



trials before delivery to her Italian owner. The experienced yachtsman ordered a Park Avenue boom and a PBO set of rigging.

SPIRITED BEAUTY FROM SOUTH AFRICA

Southern Wind has launched its newest flagship, "Thalima". BOAT EXCLUSIVE went on board the 34-metre Farr/Nauta-designed yacht for a cruise in a spectacular setting.

Text **Martin Hager** Photos **Francesca van Rooyen, Guido Grugnola**



Martin Hager takes one of the wheels.



Saloon: stained teak, large white panels and carbon dominate the modern Nauta interior, which is not a Southern Wind trademark.



Entertainment zone: the lower saloon functions as a TV snug.



Owner's suite: no less than 44 drawers and a walk-in wardrobe.



"Thalima" in Table Bay: the 33.60-metre SW 110 RS cruises the cold Atlantic sporting 529 square metres of North 3DL sails during her final



Guest cockpit: inviting sun loungers behind the seating area.



Helm station: an unimpeded view from a pair of carbon wheels.



Ample storage: Nauta's design team made full use of every centimetre.



Galley: the central island has a pull-out ironing board and a sink.

Cape Town. It is nine o'clock in the morning and the sun is shining. The famous "table cloth" white cloud formation has not yet made an appearance on top of Table Mountain. Southern Wind's flagship "Thalima" is moored in all her splendour

at the Cape Grace Hotel's jetty on the new Waterfront Marina, not far from the Victoria & Alfred Waterfront shopping centre that is so popular with the tourists.

Upon initial inspection of the superclean, flat deck of the 33.60-metre sloop, it is

difficult to focus on the yacht's details; the panoramic view of Cape Town's local mountain, Lion's Head, and the monumental slopes of Table Mountain are simply captivating. However Nauta supremo Mario Pedol breaks the spell and sings the praises

Below deck "Thalima" also features distinctive clean lines

140-FOOT CRUISER / RACER IN THE PIPELINE



Southern Wind Shipyard: the South African yacht builders have 17,000 square metres of space, including lamination and assembling zones.

Located just 20 kilometres from Cape Town's City Bowl, Athlone's Industrial Zone is surrounded by townships and the well-known South African yacht builder Southern Wind Shipyard, founded by Italian entrepreneur, Willy Persico, is right in the thick of it. The facilities are located inland for a good reason. "The humidity is significantly lower than on the coast, which suits our manufacturing", Marco Alberti, General and Technical Manager, explained. "This enables the semi-custom hulls that we laminate using a vacuum-infusion method to dry better and faster." Yachts ranging

from 72 to 110 feet in length are built here in three buildings in an area of 17,000 square metres. The most recently launched yacht is the 33.60-metre flagship "Thalima". "Yet we are also thinking bigger", said Marco Alberti. Projects of lengths of up to 140 feet (43 metres) are at the planning stage. For design, Persico relies on the creativity of Milan-based Nauta Design, whilst naval architects from Reichel/Pugh or Farr Yacht Design handle the hull lines. The builder's 330 employees are currently working on four yachts – the first two carbon SW 94 RS and two SW 100 (hull numbers 11 and 12).

of his Italian design team's latest sailing creation: "We chose modern, sporty styling for the SW 110 RS to match our previous Southern Wind lines, ranging from 78 to 100 feet in length."

The fact that the South Africans' latest yacht hardly warrants the suffix RS (Raised Saloon), given her very shal-

low superstructure, appears immaterial. The low-slung profile of the superstructure adds to the cutter-rigged Performance Cruiser's brawny and belligerent temperament. The deckhouse features a gentle upward incline from the foredeck to the guest cockpit, where it merges into two coamings that shield

the seating area and levels out just in front of the crew companionway. A total of 22 Southern Wind-built custom hatches embedded in the deck provide ample daylight in the yacht's interior. The crew operates the sheets and halyards using eight electric and hydraulic deck winches, whilst the mainsail trimmer

controls the mainsheet using a Bamar captive winch.

As on radical racing yachts, Nauta went for an open stern and a perched helm column with two carbon wheels. The crew companionway, with direct access to the galley and the navigation area, is right in front of the helm pedestal.

