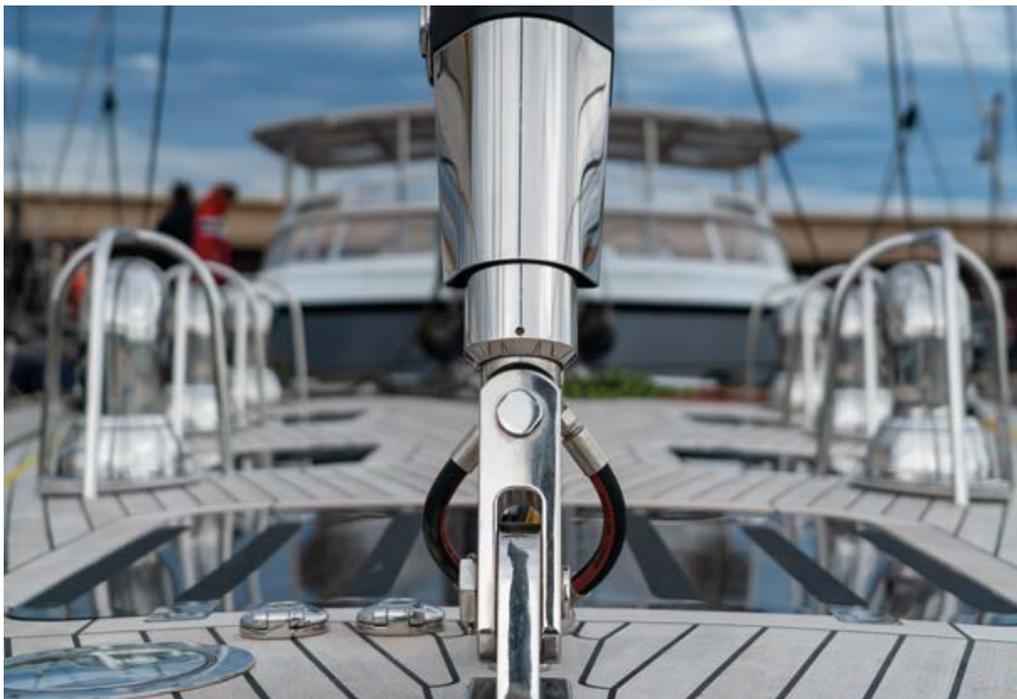
Designed to sail with a really small crew on board, the Contest 85CS is equipped with many useful servomechanisms for easier handling. This feature becomes immediately clear when, without any difficulty and thanks to the dual pop-up propellers, we leave a very complex berth with the wind abeam.

At the wheel

As soon as we leave the port, we hoist the mainsail and unroll the jib. The wind is blowing at less than 10 knots and the Polina Star heels and goes while the GPS rattles off increasingly higher numbers.

The flagship is pretty good with such wind conditions. Alessio smiles at me and I seize the occasion to bombard him with questions. He tells me that the owner likes sailing very much and that, with a true wind of 5-6 knots, the boat can sail at wind speed. And, indeed, even though we are not using any drifter or gennaker, the yacht is running at more than 7 knots.

At this speed, we take just a few minutes to exit the sheltered zone near the port. Out at sea, the colour of the sea gets darker and the wind turns fresh. The anemometer shows a



16/17-knot true wind while the Contest 85CS heels over and accelerates quickly.

We go on sailing at a speed between 11 and 12 knots while the apparent wind is blowing at over 20 knots and the boat is definitively heeled.

Yet, on board the Contest 85CS, everything is quiet, balanced and stable. The feeling of seaworthiness and safety conveyed by this boat is impressive. The wheel, while suggesting that the boat is overpowered, is always efficient and, despite the overall dimensions of the boat, is surprisingly responsive.

The wind gets stronger and we want to sail close-hauled. So, it's time to trim the mainsail and replace the jib with the forestaysail.

The two crew members perform all the maneuvers without ever starting the engine, with embarrassing ease and zero effort.

The hydraulic winches are positioned exactly where they should be and servomechanisms perform very well. In a blink of an eye, we have recovered 10 degrees of listing; the Polina Star thanks, accelerates and we finally start to sail close to the wind.

We sail close-hauled at 30-degree on the apparent wind that, under such wind and sea conditions, are not few. However, the Contest 85CS does not slow down and goes on running at a speed of over 10 knots.

Finally, between 20 and 25 degrees, the boat starts to satisfy the principles of physics and slows down a little. We are sailing at 8.7 knots but it's like running on rails.

We tack without losing speed. I bear away a little and the speed increases immediately: between 50 and 60 degrees, the boat runs



at about 12 knots. I bear away again and the speed, despite keeping its dual digit, starts to decrease.

Yes, I know, I'm testing a blue water cruiser and I should not steer like I was on a racer but I'm having too much fun and I can't stop.

The sea is rough and crossing the waves is exciting; the view from the upwind side is perfect, the Polina Star is about to break the sound barrier and everyone on board is smiling.

What a boat, guys, what a boat...!

