

Gary has worked on most of the yachts that we build, and we knew that he would not sacrifice any of the Panda's traditional advantages in order to meet our goals. He kept the interior appointment schedule that we require, and he made sure that the accommodations allowed for comfortable and private cruising. Despite the confidence we had in Gary, we were a little shocked when he came back with a yacht that was nearly ten thousand pounds lighter than our own Panda 40. We were even more surprised when we saw that the missing tonnage hadn't been removed at the cost of quality, comfort, or seakeeping ability.

In addition to being lighter, the 38 is 'longer' than one would expect, because Gary gave her a sloping transom in place of our trademark canoe-stern. This allowed him to extend the lines of the yacht, while giving us even more stowage aft. The shape meant that she gave up almost no waterline for her reduced overall length and volume.

After sailing the boat, we were surprised all over again.

The Panda 38 is the closest thing we have ever seen to a high-performance semi-full-keel yacht. With a 'half-loaded' displacement of 19,000 pounds (that is the displacement with the fuel and water tanks half-full and with a crew onboard) the Panda 38 actually weighs in with some of the racing yachts of the last decade. Her cutter rig is simple as can be, however, and with her no-nonsense long waterline underbody, she really flies.

The balance between performance and comfort and convenience is remarkable on the Panda 38. Even more remarkable is the fact that we didn't pay a price in quality to achieve it. The Panda 38 has a teak and spruce cabin sole, and solid teak interior staving. We use the same high quality bronze ports as always (twelve of them), and they are all opening for improved ventilation. The overhead beams are laminated, and the panels in the overhead are removeable, so you can service the deck hardware without tearing the boat apart. The joinerwork is typically Panda, superb, and the interior hardware is all anyone could ask for.

