FARR

PHASE 4



Built by

Whitsunday Coast Yacht Constructions Pty. Ltd.,

a division of

Binks Yachts

Australian Design Award 1988

The Farr Phase 4

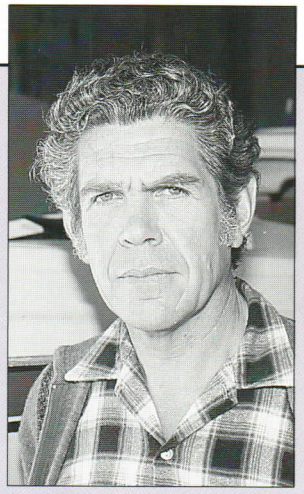
A BACKGROUND

In the past, yacht building in Australia has been carried out on a relatively small scale compared with many overseas builders. Our small population and huge land mass have prevented any one builder from having a large enough production to reduce prices to the point where he could effectively compete on the overseas market.

With Whitsunday Coast Yacht Constructions Pty. Ltd. we have taken the bold approach of tooling up for relatively large scale production and building a modern yacht factory, by far the largest in Australia, especially to produce the new generation of yachts using exciting, up to the minute production techniques.

A large amount of capital was required for the exercise, but the results have more than justified the expenditure. We have achieved in the Phase 4, our first model, a yacht which we believe is of top world standard. A giant step forward from any production yacht previously built in this country. The production techniques have, besides dramatically increasing the quality of the yacht, reduced its price to the point where orders are flowing in from overseas. For me, this is the most exciting project I have been involved in. It is very gratifying to prove to the rest of the world that we 'down under' can make yachts equal to or better than those produced overseas.

David N. Binks
Production Director
Whitsunday Coast Yacht Constructions Pty. Ltd.



David has been involved in yacht building almost all his life, and founded his own company, Binks Yacht Constructions Pty. Ltd. in 1959. His expeience spans the period covering the transition from traditional timber craft to the modern fibreglass yacht. In the field of glass technology, David's innovation made him a leader in Australia early days of glass construction. He produced the first fibreglass international class sailing dinghy in this country as well as the first sandwich construction hull.

Binks Yacht Constructions have built five world champions in the field of international class yachting. The international successes of David's early yachts resulted in the first World Yachting Championship ever to be staged in the southern hemisphere, coming to Australia.

In 1966 David was awarded a Churchill Fellowship for his contribution to Australian yachting. In the past, two of his designs have been awarded Australian Design Awards.

In 1970, Government authorities decided the Standards Association of Australia should draw up construction standards for pleasure boats in Australia. David was selected to be the representative of the Boating Industry Association of Australia on this Standards panel. His depth of knowledge has contributed greatly to these Standards now recently published.

David Binks has travelled overseas regularly, keeping abreast of the latest international developments in the yacht building industry.

FOOTNOTE:
*On the following page we have reprinted an independent test of the **Farr Phase 4** by Australia's leading Boating magazine, **Australian Boating** . We have highlighted some of their comments.*

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The new Whitsunday built Farr Phase 4 not only promises to be a smash hit amongst the bare boat charter brigade, but also a potential world beater in the popular fast cruiser market. Story and photos by Mike Davidson.

BOAT TEST
AUSTRALIAN BOATING MAGAZINE



A new era in production yacht building has begun with the launching at Abel Point, Airlie Beach, of the first Farr Phase 4. This 12m sloop from Bruce Farr's design office breaks much new ground and heralds the beginning of a new boat building venture that, in time, will see the launching of a new boat every week. For yacht buyers, the news is excellent. The Phase 4 is the first production craft ever built in Australia which is of truly international quality without imported boat prices.

The Phase 4 has been built by Whitsunday Coast Yachts, a company headed by David Binks of Adelaide, already well known for his Binks 30 and Farr 11.6 craft. A year or so back Binks got together with Australian Bareboat Charters' Tony Kelly after the latter foresaw the need for a new style of charter boat to serve the ever-increasing demand for floating holidays in the Whitsundays. Kelly, no stranger to the charter scene, felt no boats being built in Australia reflected accurately the needs of charterers, which he perceived as comfort and privacy below for up to four couples and a fair turn of speed.

Binks was interested in Kelly's concept, but believed existing production methods were too slow and expensive to make the proposition worthwhile. What was needed was a fresh look at how production boats should be built. He approached Bruce Farr (the two are old friends, having worked together for many years) who in turn became interested in the whole project. Binks suggested to Farr that the solution to efficient production was a means of securing an interior hull liner to the hull which served as a strengthening grid, anchor for interior furniture and had a clean smooth surface. Farr agreed, though he warned Binks a number of American manufacturers had tried this in the past and failed, and was able to point out to Binks how they had failed.

