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A stunning new Vantage point

Designer Bill Upfold, best known for his trademark mid-pilothouse cruisers, is finding popularity with his sedan designs.

SEDAN-STYLE launches or cruisers, not so long ago considered deeply unfashionable, are currently enjoying something of a renaissance. Australia's "big two" big boat manufacturers, both offer almost as many sedans as they do flybridge models. Many of the marques imported to this part of the world now have sedans or sedan-like vessels in their inventory, and Kiwis, especially those stepping up from a trailered powerboat, have long fancied a single level fast cruiser. Prolific New Zealand powerboat designer, Bill Upfold of Elite Marine Design, is no newbie to

With a loaded displacement of 10200kg, Vantage is currently capable of a top speed of 28 knots



this style as the author reviewed his first way back in 1992. Since then there has been 11 of various lengths and has just launched his third 13-metre Sports Sedan, Vantage. It is an excellent example of why this style of boat is again finding favour.

Scott Lane, one of Bill Upfold's regular boatbuilders, started the vessel as a spec boat and then used its hull as a mould for his own boat. Nothing much happened for a while until the owner of another of Bill's boats just happened to be looking for a second boat for his fast-growing family.

"We were originally looking at second-hand boats, but then I got talking to Bill," he says. "He told us about Scott's spec boat and it was a no brainer.

"I love the Elite style, think the look of the sedan is really smart and the boat is clearly perfect for a young family. It is not overly-complicated, very easy to use and ideal for the way we all go boating."

Unlike Scott Lane's boat, *Odysseia*, Vantage has twin engines: a pair of 300hp Volvo Penta D6s. There are other changes, too. The décor, as one would expect, is quite

different and the dinette has been raised. The top of the dinette seat backs are now flush with the bottom of the side windows and, although that looks good, aesthetics were not the main reason for the change.

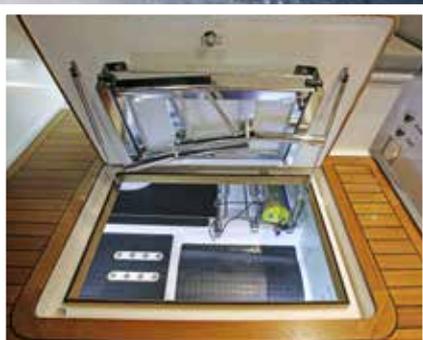
Those seated in this area now have virtually uninterrupted views right around the boat, an obvious plus at any time but especially when kids are on board. Another significant (if unintended) bonus is the greater headroom above the main berth in the cabin below.

Another immediately noticeable change is

A stunning appearance from any angle.



The guest quarters with single berths in a vee are in the focsle



One of the most striking aspects of Vantage is the incredible stainless steel work.

the new pillar-less aft bulkhead. Combined with a new electric drop-down window over the galley, the entire back of the saloon, apart from the fridge/freezer console on starboard, is now open to the cockpit, enhancing communication between the two areas and further improving visibility outside.

The interior design, the work of the owner's daughter-in-law, is very different to that on *Odyssea*. Not so much in the layout but certainly in the choice of coverings and the use of accent notes.

For example, the grains on the Oak timber veneer all run horizontally (rather than following the more common vertical orientation); the pelmet trims, which at first glance appear to be stainless steel or burnished aluminium, are Palladium and the dash is a striking combination of carbon fibre and dark leather.

SMART GALLEY

Vantage's compact galley is a smart affair

with those horizontal timber veneers offset by bright white Hi Mac bench tops and an almost jet black composite sink, the latter compete with a remote plug control. The black ship's kettle on the Force 10 4-burner oven and stove provides another contrast, as does the Fisher & Paykel stainless steel fridge across the walkway.

There are dedicated drawers for glasses (in the galley), crockery (under the dinette) and wine (by the companionway forward) and handy stowage under both the starboard settee and the helm station.

Vantage's interior layout is of the "if it ain't broke, don't fix it" variety and will, therefore, be familiar to those who know Bill's sedan designs.

