



# A pedigree performer

With her impeccable credentials, the CS36T is an attractive, well made and serious passage maker, but has she stood the test of time? **Duncan Kent** reports.

**C**S YACHTS (Canadian Sailcraft) were imported into the UK in the late 1970s and early 1980s by broker Charles Watson, currently importer of the Dutch Contest yachts. Watson imported both the CS33 and CS36 for several years until the Canadian Dollar exchange rate became unfavourable and made them uneconomic to sell here.

The CS36 was designed by the former Chief Designer at Camper & Nicholson, Raymond Wall, who began his apprenticeship in the company of famous names such as Robert Clark and Colin Mudie. Wall designed the popular CS27 while working at C&N, but then left to join the Canadian yard before creating the CS36T (the T stands for Traditional) in 1977.

As you might expect, the 36T inherited many aspects of the C&N marque – heavy displacement with a high ballast ratio, deep lead keel, slightly rising sheer, overhanging bows with fine deep vee entry, long waterline, pinched retroussé stern and a generous overlapping sail plan. Her lines were influenced by the IOR rules, but she still sported a deep rudder hung on a half skeg, rather than the more popular spade design that was becoming the norm for performance yachts at the time.

Her double spreader masthead rig is tough with a keel stepped mast for maximum strength and adjustable backstay for tweakability.

She was intentionally designed for offshore cruising, with a stiff, stable hull that has a powerful but comfortable motion through almost any sea and a good turn of speed that enables impressive passage times.

Unlike the later Merlin, the CS36T has a solid GRP hull with stringers, because, being of a conservative nature, Wall wasn't keen on the use of balsa or foam cores in the topsides. However, foam was used in the decks and coachroof for weight reduction and insulation. The hull/deck joint is flanged, through-bolted at 100mm intervals and bonded over.

Moulded inner liners were used for the heads and some furniture bases and bulkheads were bonded in position for extra strength. In all she was carefully built with much

attention paid to ruggedness and durability. Her only slight downfall is her foam-filled rudder, which, like many others of this type, tends to fill with water, rotting the stainless steel bracing inside and, as with other GRP boats of this era, she is likely to have some curable signs of osmosis in her old age.

Around 300 CS36Ts were produced between 1978 and 1987, after which a new model designed by Tony Castro and known as the CS36M (Merlin) was built until the company's demise in 1992. Sadly there are few CS36Ts left in the UK, but a large number were exported to Holland, Germany and, of course, the USA. Moorings had quite a few for Caribbean charter back in the 1980s, promoting them as performance orientated offshore cruisers.

## Down below

Her companionway steps are flat, narrow and nearly vertical. They are really only safely descended facing aft as if you were climbing down a ladder. The sleeping accommodation is fairly typical of a late 1970s cruiser in that she has a good size vee berth forward, two good sea berths in the saloon, one of which converts into a roomy double, and a cosy quarter berth abaft the navigation station.

She has an excellent U-shaped galley immediately to port that boasts a vast, top-loading fridge/freezer against the bulkhead, a full size gimballed oven with crash bar, a top-loading dry store in the worktop and a deep single sink. Pressurised H&C water was standard. The partitioned stowage in lockers above the cooker is ideal for crockery, mugs etc and there are additional cutouts in the bulkhead above the fridge. A teak grab rail keeps the cook steady underway, but there is no vent or opening portlight above to let the fumes out when the hatch is closed.

To starboard, opposite, is a proper, forward-facing nav station with a full size chart table, bags of room for instruments, books and charts, and three deep drawers in its plinth for bosun's stores. The head of the roomy 2m L x 0.86m W (6ft 6in x 2ft 10in) quarter berth provides a comfy seat, under which are the batteries, and there is a comprehensive electrical switch panel outboard.



**Left:** *Peldon Rose* powers through the Solent chop. Above from top: Her sweet sheer and streamline coachroof give her the look of a late 1970s classic racer; Andrew (right) and his Dad, Tony, have sailed both their CS36s far and wide over their 20 years of ownership; the attractive, Herreshoff-style pinched stern gives her a potent and racy profile.

