

Yachting World

MAKING YACHTS FLY

Why foils make
80 knots possible

CARIBBEAN 600
Tropical 'Fastnet'
is hot favourite

**THE SUIT THAT COULD
SAVE YOUR LIFE**

BIG BEAR COUNTRY
Cruising in Labrador

ST HELENA HIGH
Racing to an
Atlantic outpost

**HEAVY WEATHER
WEEKENDER**
On test: Morris 36

VENDÉE GLOBE

WORLD DOMINATION

How François Gabart won Vendée match race

PLUS: GoPro camera review • New High Performance Rule • Wild cats • Golding's Vendée swansong

GET YACHTING WORLD
ON YOUR IPAD
yachtingworld.com/digital

APRIL 2013 £4.60

C\$12.50 US\$10.99 A\$10.95

NZ\$16.00 Holland €8.50 Spain €7.50



9 770043 1999227 0 4 >

A lively day out

Would you take a weekender out in the rough stuff? With a quality product like the M36, set up for short-handed sailing, that would be no problem at all, finds David Glenn

A reader emailed me recently praising the weekender/dayboat phenomenon, but he expressed concern over our propensity to use pictures showing yachts of that ilk sailing in light conditions, moderate at most. How would they behave in the rough stuff, he asked? A good question.

Not long afterwards I found myself sailing a Morris Yachts M36 in weather in which no right-minded weekend sailor would dream of setting out. Or would they?

Cuyler Morris, CEO of the respected US builders, was running demonstrations in the south of France following a successful exhibition

at the Cannes Boat Show. Could we get to the marina at Bormes Les Mimosas, just east of Marseilles, for a sail?

The M36 is by no means a new yacht. The first hull was moulded in 2004 to a Sparkman & Stephens design and naval architect Greg Matzat was responsible for the lines. The story goes that Matzat had been working on a boat for S&S and had come up with a 36-footer with a reverse counter.

The late Tom Morris, Cuyler's talented boatbuilding father, got sight of her, asked S&S to rework the stern and the rest is history. The 36 is the most successful in the M range and hull

number 70 is currently under construction.

Morris's M range also includes a 29, 42 and 52, but the M36 remains the quintessential Morris product. While I've often salivated over examples at boat shows I'd never had a proper sail, at least not in a substantial breeze.

Morris's reputation for attention to detail, good sailing characteristics, magnificent looks and, I have to say, price, goes before them. I was intrigued by the company's decision last autumn not to exhibit on their home turf in Annapolis, but instead have a crack at the European market, despite the economic downturn.

Let me touch on price. I hope you are sitting down. It's US\$398,000 (£248,563), albeit with a very detailed, top quality specification, including North Dacron sails, lifejackets, flares and a three-day private training session.

The success of the 36 proves that price isn't always a barrier. In this case, it is easy to understand how a client could fall for a boat that has quintessential must-have properties. It's an object lesson in seduction. ▶



- ▶ Where we tested : We sailed out of the marina at Bormes Les Mimosas, Rade de Bormes, east of Marseille.
- ▶ Wind: 25-knot E, gusting 28-30. Moderate sea.
- ▶ Model: deep keel version with standard layout



- 1 Sail and rig control can be achieved by using foot-button-controlled Lewmar 40 self-tailers
- 2 Well set-up with high-quality cunningham and vang tackles
- 3 We sailed with no guardwires or stanchions, but they are available as an option, along with pulpits
- 4 Top quality North sails come as part of the standard package



▲ Above: The Mediterranean, but not as we know it! The M36 coped admirably. Right: sailing with a couple of furls in the jib



Photos: DG/ywpx



▲ Above: slipping along quietly in less boisterous conditions. Right: lines from the Lewmar 40s can be led round a turning block and back to the helmsman



Sailing Blue Moon

I flew to Nice thinking I'd escaped our rotten summer in the UK, but arrived in a windswept Bormes Les Mimosas with a 25-knot coolish easterly blowing straight into the Rade de Bormes. The seas off the breakwater looked feisty and among the high-sided production yachts crammed into the marina, the locally owned *Blue Moon* appeared tiny and, without stanchions and guardwires, arguably ill-equipped for the conditions.

The M36 is primarily a yacht for fair conditions – at least that's the way the brochures depict her.

"What do you reckon, Cuyler?" I asked, as the wind piped up and I hauled on my foulweather gear.

"I think we'll be fine!" came the confident reply as a couple of locals looked on and

▲ Above left: excellent cockpit, although the mainsail snagged on the pedestal once. Above: guardwires and stanchions are optional

warned us that the seas were '*fort, très fort!*' out there.

You know instinctively when you're aboard a yacht with an experienced seaman. Cuyler Morris has been involved in almost every discipline in sailing, from the America's Cup to extensive family cruising in his company's own boats in a wide variety of conditions.

His manner and confidence displayed all that experience as he busied the boat for sea. This was going to be fun!

