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ISSUE 59

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ABOVE BOARD

LISA CANNERO

THE NEW MOODY DS54 CHANGES THE GAME FOR LUXURY BOAT OWNERS WHO APPRECIATE THE JOYS OF LIFE UNDER SAIL AND THE ENVIRONMENTAL AND ECONOMIC BENEFITS SAILING CONVEYS – BUT WHO DESIRE THE ON BOARD SPACE AND DECK LEVEL LIFESTYLE TYPICALLY AVAILABLE ONLY ABOARD MOTOR CRUISERS. **ANTHONY TWIBILL** SAILS MOODY'S LATEST INTERPRETATION OF A YACHT THAT OFFERS THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS.

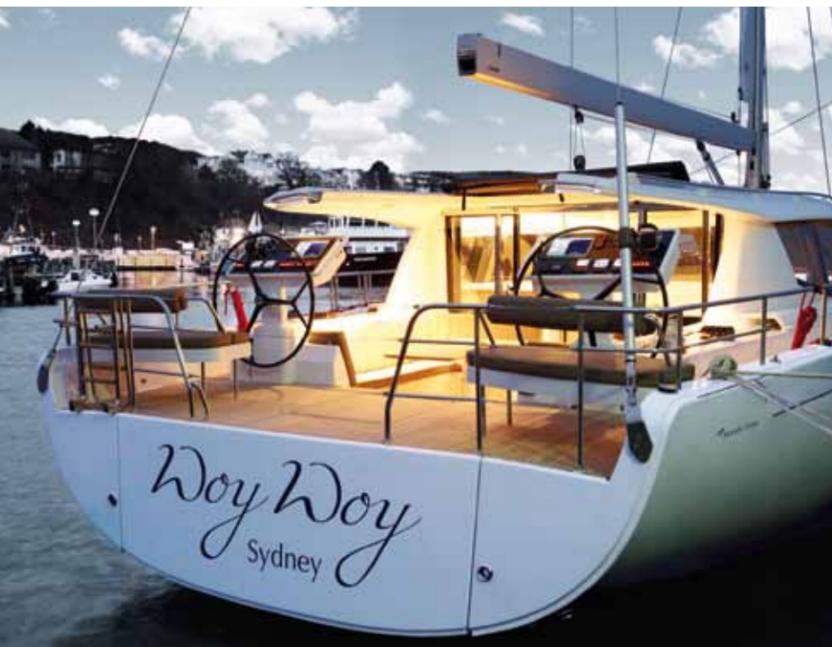
The Moody DS54 (deck saloon) is perhaps the finest example today of a sailing yacht designed to appeal to boat owners who may otherwise choose to own a motor cruiser. This all-new Moody design from the Hanse Group of recreational yachts offers true 'crossover' appeal for sailors with its ease of deck level indoor/outdoor living space, panoramic deck level views, generous accommodation below decks and a truly luxurious fit-out.

And, almost to spite its considerable bulk and the raft of creature comforts aboard, I can testify that this all-new yacht sails beautifully upwind and down, offering a solid, confidence-inspiring ride with fingertip control of its dual helm wheels. The perhaps surprisingly fine sailing abilities of the DS54 are due in no small part to excellent form stability of its solid, Judel-Vrolijk designed hull presenting a high freeboard and substantial bulwarks above deck, while below the waterline a 2.65-metre deep L-shaped cruising fin is aided by a powerful, deep spade rudder to ably control the balanced, easily-reefed sail plan of the new yacht. The new Moody flagship comes equipped with a choice of 'factory-fitted' Elvstrom 5-layer performance trioptimal sails offering performance and high durability suitable for cruising far afield over many years. Alternatively, for owners intending to club race or to compete in regatta race weeks with their DS54, Elvstrom high-end HPM membrane sails are also an option.

My review aboard *Way Way* – the very first of the new DS54 model ordered by Windcraft – was sailed in up to 30 knots of nor-easterly pressure as we set off from Middle Harbour to Sydney Heads. It was perfect conditions to put the 25 tonnes of Moody through its paces, a breeze that ideally suited the character of this bluewater yacht and, which I'm thrilled to say, it handled with aplomb throughout the afternoon sail.

