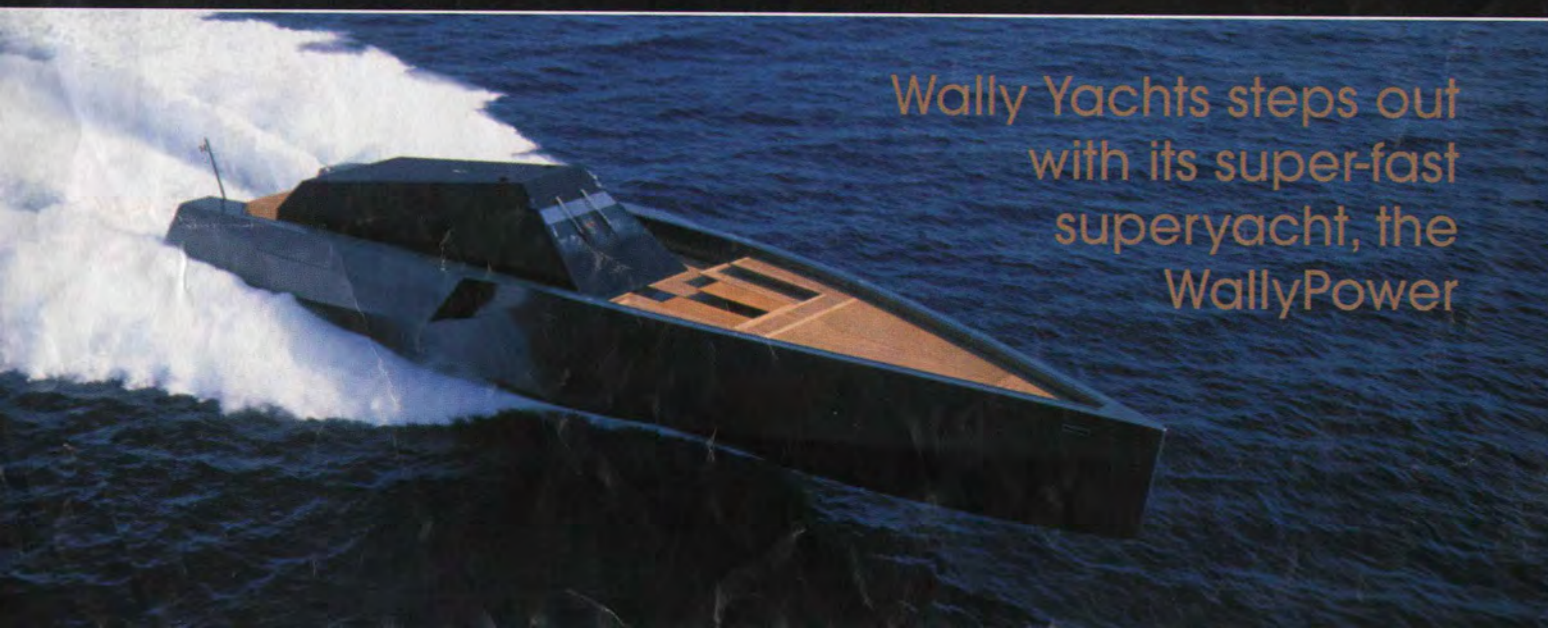


With her triple-water-jet power at speed (above) and folding side decks at rest (below right), the innovative 118 WallyPower adds up to full-time fun.

Cruise Missile



Wally Yachts steps out with its super-fast superyacht, the WallyPower

One glimpse was all it took. My friend's young son caught sight of the WallyPower, a 118-foot triple-turbine-powered yacht, and he was hooked. She is a futuristic craft that makes boys shout "wow" and turns old men into boys who whisper "wow" right along with them.

Once you're aboard, the excitement continues. Standing in the faceted black-glass jewel that is the WallyPower's pilothouse, listening to the three TF50 gas turbines spool up to their combined 16,800 horsepower, yields a massive rush of adrenaline, testosterone and every other natural stimulant you can name. As the WallyPower cut through 3-foot seas at 55 knots and carved turns like a classic speedboat, every one of the 20 people aboard with me was grinning like a kid on Christmas morning. The biggest grin of all was worn by Luca Bassani, the innovative founder of Wally Yachts and the driving force who developed the concept for the WallyPower.