For those that don't, there is the raised dinette forward of the galley to port, and a long settee between the fridge unit and the helm station on starboard. Both the dinette and the settee have been configured to provide addition berths if required. In the case of the former, a very robust looking

pedestal allows the specially-designed table to be lowered into position while the latter features a neat cubbyhole extension under the helm seat to accommodate even the longest of guests.

The settee and dinette seating are all upholstered with porcelain Le Monde leather and perfectly offset by an attractive light grey carpet (official colour name: hermelin) with vinyl planked flooring aft in the high use areas.

A hinged LCD TV, connected to a Sky TV decoder and KVH TV3 satellite antenna, has been smartly recessed into the starboard bulkhead and can swing out and be easily seen by all.

ATTRACTIVE DASH

Vantage's attractive, if rather compact, dash is dominated by a Furuno "glass bridge" system featuring two TZT (Time Zero Touch) 14" LCD screens connected to a Chirp sounder module, 4kW radar, 711C autopilot and GPS. Also networked in are

Take a look around



1. Vantage's compact galley is a smart affair with horizontal timber veneers and contrasting white and jet black. 2. Vantage's attractive, if rather compact, dash is dominated by a Furuno "glass bridge". 3. The settee and dinette seating are all upholstered with porcelain Le Monde leather. 4. There is a long settee between the fridge unit and the helm station to starboard. 5. There is lots to like about Vantage's cockpit. 6. The main cabin with its queen-sized fore and aft berth is to port.

an engine room camera and the Fusion Bluetooth stereo system.

There are also, on the main part of the dash, controls for the Auto Anchor and wipers and the engine readouts.

Underneath to port is the bow thruster control. On starboard, on a handy shelf and sloping upstand, are the engine gauges, the throttle controls and a handy stainless steel drink holder. Under these are the ICOM VHF and the Dometic Tank Monitor.

Above, in their own moulding, are twin Furuno readouts able to show speed, wind direction and strength.

There are also large sliding hatches above both the dash and the dinette to provide light and wind flow on hot, breezeless days. They also provide an excellent "Vantage" point for spotting when game fishing: allowing the skipper and mate to stand high in search of bird or fish life.

Forward, the layout is standard Elite Sedan. The main cabin with its queen-

sized fore and aft berth to port, the guest quarters with single berths in a vee are in the focus and the bathroom and head are to starboard.

As on *Odyssea*, access to the engine room is via an impressive bulkhead door in the shower cubicle and through a small but very practical utility room. This latter has received a major makeover from the previous model and now features an attractive bank of three drawers. These are ideal for tool stowage and stylishly offset with smart sliding catches.

CLEVER COCKPIT

There is lots to like about Vantage's cockpit. For a start, there is builder Scott Lane's famous "God Step", the centre section of the boarding platform that manually hinges down to just below water level. There are also protective pushpits on each quarter and stainless steel rubbing rails on the trailing edge of the platform to prevent

the mooring lines from rubbing on the teak. The transom houses a handy sink with telephone shower on the port side and a large deep live bait tank on starboard.

The forward console directly aft of the galley houses a barbecue and its attendant gas bottle as well as providing stowage for fenders and the like.

There is another handy freezer in a bench seat on port, a matching seat to starboard, a rod locker in the starboard bulkhead alongside and a second set of engine and bow thruster controls. These latter are ideal when backing up on a big fish or when reversing into a berth.

One of the most striking aspects of Vantage's cockpit is the incredible stainless steel work. Created by master craftsman Brian Elliott, the various pieces: the rod racks, hand rail (complete with eye holes for the cockpit canopy), the "roof rack" (for kayaks, paddleboards and the like) and, most particularly, the mast are true works