Knowing what **not** to do, Binks said, was a great help. After getting the vital input from Farr in America Binks then set about devising a method to make the system work and hit on the notion of vacuuming the liner into the hull. Basically the hull would be coated with a glue, the interior liner set in place then sucked down under vacuum pressure. When he realised it was possible to build this way, Binks decided to go the whole hog and set up a brand new factory to build the boats using this exclusive technology. He found a backer in Melbourne financiers Strand Holdings, bought eight acres of prime industrial land at Cannonvale next to Airlie Beach, and by October this year he will have Australia's biggest and

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most modern yacht building factory fully operational and producing yachts once a fortnight.

The above is obviously a simplistic account of what in fact took much hard work and improvisation, but it is the clue to the secret of this new boat. Binks had come to terms with the reality that the technology behind building modern production yachts is only slightly ahead of the Ark, and to bring it up to 20th century would require a fresh approach.

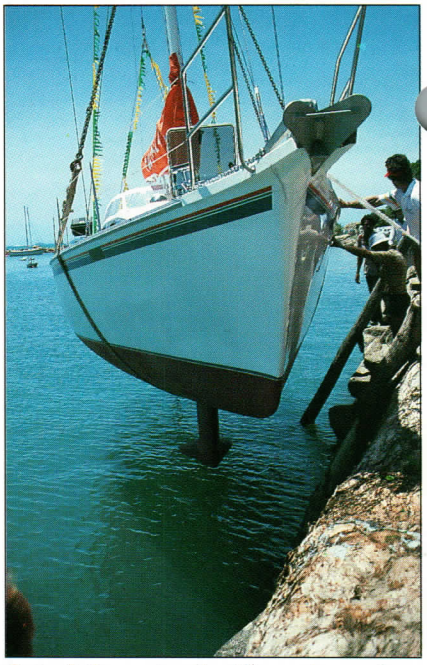
Ironically what Binks has come up with is a world first: using vacuums in boat building is not new, but it has never worked before on this scale. What it means for the builder is that the interior is fixed, and that the finishing work can be made separately under its own rigid quality control. When fitted it has no alternative than to fit precisely. Binks says from the time the mouldings are joined it will only take four days to fit out the interior. Compare that with the weeks (and sometimes months) it can take under conventional practices. For the buyer, it means the days of the interior being hung together with strips of fibreglass, cupboard spaces which have crummy little shelves suspended in the ether, joins that are layers of bog smoothed off and flow-coated, are gone. The interior lining of the Phase 4 is as clean as the hull outside. It is a genuine revolution.

Design

There's not much point in investing in new technology, tooling and factories to trot out the same boring old boats, so the Farr Phase 4 is a revolution in design as well. It is the first production boat in Australia to boast a winged keel, it has an innovative rig, a genuine step through transom, a unique liferaft locker, a deck hood to cover the sail controls and a bowsprit anchoring platform. Below decks it has three genuine double cabins, two head compartments, a huge saloon and bench-style galley.

Hull and Deck

The hull shape is reminiscent of all late Farr designs — indeed it is not dissimilar to those now drawn by the French architects responsible for Beneteau and Jeanneau craft. It is more full in the underbody than Farr's race-oriented boats and is a very close cousin to the Farr 1220 built by Sea Nymph in New Zealand. The bow has a moderate overhang but this is somewhat lost under the moulded bowsprit/anchor platform. The stern, too, is quite different, with the transom cut out to provide a water-boarding platform with a small drop ladder. A small walkway on the starboard side provides access to the cockpit while the remainder of the transom hides the liferaft locker.



Out of the water the Phase 4 reveals a shallow draft fin keel with a highly efficient wing keel.



Phase 4 shows powerful sailing lines as it sails to windward in the Whitsundays. Walk-through transom has boarding platform and ladder.

The liferaft is stacked side on and should the hydrostatic release be activated, the raft will take the transom panel with it as it is released. Inspection of the raft requires the release of a pelican hook inside the locker.

A large-ish tee-shaped cockpit disappears under a dodger which somehow manages to avoid the claustrophobic feeling one often gets when ducking below. The sheet winches are partially recessed into the cockpit backrests and no other sailing gear intrudes into the cockpit space — the rest nestling either side of the companionway. Underneath the helmsman's feet is a removable panel, under which is the steering quadrant. This is another major innovation — the first time I've ever seen steering gear totally accessed from the cockpit.