It was a bit of good luck that I was able to visit the WallyPower on two occasions prior to our sea trial off Monaco. It gave me an opportunity to appreciate the yacht for all she is, rather than grow overwhelmed by her appearance, innovation and performance.

The first visit was as she took shape at the Intermarine





With retractable tables and a sunshade, the bow (above) offers privacy for dining or relaxation. As you look forward from the saloon to the dining area and helm (below), the visual advantage of folding side decks is apparent.

shipyard, now part of Rodriquez, in Sarzana, along Italy's northwest coast. The day I visited, the composite hull was sitting in the yard's drydock, nearing completion but still entirely open for inspection. Viewed from below, the WallyPower was similar to other planing hulls, with a deadrise of about 22 degrees. There was just a hint of rocker in her aft buttock lines, intended to keep her bow up, and there were narrow chines but no bottom strakes.

As I climbed over the bare stringers and through the towering bulkheads, Mauro Sculli, Wally's design manager, explained that the structural array then in place would carry all of the tremendous at-sea loadings anticipated at top speed. The accommodations, yet to be added, would float on isolators within the hull but would not be directly attached to it. There are two reasons for this: weight and noise.

In order to achieve the highest speed for a given horsepower, it is necessary to minimize weight, and weight can best be reduced by limiting structural loads. Sculli, along with the other Wally and Intermarine designers, decided to build all necessary strength into the hull itself and not rely on joinery bulkheads or cabin soles for extra stiffening. The hull bottom is solid, but the remainder of the hull and superstructure are cored to minimize weight. Most of the main construction is carbon fiber. The interior bulkheads and cabin soles carry no structural loads, so are constructed entirely of thin wood and laminate veneer skins with cores that are largely hollow.

Isolating the interior from the hull structure also serves to keep sea and machinery noise and vibration from transferring into the accommodation spaces. It is much easier, less expensive and weight-efficient to prevent noise transfer in the first place than to try insulating it later. This system also allows the interior arrangement plan to be customized on future yachts without having to modify the hull structure.

My second visit to the WallyPower came a year after the first, as she was undergoing initial yard trials off La Spezia, Italy. She was nearly complete but had been hauled out for some fine-tuning of her machinery and detailing of her interior. Out of the water, her hull and running gear were fully visible. Also apparent was the vast amount of space devoted to propelling this large yacht, with the entire after half of the hull crammed full of machinery: three gas turbines, three water jets, two propulsion diesels, two gensets, auxiliary systems, and more ductwork, filters and water separators than you can imagine.



The saloon's large double doors bring the outside in (above). With the dining table stowed (right), the chairs are fastened to the sole for high-speed operation. In one of the two helm panels (inset) that flank the forward gull-wing door, three screens monitor the 118 WallyPower's gas turbines.



The turbines drive KaMeWa water jets—two steerable 63s outboard and a non-steering 52 on centerline. For maneuvering and low-speed cruising, the two diesels drive the outboard jets through a selective clutch arrangement on the same reduction gears as the gas turbines. Known as a CODOG (combined diesel or gas turbines) arrangement, the diesel and turbines cannot be used simultaneously to drive the water jets. Although CODAG (combined diesel and gas turbines) installations exist, they are considerably more complicated and costly than the CODOG arrangement, and are limited mostly to military ships.

It is essential that water flow into the water jets remains as smooth and undisturbed as possible to prevent cavitation and loss of thrust at the jets' impellers. Intakes for the water jets are faired into the hull in accordance with tank testing and computational fluid dynamics calculations. Copper ground plates forward of the intakes are mounted flush, and smaller intakes to provide cooling water for the engines are outboard, well clear of the propulsion intakes, without the scoops or strainers seen on slower yachts. Forward on centerline, a retractable anchor nests into a pocket whose cover is shaped to match the hull.

