

Happy Koumata moved along in light airs during our test and showed her quiet strength



PRIVILEGE SERIE 5

A real Privilege to sail

With a deserved reputation and strong values, Privilege Marine is using its know-how across completely re-styled models and is showing new creativity. We took the opportunity of a test sail aboard Happy Koumata, one of the first Série 5s, when she stopped over in Marseille on the way to beginning a round the world trip.

Text: Philippe Echelle - Photos by the author and DK

THE SÉRIE 5. SUCCESSOR TO THE 515

At 50 feet, the 515, first shown at the Grand Pavois boat show in France in 2009, confirmed a major evolution at Privilege, already experienced with larger models. The commercial career of this catamaran was unfortunately interrupted by problems at the yard. The new Série 5 revisits this promising start, modified by the Lombard design team (the waterline length has been slightly increased, the sail area is bigger and the deck layout improved). The new interior design is by Franck Darriet, whose influence is to be found on many French multihulls.

The higher sailplan really comes to life in light airs



← A quality hull covering transforms the appearance of the gelcoat and the lines

thened arches of the new sugar-scoops produce fine wakes. The Lombard-designed skegs are fairly short, fine and deep for good performance while minimizing the whetted area. Our test boat, Happy Koumata, was fully loaded and ready for her forthcoming voyage.

A FULL-MASTERED BUILD PROCESS

The hand lamination process has been abandoned, and the S5 is now built using infusion. The outer half-hulls, the nacelle and the inner half-hulls are dry-prepared in molds which have already been gelcoated: the directional glass cloth carefully applied using Divinycell foam for the sandwich, before being vacuum-infused with polyvinylester resin. Monolithic materials are used for through-hull skin fittings, grounding plates and so on. The skegs are structurally isolated from the rest of the vessel, and impact zones are the subject of particular attention, with crash boxes preventing the ingress of water forward and flooding of the engine compartments in the event of

sudden impact. The interior joinery by the Vendéen yard remains true to its reputation for excellence and rigorous attention has been paid to the installation of the technical systems.

HAPPY KOUMATATA, AN ELEGANT CRUISING CATAMARAN

In her beautiful metallic gray livery (a film covering, applied straight onto the original gelcoat), the Série 5 gives an impression of quiet strength. The superstructure created by Philippe Jeantot and Guy Ribadeau Dumas on this 14,70 meter platform is reminiscent of that of its predecessor. This distinguishing structure significantly reinforces the forward beam and streamlines anchoring while creating an enviable increase in interior volume which the French yard had always wanted to maintain. A little wave-piercing skeg has been fitted below to diminish slamming from the most aggressive waves. The straight, vertical bows overhang the start of the step, which runs all the way to the aft, which is lengthened by the practical sugar-scoops for access from either the dock or the dinghy. A superb stainless handrail ensures that this tricky area is completely safe, with three rows of guard wires enclosing the entire platform bringing the security you need for long term sailing. The edge of the deck is hemmed by a nice teak toe-rail showing a slight sheer, and the dipped longitudinal section in the topsides breaks the straightness of the panel and houses the plexiglass light-wells, which have integrated opening hatches. The sloping appearance to



↑ Having a cutter rig is made easier by the superstructure. The front of the S5 also benefits from an appreciable sunbathing area

THE OWNER'S OPINION

We were occasional sailors, boat show visitors, pontoon stalkers, magazine readers (and even owners of a motorboat), and then after a few sailing trips on monohulls over the course of the last 25 years, my wife Catherine and I chartered cats in the Mediterranean and the Caribbean. With our family now comprising 6 children, the choice of a multihull was very quickly imposed on us, due to the habitability, the number of cabins, peace and quiet on board and the ease of handling the machine. Our first cat was a 44 footer we bought in 2009: over five years of weekends and vacations, we sailed from Marseille to the îles d'Hyères, to Corsica and Sardinia, much to our enjoyment. In 2014 we decided to stop working and prepare for a trip around the world under sail. As the main dreamer in the project, I came up with a list of specifications for our search for a boat. The characteristics of the catamaran chosen would be adapted a little to accommodate my wife's wishes on the precondition that our 5 to 6 year trip around the world was to be a shared pleasure. So, gone were the daggerboards, owner's hull, self-racking jib and lightweight cat. We kept our requirement for performance under sail (the figures quoted by the yard have happily been confirmed over the last 2,700 miles), for personalization and comfort on board with a nice owner's cabin and a galley which allows the first mate to exercise her culinary passions. And lastly, a solid and reassuring boat in all conditions. The final criteria important to us: sharing the emotion with those in charge at the yard who would allow us to realize our dream: Our choice took us to the Privilege yard and the Série 5.