Australian and New Zealand Moody dealer Windcraft is widely regarded as the number one global dealer for the Hanse Group (owners of the Moody brand) with Windcraft MD Peter Hrones having had considerable personal contribution into the design, layout and features of the new Moody DS54. As a result, the yacht is ideally suited to our antipodean cruising conditions, with features equally well suited to appeal to how we do our boating down here.

Although launched to the world only a year ago at Europe's giant Dusseldorf Boat show, Hrones has already ordered and delivered the first three hulls of the new 54 (called *Way Way*, *Moody Buoys* and *TryBooking.com*) to Australian



OPEN PLAN
Left: A high-tech, remote autopilot allows steering and all navigation functions either from inside at the navigation station or outside at the helm stations; Opposite page, clockwise from above: Moody have finessed the design to make sure setting sail on this boat can be handled by just one person; The cockpit leads to the transom deck extending the 'one level living' concept; A retracting bimini arrangement gives optional cover for the cockpit.

owners and he says a further three are due to come here this year. So well received has the new Moody DS54 been since launching, that at the time of writing in November, Moody had an impressive 18 orders for their latest and greatest deck saloon model.

As most cruising yachts of this genre and size are still typically sailed by a couple, Moody have finessed the design of the boat to optimise ease of sail handling and sailing control – with the unfurling, furling, reefing and trimming of all sails easily managed from the helm station with toggle switches controlling electrically-powered winches that do all the hard grind. So, setting sail on the Moody DS54 is literally a breeze that can be handled by just one person.

On deck the boat comes typically equipped with what can only be described as 'the lot'. This includes a mast-furling mainsail with integrated vertical battens (as standard) although a Southern Spars carbon boom furler is an option if you'd prefer a fully battened slab mainsail; a self-tacking jib (made globally popular by Hanse group) together with electrically-operated Furlex double furlers at the bow for both the self tacking jib and the Genoa furled on a separate forestay; pushbutton helm-operated electric winches; a high-tech, remote autopilot allowing steering and all navigation functions either from inside at the navigation station or outside at the helm stations; Volvo Penta 'drive-

by-wire' technology ensuring reliable and precise engine control; plus Sidepower joystick-controlled, 'drop-down' bow and stern thrusters to assist in docking and low-speed manoeuvring of this large yacht – invaluable if short-handed with just a cruising couple aboard.

It's clear that Moody (with regarded yacht designer Bill Dixon) drafted the DS54 as a much larger and improved evolution of its well-received Moody 45 Deck Saloon model, offering living on the one spacious level indoors and out, but with much greater space overall and fitted out in even more luxurious comfort, coming as it does with a plethora of options available to suit almost any owner's whims.

Another big plus for this latest model, to my eyes at least, is the more attractive, streamlined profile of the yacht, with the longer waterline of the hull adding balance and poise to the prominent deck saloon coach house.

As a bluewater capable cruiser, safety and seaworthiness were also crucial in its design and construction, providing confidence that the big Moody can handle serious sea states when cruising to far-flung destinations. Aboard the DS54 you can appreciate the feeling of moving around safely behind deep, high bulwarks topped with a solid railing that surrounds the entire deck, as well as a roof rail running the length of the saloon hardtop, giving a secure passage along the side

decks even if the weather gets rough. This would be particularly important if you have young children, grandchildren or even pets aboard when cruising. The DS54 benefits from solid construction with strong bulkheads sturdily connected with hand-laid laminates to the hull and deck, and many other inbuilt safety features such as a solid watertight bulkhead in the bow.

As a demonstration of the yacht's build quality and offshore capability, two Moody 54 DS yachts have just successfully competed in the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race, sailed from Sydney Harbour on Boxing Day.

The overall design of the boat also allows for a high degree of independence when passage making. Highlights include substantial refrigeration/freezer space for stores of food and beverages, long-range water and diesel capacities (810 litres of water and up to 940 litres of fuel).

