

# No limits

The explorer trend continues unabated. Yet what characteristics do yachts need to have to be able to travel anywhere completely independently? The Damen Group and Hawk Yachts currently offer perhaps the best concepts.

Text Marcus Krall



## SEAXPLORER

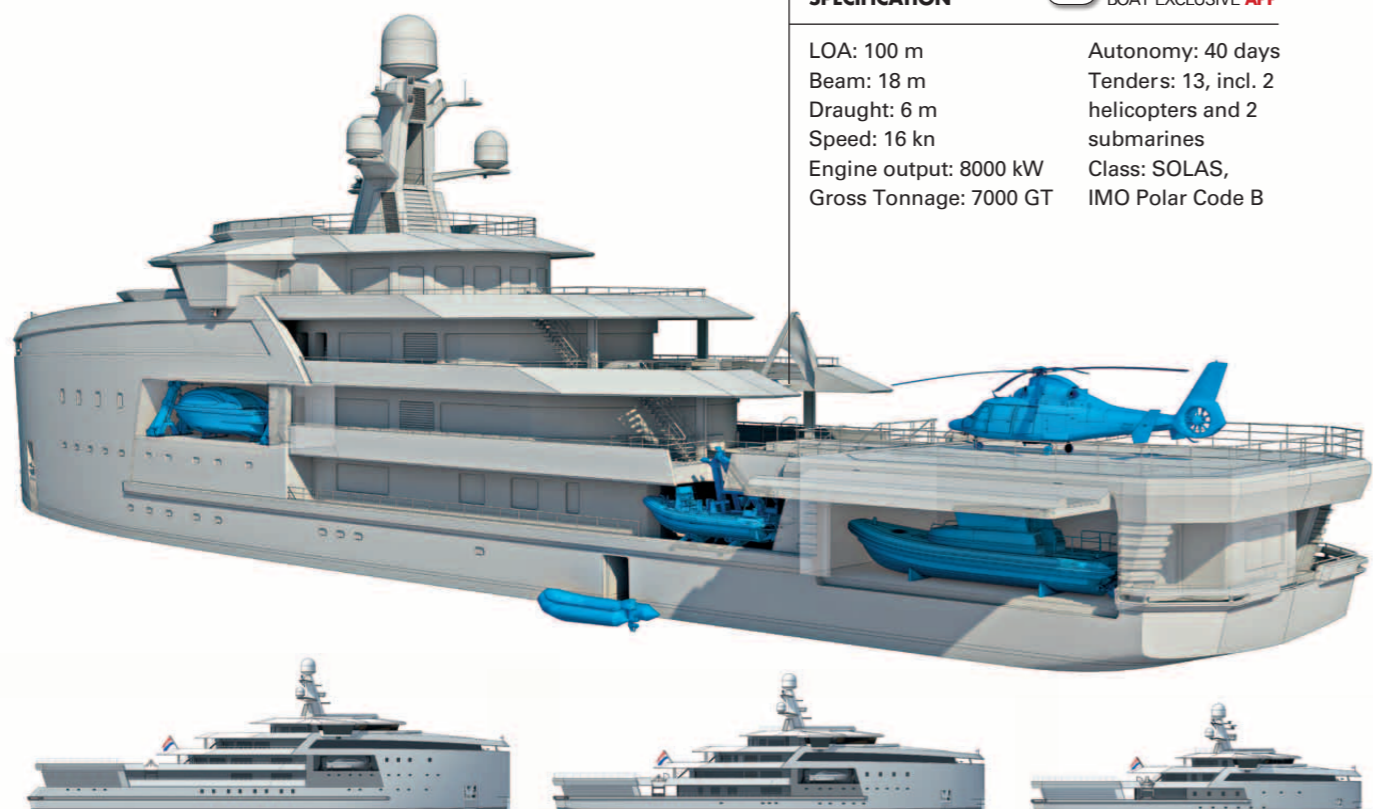
The Damen Group from the Netherlands has developed "SeaXplorer" models with LOAs of 65, 90 and 100 metres. The look is characteristic and the range of tenders and toys, particularly on board the larger models, is simply enormous.



## SEA HAWK

This 103-metre project by Hawk Yachts is based on the experience gained by "Lady Moura's" captains, who have now put a large team of experts together. "Sea Hawk" has a range of 12,000 nautical miles.