The voice of "Thalima's" captain, Clinton White, brings our spontaneous tour of the deck to an end as we all gather aft. "The wind forecast is excellent. This morning will be 15, increasing later up to 25 knots. Let's go sailing."

Hoisting sails in 30 seconds

Since "Thalima" is due to be delivered shortly, Pascal Kiera, the technical project manager, takes the helm and navigates the elegant sloop through the drawbridge out of the narrow harbour basin. Her length of 33.60 metres, her dark blue hull with its near-plumb, acute stem and her 40-metre white Nordic carbon mast attracts amazed looks from the tourists and even the sea lions that are always swimming around the harbour basin appear to turn round to look at her.

Out in Table Bay the sails are set right opposite of the impressive Green Point Stadium. The fully-battened North 3DL mainsail is hoisted within just thirty seconds with the aid of the hydraulic Harken winches, and a Reckmann furler releases the genoa.



Spacious bow: for the layout of the SW 110 RS the builder remained true to its principles. The owner's suite is located right up in the bow, aft of which is a guest suite to port and the TV snug opposite. Transparent-varnish carbon also sets the tone in the owner's bathroom.



THE HULL IS MADE OF THREE MOULDS

The vacuum-infusion method, laminating components using artificial vacuums, is not new. Southern Wind Shipyard has employed this proven technique since 2005, in which components complete with fibre mats are sealed in air-tight plastic film using vacuum pressure and infused evenly with resin via a complex system of pipes. "The rigidity of components that are laminated



Vacuum-infusion technique: the epoxy resin is spread evenly over the fibres using vacuum pressure.



Three moulds: the South African builder manufactures the hull out of three parts.

using the vacuum-infusion method is significantly greater than those that are wet-laminated", shipyard founder Willy Persico explained. The South African firm has also modernised the process of hull construction. The hull of the SW 110 RS is made of three moulds, one base and two side sections. This technique was invented by the yard's head of lamination, Stefan Falcon. "This enables us to handle every component whilst it is almost horizontal and thus better, and the infusion process does not have to overcome the forces of gravity", the engineer explained. Also Kevlar and carbon-fibre mats, Corecell core material and the vacuum plastic bag including pipe system can be configured with greater precision.

"Unfortunately today we have to operate the mainsheet using the deck winches", Marco Alberti. "The Bamar captive winch is not working at the moment." In order to escape from Table Mountain's lee and to nab the odd breeze from the southeaster called the "Cape Doctor", "Thalima" cruises close-hauled in the

direction of Milnerton. The prominent B&G displays soon show us the true wind, with a top speed of 21 knots, and our flagship heels with the aid of 529 square metres of sail, as if racing. At an apparent wind angle of 24 degrees, the 86-tonner's log shows an impressive speed-made-good of 13 knots.

The rudder handles impressively, and the pressure remains manageable even in hefty squalls. "Thalima" feels more like a lively 50-footer than a yacht more than twice that size. A great deal of know-how and research work has been incorporated into developing the steering system. "We use low-tensile

