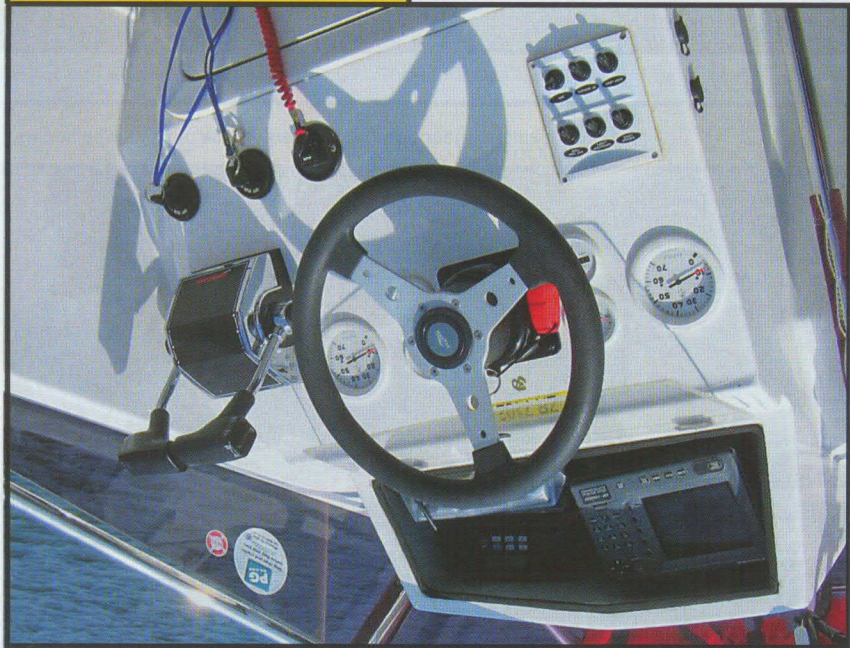


## “Hi Nautique hydraulic steering makes life easy for the skipper”



V Cat steering/instrument console



Bow storage hatch and lure panel



Fuel and fish hatches with raised lips

building of this boat. For more information on the V Cat or other boats in the range, Nathan Muntree can be contacted at Boat-A-Rama Durban (031) 305 3837 or 082 555 2807.

offered by the traditional rod holders in the gunwales.

The V Cat is extremely smooth to plane with the power supplied by the Mercury 90s, and the Hi Nautique hydraulic steering makes life easy for the skipper. The motors have 17 inch pitch props, which explains the rapid acceleration out the hole. Being such a big boat, one needs this when circumstances demand.

There are a lot of V Cats in use along the Natal coastline for commercial fishing and diving, and for whale and dolphin watching trips. As the conditions offshore proved to be too calm for such a boat, Nuno did his best to find some rough water, even making some of our own! Her response to cornering and any chop was so slick that I decided we needed to come back again on a rougher day. We planned at 3 000 rpm, trawled, cruised, and since conditions allowed, went flat out. We just could not fault her performance.

The finish on the boat is good - not surprisingly, as Dr Jumna, who has polished many teeth, expected his boat to have the same sheen. To their credit, the factory met his expectations.

## “We just could not fault her performance”

be on the lookout. There was no snoozing on this trip! The V Cat forged ahead at 3 000 rpm looking as solid as the oil rig next to us, a tribute both to the boat's ability to cope with difficult conditions and to Dr Jumna's prowess as a skipper. And even in some of the big swells, the crew on board managed to stay dry. Meanwhile Nathan and I were popping around in the semi-rigid like champagne corks. Luckily I knew that he was an experienced skipper and I trusted him, but my old bones took a beating!

This eight-person, 6.6 m Cat, which comes with safety equipment and a Furuno LS 610 fishfinder, can be recommended as a real investment at her price of R255 000. She is a tribute to the boat builder, Vega, who has harnessed his many years of experience in the

A few weeks later just after a cyclone had passed Madagascar, the sea off the Natal coast became extremely rough. It was time to go out in this Cat again to see what she was really made of. Dr Jumna was most enthusiastic, and I was grateful that he was so obliging. I asked Nathan Muntree to bring along another boat from which we could take pictures, and he arrived with a good-looking 5 m Polo semi-rigid boat. (I didn't think too much about this until we were out of the harbour mouth.) Port control must have wondered why we would want to go out of the harbour as fishing was out of the question. Well, Nathan and I had the time of our lives! The swells were 2 to 2.5 m high, and even going closer to shore, the V Cat was out of our line

## Part 2