

Ocean Star 56.1 tested by Yachting World

Jun 2003

Below Decks

From first descending the wide, flat and solid companionway steps to seeing if I could make the interior doors rattle in their frames, I was impressed. Seriously impressed. Detail throughout is good, the general construction substantial and sturdy, the layout appealing and the finish attractive.

The 56.1 we tested had a five-cabin layout, offering two aft doubles, two midship doubles and a forward twin bunk cabin designed as a skipper/crew cabin. Her five heads might lead you to think the layout would compromise on space, particularly in the saloon, but partly thanks to a beamy hull, this is not the case. There are several other layout options, including a three- or four-cabin version, which retains the two aft cabins and the skipper's cabin forward, but replaces the midships cabins with a palatial owner's suite. The semi-custom nature of the yacht means buyers can specify certain changes to layout and furniture to suit their needs.

The saloon makes maximum use of the beam and the layout. Our test yacht had a large, fixed dining table to starboard, with wraparound seating, including a curved bench settee amidships, and comfortable upholstery. To port was a further seating area, with a bench settee and a smaller coffee table. The tables and midships settee are solidly fixed, providing useful and sturdy handholds when passing through the yacht while underway.



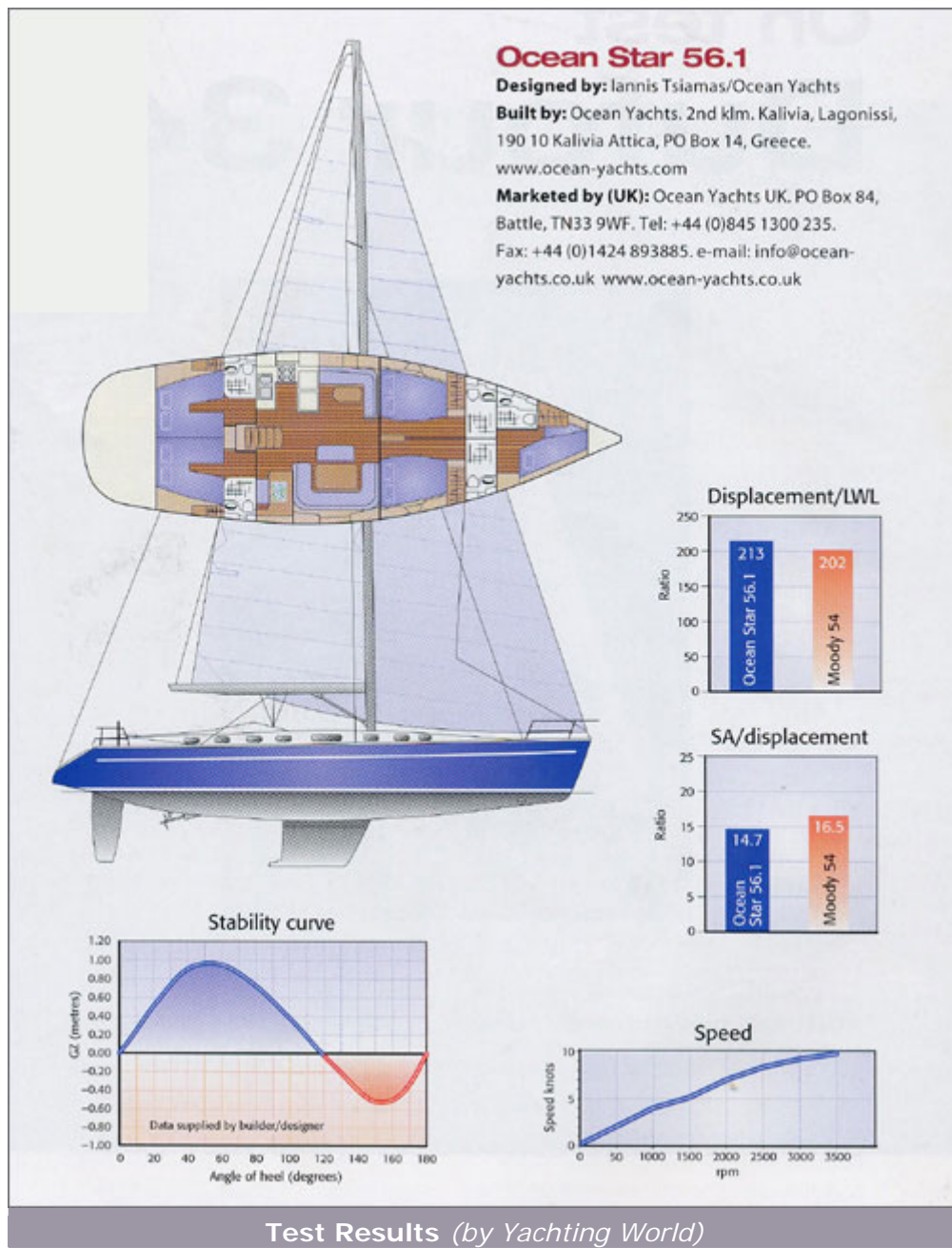
Ocean Star 56.1



Below Decks (Photos Yachting World)

Drawers are all wood and in general the finish is excellent. Throughout the interior the detailing is fine. The cherry veneer of the test boat had a lacquered finish, although a matt finish was also available. The white deckhead panels and extraneous trim are screwed in rather than relying on velcro and the cherry ceiling strips add to the sense of class. Doorways are wide and the solid doors feature two top hinges for extra strength.

Perhaps most telling was the attitude of the Anargyrou brothers and technical manager Kostas Rendas to my visit. They asked repeatedly if I thought anything should be changed, particularly to the interior. Builders who are keen to seek the views of a third party, and willing to take on board criticisms and make changes, are a rare breed these days. And it's a testament to the interior's quality that I couldn't think of any significant alterations.



On deck

The deck layout is fairly standard, with a large cockpit dominated by the table (good for bracing) and a separate twin-wheel steering area. The coachroof moulding around the companion way features a moulded recess to take the cockpit canopy flush when stowed.

The helm positions feature slightly contoured seats and foot stops for bracing, and primaries and windlass controls are within easy reach.



On the wind, she seemed comfortable at about 40° to the true wind, making a steady 7.6 knots to windward. Cracking off the sheets and pointing her down to a close reach, the speed quickly jumped to the low 8s and on a beam reach she charged along happily at over 9 knots. Moving around down below was easy on all points of sail and despite putting her through a series of manoeuvres - and some reasonable chop - there was not a crack, crash, squeak or groan. She really is solidly built below - she is solid, acceptably quick, smooth, seaworthy and should be comfortable on long offshore passages.

Yard and construction

All Ocean Star yachts are hand-built and the laminates are generally 30 per cent thicker than the design drawings specify. Gelcoat is hand-applied to the mould; blue gelcoat is standard. The hulls are built in two halves, which not only means a flange can be moulded for the hull/ deck join, but it allows the lamination of the two halves to be done in a relatively flat area on the fore and aft mid-point of the hull.

The laminate is pretty much solid throughout, with only a couple of foam strips. A two-piece inner moulding grid is laminated in, as are the bulkheads, both top and bottom. A 15mm steel plate on each side takes the load from the chainplates on the 56.1 and is laminated into the hull sides, gaining additional support from being bonded to one of the longitudinal hull stringers. As well as flange and lamination, the hull/deck join is also bolted every 15cm.

Overall, the build, from surface finish to deep under the skin, looks top-quality, strong and reassuringly solid.