



# FRUGAL PERFORMER

the Seawind 1160 Lite

The Seawind 1160 Lite lives up to its name by being both light on the wallet and on the scales, compared to the standard model. *Photo Kevin Green*





Seawind has to be congratulated with the launch of the 1160 Lite for reinventing a proven design at a price that makes owning your first ocean-going catamaran a realistic possibility, reports KEVIN GREEN.

Catamaran cruising could be within reach of more sailors with Seawind's move to simplify its popular 1160. The idea already has persuaded several 1000XL owners to up-size to this new Lite model and after a day spent sailing it, the appeal is obvious. The popular 1160 sold 106 hulls but in an ever competitive market the Vietnam based company realised that a new product was required to widen appeal of its boats. With the relocation of production to south Vietnam Seawind is reaping the benefits of reduced costs which translates into a very good value 39ft catamaran

that should attract a variety of sailors, including first-time buyers to this category of cruiser.

According to Australian distributor Brent Vaughan at Multihull Central the price and more spartan specification is proving popular. "We've sold seven boats so far and several have gone to Seawind 1000 owners who like the concept of an outboard powered boat and want to up-size, but in an affordable way."

The 1160 Lite has shed nearly 0.75 ton with the removal of the inboard diesels and the more modern composite interior which has slashed the price by \$100,000 to become \$435,000. For this

**above: The outboard powered Seawind 1160 Lite. Photo Kevin Green**

**far left: The spacious cockpit is sheltered and Brent is steering with his foot on the outboard well. Photo Kevin Green**





**left:** Effective handling of the lines with sturdy jammers, twin Lewmars and the larger L45 is electric; for halyard hoists.  
*Photo Kevin Green*

**top:** The main console is on port and is a sheltered steering position but you can sit out or stand to navigate. *Photo Kevin Green*

**above:** The second helm is welcome when manoeuvring and the window removable for clear views through the saloon.  
*Photo Kevin Green*

you are getting an ocean ready catamaran with the same powerful Australian rig along with Harken deck gear that made the 1160 a best seller.

Stepping inside, the new Lite interior is strikingly different from the wood-centric interior of the standard version thanks to rounded GRP bulkheads, laminated surfaces and grey stained timbers. The height adjustable dinette table and storage under the benches are functional – and store the





above left to right:

**The large, opening saloon windows give natural ventilation but sun protection will be needed at rest. Photo Kevin Green**

**Chest fridge, ample work surfaces and open bulkhead all go to make the galley a pleasant space on the 1160 Lite. Photo Kevin Green**

**The owner's port hull has the bed forward, desk in corridor and bathroom aft. Photo Kevin Green**

**Composites, sturdy furnishings and easy-clean surfaces makes the saloon a practical and comfortable place on the 1160 Lite. Photo Kevin Green**

below left to right:

**Easy clean mouldings and perspex shower door make the bathroom a practical space – and note the door to the empty engine room that is now storage on the Lite. Photo Kevin Green**

**The starboardside galley has a fridge as standard plus chest lockers that can become freezer units. A triple burner stove and double sinks are standard with optional oven fitted on our review boat.**

**Photo Kevin Green**

**The aft berth is a favourite of mine on Seawinds as it has plenty of natural light and a roomy mattress for one plus lots of storage underneath – in the absence of the diesel engines. Photo Kevin Green**

batteries as well. Large surrounding windows with the front ones opening ensure good light but blinds or tarps outside will be needed on sunny occasions. Lighter laminated timber with more neutral colours has been used and the upholstery has a more angular design but with hard-wearing Sunbrella fabrics. The galley-down design creates a large entertaining space in the 1160 Lite's saloon; while also giving the seamless access to the aft deck via the much lauded tri-folding doors (that cleverly seat in the roof). Elsewhere, cabin doors are now honeycombed composite yet felt strong without any flimsiness.

### THREE OR FOUR CABINS

The layout is unchanged, apart from the ensuite on the starboard forward cabin which is replaced with a walk-in wardrobe and wet locker. Our review model, hull #1, came with three double cabins but a four cabin version is also

available. The owner enjoys privacy in the port hull with double bed forward which lies athwartships. The elevated bed means limited headroom but it also gives good storage space beneath and in the forward bulkhead, while natural light comes from two opening

skylights and rectangular portlights. In the corridor there's a useful desk with swing-out stool and locker. The desk is a good charting area with shelf above and bulkhead space for electronics – in addition to the instrument and power switches already there. The aft section







of the port hull is taken up by the bathroom which has a manual head and separate shower cubicle – with easy clean mouldings throughout. Behind it, a door leads to the empty engine bay, as the outboards are inside bridgedeck wells. The removal of the diesel engines frees up a lot of storage space and as I noted while looking from the pontoon, lowers the waterline by several inches.