On either side of the cockpit are two deck lockers — the one to port containing the gas bottle and to starboard, general stowage. There is another small cutout locker for sunglasses and cream, but the two locker lids in the cockpit seats open only to provide air to the cabins below. Even so, one could use these as temporary stowage for fenders or mooring lines when using the craft for day-sailing. There is no lazarette locker as such, though there is a lazarette accessed from the ends of the aft cabin berths.

Sail controls, including the mainsheet, are operated under the dodger where a Barlow self-tailer each side is fed by two banks of Spinlock jammers. The traveller is forward of the dodger and the sheet led to the mast and returned. From the cockpit the lines disappear under a moulded cabin hood which includes a recessed handrail and air vents, thus providing both the ease of banked aft controls and a clean deck — another first.

The spar is a twin-spreader section used on the Farr 11.6 but with reinforcing up its leading edge. The spar is held aloft by a pair of continuous shrouds from the cap and from the intermediate position.

On this first boat the shrouds terminated at an acute angle to their tangs, but David Binks assures me this won't happen again. Sails are by North (Binks has equity in North's Adelaide loft) and are another first . . . fully battened main with lazyjacks for easy dousing, and roller furling headsail, fitted to a Hood Seafurl. The single deck track is very close inboard, allowing for race-boat type headsail sheeting angles. In the cabin hood is a flush-fitted sliding perspex hatch to provide air to the main saloon. Opening ports along the trunk cabin also provide cross flow





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ventilation, a wonderful idea provided you remember to close the leeward ones before sailing to windward on blustery days.

The foredeck is clean and functional and enhanced by the bowsprit with double bronze roller and offset to starboard Muir electric windlass. This system means there is the conventional anchor locker in the bow available for other uses.

Alloy toe-rails of a flush style are on the hull/deck joint and the stanchion posts are set inboard. I questioned the use of this type of toe-rail and Binks said he wanted clean lines above all. The disadvantage is that there is nowhere to take off preventers or similar. Binks' answer is that as soon as you figure out where you want deck fittings, you can then instal eyebolts in the deck. I have no great fondness for the slotted toe-rail as such, but believe the need for a preventer takeoff is critical, especially in an area where the wind blows hard a lot.

In general I found the deck and cockpit extremely well done, and toerails aside, have little to comment about. I suggested to Binks he might consider extending the pushpit across to the walkway, to provide the helmsman with added security, and he agreed to look into it.

Below Decks

The greatest of ironies beholds the instant you walk through the hatchway and down the companion steps. Binks has built what is probably the ultimate Australian plastic boat, but there is such a feast of rich, warm timber below you wonder where the plastic is. It's there all right, but mostly out of sight. Open a locker to find the hidden bits — the ones we boating journos have been trained to ignore in the past — now gloss smooth and unbroken.

Pull up the floorboards and the bilge is high gloss gelcoat, just like the exterior. Talk about a revolution! Nowhere is this more convincing than the engine locker, accessed through the companionway. The standard Volvo (there is a choice of size, not of make) has its own segregated part of the liner designed around the mounts and the sumps. No more dripping engine oil spreading through the bilge like liquid cancer.

The liner becomes easier to find in the three sleeping cabins, where the clean gloss surface replaces the carpet we've come to hate, plastered over the messy hull. Full headroom is available at the heads of the after cabins, with a small bureau and locker before the bunk itself. An opening port is set over the bureau and the seat locker already mentioned provides excellent airflow at rest. The headliner in these cabins is also pretty amazing, and a close look at it reveals the ingenuity of the whole design package.

