

review

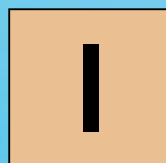
Dickey Boats
Semifly 45

WORDS BY
MATT VANCE
PHOTOGRAPHY
SUPPLIED

THE 'JUST RIGHT' SYNDROME



It was like a scene from *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*. Thanks to some COVID rescheduling, Dickey Boats had the 32-, 36- and 45-foot versions of its Semifly designs docked at the Napier sailing club. Bliss for a journo looking for a review.



It was a beautiful sight and a rare occurrence to have all three in one spot, as the owners usually whisk them away as quickly as the team at Dickey Boats can build them. It was also an opportunity not to miss and with this in mind, I was shoes off and sprinting from one to the other like a sailor on a brewery tour.

With three in a row, it's easy to see that the distinctive plumb bow, sweeping sheerline, chine detail and well-proportioned pilot house formula runs right through the Dickey range. They're all from the same general concept of family, fisher, modern classic, yet the subtle details of layout are more apparent when you can walk from one to the next.

The Semifly 45 is the queen of the fleet and while all Dickey boats are large for their size the Semifly 45 takes the cake for space. Whether it is the catamaran-sized aft deck or the owner's generous stateroom, there is plenty of room to move.

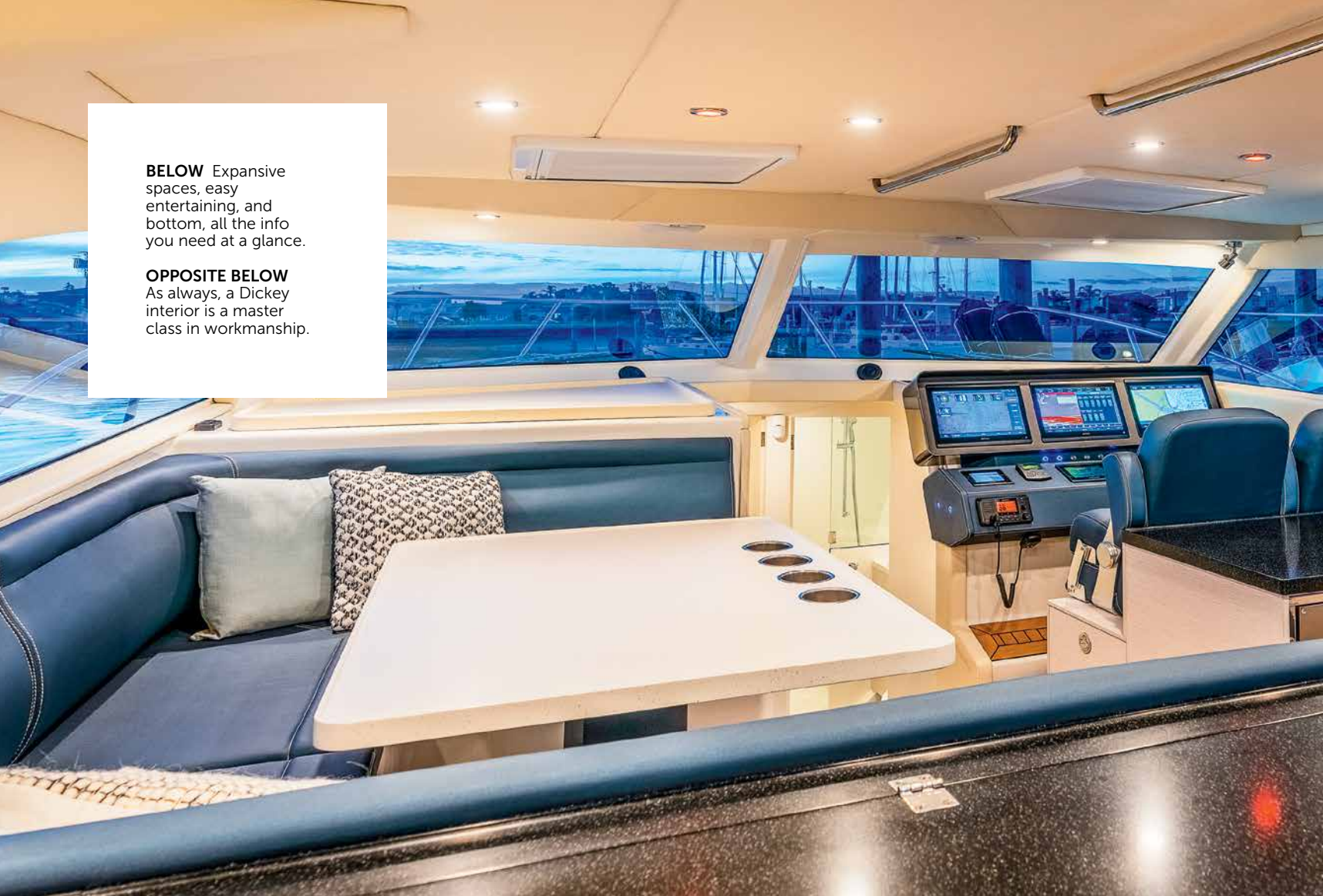
DESIGN

As with all these designs, owners have significant input into the set-up and thanks to alloy construction and lack of moulds this means an infinite variation on the preferred layout is possible. Which is why some very clever interior design comes off the drawing board.