SEAXPLORER 100	
SPECIFICATION	BONUS MATERIAL BOAT EXCLUSIVE APP
LOA: 100 m	Autonomy: 40 days
Beam: 18 m	Tenders: 13, incl. 2
Draught: 6 m	helicopters and 2
Speed: 16 kn	submarines
Engine output: 8000 kW	Class: SOLAS,
Gross Tonnage: 7000 GT	IMO Polar Code B

Safely stowed: “SeaXplorer” tenders are securely accommodated but also easy to launch; the helicopter can disappear out of sight into a hangar. Damen is offering the concept in a choice of three different LOAs: 65 metres (right), 90 metres and 100 metres.

Many owners still opt to have the visual identity of their yachts characterised by conventional lines. That might be a wise decision if you’re thinking about resale values or appealing to as many charter guests as possible. An increasing number of UHNWIs (ultra-high-net-worth- individuals) are however thinking along slightly different lines and embracing the trend towards

explorer or expedition yachts and those that at least look like they could take their guests cruising around the globe. Speaking with designers, sales managers and other experts about increasing demand reveals a multi-layered range of reasons. There are statements revealing a certain weariness of those proven and well-marshalled destinations in the Mediterranean and the Caribbean. Com-

parisons are also made with the huge SUV market ashore – the drivers of the Evoques, Cayennes and Touaregs of this world display a certain degree of masculinity, whilst female drivers value the safety aspect. That also applies, apparently, to the Jeep of the oceans, i.e. explorer or expedition yachts.

#### What can we experience?

However a third issue seems to be the most cogent argument, because it is also mentioned by specialists, whose day jobs involve enhancing the lifestyles of UHNWIs. The word from these elevated circles is that the pinnacle of consumption is no longer pure ownership of something but rather experiencing the exceptional. And that doesn’t mean the next boozy party on the sun deck, but rather touring one-of-a-kind destinations like the Antarctic or the Amazon,



Shipping grade tank test: “SeaXplorer” had to demonstrate her ice-breaker qualities using both her stern and bow at the well-known Hamburg Ship Model Basin (HSVA).

having contact with people you would normally never meet, diving in untouched stretches of water and discovering foreign cultures. We’re talking eternally memorable family adventures offering the highest possible degree of freedom and an appropriate atmosphere, as only really well-engineered explorer yachts can provide. The fact that two such concepts – “SeaXplorer” from Damen and “Sea Hawk” from Hawk Yachts – were showcased at the recent Monaco Yacht Show at the same time is therefore no coincidence.

Let’s kick off with “SeaXplorer”, which represents a first for the Dutch corporation, Damen (5000 ships built since 1969, sales of 2 billion Euros p.a.). Normally Amels, which belongs to the trust, builds and markets all the yachts built by the Damen Group. But in this case the parent company is itself acting as a brand. Victor Caminada, Marketing Manager at Amels, explains the procedure: “You can only buy products of the highest yacht standard from our company, i.e. Amels. ‘SeaXplorer’, which Damen is offering with LOAs of 65, 90 and 100 metres, is however in some respects equipped like a commercial vessel. That is why these two brands have been split.” In this case “commercial” means the spec of the engine room for instance, or even the way the hull is painted. “We don’t have to offer the full gloss finish if one of the yacht’s essential features are her ice-breaker qualities”, says Mark Vermeulen, development manager of the “SeaXplorer” project. The Damen Group’s tried and tested “Sea Axe” hull, featuring a plumb bow, which is used in particular in the offshore industry and by coastguards, has been enhanced even more. For example the yacht’s stern can break

## “SeaXplorer’s” stern can break through ice up to 90 centimetres thick



Animation: the yacht breaks through the ice stern first (t.). “SeaXplorer’s” lines were CADed by Azure Naval Architects. The unusually appealing yet robust exterior would significantly overshadow superyachts like “Lady Moura” or “A” in any marina (b.).

through ice up to 90 centimetres thick, if the ice concentration in the stretch of water where she is currently located is in excess of 70 percent – that at least is what the test results from the Hamburg Ship Model Basin (HSVA) state.

These results and of course the rest of the “SeaXplorer” concept (incl. ice

radar and double-hulled tanks) entitle the concept to feature the International Maritime Organization’s Polar Code.

#### Polar Code soon mandatory

The code will be mandatory for all ships travelling in polar waters from next year onwards, although here one other distinction will be made – vessels will be categorised as Class A, B or C.

“SeaXplorer” will be certified as Polar Code B, which in broad terms means a





**Magnificent views: both the observation**

very few yachts even meet the requirements for fulfilling the wishes of their owners. That starts, according to McCallum, of course with the hull. Polar Code B certification, as the "SeaExplorers" will have, is practically an absolute must-have for operating in ice conditions. Most yachts that include the word explorer in their names or descriptions have for a long time been travelling in the Arctic or Antarctic outside the restrictions of their specifications or classifications.