TEST

The new cockpit design works well. Conviviality, safety of the dinghy on its own specific platform, and a special mention for the handrail and three-level guardrails



At deck level or from the cockpit, the access is good and safe



50 FEET OF LUXURY AND COMFORT

You enter the S5 by opening the splendid sliding door, whose polished stainless steel frame really sets a tone of quality. The first glance reveals straight away the radical change of style. The superb cabinmaking is evident, as are the exacting standards of fabrication, but the matt varnish finish to the light oak furniture, the beige headlinings, the sleek, formal lines show off a creative atmosphere which has been redesigned. Still showing all the Privilege hallmarks, but with a more contemporary feel. The sliding blinds covering the light-wells in the ceiling open to reveal good sized opening panels. Venetian blinds allow you to adjust the amount of light in the salon to the required level of intimacy. The galley is a model example of the genre, and the dining area has a true dining table (height-adjustable on remotely controlled struts). A reversible climate control system allows you to deal with high or low temperatures, to dry the air in tropical regions or to fight the invasion of culicidae (otherwise known as mosquitoes). Welcome to the unusual world of luxury at sea. The semi-owner's version we tested combines all the advantages of separated accommodation while offering 3 nice double cabins (of which one is a twin), all of which are equipped with shower and head. The gray oak style floorboards are perfectly fitted and secured to avoid any annoying vibration, and are carefully edged to prevent absorbing any dampness. The general hardware used, notably the drawer mechanisms is of excellent quality.

MOTORS, ANCHORING, BATTERY BANK

Despite the unfortunate increase in maintenance needed by having saildrive transmission, the engine compartments are well designed, painted throughout, light and accessed by metal ladders. The strong, watertight hatches are located in the deck and not on the aft steps. The motors have been moved forward in the boat, creating space for the generator (to starboard) and the watermaker to port. The anchoring station



The helm station is the nerve center of the boat, its design and construction largely participating in the sense of controlling the boat



The splendid sliding door in stainless steel provides access to the new design, and to the discovery of Privilege quality



The main forward cabin benefits from the space in the superstructure

Separate shower, heads compartment and WC occupy the owner's suite in the starboard hull



The cabinetry shows all the ergonomic design and the marine fittings are all top quality



TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Naval Architect	Marc Lombard
Interior Designer	Frank Damer
Builder	Privilege Marine
Length	15,24m
Beam	7,90m
Draft	1,57m
Working displacement	16,8t
Maximum displacement	22,3t
Manuel area	38m ²
Crew	5/6/4
Height at the TP	Max 3,12m
Max Vmax	23,5kts or 7 knots 2,5kts optional
Transmission	Saildrive
Engine pumps	2 manual pumps, 4 electric pumps
Water tanks	2x300l
Fuel tanks	2x100l
Holding tanks	2x100l
Batteries	service 800Ah / service 2,55kVA
Price ex tax	€930,000

Optional options on the version tested

- Semi-owner version with galley "up"
- Generator on trailer
- Hydramat radial sails
- Watermaker
- Solar Panels
- Wind generator
- Reversible climate control
- Yanmar 25 hp + three blade folding Maxprop propellers
- 2nd cockpit in place
- Hull covering