Technical Specifications

Boat Design Name:	Vantage
Year Launched:	2015
Designer:	Bill Upfold/Elite Marine Design
Interior Designer:	Amy Clark
Builder:	Scott Lane Boatbuilders
LOA:	12.8m
Beam:	4.3m
Draft:	.85m
Displ (loaded):	9800kg
Max Speed:	28kt
Cruise Speed:	21kt
Construction:	GRP
Fuel Cap:	1000L
Water Cap:	600L
Engines Make:	Volvo Penta
Drive Train:	Conventional Shafts
Propellers:	Teignbridge
Inverter/Charger:	Mastervolt
Bow Thruster:	Maxpower
Anchor Winch:	Lofrans
Anchors:	Manson Supreme
Steering:	Hi Drive
Engine Controls:	Volvo
Lighting:	Cantiluiipi/Hella
Paint (Antifouling):	International Awlcraft
Hatches:	Lewmar
Wipers:	Exalto
Sunroof/Woodwork:	SLB
Heads:	Sealand
Tenders:	Takacat
Trim Tabs:	Volvo
Upholstery:	Coastal Upholstery
Searchlight:	Marinco

Fuel & Performance Data

Elite 13m Vantage

Fuel capacity: 1000 litres

RPM	Knots	L/h	L/NM	Range (NM)
1000	5.7	5.8	1.3	769
1500	8.1	15.97	2.0	505
2000	10.0	30.7	3.0	329
2200	11.1	40.1	3.6	275
2400	13.8	47.94	3.5	287
2600	16.2	54.44	3.4	297
2800	18.5	67.75	3.7	273
3000	21.0	76.27	3.7	273
3200	23.3	88.6	3.8	262
3400	25.3	101.13	4.0	250
3500	26.4	116.51	4.4	227
Full	27.9	117.1	4.2	238

NM based on 1000 litres of fuel.

Electronics

MFD:	Furuno
Autopilot:	Furuno
VHF:	Icom
Entertainment Systems:	Fusion
Base Price of Boat:	\$900,000

of art.

So, too, is Vantage's amazing bait board, which lives in its own holder under one of the twin cockpit hatches. These open to reveal stowage for dive bottles (in their own racks), the ship's tender and its two outboards: a 2hp Mercury and a 15hp one.

Even the side decks have been embellished: with resin-coated mahogany toe rails coated with attractive metallic paint.

UNDERWAY

With a loaded displacement of 10200kg and able to carry 1000 litres of fuel and 600 litres of water, Vantage is currently capable of a top speed of 28 knots and a cruising speed anywhere between 20 and 25 knots, depending on conditions. There seems little difference in fuel consumption (on a litres per nautical mile basis) whether one is travelling at 12 or 13 knots or 25 knots, meaning the owners can cruise at whatever speed suits them at the time, without having to keep an eye on the fuel gauge.

At the time we conducted this review, Bill noted that they still "had a 100rpm up their sleeve", meaning the twin D6s

potentially have another knot or two to deliver once the propellers have been tweaked.

SUMMARY

While the predictability of a production boat appeals to some, there is obviously still a market for a more customisable approach such as that offered by designer Bill Upfold and builders like Scott Lane.

A vastly experienced boatie, Vantage's owner had very clear ideas on what he wanted and has clearly relished the opportunity to be intimately involved with the design and fit-out of his new boat. A perfectionist, he also clearly values the high level of the finish produced by Scott and his team.

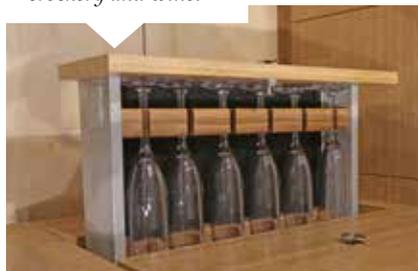
Proudly showing me around the saloon, he constantly pointed out favourite areas, proclaiming "how high the level of finish and detail is on a full custom build

With New Zealand well and truly out of the big boat production game, it is great to see there is still a place for inventive and flexible designers such as Bill Upfold and craftsmen boatbuilders like Scott Lane. ☼

Looking forward through the saloon, it's easy to see the high attention to detail.



There are dedicated drawers for glasses, crockery and wine.



Contact: Scott Lane Boat Builders: www.scottlaneboatbuilders.co.nz
Bill Upfold: www.elitemarine.co.nz