

“I believe yachting is reinventing itself, particularly monohull yachting.”
JUAN KOUYOUMDJIAN

NEWS + VIEWS

A racer-cruiser offers a greater design challenge than a pure raceboat



Juan K's "First" Boat

Juan Kouyoumdjian on his new production boat | BY DAVID SCHMIDT

Argentinian Juan Kouyoumdjian has designed some of the world's most successful raceboats, including *ABN Amro One* and *Ericsson 4*, winners of the last two Volvo Ocean Races. Now "Juan K" has focused his formidable skills on production racer-cruisers, starting with the new Beneteau First 30.

What was your biggest challenge designing the First 30?

I've never designed a racer-cruiser before, so in essence that was the biggest challenge. For your first racer-cruiser to be the First 30 for Beneteau creates a lot of pressure, as you're replacing probably the most mythical boat Beneteau ever did [the original First

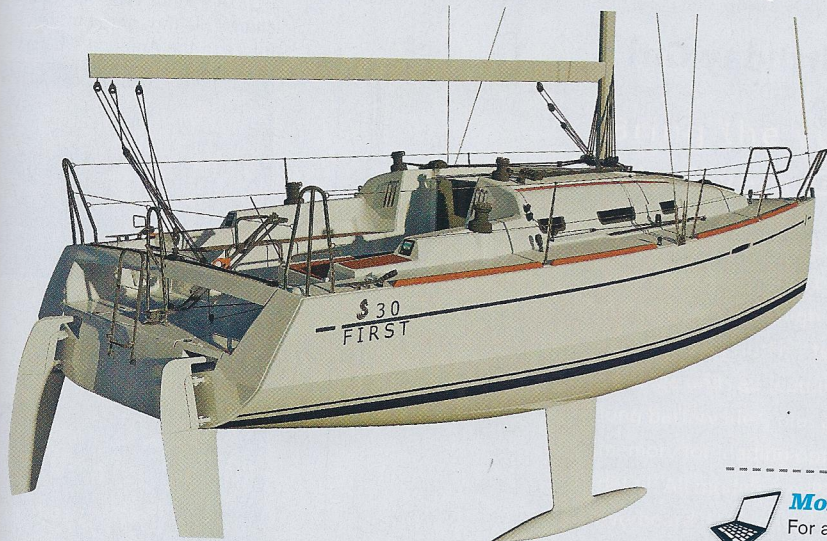
30]. But working with Beneteau has been great. They helped keep us balanced with reality checks on our work, as we come from a very high-performance racing background.

How much was the First 30 influenced by your Volvo 70 designs?

Quite a lot. The brief for the boat was to be able to sail fast and comfortably offshore with a reduced amount of crew, which is in essence what you end up doing in the Volvo. Since we spent so much time researching the Volvo Open 70s, it was natural for us to apply hull shapes that evolved from that philosophy.

What do you see as the future of production boat design?

I think that yachting is going through a transition. This doesn't apply only to style and looks. It's about materials. It's about how long a boat should last. It's about safety issues. I'm happy to be a part of a moment in yachting when I believe yachting is reinventing itself, particularly monohull yachting, and to do that with a legendary company like Beneteau is a great opportunity. *AL*



More Online:

For a video of the complete interview with Juan Kouyoumdjian, visit sailmagazine.com/video_gallery

BURDICK RECEIVES SAIL INDUSTRY AWARD Wayne Burdick, president of Beneteau USA, was presented with *SAIL* magazine's Industry Leadership Award for 2010 during the US Sailboat Show in Annapolis, Maryland. Burdick increased sales by 80 percent after joining Beneteau in 1977, and oversees a network of 30 sailboat dealers around North America. He is on the boards of directors of the National Marine Manufacturers Association and Sail America. — AC

