CATAMARAN TEST — G-CAT 5 METER

by Don Alexander

Sometimes you know exactly what to expect; at other times, you at least have a pretty good idea. In the case of the G-Cat 5 Meter catamaran, however, there were no preconceived notions. This unusual craft has performed very well in open class multihull races, but we wondered how it would fare under test conditions. Some of our findings are surprising.

We conducted our basic test at Hurricane Gulch in San Pedro, California, in light to moderate conditions. We were fortunate to catch a day between two storms. We were also able to sail the G-Cat during the **Windy Sails Multihull IV Regatta** in Long Beach the following weekend. The winds in Long Beach varied from drifting conditions to 25 knots with choppy, steep swells and allowed us to test the boat in a wide variety of wind and sea conditions. Our test boat was provided by John Miller from G-Cat West in Newport Beach.

The G-Cat 5 Meter

The G-Cat is the brainchild of Hans Geissler of Florida, who, as a catamaran dealer, carried six lines of cats. He thus learned the advantageous design features of these catamarans. Coupling them with a number of ingenious ideas of his own, he developed the G-Cat, a vessel of unique, if not revolutionary, design.

The hulls of the G-Cat are its most unusual feature. The hull design is symmetrical but utilizes no daggerboards. Leeway is resisted by a deep-V hull section below the waterline. The profile of the hulls below the waterline provides considerable resistance to leeway with a minimum of wetted surface area. The below-water profile and side view show a semi-circular section, with the deepest section being in approximately the middle of the hull.

Specifications:

LOA:	16'8"	5.08 M
LWL:	15'6"	4.72 M
Beam:	8'	2.40 M
Mast:	27'	8.23 M
Sail Area:		
Main & Spars	150 sq. ft.	14.00 M2
Jib	60 sq. ft.	5.50 M2
Total Sail Area	210 sq. ft.	19.50 M2
Weight	340 lbs.	154 KG
Racing Crew	2	

Features:

Hand Laid-up Fiberglass Hulls
Colored Sails
Stainless Steel Rigging
Three Beams Connect the Hulls
Mast Rotation Control
Roller Bearing Traveler
5:1 Racing Blocks
Main Out and Down Haul
Adjustable Hiking Stick
Adjustable Trapeze
Weatherproof Mesh Trampolines

Colors:

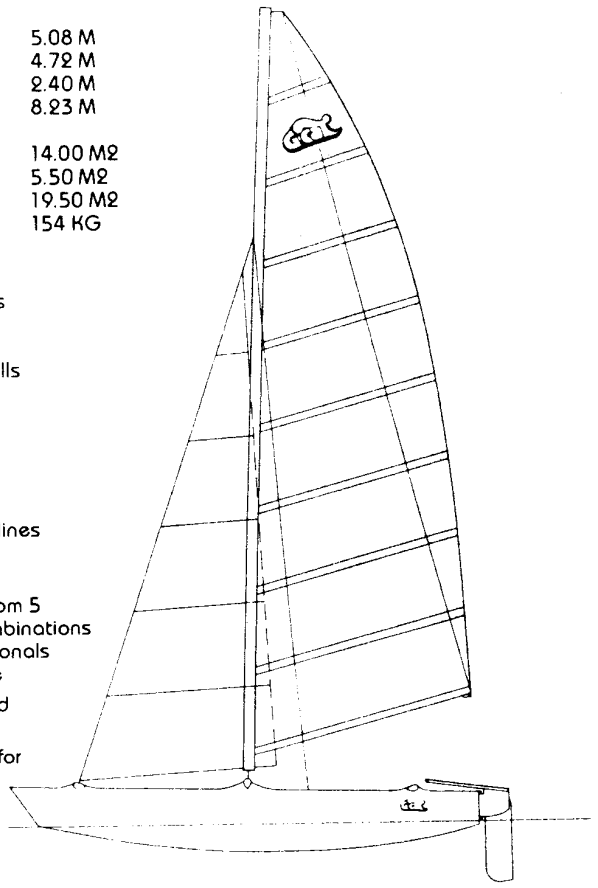
Hull	Sails
Choice from 5 standard colors	Choice from 5 color combinations with optionals available

Fully Battened, Loose Footed Main with High Aspect Ratio

110% Genoa — No Battens for Easy Tacking — Zipper Luff

Sailplan with Low Center of Effort — Low Heeling Force

Extra Buoyant Deep Hulls Keep Crew High and Dry



This semi-circular section allows the boat to pivot in the middle while tacking or jibing and minimizes the amount of drag at either end of the boat during such maneuvers.

The above-water profile shows relatively flat-sided hulls with moderate freeboard and no sheer. The hulls are constructed of hand-laid fiberglass. The decks, which are constructed separately, have a lip around the entire perimeter. The overall length of the G-Cat is 16 feet 8 inches, the load waterline is 15 feet 6 inches, and the beam is 8 feet.

The hulls are joined with three crossbars made from annodized aluminum mast extrusions. The fore and aft crossbars are placed horizontally so that the track in the extrusion provides a mount for the trampoline bolt ropes. The center crossbar is mounted vertically to compensate for the increased vertical loads created by the mast, which is stepped to the middle crossbar. The jib is hanked to the center of the forward crossbar while a bridle wire for the forestay attaches to the inboard side of each hull on the crossbar. An eye-beam