Between the companionway steps and the quarter berth is a wet locker, which is simply an extension of the cockpit locker behind, so oilies can be grabbed in a hurry from the cockpit.

The saloon is in the beamiest section of the boat and is uncomplicated, but decidedly comfortable with 1.88m (6ft 2in) headroom to boot. To starboard is an L-shaped settee with thickly cushioned upholstery that

makes a 1.92m L x 1.26m W (6ft 4in x 4ft 2in) double berth with the infill in place. The port settee is similar, but shorter, requiring the trotter box under the hanging locker to make it into a full 1.92m (6ft 4in) long berth. Both settee backs hinge up to widen the seats considerably and the area behind makes ideal stowage for bedding during the day. Much of the space beneath the seating is »





**Clockwise from top left:** Tramping along under shortened sail; her high bridge deck keeps water from going below; spacious forecabin; wide, uncluttered side decks; a gas vang on the boom; sloping forehatch needs non-slip; deck locker for anchor and windlass.

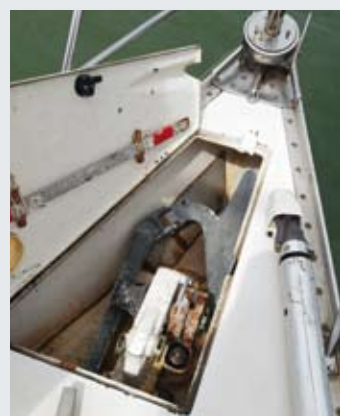


**Clockwise from top left:** The wire furling line and dedicated winch works well, but watch your fingers; the heads is very roomy for an older boat with plenty of storage and room to move about in; having the primary winches and mainsheet traveller all to hand from the helm means singlehanded is simple.



**Specs - CS Yachts 36T**

LOA	11.12m	36ft 6in
LWL	8.91m	29ft 3in
Beam	3.50m	11ft 6in
Draught (shoal/deep)	1.52m/1.90m	4ft 11in/6ft 3in
Displacement	7,045kg	15,500lb
Ballast (shoal/deep)	3,022kg/2,955kg	6,650lb/6,500lb
Sail Area		
(inc furling genoa)	76.4m <sup>2</sup>	822ft <sup>2</sup>
Fuel	158ltr	35gal
Berths	5-6	
Engine	33hp Westerbeke fresh water cooled diesel	
Designer	Raymond Wall	
Builder	Canadian Sailcraft	
Owners' association	<a href="http://closereach.com/csoa/">http://closereach.com/csoa/</a>	
Price guide	£25,000-£35,000	



**Boat and owners**

The owners of our 1982 review boat, *Peldon Rose*, are father and son, Tony and Andrew Christmas, who keep her in Shamrock Quay marina in Southampton. Both are very keen sailors and cruise throughout the Channel, whenever they can find the time, along with Andrew's wife, Nicky and friends. A lawyer and Yachtmaster, Andrew (52) used to own another

CS36T, which sadly hit a semi-submerged object during a night crossing back from Cherbourg and sank, leaving him and his surprised crew of burly policemen to take to the liferaft – only to be returned to France via the helpful cross Channel ferry that rescued them! Despite this, Andrew was so impressed with her performance that in 1990 he tracked down the only other CS36T in the UK at the time and bought her as a replacement.

into a seating position) to give you more dressing space.

In all, the workmanship is very good and the materials top quality. Engine access, however, is not good. The engine is effectively mounted back-to-front with a V-drive mechanism taking the shaft out in the conventional way. This means access to the freshwater coolant and oil requires acrobatics of the most athletic sort through the side panels, in the cockpit locker to port and quarter berth to starboard.