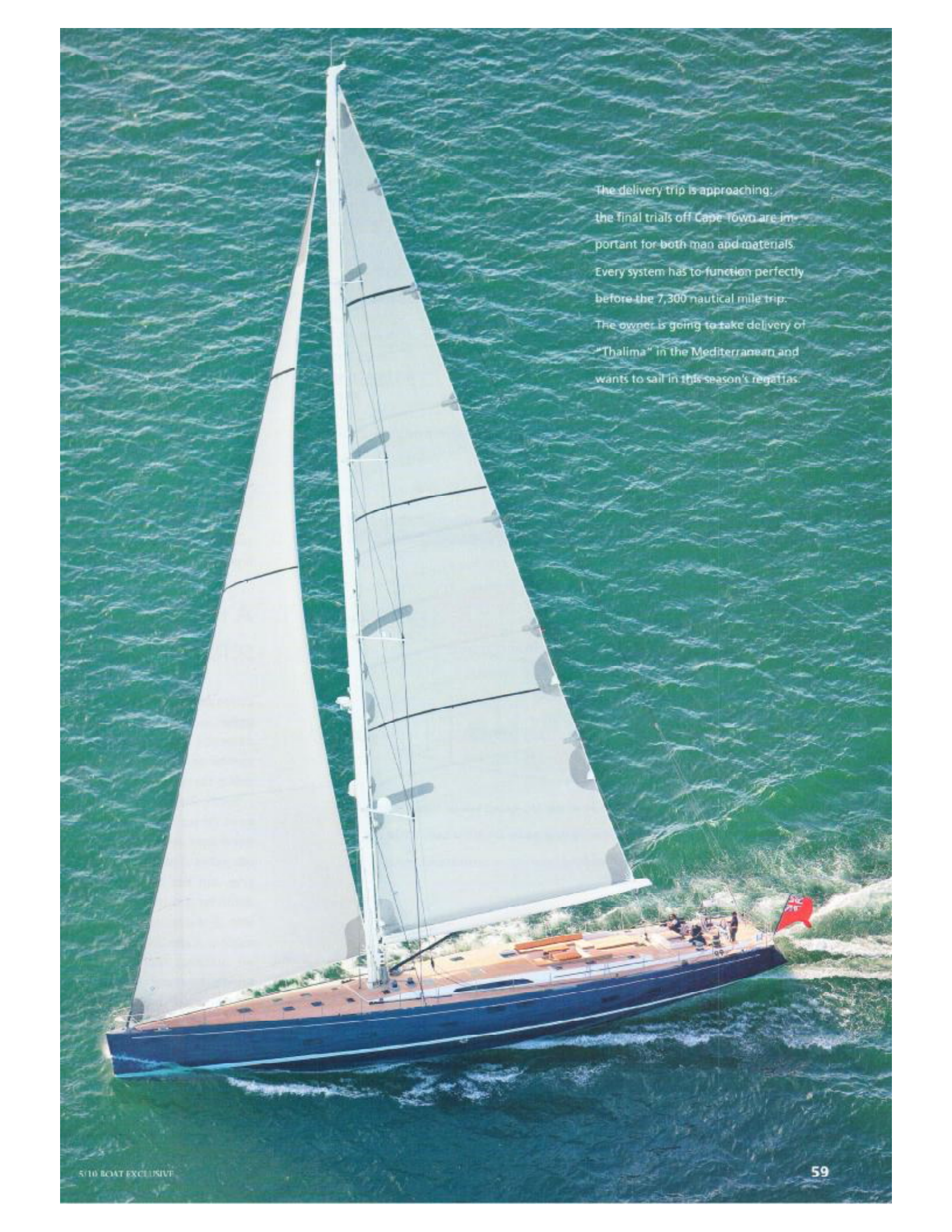
Spectra cords, which are routed to the GRP rudder quadrants cleverly positioned in the lazarette", Marco Alberti explained. The high-strength Dyneema cords would explain why the rudder has hardly any slack and why the steering is so direct. This spot of sailing pleasure is brought to an abrupt end when one of our many gybes causes the temporary winch to suddenly release the mainsheet, which surges through the pulley, causing the Park Avenue boom to slam against the PBO shrouds, and superficially damaging the carbon-

Piece of cake in a hefty squall

fibre boom. An incident which demonstrates that captive winches are the right pieces of kit to cope with the enormous sheet loads on board maxis.

Whilst cruising back to the harbour there is time to take a look at the extremely neat and modern interior. Stained teak in combination with large white bulkheads and light upholstery dominate the setting, whilst a wide range of details, such as handrails and folding chairs made of transparent-varnished carbon, add a touch of class to the ambience. It is immediately apparent that the owner of "Thalima", which is now his third Southern Wind yacht, likes everything to be neat and tidy.