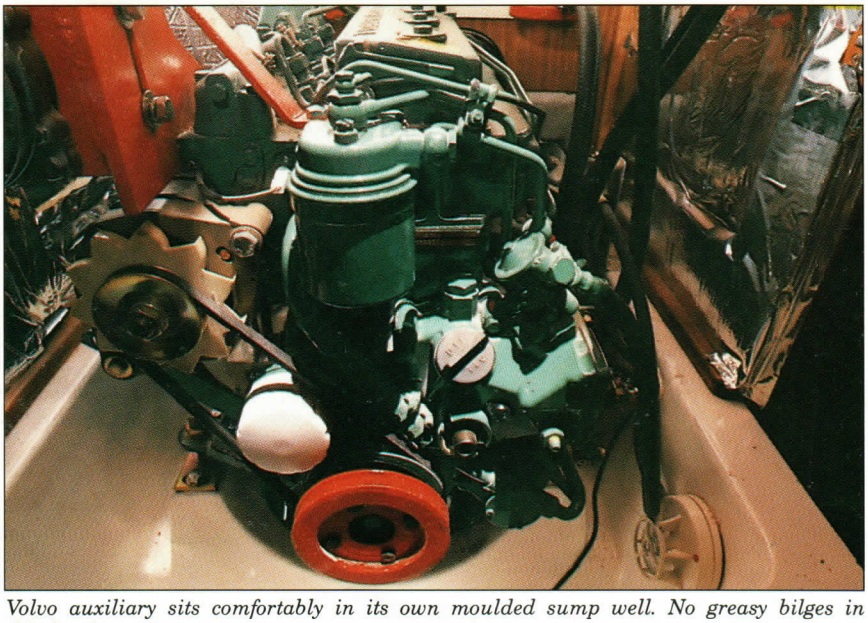
The saloon is dominated by a huge dinette to starboard, the table lowering to form a fourth double if necessary. This is nicely upholstered and set off with some warm timber trim and shelving. To port is a long bench incorporating the navigation station aft and galley. A custom electrical panel is fitted aft and over a double-opening top access fridge/freezer. A narrow but long cupboard under the panel is for chart stowage — the fridge top being deemed good enough for the chart table. The galley has a re-badged Roden gas stove on gimbals, twin sinks, gold-plated plumbing fittings, cupboards below and behind — one of these has a rubbish bin incorporated.

The forward cabin has a hanging locker, bureau, large Vee berth and another innovation — fixed port allowing visual access to the world outside. Both heads are tastefully decorated and use Lavac heads — shower and hand basin fittings are gold plated.

I doubt if I could find in a day all the innovations and genuinely sensible things this boat has, so well has it been thought out, so therefore I will confine myself to impressions at this stage . . . and my impressions are that it is very, very good. The hull liner that makes it all possible has been effectively



Purpose-made instrument panel groups all of the electrical systems into one sensible, easy-to-read console.



Volvo auxiliary sits comfortably in its own moulded sump well. No greasy bilges in this boat!

disguised, and Binks' job in figuring out how to make it in the first place is a mammoth work of craft. Tony Kelly had some input, too. It was his idea, for example, to have a radiused curve between the galley bench and the sole so food particles could not get trapped . . . small things which his experience as a cleaner-upper after charterers had taught him.

There will be people who won't like this boat because it hasn't a dedicated nav station. True enough. Others, myself included, would prefer a U-galley and a port settee, but that is only because I judge boats by their comfort in crossing oceans rather than protected passages, but people who cross oceans are in the minority. This layout works very well for all those people who want to use boats for their recreation and for charter, it is very sensible. If one wanted to cross oceans, one would modify the layout by removing the doors to the private aft cabins and providing a galley strap.

I have a number of small reservations about the boat in the suitability of its intended role, but in the overall scheme of things I would class these as nit-picking. Basically the Farr/Binks combo has put Australia on the map as a serious producer of quality yachts . . . the first Australian craft to prove to the world we, too, can mix it with the best.

Binks is deadly serious. He wants to stick his thumb in the air to the likes of Beneteau. Already he has received one of the greatest accolades an Australian boat-builder can get — he has orders for 24 of these boats, yes, 24, from Rainbow Yacht Charters of New Zealand. If that isn't the equivalent of selling fridges to the Eskimos, I'll eat my hat.

Specifications

Extreme length	12.90 m (42'4")
LOA	12 m (39'6")
Waterline length	9.86 m (32'6")
Beam	3.77 m (12'6")
Draft	1.7 m (5'10")
Displacement	5 908 kg (12 026 lb)
Sail area	72 m² (790'sq)
I	14.34 m (47'11")
J	4.14 m (13'6")
E	4.70 m (15'4")
P	12.45 m (40'9")
Water capacity	800 L (180 gals)
Fuel capacity	200 L (50 gals)
Diesel engine	28 hp Volvo





Product Citation

The Binks Farr Phase 4 is an outstanding yacht whose design well matches the specialised and demanding requirements of the charter market in particular and cruising yachts in general. The panel highly commended the quality of the finish and attention to detail in its construction which have resulted in an easily managed boat with well located controls. The design will facilitate successful sailing by people with widely varying levels of experience.

The panel also commended the modular construction technique and the vacuum bonding process used to bond the hull liner to the outer hull shell.

The spacious design of the vessel, comfortable, well lit and ventilated interior is also commended.

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