**On deck**

The deck layout is fairly straightforward. On *Peldon Rose* reefing is done at the mast, but later models had the reefing lines led into the cockpit. *PR* also has her mainsheet track immediately in front of the pedestal, whereas many later models had it forward of the main hatch. The large Lewmar 40ST primary winches are placed within easy reach of the helm in the T-shaped cockpit, so she's simple to singlehanded if desired. Under the helm seat is an ideal place for the liferaft and each side are gas bottle lockers draining over the transom. A boarding ladder is integral with the pushpit rail, leaving an open gate when it's lowered. Her cockpit isn't huge, thanks mainly to the pinched stern, but this means it's

easy to brace one's feet on the seat opposite when heeled. It's also quite deep with high coamings and bridge deck, making it a safe place to be in the rough stuff.

The non-slip surfaces on the wide side decks and low, sleek coachroof are very effective and the handrails atop the cabin run almost the whole length. The shroud plates enter the side decks roughly in the middle, but I found they actually made going forward at sea easier, rather than being an obstruction. The toe rail is perforated aluminium, which is handy for attaching blocks etc, but I don't like the integral captive fairleads that force you to thread the warps through them before cleating off. The genoa tracks run a long way aft and are recessed into the deck and there are fittings for permanently stowing the spinnaker pole on deck.

The foredeck is level and safe to work on, although I'd be tempted to put a few strips of non-slip tape onto the large, inclined forehatch. The chain locker is deep and a raised lid moulding allows the anchor to stow neatly in the chunky stainless bow roller.

Her thick-sectioned, Isomat mast is keel-stepped and has a gas vang, though a topping lift is also supplied. Early boats had conservatively short masts, but these were made taller

after a couple of years for the deep keel models. She has twin straight spreaders with continuous cap and intermediate shrouds terminating on one plate, together with forward and aft lowers on separate chain plates, all of which attach directly to substantial fillets bonded to the hull sides. Roller furling was standard with a steel wire furling line and special winch.

**Under way**

Being a good friend's boat, I've sailed *Peldon Rose* in a wide variety of weather conditions from light airs to howling F9s, so I've a pretty good idea how she performs. If you like stiff, heavy displacement, ocean going yachts you'll love the CS. She tracks on rails in almost all conditions, is powerful enough not to lose momentum in big seas and is surprisingly quick on

and off the wind, except maybe on a dead run. Her deep keel and high ballast ratio mean she stands up to her sail without burying her leeward rail overly and when she is over canvased her deep rudder just never seems to let go. On our test day we had a good blow – ideal conditions for this ocean passage maker. With a steady SW6-7 and two reefs in we charged off down Southampton Water with the log firmly over the 7kn mark. Hard on the wind she gave us an effortless 7.2kn in 26kn true wind, increasing to 7.4kn close reaching and 7.8kn with the wind dead on the beam. Once the wind increased to 28-30kn, 8+kn was the order of the day with little spray over her bows. Still with two reefs, she tacked through 85° reasonably quickly without losing too much speed. Her helm balance always

remained spot on, with just enough feedback and only showing a tad of weather helm when really over pressed. As with all reasonably heavy boats in light airs she needs all of her 140 per cent genoa to keep going on the wind and a big spinnaker off it.

Under power she's responsive, if a little pensive, and consideration must be given to prop walk. *Peldon Rose* still has her original Westerbeke engine (BMC in the UK), which is powerful enough to provide a steady cruising

speed of 6kn (at just 1,800rpm while consuming a little under three litres per hour) or a thirstier 7kn at 2,200rpm.

Care must be taken with the US-styled separate throttle and gear levers, though, if you're used to the European fashion of having it all on one lever – it's very easy to simply yank the throttle back when you want to stop in a hurry, inadvertently leaving her in forward gear to ram the pontoon – albeit at tick over!

**Verdict**

If you like a more traditional, heavier cruiser that feels safe in any weather, the CS36T is well worth a long look. She's well put together using good quality components and should outlast many of her lighter weight rivals and for this reason she retains a good secondhand value. Furthermore, despite not being as beamy as a more modern yacht, her accommodation is well thought out and very comfortable – especially under way.

**For**

- Strongly built using good materials and components
- Powerful, steady and well balanced under sail
- Thoughtfully designed and well appointed interior

**Against**

- Steep companionway steps
- Difficult engine access
- No private after cabin
- Needs plenty of sail in light airs
- Awkward engine controls

