



# BAVARIA OPEN 40 CATAMARAN

by Jason Chipp

Some say you need to live on a boat to really get to know her. Others might suggest you must first build one to gain an understanding and then there are those that insist only the architect would truly know a vessel inside and out. I will go against the trend here and state that the absolute best way to really get to know a vessel is to present her to the public. What better way to really get to know a boat than to live on one for a week at the Sydney International Boat Show, perhaps the coal face if you will, where every comment is judged and every feature scrutinized before an extremely astute and well informed public. Having presented her at least a thousand times during the recent SIBS, this is what I found out about the new Bavaria Open 40 catamaran.



**left:** Excellent visibility from the Open 40's twin helm arrangement.

**T**he Open 40 is the latest offering from Nautitech Catamarans. German based Bavaria – the second largest manufacturer of sailing and motor yachts in the world – recently acquired Nautitech in a move that allows them to expand their already impressive product portfolio. Nautitech Catamarans have been manufacturing top quality 40-60ft catamarans at their Rochefort site in France since 2004. Each vessel is designed and built by founder, Bruno Voisard, and his experienced team of multihull specialists who will continue construction in their revamped French factory as before. For the production catamaran market, the partnership is nothing short of ideal. Now there is a real alternative for a high quality, production built multi-hull with the support of a world-wide dealership network and unparalleled factory support.



**top:** Placement of traveller well aft maximizes leverage and ease of adjustment.

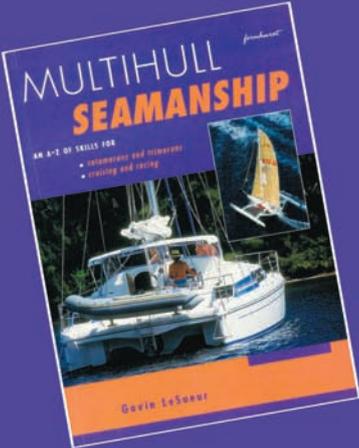
**above left:** Great to spend quality time explaining the many features of the Open 40 at SIBS.

**above right:** The Open 40 features the largest and perhaps the most entertaining cockpit in its class.

The Open 40 was conceived and built with an emphasis on performance. Most catamarans will perform better than monohulls simply because they don't need to drag a big bulbous keel through the water. The Open 40 continues this same thought process with a fine entry hull that aggressively steps out above the waterline to create volume where it's required and to minimize drag where it's not. This is achieved through a three-part mold that sets the Open 40 apart from most other hulls borne from a single mold that simply carry the vessel's bulk right through to the keel.

On the subject of keels, the Open 40 boasts mini keels that are glued on and not bolted to the underside of the hull. These mini keels are able to support the load of the vessel (i.e. the Open 40 can be beached) and are designed to break off in a sacrificial state if in the unfortunate event you hit something hard. (Don't try this with dagger boards or a bolt on keel as you will soon rip a chunk out of your hull)

Bavaria has also incorporated many weight saving techniques during the production process to further enhance performance. The hulls are already finer so less surface area translates instantly to less weight. The fibreglass is applied using a process of infusion, seeing vacuum – suction applied to draw the resin through the layers of fibreglass cloth. The resultant laminate is extremely strong with a minimal resin to cloth