The Moody deck saloon 'one level living' concept takes a different approach to sailing yacht design, one that does away with disappearing into a 'dark hole' down a flight of stairs from the cockpit to a typical yacht's 'below decks' living and accommodation spaces. Aboard the Moody, its single-level living – from the aft cockpit you simply slide open the Trend safety glass door (and adjacent window) of 12mm thick glazing – that's sufficiently strong to have been approved for the new Moody DS54 model to compete in Category 1 ocean races such as the Rolex Sydney Hobart – and enjoy the panoramic views and weather protection afforded from the luxurious comfort of the saloon inside, or from the vast teak-laid aft cockpit, with integrated dining table and plenty of seating, outdoors on the same level under an innovative hardtop and retracting bimini arrangement overhead, giving all weather protection or sunshine, whatever your pick.

Whilst safety at sea and satisfying sailing performance should be expected from a cruiser of Moody pedigree, the most attractive features to most potential new owners looking at a DS54 will, quite honestly, be the simple luxury of the vast space and deck-level living offered by this mid-fifty footer, together with its ability to sail away to distant destinations surrounded by so many of the creature comforts of home.

These start with the obvious, such as the comfortable lounging space with convertible dining table in pride of place portside in the voluminous saloon, and progress upon closer examination to more discreet details which make the DS54 truly a home on the water. These include a large, capable galley located in the aft starboard corner (in the 'galley-up' version of the boat) topped with quality Corian work surfaces, below which top-name



LISA GAINERO

THE MOODY DECK SALOON 'ONE LEVEL LIVING' CONCEPT TAKES A DIFFERENT APPROACH TO SAILING YACHT DESIGN.





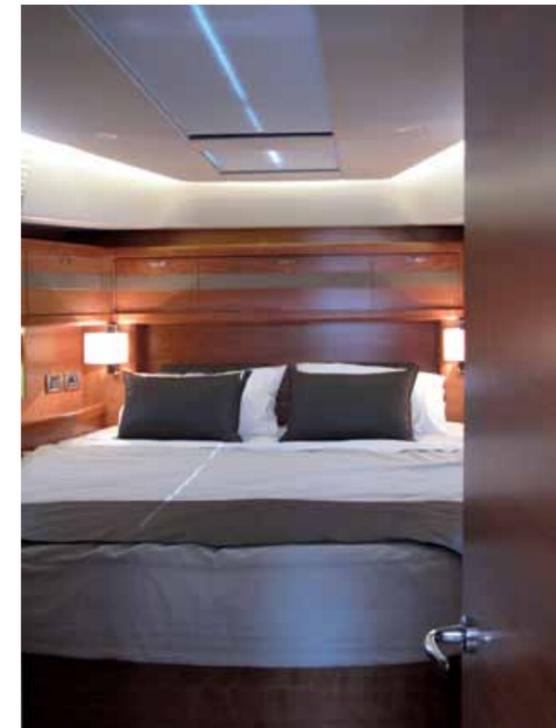
ROOM TO MOVE
Left: The galley and seating space has a navigation area with pop-up TV; Below: The boat comes in a choice of galley-up or galley-down versions to suit the owners lifestyle; Right: There are no less than five 'cabin concept packages' to choose from.

LISA GAINERO

appliances are discreetly hidden behind the cherrywood cabinetry (on the review boat). There's a dishwasher, an array of fridges and freezers, large home-style gas cooktop / oven, plus a microwave oven, acres of storage space and even a pop-up wine bar to impress the guests!

Those who prefer a cooking area separated from the deck-level saloon may choose a cabin concept with the 'galley-down' (forward to starboard on the accommodation deck). This version offers yet more working space and stowage room in the galley area, and more seating upstairs in the deck saloon, though you do 'lose' a guest cabin as a compromise, so there would be three cabins compared to the more typical four cabins with the 'galley-up' version.

Then there's the extensive AV entertainment system with lifting flat screen TV that emerges silently from a hidden cavity adjacent the interior navigation station / helm, directly opposite the saloon lounge affording the perfect view of the screen. From the nav station helm seat the boat can be driven by its autopilot and Volvo Penta throttle controls alone – without the need to head outside



to the helm wheels and binnacles – whether you are under sail (as the job is self-tacking) or motoring, offering the skipper total protection from the elements when cruising at sea.

