

The 49er is the two person one-design skiff which has transformed competitive dinghy sailing offering performance, excitement and spectacle, previously only found in 18 footers, together with the unmatched ferocity of competition only generated in Olympic fleets.

Designed by Julian Bethwaite, the ultra light, slender hull offers minimal resistance with no noticeable speed hump. This means the 49er smoothly accelerates onto the plane and the speed just goes on rising.

The most remarkable feature of the 49er at first sight is the solid wings which make the boat safe and a joy to sail. Running from wing to wing is easy helping newcomers quickly climb the "skiff learning curve".

Trapezing from these wide wings, the crew members generate a massive righting moment to control the power from the huge sail area, and continue accelerating the boat.

The enormous sail area means that the 49er is fully powered up in about 8 knots of breeze. The flexible composite top mast gives effective gust response above this wind speed, making control of such a large rig possible. The high boom means there is plenty of room to move around the boat, whilst a self-tacking jib frees the crew is to concentrate on playing the mainsail upwind and the asymmetric spinnaker downwind. The short foot on the spinnaker and radical new style of cut means the sheet loads are kept to a minimum, allowing many shapes and sizes of crews to sail the boat effectively.