"Another major issue is autonomous operation or self-sufficiency", says the New Zealander. "The enquiries we get never involve routes between Monaco and Saint-Tropez; we're talking regions with little or no infrastructure."

**40 days of self-sufficiency**

"SeaExplorer" is being kitted out by Damen to enable guests and crew to spend 40 days on board in complete self-sufficiency. Equipment, provisions and fuel are intended to be stowed in specially sized tanks and stowage facilities. "Incidentally when advising the

lounge (l.) and the owner's suite feature large windows. The interior design of these spaces is a suggestion made by the builder.

builder, we not only had expeditions to polar regions in mind", says McCallum.

"That's what you usually think of in connection with explorers, but itineraries can also include Micronesia, Kamchatka or Franz Josef Land." These destinations can of course be observed from saloons on board, which in design and vision terms compare well with conventional yachts – guests are catered for even better in the observation lounge. The space in the bow section of the main deck provides magnificent views through its panorama windows on the one hand and at the same time there is an opportunity to go out on deck. The approach to any destination can be followed from

this spectacular position directly above the stem and up to 13 metres above the surface of the water (depending on LOA). For excursion purposes the crew then provides guests with a veritable armada of explorer tenders and toys.

**Mountain bikes and submarines**

Irrespective of LOA, each "SeaExplorer" features a chopper on her stern that is shielded from the elements in a hangar when she is at sea. If we take the 90-metre version of "SeaExplorer" as an example, the range of mobility options looks something like this: ski equipment, diving equipment mountain bikes, motorbikes, canoes, kayaks, submarines, amphibious

vehicles, jetskis, inflatable dinghies and guest tenders. The largest tenders have an LOA of up to 12 metres. Whilst these large units are stowed in a garage, two 7.50-metre RIBs are parked up on the main deck, where guests can board them directly. Using a launch system previously developed by Damen, the crew can launch the RIB, including guests on board, within around three minutes.

Incidentally the 90-metre "SeaExplorer" can accommodate 22 guests, while the 65-metre version can take 12 and the 100-metre model can accommodate 30. Crews range from 20 to 50 in number, while gross tonnage ranges from 2000 via 5000 through to 7000 GT. "For the

Contrasts: despite the occasionally very remote destinations, guests do not have to go without the comforts of a yacht. Here the main saloon with dining table and fireplace.

permit to operate in sensitive regions in the summer and autumn; furthermore the ice in the region of travel can also be older than one year. "At the same time", Mark Vermeulen explains, "we have incorporated as many environmentally compatible features as possible into the concept." The debut "SeaExplorer", assuming a buyer is to be found, will feature diesel-electric propulsion, exhaust filters and a well-engineered waste management system. In line with the environmentalist's motto 'Those travelling in waters worth protecting should leave as few traces behind as possible'.

Incidentally the EYOS Expeditions team, one of the most experienced providers of yacht cruises to remote destinations, had a major influence on the yacht's spec right from the start. Founder Rob McCallum specialises in regions like Greenland, the Antarctic or Papua New Guinea and sees increasing demand among superyacht owners for voyages to almost undiscovered destinations. "My experience shows that only very,

**To date only very few yachts have had the features required for global expeditions**



Going with the floe: at anchor "SeaExplorer" provides a range of options for exploring the surroundings – skiing equipment, helicopters and submarines are available. Not quite so adventurous guests can follow the action from the comfort of the spacious sundeck.





On location: "Sea Hawk" is suitable for both polar and Amazon expeditions (l.). This 103-metre yacht was styled by Sterling/Scott.

**SEA HAWK SPECIFICATION**

LOA: 103 m  
 Beam: 18.50 m  
 Draught: 5.50 m  
 Speed: 18.2 kn  
 Propulsion: diesel-electric  
 Range: 12,000 nm @ 12 kn  
 Gross Tonnage: 6400  
 Classification: SOLAS,  
 Polar Class 6

**BONUS MATERIAL**  
 BOAT EXCLUSIVE APP

time being these are our suggestions", says "SeaXplorer" manager Mark Vermeulen. "If you require a different size, of course you can get it." Suggestions for the interior produced to date are also variable and can be fully tailored to the owner's requirements. "We have already received genuine initial enquiries", says Vermeulen. "We hope to be able to start building the first vessel soon."