To keep you entertained, there's also a hi-fidelity Fusion entertainment system fitted throughout the yacht. For extended passages into warmer climates air-conditioning is available, as well as a washing machine and dryer and a sophisticated C-Zone electronics management system to make everything aboard function with the greatest of convenience. With this state-of-the-art C-Zone system, the skipper can adjust technical functions to suit particular boating situations such as sailing away, being off board or boating at night; all easily done by using a single control panel in the hallway.

All these 'home-away-from-home' comforts do come with some high electrical power demands, provided on the DS54 by a reliable Fischer Panda generator, which sits alongside the yacht's 150hp Volvo Penta diesel auxiliary in what can only be described as a genuine 'engine room' situated directly below the



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saloon floor. The Hanse Group's experience with motor-boat manufacturing (Fjord and Sealine brands) is clearly evident in this large, easy-to-move-around technical space and professional layout of the engine room, which is a pleasant surprise aboard a mid-fifty foot sailing yacht.

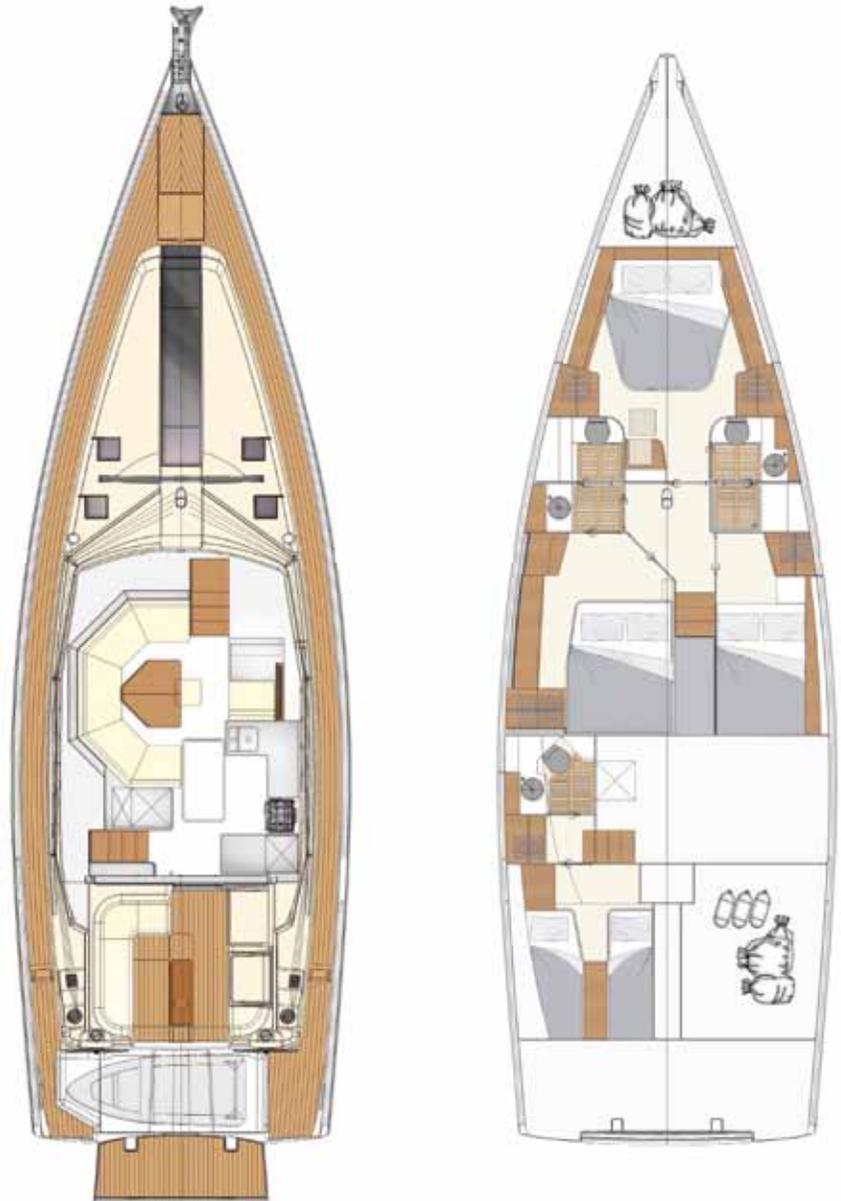
After all though, roomy is what the DS54 is all about – whether inside and out. If you must head below the main deck (at least for a good night's sleep anyway), the accommodation spaces are bright and airy, with good light and fresh air from hatches and various port lights. The cabins are entered via a spacious atrium at the foot of the short flight of stairs leading from the main deck. There are no less than five 'cabin concept packages' to choose from, Moody explains, so you're spoilt for choice. The most typical four-cabin layout (with the galley-up package) provides for a large owner's cabin of luxurious ambience located in the bow featuring a separate private head and ensuite shower. A second guest double cabin with ensuite is amidships to port, and a third cabin is a double bunk bed arrangement to starboard (excluded in the galley-down package). There is also a fourth cabin in the aft port corner of the boat, down a separate flight of steps from the saloon (that also leads to the day head), that is ideal for kids or as accommodation for a pro skipper/crew if needed to assist the owners.