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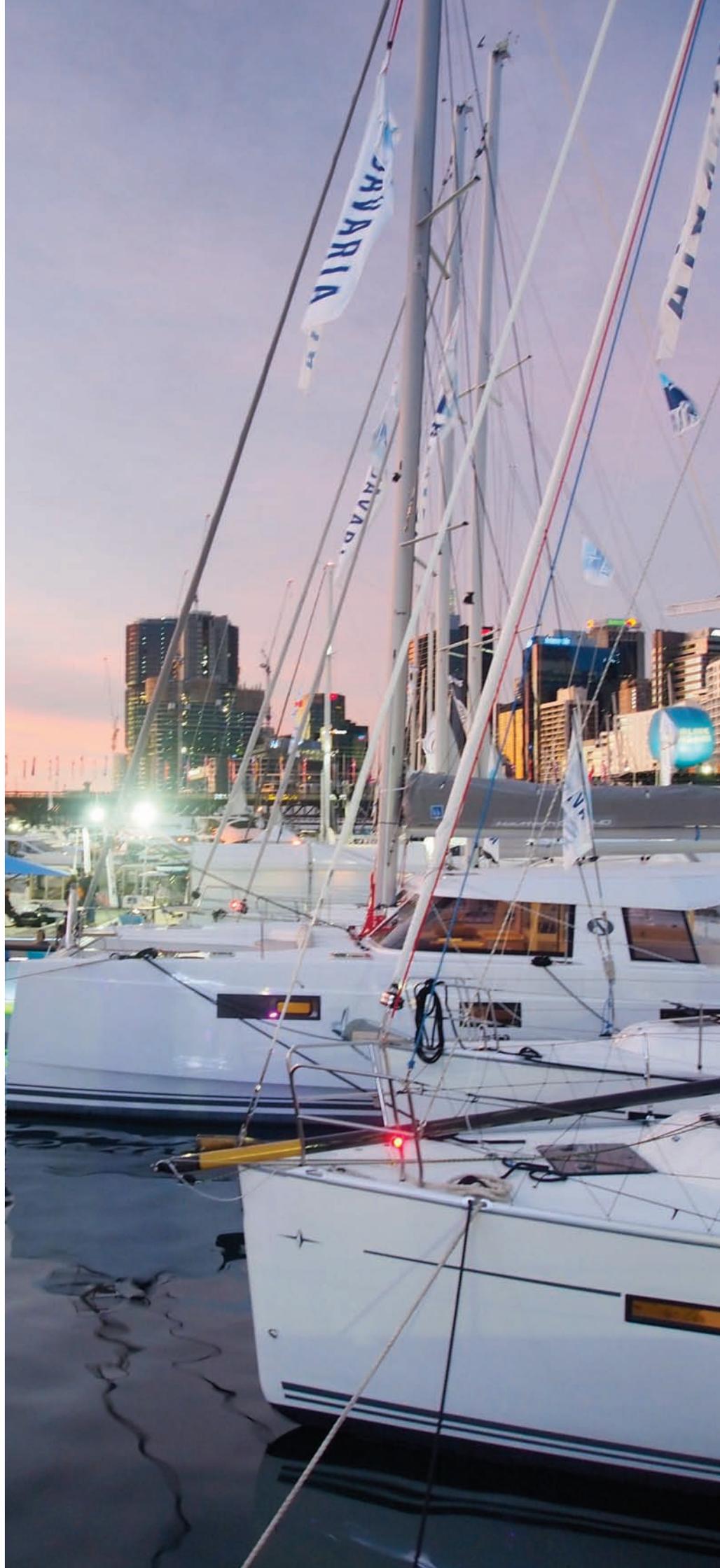
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ratio given that any excess is quickly discarded. Bulkheads are also built using a similar technique and a foam core to save further weight yet offering additional stiffness. This effort ensures the Open 40 is at least a tonne lighter than most other product offerings in her class, and when combined with those fine entry hulls mentioned above soon give her a performance backing worthy of hanging her hat upon.

### **BAVARIA HAS ALSO INCORPORATED MANY WEIGHT SAVING TECHNIQUES DURING THE PRODUCTION PROCESS TO FURTHER ENHANCE PERFORMANCE**

Plenty of discussion often surrounds the helm position on a catamaran. The Bavaria Open 40 is no exception. There really are only three positions one can place a helm on a catamaran. On the hulls, on the rear of the saloon bulkhead or up on the flybridge. The decision by Bruno Voisard and the Nautitech camp to position the helms on each hull was certainly no accident and one that they will certainly stand behind (#pun). A flybridge helm is the most exposed to wind and rain from all sides, offering the least visibility when manoeuvring and causing the boom to be aggressively higher up the mast so as not to take your head off should a jibe come about unplanned. Vision to see your wind vane is blocked by your mainsail, as too is half your vision forward given there is a large headsail in place (even more so if you run a gennaker).

