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Farr Design Revolutionalizes European Lake Racing

Yacht designer Bruce Farr has teamed up with Mark Lindsay's high-tech boatbuilding firm to create a 35 ft. racing yacht with "wings" which has revolutionalized European Lake racing.

The boat, OPNI (which stands for Object Planet Non-Identifie), was commissioned by Alain Golaz of Geneva, Switzerland and represents the first European client to have a Farr design constructed in the U.S. Farr, a New Zealander, moved his headquarters to Annapolis, Maryland in 1981. According to Farr, "for the first time in years, American firms are being very competitive in their pricing of custom one-offs and able to match any foreign technology. Now our European clients are looking for some of their boats to be constructed in the U.S."

Lake racing has always been popular for its radical designs. This new Farr design is characterized by a set of "wings" which are exaggerated side deck forms to be used by crews to trapeze out from the mast. Two previous Farr European lake racers, GRIFO and FARRNETICANTE, which placed 1st and 2nd respectively in the 1982 European Lake Cup, were designed with trapeze racks to support a seven man crew. "These racks were disallowed in 1983 under the lake racing rules and our client wanted the same effect...thus the wings," Farr said. The "wings" are detachable for trailering throughout Europe.

The new 35 footer, OPNI, was built of Kevlar and Nomex honeycomb core by Mark Lindsay Boatbuilders, Gloucester, Mass., a firm highly respected in the industry for its state-of-the-art construction techniques.

GRIFO and FARRNETICANTE are wooden yachts approximately 45 ft. in length and weighing about 4,000 lbs. Through high tech construction techniques with Kevlar and honeycomb, the Farr design constructed by Mark Lindsay is 10 ft. shorter and some 2,500 lbs. lighter.

The results: OPNI is in first place with two-thirds of the 1983 European lake circuit complete. After the circuit, which ends on September 11 at Lake Garda, Italy with the Centomiglia Race, Dupont, the developers of Kevlar, plan to exhibit the yacht at technical trade shows throughout Europe.

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