BELOW Expansive spaces, easy entertaining, and bottom, all the info you need at a glance.

OPPOSITE BELOW As always, a Dickey interior is a master class in workmanship.



Says designer Mark Addis: “We’re forever looking for 50mm here and there to get the flow and function of the spaces working.” As is usual for a Semifly 45 the owner’s stateroom is amidships, complete with a lounge and generous storage space for extended cruising. It’s complemented by a double guest room forward with twin singles to starboard. These small refinements make this a comfortable long-range cruiser/fisher for two couples – one that’s capable of cruising in comfort for weeks.

Much of the Dickey Boats magic is in the construction and it’s a combination of weight distribution and strength that delivers the renowned ride. The CNC-cut, 5083 marine-grade

alloy panels are laid up in an interlocking lattice framework. This makes for a lightweight and strong structure with full-length longitudinal girders, traverse bulkheads and frames at 650mm centres.

Four of the larger longitudinals make a slightly wider sweep and become the mounting structure for the engines and this plugs the power straight into the hull. The result is a seriously strong structure, built to last and which won’t flex or twist in even the biggest seas, making this boat truly offshore capable.

On top of this base structure are many hours of work in the finishing and detailing. The thickness of the aluminium skin



WHETHER IT IS THE CATAMARAN-SIZED AFT DECK OR THE GENEROUS OWNER’S STATEROOM, THERE IS PLENTY OF ROOM TO MOVE.



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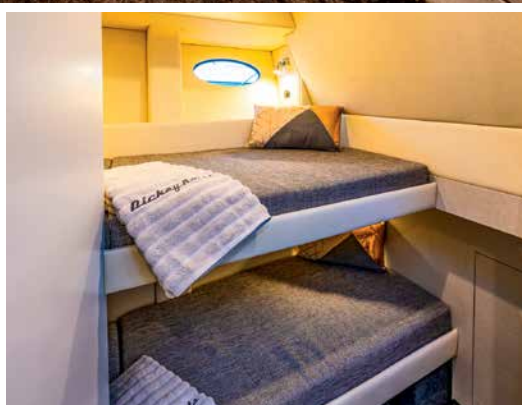


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varies throughout the vessel, with the lightest section being 4mm and the heaviest 16mm. Even a close inspection from the dock will have you fooled into thinking this is a glass fibre composite boat. Over 2,000 man-hours were racked up in the paint shop alone – this is one high-end finish that's built to last.

POWER

The Semifly 45 is fitted with dual Volvo Penta D6-IPS600s running through IPS pods. This delivers efficient power from the 5.5-litre engines, with the bonus of slow speed and stationary manoeuvrability with joystick control from either the helm station or an aft cockpit position.

As with all the Dickey boats I've reviewed, weight placement and hull design mean the power package can maintain a large cruising range due to a sizeable sweet spot in the cruising speed at a relatively constant fuel consumption.

The Volvos live under the aft deck and are accessed by a substantial twin door hatch on an electric hoist. Once open there's plenty of room around the engines and, with immaculate white bilges it's easy to spot any problems quickly. All exhaust fumes are emitted through the pods and into the prop wash for a tidy wake.

Ahead of the engine bay is the pump room. It contains all the tankage, pumps, electrical brains, batteries and that Godsend of all cruising accessories, a washing machine. Access is from a hatch near the entrance to the saloon. The power plants are fed from a 2,300-litre diesel tank, and thanks to the economy of the design this gives the Dickey a 500nm cruising range at 28 knots.

ABOVE With that rear 'wall' fully open, there's an easy flow between cockpit and saloon.

BELOW Fuel capacity and a slippery hull combine for a 500nm range at 28 knots.





LAYOUT

A walk-through of this boat is a feast for the senses. Rather than cram too much accommodation into too small a space (as some designs are prone to do), the Semifly 45 has a sense of elegant restraint about her layout. There is time to enjoy each facet of the cockpit, saloon, or accommodation without a sense of being rushed or squeezed.

The aft deck's a case in point. The stern duckboard provides seamless access to the water and the fish. All the wet fun of the duckboard is separated from the commodious cockpit by a walk-through transom either side of the professional scale bait station. It features a live bait tank, option for tuna tubes, a rubbish bin for the fishy stuff and high-density cutting board.