Extracting ourselves from the tight marina berth and then swinging hard to starboard to thread our way towards the entrance simply wasn't a problem as the 21hp three-cylinder Yanmar, Flex-O-Fold 16in prop and carbon rudder blade combined to great effect.

Steadily rising seas

As we punched out into the steadily rising seas off the breakwater we had to hang on. Everything was ready to hoist or unfurl, but we had to get some searoom before we could safely set sail, so we relied on the engine to get us half a mile to weather. That proved no trouble at all and I was staggered to find we remained dry in the cockpit as the waves broke and the spume flew. There was also a blissful absence of slamming as the yacht's veed forward sections parted the disturbed Mediterranean with ease.

All M36s come with a beautifully finished carbon Hall Spars rig and this yacht was equipped with a tasty suit of North Marathon sails made of a Mylar/polyester laminate. Cuyler Morris tucked a reef into the fully battened main using the single-line

system and we took three rolls in the self-tacking 100 per cent jib using the underdeck Harken MkIV furler.

Everything was done from the safety of the cockpit and, without stanchions or guardwires, I was very glad of that. Morris offer the yacht with pulpits and stanchions on request.

We set off on port tack, just cracked, with the cloud looking ominous and Ile du Levant a darker shape on the horizon 16km distant. The island is well known for its naturist resort at Heliopolis, but in these conditions we didn't expect to see any evidence of that.

What was plainly evident, however, was the M36's truly sparkling performance as she rode up over each sea with ease, touching in excess of 7.5 knots and giving the helmsman nothing but pleasure on the

▲ Above: superb attention to detail in coamings and superstructure, plus fairleads set into the toerail

wheel. Steering is chain and wire onto a fair-sized quadrant and at all times the yacht was responsive and provided delightful feedback. Tweaking backstay, mainsheet and vang, you could really trim this rig and sailplan to perfection. In particular, being able to flatten off the top of the main with ease allowed us to maintain control.

Today, though, called for cleating things off and hanging on! The neatness and attention to detail evident in items such as the luff cunningham tackle and other systems were a joy to behold. Whoever set this boat up knew what they were doing.

While the deck forward of the short coachroof was constantly wet, we remained totally dry in the cockpit until a really nasty one curled up to weather and broke straight into the boat. It didn't quite knock me off the

wheel, but I certainly had to grip hard, but from thigh deep to empty, the cockpit drained impressively quickly.

In flatter water in the lee of Ile du Levant the M36 smoked along and after a broad reach back along a reciprocal course surfing at 11.7 knots tops – really great fun! – we decided to try a little close-hauled work.

I expected the M36 to be stopped in her tracks occasionally, but not a bit of it. The yacht knuckled down, dealt with some awkward breaking water and cleaved her way upwind in fine style. I was more than impressed with her seaworthiness and sailing ability and it proved without doubt that this yacht is far, far more than a dayboat. I remember thinking what a shame Greg Matzat had moved on from S&S to design wind farms ...



Home and dry

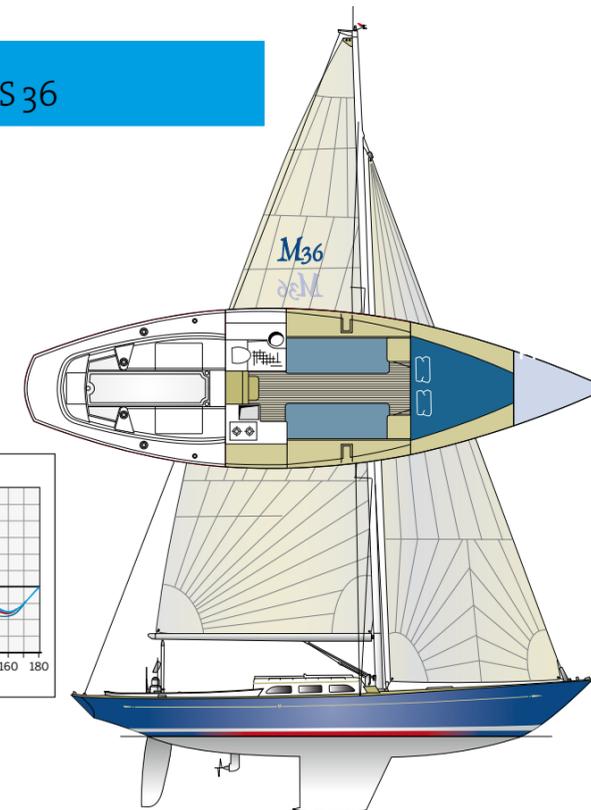
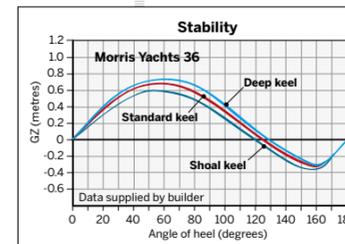
There's no getting away from the fact that there is sitting headroom only below. You can sort of crouch in the companionway area, which is handy for working at the small galley. There is no cooker as standard, which to many in the UK would be anathema. And bearing in mind the price, this absence tends to grate. It can be fitted as an option.

