

✦ Best Full-Size Multihull **Leopard 48**



Winning Details

- ✦ Quality construction from South African builder Robertson and Caine—with over 1,000 cats to its credit, the company is one of the world's best multihull manufacturers.
- ✦ A fine combination of excellent sailing performance with a stellar accommodation plan and layout, particularly the inviting, comfortable forward cockpit.
- ✦ Plenty of attention to design details, including the rigid overhead bimini, generous scuppers, and the very effective raised helm station with at-hand sail and engine controls.

On the heels of last year's sweet 44-footer, which won its class and was named Import Boat of the Year, [Leopard Catamarans](#) has followed up with another strong effort: The Leopard 48 has earned the prize as CW's Best Full-Size Multihull for 2013.

Leading the praise for this latest South African partnership of naval architect Alex Simonis and the Cape Town-based builder Robertson and Caine was BOTY judge Ed Sherman: "I loved this boat," he said. "As far as the service access is concerned, I can't recall being on a boat where they'd actually engineered the ease of access to all the systems as nicely as this one. Every single panel where there was electrics or machinery that will ultimately require service had these quick-release threaded knobs that you undo and you're there. Beyond that, once you get into these service areas, all the equipment was first class, and the degree of workmanship was very high. And everything was labeled. Terrific."

"I also enjoyed sailing it," he continued. "But it performs well under power, too. At max cruising speed, we were making over 9 knots. And it was one of the quietest boats we tested. To me, that's indicative of the overall quality of construction, because they thought about the things that would reduce vibration and rattles and addressed them accordingly."

Alvah Simon also found much to like. "The ergonomics worked very well," he said. "The forward cockpit door struck me as beautiful. It was so convenient and so simple. It just works. And with it, they've created a beautiful lounging platform forward. All of my notes, whether they address the storage, the transom, the seats—they all say 'good.'" Taken together, such praise adds up to a great boat.