Providing protection from the elements half the time (you're fine if the wind isn't blowing from the side that your seat is open to) is the helm positioned on the rear of the saloon bulkhead. Often surrounded with plastic and a canvas cover to combat this, this position requires the boom to not be so high up the mast and affords you somewhat of a view of the weather vane and even your





The stylish lines of the Open 40 are a credit to the designer.

mainsail, pending of course if you are on the right tack and the boom is across on the side opposite you. At this position you will have a better view forward, with only perhaps a third of your view obscured by the headsail. Naturally this window of observation soon narrows when you adjust course and tack, but at least it is possible to stand on your toes and still reach the zip on the boom bag. Manoeuvrability is improved as you can see what is going on behind you, though keeping an eye on what is down the side of the hull opposite to you is not really possible.

Enter, if you will, the decision to place the helms on each hull as in the Open 40. Two-thirds of your

body is protected from the wind due to the hull sides, and even more if you wander to the lee helm. Visibility forward is maximized as you can swap sides given the position of the headsail, and visibility of your main in any condition is unrivalled. The top of your mast is easily sighted so you don't have to stare at a weather gauge on your dash, and the leverage of your mainsheet is maximized given the traveller runs aft on the boom immediately beside you. Unlike the other two helm positions where hydraulic steering is typically incorporated, the twin helm Bavaria runs efficient cable steering offering instantaneous response to the skippers touch in line with her more performance origins. Further,

manoeuvrability is excellent as you can see all four corners of the vessel with ease, particularly when reversing into a pen. Lastly, the cockpit layout is maximized as there is no helm station or ladder system encroaching upon it. An optional well positioned bimini above the helm is available should further protection from the sun be desired.

Naturally all will suggest when underway in a catamaran you are regularly on autopilot, lending even further support to the Open 40's helm position with her ease of access into the social setting of the cockpit. And what a cockpit the new Bavaria boasts! All one level, the Open 40 offers a large deck area with the most seating and storage in its class. High quality sliding doors allow the saloon and cockpit to combine and offer room far in excess of any other 40' production cat. Superbly designed galley boasting excellent storage offers a panoramic forward vista and head

**FURTHER, MANOEUVRABILITY IS EXCELLENT AS YOU CAN SEE ALL FOUR CORNERS OF THE VESSEL WITH EASE, PARTICULARLY WHEN REVERSING INTO A PEN**



room commensurate again with that of a far larger craft. The company catch cry is that the Open 40 reflects a disproportionate feeling of space. Simply, she looks bigger on the inside.

Like most cats this size, the Open 40 offers a three bedroom/two bathroom owners version and a four bedroom/two bathroom holiday version. Both models feature large doubles to each bedroom and plenty of space to move around. Fore-peak berths are available and when combined with convertible dinettes in the saloon and cockpit offer enough accommodation to house two large families with ease. Ventilation, headroom, storage and natural lighting are all well catered for throughout each hull. Engine access is behind the helm seat and not under the aft bed, seeing noise levels kept to a minimum and tankage levels maximized with 450 litres of both fuel and water.



**top:** Ensign Broker giving professional presentations.

**above:** The Open 40 was a hive of activity with so many people keen to see the new model.



**above:** Wonderful to see such an impressive line-up on display from Bavaria, the world's second largest manufacturer.

**far left:** Enjoying Sydney Harbour in a beautiful catamaran ... YES PLEASE!

**left:** Being able to keep the boom low and offer easy access is a key feature of the Open 40.

Up forward, the Open 40 features a large net area and raked windscreens providing a stylish feature to the extended coach roof that boasts easy access to the main. The clever way the anchor is brought back to just forward of the mast ensures less weight forward and yet the bridle is still easily accessible without having to hang by your ankles. Additional

storage with large lockers and those fore peak berths provide all that you would expect for the extended cruising regime commensurate with catamarans of this size.

The Bavaria Open 40 really is the full package and should be considered by anyone looking up to a 42' or even 43' catamaran size. Her flowing modern lines breathe a fresh look to

the more faceted catamaran designs of old, and with her emphasis on real performance this is definitely the right catamaran for those transitioning from a monohull or those who actually still live for a good days sail. To find out more and to book your own presentation of this fantastic catamaran visit Bavaria Australia on [www.ensignbrokers.com.au](http://www.ensignbrokers.com.au)

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