This is also what the Hawk Yachts team hopes for its "Sea Hawk" project. Development of the 103-metre explorer

initially started off somewhat tentatively, involving a very small team, headed up by "Lady Moura's" captain, Matthias Bosse. However the project picked up the pace considerably about a year ago. The team at the London-registered brand is backed up by polar specialist David Fletcher, naval architect Michael von der Heide (formerly of Blohm+Voss), project manager Andri Largiadèr, marketing professional Nick Locket and experts from the École Hôtelière de Lausanne. Support is even provided by the owner's

family, which is Bosse's main employer. "We are continuously developing the brand and are shortly about to begin construction", says Bosse, who showcased "Sea Hawk" to potential clients at the Monaco Yacht Show and will also exhibit at boot Düsseldorf. But what is so special about this 103-metre yacht, which is due to be complemented by smaller "sister yachts"? First of all she represents the unparalleled concentrated accumulation of experience gained to date. Bosse himself has clocked up

approximately one million nautical miles at the helm of cruise ships and super-yachts in nearly all regions of the world's oceans and in virtually every kind of sea state and weather conditions.

**Blend of both worlds**

He knows which components function in practise and what characteristics a ship

needs to have, to be able to operate in extreme environments. The team's idea was the inverted and very tall stem, which on the one hand channels off wave energy effectively and the size of which represents a further safety detail on the other. "Most well-designed yachts are not built to operate in hostile environments and tugs or trawlers that have

**"Sea Hawk's" developers have clocked up more than 1 million miles in total**





First impressions: the bar on the top deck will be installed next to the glazed heli-hangar. A conversation point. The suites with floor-to-ceiling windows provide all mod cons (t.), and the 330-square-metre spa with gym and sauna in the stern extends over two decks.



At creep speed: in very environmentally sensitive regions "Sea Hawk" may cruise in so-called electric mode. Her generators are then driven solely by an electric motor.

been converted to yachts that are capable of of doing so, don't cut much of a dash in hip, chic marinas around the globe", Matthias Bosse explains and points out that "Sea Hawk" is a blend of both worlds. Diana Scott of Sterling/Scott was responsible for designing "Sea Hawk's" exterior, and she gave the beefy-looking (bow-view) yacht a more extended exterior than you might think when looking head on, by adding large, well-tiered aft decks. Large windows and a pool in the stern do the rest to give "Sea Hawk" thoroughbred yacht characteristics.

### Range of 12,000 nautical miles

The hull has been engineered to meet IMO Polar Class 6 certification requirements. It can break recently formed ice up to 80 centimetres thick and robustly withstand a 100-tonne agglomeration of ice. Heated seals ensure that no doors can freeze shut and boilers have been designed to operate at very low temperatures. Manoeuvring equipment like rudders, bow thrusters and propellers have also been specified especially for use in polar regions. One route, for example, from Vancouver via Alaska and the

Northwest Passage through to Greenland is not likely to cause "Sea Hawk" any problems. The yacht's range of up to 12,000 nautical miles would easily cover the 7200 nautical miles from Vancouver to Greenland, and the journey time of 42 days estimated by "Sea Hawk's" development team could effectively be managed without making any provisioning stops. "Capacities have been desi-

gned to enable up to 36 guests to be looked after for three months at a stretch.", explains Matthias Bosse, who as a cruise ship captain was previously used to thinking in quite different dimensions.

However "Sea Hawk" is not a yacht designed purely for polar use, even if a growing community of owners are putting the Arctic and Antarctic at the top of their must-do destination lists. She can

The yacht has a range of 12,000 nautical miles and caters for up to 36 guests





Montage: this is how "Sea Hawk" would look at the T-Jetty in Monaco's Port Hercule. Commanding but fitting into the landscape.

also operate in other very contrasting climates – the Amazon is a good example. A water temperature of up to 36°C plus high humidity, swarms of insects as well as plenty of mud in the river can quickly cause the systems on board conventional yachts to reach their limits. On board "Sea Hawk" a supersized system cools the engines, and specially developed filters protect the high-performance air-conditioning and other sensitive components. Travelling upstream would only be limited by the river itself", says Bosse. A rainforest expedition from Belem to Iquitos can be up to 2000 nautical miles long.

Of course it makes obvious sense to apply an environmentally compatible yacht concept in such ecologically sensitive regions. The crew of "Sea Hawk" not only utilises a waste incinerator, a well-engineered waste water treatment facility and a metal shredder, but also a hybrid, diesel-electric propulsion system. It consists of two main engines and four generators, which can operate in three different modes according to needs.

