




KATE's owner-builder, Philip Walwyn, has had an eye for 12-Meters since the 1958 AMERICA's Cup, when COLUMBIA beat the British challenger SCEPTRE. He was 11 years old then, and has been a fan of the class ever since.

KATE's topsails were en-route from the loft at the time of this writing. "It's a good thing we don't have them," said Walwyn, suggesting that the temptation to fly them may have trumped the crew's learning curve.

is color. Walwyn's first boat, you see, was yellow. It served him well, and he saw no reason to change that. Every boat he's built since has been similarly painted. It's become something of a Walwyn hallmark—not to mention a Caribbean photographer's delight: KATE's hull tends to pop out against cerulean hues, and in the half-light of evening, sitting on her mooring, the boat develops a sepia tone that suggests her era. But Walwyn settled on the color for none of these reasons. He simply likes yellow.

"The drum I like beating is this thing called simplicity," said Walwyn. "It's much more difficult but much more rewarding." Sailing KATE on and off the mooring without an engine is an adventure and a challenge, and making sail is not for the faint of heart—literally. Her rig, for its miles of cordage, is simple in comparison to some of the modern, highly engineered yachts that she encounters in the Caribbean. "Within four days of launch we were sailing

offshore," Walwyn said. He recalls a Swan 82 of extreme complexity: "They were waiting two years to sort it."

What drove Philip Walwyn to build a 60' gaff-rigged sloop on the side of a hill on a Caribbean island? One could conclude, from his history of sailing and building, that it's competitiveness. His reading of the yachting classics during his youth was certainly a factor—as was his fascination with International Rule boats. The man knows his passions, and he indulges them. But during the awards ceremony after our first day of racing, he revealed something more than that. He went deeper than Uffa Fox and Alfred Mylne and simplicity and winning. He paraphrased Henry David Thoreau. When asked why he built KATE, Walwyn looked me in the eye and said this: "Most people live lives of quiet desperation and die with the song still in them." 

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