#### SPACIOUS GALLEY

Moving down into the starboard hull brings me to the longitudinal galley. Here, there's a chest fridge/freezer lockers inboard, beneath the composite worktops and locker space above as well. Outboard sits the twin sinks, alongside a three burner stove plus the optional oven was fitted to the review boat. Having used this layout at sea and at anchor, I find it works well as it has enough room for two to cook. Ventilation is good with a very large opening portlight and the open plan above your head also gives airflow from the saloon. Elsewhere in the starboard hull is the double berth forward, located fore and aft. Again it has an opening skylight with skylight in the forward compartment and of course hull portlights, so shouldn't be too claustrophobic. Walking aft, through the galley take you to the stern three-quarter bunk which is a pleasant spot on the Lite, especially since the hot engines beneath have been removed. The large portlights, bench and cavernous storage locker underneath all go to make this a comfy single (or double at a push) berth.

#### TWIN HELMS AND SIMPLE SAILPLAN

Up on deck the twin helms are another feature that has distinguished the 1160 so they continue and are my preference (rather than a single) for close-quarter handling of catamarans.

**above left: A small amount of cavitation is hard to avoid with outboards but when retracted they reduce drag significantly. Photo Kevin Green**

**left: The Lewmar windlass is an option worth adding and creates an effective anchor arrangement. Photo Kevin Green**

# SEAWIND CORPORATE



The deck-level setup of the 1160 also requires this arrangement as your helm position relies on looking across the cabin top or through the large windows in the saloon. At the main port binnacle Raymarine i70 instruments and E7 touchscreen plotter was fitted, along with outboard engine throttles while over to starboard a single i70 was installed.

The big change on the Lite is of course the engines, to lighter 20 or 25hp outboards. Petrol for both motors is fed from a single 200L tank in the bow locker. Having just written an article on folding propellers I can tell you this is major cost saving by avoiding these expensive items alone, not to mention the reduced drag, as the motors have electric tilting. The downside is power supply, due to the smaller alternators but advances in solar panel technology does mitigate this to some extent. They go on the cockpit roof which has been enlarged to hold four 200W panels. In addition the large forward locker can easily accommodate a portable generator but I'd probably add a third house battery (120a/h) as well.

Decks space is what catamarans are all about and Seawind have evolved a very usable layout with the 1160 that frees the aft deck for multiple uses – throw some foldable furniture there or leave it as social area, while the wide transom bench houses the optional barbecue plus davits for the rubber ducky. It's a functional layout and moulded steps in both hulls make water entry easy. Along the decks the way forward is well supported by the saloon top which brings you to the trampoline where the anchor setup has the optional horizontal Lewmar windlass and rode running in a channel to the bow anchor.

**above right:** The Lewmar windlass is an option worth adding and creates an effective anchor arrangement. *Photo Kevin Green*  
**right:** The self-tacking jib allows short-handed sailing and worked well during our sail. *Photo Kevin Green*



The sailplan is designed to be very user-friendly so our review boat came with a roller furling jib that runs on a self-tacking track while the fully battened North Sails dacron mainsail is supported by lazy jacks. It worked effortlessly on Sydney harbour and for lighter airs a genoa could be added plus a cruising chute. Another addition that made halyard hoists easy was the electric Lewmar winch by the port helm but with only outboards for charging I'd be inclined to use muscle instead. It also

doubled as the mainsheet winch and easily controlled the big-topped mainsail while the mainsheet track sits on the bimini with Seawind signature adjuster winch on the GRP arch; a system that works well I've found, even in strong breeze.

Taking the weight out of the 1160 has prompted the Ho Chi Minh City based company to offer a Sport version which involves installing a daggerboard housing into the GRP resin-infused

**above left to right:**  
**Sail handling is easily done by climbing onto the elongated bimini via a step in the saloon sidewall.** *Photo Kevin Green*  
**A functional cruising setup thanks to easy deployment of the dinghy with moulded steps on both hulls for disembarkation.** *Photo Kevin Green*  
**The foredeck has double lockers where fuel and generator can live.** *Photo Kevin Green*



below left: Twin helms give clear views from either hull. *Photo Kevin Green*  
below right: The outboard well (top pic) has freed up the hull for storage space (bottom pic). *Photos Kevin Green*

hulls, instead of the standard mini-keels. This would give better windward performance. In addition the alloy main crossbeam is replaced by an in-house made carbon spar – using the lightweight construction expertise from sister company Corsair. The sail wardrobe is also beefed up in the Sport with a carbon bow sprit added to fly big headsails and 15% larger mainsail so twilight racing could be fun or just fast passage making in the tropics.