There is ample space for the fishing action on the aft deck with a members' stand seating and a table arrangement in front of the bar leaner which separates the cockpit from the saloon. At the forward end, the aft deck is covered by the continuation of the cabin top line into a canopy, which makes this area all weather and out of the sun on those scorching hot summer days.

On the port side of the bar leaner are the remote controls for the IPS system, which places the skipper right down where the action is for fishing or docking. On the top deck is an OC tender with a Torqeedo outboard and removable davit to take the hassle from getting ashore.

The saloon continues the relaxed spacious theme. Immediately to starboard is the galley with hob, sink, fridge and oven all running on 240-volt power surrounded by ample storage space. This power comes from the 1,200-amp lithium-ion batteries. With the electric outboard on the tender, this is a one-fuel boat – up there with sliced bread for convenience and safety.



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To port in the saloon is a comfortable wrap-around seat and table in blue trim, which can be lowered to make up a substantial double bed for extra guests. On cooler days the aft end of the saloon can be closed off with folding doors and two Eberspächer diesel heaters keep the saloon and accommodation warm and dry.

The helm station's to starboard and contains a triple screen set up of Garmin instruments including plotter, radar and depth sounder. All the information's easy to read at a glance and the IPS controls trim controls and throttles are within easy reach.

Switching is controlled by the CZone system, which intelligently tracks through cruising, dock, and hibernation modes, sending all the information back to the Sentinel app on your phone, which can remotely monitor the systems.

Stepping down into the accommodation section of the boat

there are well thought out spaces. The owner's stateroom in the forepeak has a substantial queen-size bed. This is backed up by an additional guest cabin to port, shower and heads to starboard with a further double bunk layout for extra guests.

With the accommodation and capacity, this is a three-week boat; that is a boat capable of staying out in comfort for three weeks without being beholden to fuel bowser, water taps, or bottle stores.

ON THE WATER

While the design, engineering and attention to detail are great, it is what the boat feels like that ultimately counts. Seakeeping and cruise speed are top of the list for this boat reviewer and this Dickey excels at both. It is for this reason that Dickey's tend to sell themselves and it is no different for the Semifly 45.

While I've experienced Dickey Boats many times, this was my first one with an IPS system. It was an added layer of quality to what is an already brilliant boat and, in future, I'll be adding marina manoeuvrability to the list above.

I came to that conclusion by being thrown into the deep end by the company's sales and service manager, Jason Dickey, as we backed away from the dock. He handed over the aft deck joystick controls to me with the line "You will only learn how to use it when it really counts."

**IT WAS ONE OF
THOSE DAYS
WHERE YOU
JUST WANT TO
KEEP GOING.**



BELOW A neat, cleverly-designed davit simplifies launching and retrieving the tender.

It was one of those dry-mouth moments for a boat reviewer with plenty of looming hazards on all sides at close quarters. Much to my relief I was able to rotate spin, sideslip and hold position like a pro within minutes of trying the system. It was probably the single best thing for curing the dreaded marina manoeuvring syndrome that keeps many boats in their marina berths.

With that revelation under our belt, we headed out on one of those brilliant Hawke's Bay days with no wind and a small, dying swell. Try as I might I could not get her to pound nor even get so much as a creak in the joinery. Like the rest of the Dickey family, she is as smooth as a caramel milkshake.

Out of the blocks the twin Volvo D6-IPS600s had plenty of power, but thanks to a well-insulated engine room the sound in the saloon is more like a distant throb. Even at speed (around 27 knots) her flared chines held well in the turns with a sure-footed grip.

The light, stiff hull mixed with a long waterline length is good for economy. Between 18 and 29 knots boat speed fuel consumption seems to remain constant around four litres a nautical mile. This is a large sweet-spot that allows for a considerable range of sea states and helps to keep the family in all-day comfort, or get you back from an offshore fishing trip when it cuts up rough.

At 29 knots Napier slipped astern rapidly. It was one of those days where you just want to keep going. The autohelm and joystick control mean helming could be anything from hands-on fully engaged to hands-off enjoying the view with a nice cup of tea at the push of a button.

I felt like I had flogged Papa Bear's Semifly 45 while he was sleeping. **BNZ**



Dickey Boats Semifly 45

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HIGHLIGHTS

Performance
– this is a slick lady

Workmanship
– it looks great
and feels better

IPS joystick control
– even absent-minded
journos look like
seasoned pros

SPECIFICATIONS

loa 14.20m

lwl 12.6m

beam 4.85m

draft 1.1m (including drives)

deadrise 16°

displacement 12,950kg dry

construction 5083 marine-
grade aluminium

fuel capacity 2,300 litres

engine 2 x Volvo Penta
D6-IPS600

top speed 34 knots