Underway

After leaving the wheel reluctantly, I start to walk around the boat while some journalists of other magazines alternate at the wheel and the Contest 85CS goes on covering miles at the speed of light.

The boat is heeled but I can move in total safety and quite easily up and down the huge cockpit and the enormous teak surface leading to the stern. On the deck, circulation is facilitated by an incredible number of handholds that magically materialize every time I reach out at the end of every single step.

I go down to the lower deck and, despite sea conditions and speed, silence welcomes me. Everything is incredibly silent, with no creaking or squeaking. Even the noise produced by the hull gliding on the water is not audible. The expertise of Contest Yachts' shipwrights and the particular building technique used are literally unparalleled.

I come back to the deck and I sit on the downwind side, in the cockpit. The semi-raised saloon and the spray hood offer total wind protection and I start to write sentences

like I was at home, in my living room.

The word "stability" is an understatement on board this maxi yacht that sails at an always optimal, never exaggerate heeling angle. Side-decks, bow, stern and walkways are always comfortable and safe.

Contest 85CS : conclusions

The new flagship of the Contest Yachts' fleet is always able to sum up the essence of this legendary shipyard. These sailboats are always uncompromised, fast, seaworthy, extremely elegant and superbly designed to fully meet their experienced owners' needs.

The Polina Star is a clear example of that and she is literally designed around her owner and captain's needs, with very high comfort and safety standards.

This is witnessed, for example, by the special power equipment that makes it possible for the boat to navigate under sail for hours while supporting all maneuvers and sail trimming. Independent and separated from any other system, a diesel-powered dewatering pump can deal with considerable water intakes. Watermakers and generators are redundant while batteries, independent and raised, deliver power to systems even when the boat is flooded.

All these systems, and I can list many other ones, perfectly coexist with the soul of this Contest 85CS that not only does not lose a tenth of knot when sailing but also continues to show off unparalleled class and elegance.

Performances and easy handling make this boat a real "fast blue water cruiser" and, believe me, there are only a few boats like this.



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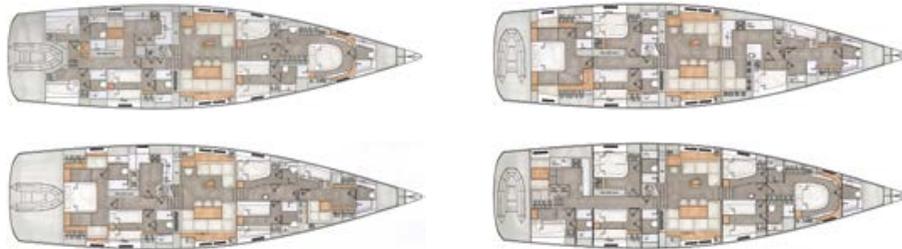
Contest 85CS - Performances under sail

TWS	AWA	Boat speed
15	25	8,7
16	30	10,4
17	40	11
17	50	11,6
19	60	12,1
17	70	11,3
17	80	10,8
17	90	10,1
15	100	9,1
15	120	8,2
13	140	7,8

Test conditions: cloudy sky; true wind from 15 to 20 knots; rough sea; 12 passengers on board; fuel tank 50%; water 30%.

Technical Specs

Length overall	25.82m	84.71ft
Length overall including bowsprit	26.78m	87.86ft
Length waterline	23.17m	76.02ft
Maximum beam	6.40m	21ft
Draft standard keel	3.79m	12.43ft
Draft shallow keel (optional)	3.28m	10.76ft
Ballast standard keel	18,500kg	40,785lb
Ballast shallow keel	12,000kg	26,455lb
Fuel tank	2,500lt	549.92imp. gal
Water tank	1,500lt	329.95imp. gal
Engine, Volvo Penta	194kW	264hp



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Contest Yachts: Building technology

Taking about construction in the same way as any other boat would be simplistic when it comes to a Contest yacht. For over 50 years, indeed, this shipyard has been building very high-quality standards and materials boats.

This is why, the shipyard combines technologically advanced building techniques, like the Conyplex vacuum infusion system®, and artisanal processing of the structural parts, where the shipwrights' expertise is unquestionable.

A clear example of this comes from furnishings that are not only masterfully designed but are also positioned with extreme precision and a kind of care that is not afraid of the passing of time.

The teak deck is a masterpiece and, made with a particular technique, leaves a

predominantly aesthetic function to the seam. It is dry built and subsequently glued under vacuum on the deck. The result is simply incomparable to any other technique used.

The construction of the hull deserves a separate chapter. The famous vacuum infusion system patented by Conyplex, in a process that lasts for 24 hours, eliminates the air completely and reduces the percentage of resin by 30%, with a clear benefit in terms of weight and sturdiness, since it is the fiber that gives strength to the hull.

The use of insulating materials used substantially everywhere gives all the boats a soundproofing and insulation level that must be tried to fully understand its countless advantages.

The combination of these two techniques results into boats that are exceptionally rigid, comfortable and practically free from any osmotic phenomena.