ON SYDNEY HARBOUR

Firing up the petrol outboards is a fairly noisy affair compared with inboards but a small price to pay for what is still a manoeuvrable boat – simply push one throttle and pull another and the 1160 Lite turns swiftly. Motoring out with my host Brent Vaughan from his company’s catamaran marina in Rozelle Bay I took the chance to check the performance under power, reaching 8.1kts with the Yamaha 25hp’s flatchat. Nice-haves



at the binnacle would have been a rev counter (hidden inside the outboard well) and a fuel consumption gauge but again not essential. The cable throttles are a wee bit stiff but do their job and the same satisfactory steering linkages are used as on the standard 1160 twin rudders. As I motored under the Sydney Harbour bridge some cavitation was encountered but fairly normal for this style of boat and before long we were pointing windward to hoist the mainsail using the electric Lewmar winch. Rolling out the jib I spun us around to run

with the westerly breeze clear of the headland and felt a strong acceleration from the Lite, which definitely felt livelier than her standard sibling I sailed last year. Sheeting in the mainsail and jib on its track set me up for an easy beat up the harbour – so at each tack all I did was turn the wheel with no sheeting required.

Sitting out on the sidedeck gave me a comfy perch to watch the ferries and other harbour users fly by while walking to the opposite helm is easily done with no obstructions. At the starboard

above left to right:  
The starboard double cabin has walk-in storage in the forward part of the hull and ventilation is via two opening hatches. *Photo Kevin Green*  
The elevated bed does restrict headroom but beneath is storage in the owner’s cabin. *Photo Seawind*  
Athwartships portside bed has sufficient locker space and natural light. *Photo Kevin Green*

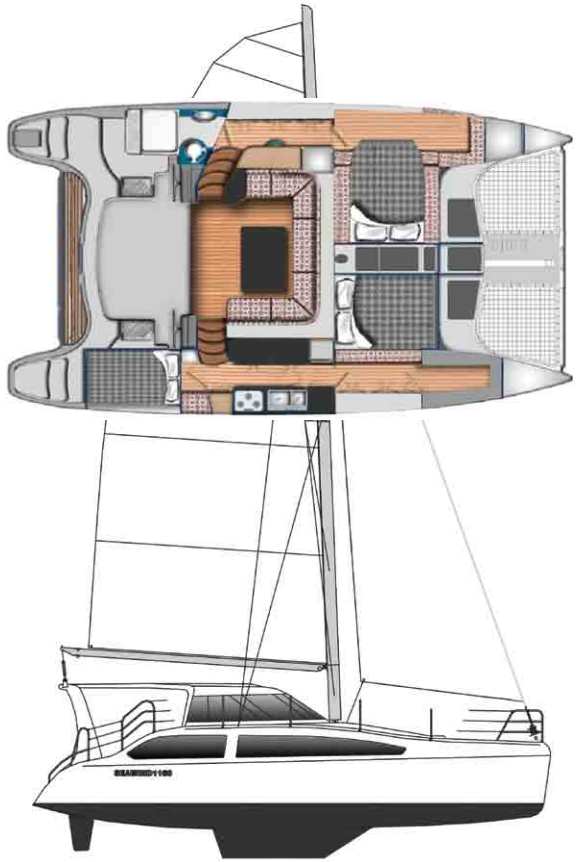


below: Increased bridgedeck clearance is another benefit of ditching the diesels.  
Photo Kevin Green

right: Solar panel space and maintrack. Photo Kevin Green

helm the glare from the saloon window prompted Brent to remove it for me, allowing clear views forward through the saloon windows. So I felt confident to push on as we neared the shore, touching 7.6kts with an apparent wind angle of 22° as the telltales levelled. The 17kt breeze was ideal for the 1160 Lite allowing us to make good progress to windward – where I also used the mainsheet track winch on the GRP arch to centralise the alloy boom. For gybing in windy conditions it gives effective control of the boom, again something

I've found when sailing Seawinds offshore. As our afternoon came to an end, sail handling was the next test and again passed by the 1160 Lite – simply roll up the jib and drop the mainsail into the lazyjacks, then climb the saloon step to zip-up the sail as I walked around the sturdy bimini roof. Shortening sail is done by standard slab-reefing and the all lines run through deck organisers to jammers by the helms so fuss-free and straight forward – like all the important aspects of this impressive Seawind 1160 Lite.



## SEAWIND 1160 LITE :

### FACTS&FIGURES

Base price	\$435,000
Test boat price	\$490,050 (plus \$17,000 delivery)

### SPECIFICATIONS – SEAWIND 1160 LITE

LOA	11.9m 39ft
LWL	37ft / 11.3m
Beam	6.5m
Draft	0.96m (mini keels)
Displacement	6,500kg
Fuel	200 L
Water	700 L
Engine	2 x 20hp Honda (or 25hp Yamaha) outboard engines with electric tilt

### Sails

Mainsail	57m <sup>2</sup> (65m <sup>2</sup> on Sport)
Jib	21.8m <sup>2</sup>
MPS chute	90.99m <sup>2</sup>
Code 0	62m <sup>2</sup>

### Supplied by:

Multihull Central Sydney  
Lot 4 Chapman Road,  
Annandale NSW 2038, Australia  
Office phone: 02 9810 5014  
[www.seawindcats.com](http://www.seawindcats.com) and  
[www.multihullcentral.com](http://www.multihullcentral.com)