Behind this and below the cockpit above is a generous aft lazarette equipped with a transom door that easily swallows a dinghy and plenty of toys for lazy days out on the water.

The Hanse Group is renowned for the large array of colour and fit-out choices for their various yachting brands, and for the new flagship Moody DS54 the possible combinations are vast. This includes owner choice of hull and waterline colours, Flexiteek caulking colours, windscreen covers, sprayhood, bimini, maindrop and canopy colours, cockpit and sunbed upholstery, galley worktops (in corian), floor carpets, curtains, and the saloon sofa and navigators seat upholstery – in fabric or Yorkshire leather – and a broad palette of colours. It's enough choice to leave you apoplectic!

However, if custom crafting of the dream cruising yacht is your idea of boating nirvana, then freedom of choice in doing so will be high on your list. If cruising is your mantra, whether you consider yourself more of a sailor or a motor yachtie, take time out to look aboard the Moody DS54 – it is one impressive production yacht that refines the concept of sailing and comfort like none before it. ○

www.windcraft.com.au



ENDLESS SUMMER

Moody DS54 Exclusive Yacht
Syndicate launched

If you're willing to share a brand new Moody DS54 with a handful of like-minded cruising enthusiasts sailing the yacht in a mouthwatering line-up of dream yachting destinations located throughout the near South Pacific, then visit the website:

www.exclusivelyachtsyndicate.com

MODEL	Moody 54 DS
DESIGNER	Dixon Yacht Design
LENGTH OVERALL	17.10 m / 56'1"
WATERLINE LENGTH	15.55 m / 51'0"
BEAM	5.20 m / 17'
DRAFT	2.65 m / 8'5" (standard) or 2.25 m / 7'4" (option)
DISPLACEMENT	25 tonnes approx
BALLAST	7 tonnes approx
HULL DESIGN	Judel-Vroljik
ENGINE	Volvo D3-150 110 kW / 150hp (standard)
FRESHWATER CAPACITY	810 litres
MAST LENGTH ABOVE WL	25.30 m / 83'
MAIN	81.50 m ² / 878 square feet
JIB	65.00 m ² / 700 square feet
GENOA	79.00 m ² / 851 square feet
GENNAKER	200.00 m ² / 2,154 square feet
SAIL AREA	160.50 m ² / 1,739 square feet
FUEL CAPACITY	940 litres (optional) / 520 litres standard
RIG	Aluminium (standard) in mast-furling
RIG DIMENSIONS	21.40 m 70'22" / J 6.40 m 20'96" / P 20.70 m 67'90" / E 7.10 m 23'29"
CE CERTIFICATION	A (ocean)
PRICE	\$1.295m (A fully-optioned boat would range from \$1.5 to \$1.6m)