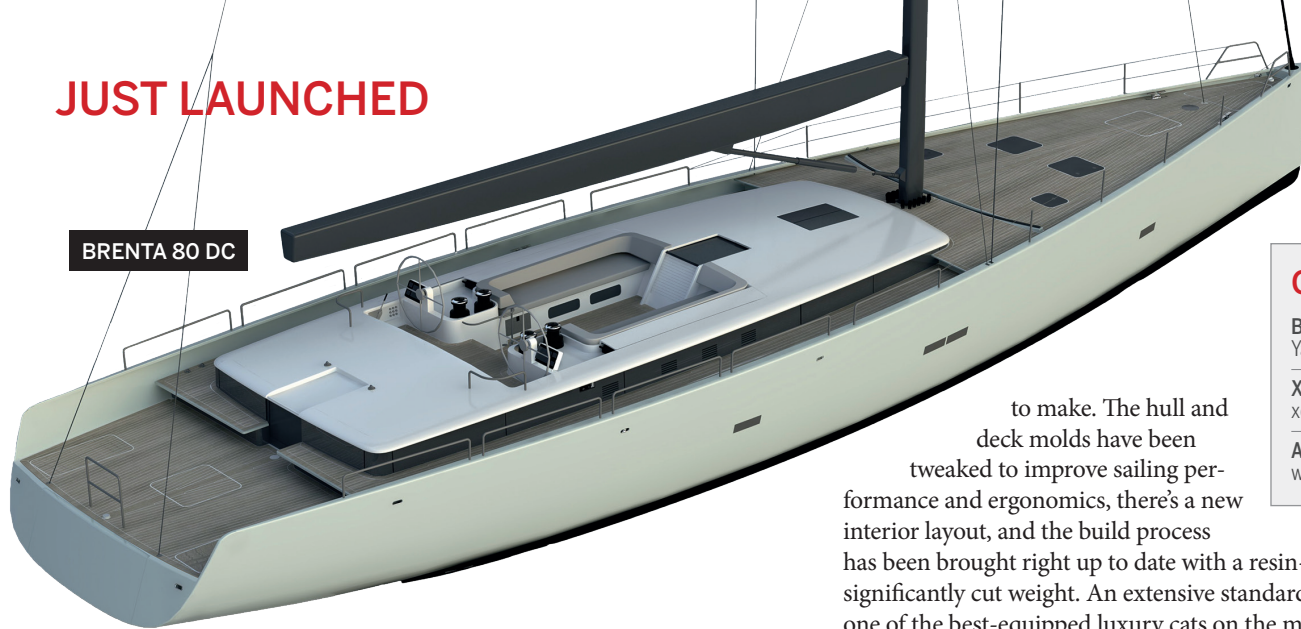


JUST LAUNCHED

BRENTA 80 DC



Carbon Beauty

by Peter Nielsen

When Hanse Yachts founder Michael Schmidt sold his company a few years ago, it seemed the European boatbuilding community had lost one of its canniest operators. Not only did Schmidt build the company from a startup in a disused East German furniture factory to a multi-brand powerhouse at a time when many other builders were struggling, he is a true character and an innovator; witness how widely copied the trademark Hanse big mainsail/self-tacking jib combo has become.

With a boatbuilding background going back to the 1970s it was unlikely that Schmidt would stay away from the scene for too long, and sure enough, he is back with something completely different—a new line of sleek carbon-fiber bluewater cruisers designed by Italians, styled by a Brit and built in Germany.

In typical unabashed style, Schmidt asked Italy's Brenta Design and British architect and designer Sir David Chipperfield to draw a boat fulfilling his criteria of beauty, simplicity, functionality and speed.

The first boat, the 80ft **Brenta 80 DC**, is now in build in Greifswald, Germany, site of the Hanse yard. It offers three different deck plans, with interior layouts tailored around these. Electric and hydraulic power is used to make handling the powerful sailplan (consisting, naturally, of a large main and self-tacking jib) a push-button operation, and the boat will be set up to be sailed by two people. Lines are concealed in galleries below the deck and cabintop, whose profile is partly concealed by a raised bulwark topped by a solid stainless steel railing.

Brenta Design and Chipperfield are also working on a 100ft luxury cruiser for Schmidt, along with a powerboat. Could Schmidt's foray into the luxury market be as successful as his production boat venture? Don't bet against it.

The swooping lines of the **Xquisite X5**, a South African-built catamaran that's new to the United States, stood out among the big cruising cats at the Strictly Sail show in Miami this past February. Company owner Tamas Hamor explained that the boat on show was really a sheep in wolf's clothing; it was, in fact, the Dean Cat 5000, the last boat built by Dean before Hamor bought the yard and set about revamping (and renaming) the boat.

The next X5 will be a very different animal. Hamor sailed some 20,000 miles on his own Dean Cat and had an extensive list of changes he wanted

to make. The hull and deck molds have been tweaked to improve sailing performance and ergonomics, there's a new interior layout, and the build process has been brought right up to date with a resin-infusion system that will significantly cut weight. An extensive standard inventory will make the X5 one of the best-equipped luxury cats on the market. The first example of the new-look X5 will be shipped to Florida next year in time for the Miami show in February 2016.

I first saw the **Astus 20.2 trimaran** at a French boat show and admired its clean, functional design. It looked like a great daysailer, with its large cockpit, a small cuddy cabin where you can stow your gear out of the weather and even spend the night, and unsinkable construction.

When you want to tow or stow the boat, or just make it narrower to fit into a slip, the amas telescope inward to reduce beam from 14ft to under 8ft. Using a gin-pole variation, the delightfully named "Astucious System," the rig can be raised or lowered by one person. Displacing less than 800lb, the boat can be towed by a small car and is capable of impressive speeds.

This nifty boat is now available in the United States via its new importer WindRider, which showed an example at Strictly Sail Miami in February. Others in the line include 18ft, 22ft and 24ft versions. Look out for an upcoming review of the 20.2 in *SAIL*. **S**

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