Price ex tax of the boat tested: €1,2M

from the south, and, surprisingly, the Série 5 set off at 2.5 knots in a breath of air which was barely detectable! The pace is regular and the boat happily accepts coming up on the wind without making any leeway. Not bad, eh? The Hydrant sails by incidences Voiles, kept perfect shape in this area, mic breeze, despite their modular construction. Remarkable! We were on a level playing field with a prototype 12m monohull which appeared to be well sailed. The wind continued to build, and the GPS showed we were keeping up with it: 4, 5 then 6 knots in less than 10 knots of wind. Entirely satisfactory for a cruising boat as luxurious and as laden as this one. Tacking was smooth and we picked up again easily. Happy Koumata is cutter-rigged, so the genoa has to be partially rolled up to tack, so as to avoid snagging on the staysail. This doesn't lead to a problem though, thanks to the turning blocks and the electric Anial winch. The breeze was picking up more now, building progressively, to 20 knots, and I reduced the genoa by taking in a few turns before tacking and I noticed that the boat seemed to complain a little

benefits from the clever design of the superstructure to house reef offshore equipment: a 40kg Spade anchor with 75 meters of 14mm chain and a 1400W windlass which you can see clearly - a great choice! The secondary anchoring setup consists of a 35kg Brittany anchor with 25m of chain and 50m of rode. The battery bank is located below the salon floor in a specially designed, enclosed locker, protecting the batteries from being sprayed or from tools which have been dropped. The tightness of the terminals is identified by red varnish markings.

DYNAMIC TEST

We easily pulled away from the dock in the old port of Marseille, there being not much of a crosswind, but with not much room forward or aft. The all-round visibility from the helm station is good. The engine torque with the three-bladed Maxprops is generous (meaning you have reserve power on hand for tricky situations). The suppleness of the manual controls for the gearboxes is noticeable, and simpler and cheaper, and I don't miss electrically assisted controls. Fully loaded and equipped the Série 5 can make 9.5 knots at full throttle, with a cruising speed of between 7 and 8 knots depending on the consumption you are looking for. The quietness of the motors would make for easy long trips under power. We quickly shut down the Yanmars to make the most of the tiny bit of breeze which was building

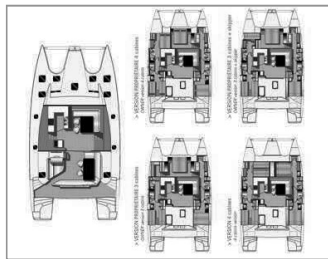
THE COMPETITION

Model	Builder	Naval Architect	Upwind sail area in m ²	Weight in tonnes	Basic price in € ex tax
SARA 50	Fountain-Pajot	Berret Racoupeau	141	15,7	585,000
DISCOVERY 50	Discovery Yachts	Dixon	138	14,5	1,094,000
NAUTITECH 482	Nautitech/Bavaria	Morain-Mavinkis	116	11,2	515,500

The JP Maréchal aluminum mast, a top of the range product whose lacquer is coordinated with the hulls



when picking up again on the wind under full main and partially furled genoa. I listened to what the boat was saying, reduced the main, and order was restored! Setting a reef is done in the traditional fashion with a webbing strap at the mast and a line back to the halyard winch at the helm. With the mainsheet let right out to spill the wind, the maneuver was simple and quick. The balance under 1 reef and 5 rolls of genoa is excellent, and you mustn't forget that at 88m², it's the main which should be reduced first! After gybing I rolled up the genoa and unrolled the staysail. This smaller headsails very practical and would nicely complement the main with two reefs at probably around 28 knots true. The wind which had picked up to over 25 knots seemed to be dropping now, so it was the time to test the genacker. Bearing away to around 160° to blanket the unrolling of the genacker by the main, its 120m² set with ease even doing it solo, as the controls for the electric winch located in the cockpit and the tail from the furling drum are both led back to the helm station. A big thumbs-up to the designers of the deck layout: I was new to the boat, yet was able to successfully complete all the maneuvers on my own. Between 8 and 9.5 knots our limousine came back inshore to the lies du Frioul, the wind reduced and we had to hoist the full main again. The genacker furled gently (the furling line is perfectly calibrated to fill the winch next to the helm and needs no manual assistance). I unrolled the genoa, sheeted in the main, and there we were, upwind heading back to port, alas all too close!