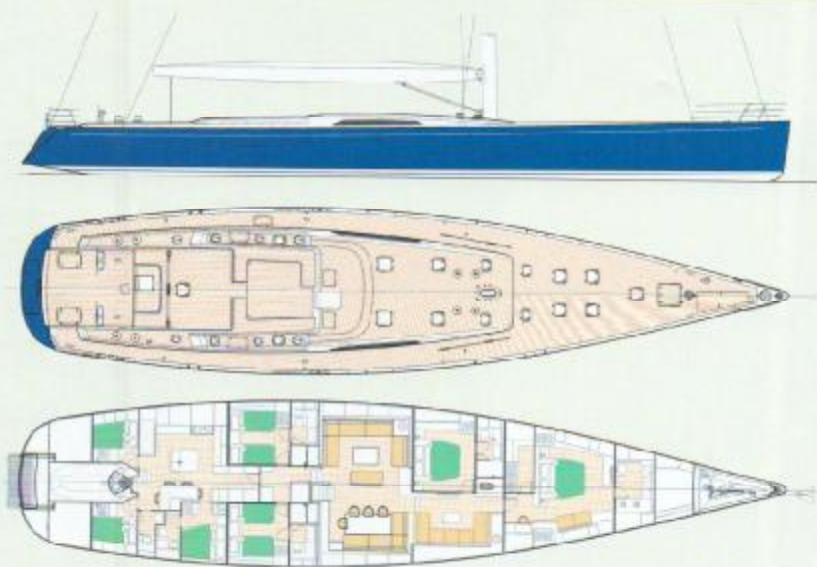
"He can't stand items, such as books, magazines, DVDs or shoes, lying around", Marco

An aerial view of a large, dark blue sailboat with a white deck and two large white sails. The boat is moving across a body of green water, leaving a white wake. A red flag is visible at the stern. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

The delivery trip is approaching; the final trials off Cape Town are important for both man and materials. Every system has to function perfectly before the 7,300 nautical mile trip. The owner is going to take delivery of "Thalima" in the Mediterranean and wants to sail in this season's regattas.

THALIMA

LOA:	33.60 m	Engine:	Cummins QSL9L-405
LWL:	29.80 m	Engine performance:	302 kW
Hull speed 2.43√LWL:	13.27 kn	Generators:	2 x Onan 27 kW
Beam:	7.30 m	Fuel capacity:	5,600 l
Draught:	4.20 m	Fresh water capacity:	3,000 l
Displacement:	86 t	Winches:	Harken
Materials:	carbon/Aramid/epoxy/Corecell core	Furlers:	Reckmann, Bamar
Ballast:	30 t	Bow thruster:	Max Power
Ballast ratio:	35 %	Navigation systems:	Furuno, B&G
Rigging:	PBO Future Fibres	Communication systems:	Simrad, Icom
Mast:	Nordic Mast	Naval architect:	Farr Yacht Design
Above-deck mast height:	40 m	Interior & exterior design:	Nauta
Sails:	North Sails, 3DL	Classification:	RINA, MCA
Sail area:	529 m ²	Builder:	Southern Wind Shipyard, 2010



South African flagship: the superstructure of the 110 Raised Saloon is very shallow and the layout is tried and tested. The owner's quarters are in the bow, whilst the crew is accommodated at the other "working" end of this performance cruiser.

Alberti recounts with a grin. "He wanted as much storage space as possible for any odds and ends." The owner's suite alone features 44 drawers and storage compartments. Every millimetre of space has been used for storage space. "That was a real challenge for our

naval architects, especially as the owner himself is an engineer, knows how to use AutoCAD, and therefore provided a very large number of suggestions himself", Willy Persico added with a smile.

As far as the layout was concerned, the builder stuck

with its proven concept. The owner's suite is located forward in the bow and features both a large walk-in wardrobe and a full-beam bathroom with subtle lighting for a shower and bathtub experience for all the senses. A VIP cabin is located to port behind

this suite and film fans can settle down on the U-shaped sofa in front of the TV opposite this cabin. Going up a couple of steps, the full-beam saloon, including the dining table for eight people and ample seating area, adjoins aft. The elegant carbon-fibre folding chairs were manufactured at the shipyard in accordance with plans by their own in-house designers.

"In order not to be dependent on long logistics routes and subcontractors, we try to manufacture as much as possible ourselves", said the GM Marco Alberti.

Continuing towards the stern, four guests are accommodated in two identical

A maxi regatta sensation

cabins and behind them is the galley, including large stand-alone sink unit, the navigation station and three two-berth cabins for the crew of six.

South Africa not only appeals on account of its sensational flora and fauna, premium wines and delicious cuisine, but has also set standards for a number of years with first-class sailing yachts made in Cape Town. There is no question that Southern Wind's "Thalima" is an agile flagship. Just how fast the Farr/Nauta Design yacht can really sail will be seen very soon on the 7,300 nautical mile transfer to the Mediterranean – and of course during the maxi regatta circuit.