There is a double berth forward and two saloon settee berths are a good length. The forecabin could be curtained off for privacy. Upholstery quality is of the highest order and detailed finishing throughout faultless as far as I could see.

The head compartment opposite the galley space is satisfyingly huge. The remainder of the space is taken up by the engine compartment and two vast cockpit lockers, which accommodate things like fuel tank, fuse boxes, Lewmar systems for the powered winches and good stowage space.

I have no hesitation in saying that the quality of the joiner work, the running of cables and fitting of equipment throughout the yacht is of the highest standard.

DATA MORRIS 36



Conclusion

I have to confess to being marginally underwhelmed when I first came across the Morris some years ago. I felt there was a lack of toughness and they played the aesthetic card too often. But *Blue Moon* has changed my attitude entirely.



What really impressed me about this yacht was not so much her good looks, which are undeniable, or the attention to detail in her finish, which is outstanding, but her handling qualities and excellence as a sailing boat in challenging conditions.

Morris have produced the antithesis of the sailing caravan, which can compromise performance to the point of being unseaworthy. Instead they have looked back and improved a concept from the past. The result is stunning.

So is this yacht the complete package in the context of what she sets out to achieve? I think she is, as long as you accept the headroom restriction below and don't expect to cook Sunday lunch aboard.

I have deliberately listed the basic spec in an attempt to explain the price tag, which is the one dark cloud on an otherwise sparkling horizon. Seduction will do the rest.

SPECIFICATIONS

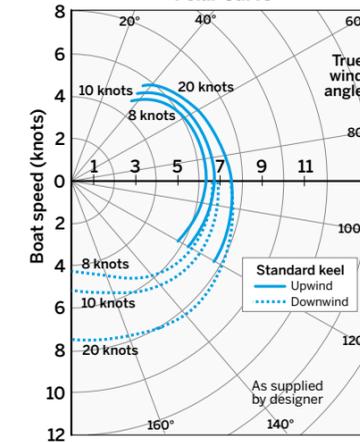
LOA	11.00m	36ft 1in
LWL	7.62m	25ft 1in
Beam (max)	3.07m	10ft 1in
Draught (standard)	1.60m	5ft 3in
Draught (deep)	1.89m	6ft 3in
Displ (half load)	4,045kg	8,900lb
Bridge clearance	15.90m	52ft 2in
Headroom	1.47m	4ft 10in
Engine	21hp Yanmar diesel	
Fuel	91lt	20gal
Water	90lt	20gal
Price ex VAT	£248,563	

Designed by: Sparkman & Stephens
 Built by: Morris Yachts, Maine, USA
www.morrisyachts.com

Basic specification includes:

- Yanmar 21hp three-cylinder diesel inboard
- Flex-O-Fold 16in two-bladed prop
- 2 x 100ah domestic batteries
- 1 x 60ah engine start battery
- Alternator 90 amp
- Raymarine VHF radio
- Raymarine speed, depth and wind instruments
- Isotherm 1.45ft³ fridge
- Whale electric bilge pump
- Whale manual bilge pump
- All Harken deck gear including winches/clutches
- Varnished ensign staff
- Varnished 34in wheel

Morris Yachts 36 Polar Curve



- 22lb Bruce anchor plus 100ft nylon rope rode
- 4 warps
- 3 fenders including fleece covers
- Boat hook
- North Dacron main and jib including cover and UV protective cover
- Carbon Hall Spars mast, aluminium boom
- Harken jib furling unit
- Canvas interior cushions
- Tool kit
- 4 lifejackets
- Flare kit
- Air foghorn
- Three-day private training session

Well-built

It's worth studying the M36's underwater shape in the drawings opposite plus her well-proportioned rig and sailplan. *Blue Moon* sported the Mediterranean deep keel option comprising a 3,475lb fin and bulb which pushes draught to 6ft 3in. The standard keel weighs 3,800lb and draws 5ft 3in and there's a shoal option at 4ft 6in with a slightly shorter rudder.

Hull and deck moulds use an infusion technique for greater resin control and the yacht is balsa-cored throughout.

Foot button controls for the yacht's Lewmar 40 electric rig and sail control winches were useful as we were short-handed. The only moment of nervousness was when the mainsheet managed to loop itself round the steering/instrument pedestal during a tack. The relatively violent motion might have caused this.

All rig controls are led back below decks to banks of clutches set on the winch pedestals either side of the helmsman and once one I got used to which button was which the boat could be sailed easily by one person from here.

There's provision for a code sail to be set from its own furler which can be tacked onto the stem, but conditions simply didn't allow this to be used.

▲ Top: a welcoming, cosy cabin, but there's only sitting headroom below. Above: the big double berth forward can be curtained off. Left: good access to the engine



▲ Centre: excellent luff cunningham and vang tackles. Above: jaunty colours for the cutlery and a powerful corkscrew