The WallyPower's dynamic trim is controlled by Humphree interceptors, mounted to port and starboard on the transom.

When I finally had the chance to try out the WallyPower, during my third trip aboard, her details remained clear in my mind. As the gas turbines were clutched into gear and Bassani pushed her ever faster, I could appreciate all that power beneath our feet, gulping tons of water and pushing it out the transom into a trio of geysers behind us. As we sliced through the waves, I could picture the flow along her sleek, unadorned hull bottom.

If anything surprised me, it was how quiet it was inside WallyPower, given her speed and horsepower, and the minimum of soft surfaces—carpets, curtains, sofas and such—that normally help absorb sound within a yacht's cabins. Idling in the harbor under diesel power at 6 knots, with the deckhouse doors open forward and aft, sound at the helm was 62 decibels. Once we'd closed the doors and cranked the turbines to full power, the sound crept up to a high of 76 decibels, with conversation still possible at a very reasonable level. Vibration was basically nonexistent at any speed. It appeared that the isolation between the hull and the inte-



Devoid of heavy trim, the 118 WallyPower's weight-saving construction still provides all the comforts guests need for long trips and extended stays aboard.

on the design. Like a big center-console runabout, the WallyPower is open fore and aft, port and starboard, with an uninterrupted view all around the horizon from the helm and the adjoining dining table. Head down a couple steps to the saloon, and you have a more private feeling as you sink into the loose cushions that line the periphery of the space. If the weather's nice and you want something a little more open, slide the after doors apart, swing up the gull-wing door forward, and drop the outward-hinging sections of the bulwarks port and starboard. The interior's teak sole blends with that of the open areas at either end to create an effect akin to a massive stem-to-stern sunpad.

Such groundbreaking projects are never without flaws. The yacht has not achieved the 70 knots that was banded about prior to her construction, but without the extra people on board and once everything is dialed in, she should crack 60 knots. That's still quick—she is, after all, a very big yacht. The engineroom is cramped, no question, but future versions of this design are offered with twin diesels instead of a complicated combination power plant, and will operate at a more sedate 40 to 50 knots. That's fast enough for lots of excitement, and even at rest, the WallyPower is a very

rior was performing well.

Less surprising was the finished interior of the yacht. If you are familiar with Wally's precedent-setting sailboats, you know that they are minimalist, yet very attractive and functional. The WallyPower builds on the soft beige of teak and the pure black of carbon fiber to create a contrast complemented by loose cushions and modern furnishings in the same hues.

The WallyPower has three en suite queen-berth staterooms below, the master at the bow and a guest stateroom on each side of the central passageway. Amidships are two crew cabins, each with upper-and-lower berths, which share a head. One additional en suite cabin, with upper-and-lower berths, can be used by the captain, crew or guests. Opposite the crew cabins is a spacious and well-equipped galley. Though the WallyPower resembles a day boat in some ways, she is fully capable of providing the necessary comfort for longer trips and extended stays aboard.

The main deck is where this yacht and the ever-reaching mind of Bassani really shine. Credit must also be given to Lazzarini Pickering Architects, which worked with Bassani

SPECIFICATIONS

LOA	.....118'0"
LWL	.....100'0"
BEAM	.....26'3"
DRAFT	.....4'1"
DEADRISE	.....22 degrees
DISPL.	.....210,000 lb. (half-load)
FUEL	.....5,800 gal.
WATER	.....317 gal.
NAVAL ARCHITECT	.....Wally/Intermarine
INTERIOR DESIGN	.....Wally/ Lazzarini Pickering
ENGINES	.....3x 5,600 hp TF50 gas turbines; 2x 370 hp Cummins diesels
TRANSMISSION	.....Maag
WATER JETS	.....2x KaMeWa 63s; 1x KaMeWa 52
GENERATOR	.....2x 33kW Kohlers
BUILDER	.....Rodriguez Intermarine

enjoyable yacht. Count me in. □

Contact: Wally Yachts, (011) 377 93 1000 91; www.wally.com.

For more information, contact: (866) 922-4877; www.yachtingnet.com/yachting/productinfo.