#### Generators plus electric motor

In Boost mode the engines and generators operate in tandem and accelerate the superyacht up to 18.2 knots. In Transit mode only the main engines are in

## If "Sea Hawk's" developers get their way the yacht will be built in Northern Germany

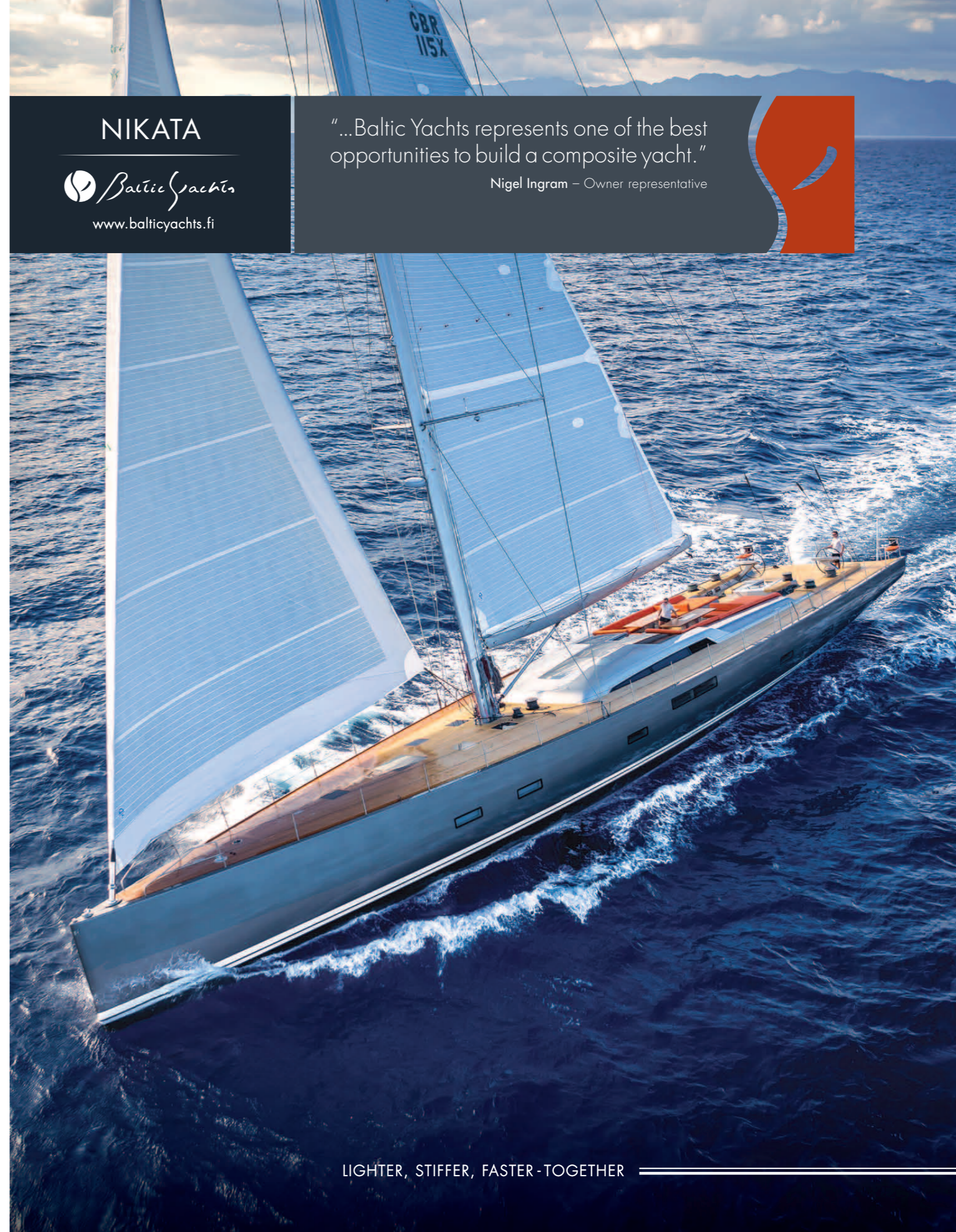
operation and they give "Sea Hawk" a good, steady and efficient, speed of 17.2 knots. And in the, quiet and environment-sensitive, Electric mode the generators drive an electric motor that gives "Sea Hawk", which displaces 5200 tonnes, a top speed of 12 knots. Of course the guest amenities are in no way inferior to the engineering refinements.

Depending on layout requirements, "Sea Hawk" can accommodate between twelve and thirty-six guests, who can enjoy the use of facilities that

include a 330-square-metre spa spread over two decks, a bar with a view of the helicopter hangar or a lounge directly next to where the captain works on the bridge deck. The ultimate choice of interior décor will be left to future owners, whom Matthias Bosse and his team are intending to go in search of this year. The "Sea Hawk" model – that has already been put out to tender – will then definitely be built in Northern Europe, with Germany being the preference of the instigators.



Large aft decks: the yacht's outdoor decks provide plenty of space for sightseeing or for events, perhaps even the GP. A large pool is a tempting place for taking a dip.



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