A WORD FROM THE ARCHITECT

Privilege Marine's new Série 5 is an evolution of the 515, but the improvements are noticeable: the deck layout and the cockpit have been redesigned, hulls lengthened, and the sailplan made higher. The interior has not been left out, with an overall improvement in the way the volume works, and a very successful design by Franck Darnet. The attention to detail at the yard is omnipresent, in the structure, the equipment and the interior finish. It's a measure of safety and comfort for exacting clients and Privilege owners who really sail long term. At a time when other yards are standardizing everything with a vengeance, Privilege Marine knows how to listen to their clients and offer an à la carte personalization. Our partnership with the yard has been going for 25 years now and never has the will to make a difference been stronger. The yard's new director knew how to bring together a quality team working with this in mind. The Série 5 is the wonderful result of this, while we are waiting for the all new Série 6 planned for a few months' time...



Marc Lombard



A guest cabin: here, starboard aft



The engine compartment is fully painted, and fitted with shelves for stowing consumables



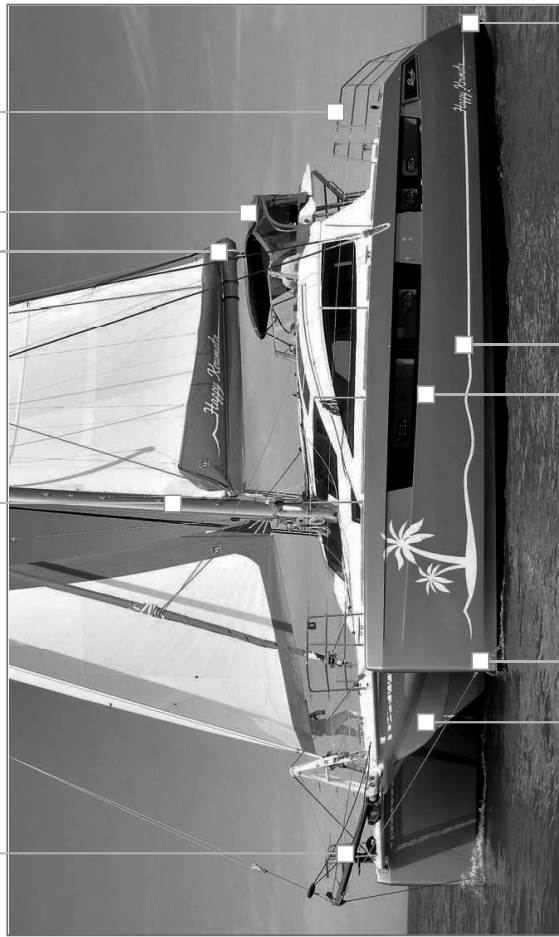
The helm console contains all the sail handling equipment from an efficient deck layout, making the boat easy for one person to handle

Protection of the helm station is ensured by the top quality bimini (adaptable for rain or sunshine)

The JP Maréchal aluminum spar is lacquered. Privilege remains loyal to this proven top of the range product.

The addition of a bowsprit is made easier by the superstructure, and handling the furling line from the helm station is particularly well achieved

Safety on the S5 is enhanced by fixed stainless rails and 3-level guardwires which go around the whole boat



Protected from impact by a wave-piercing wing, the superstructure reinforces the forward beam, simplifies the anchoring station and creates the original distinctive Privilege living space

The vertical appearance of the topsides is broken up by the light wells and the hatches

The new sugar scoops improve the flow through the water by lengthening the waterline: they also make for practical boarding and landing places

The straight, fine-entry bows overhang a modern and balanced hull

The topsides blend elegantly with the step

- ◆ Quality of build and passive safety
- ◆ Luxuriously fitted out
- ◆ Efficient helm station
- ◆ Maneuverability when short-handed
- ◆ Reliability of the installations



- ◆ Upkeep of the saildrives in the long term
- ◆ No mainsheet traveler
- ◆ No boom vang for sailing downwind
- ◆ No electric winch for the mainsheet
- ◆ No active alarm for the engine coolant