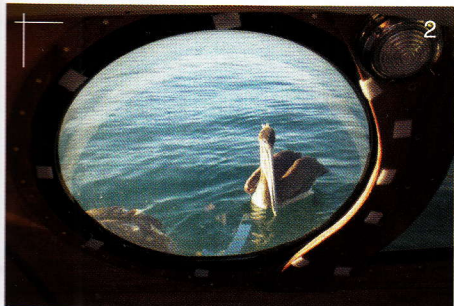


## MICRO LONG-TERM CRUISING CATAMARAN

Tony Bigras likes designing and building boats, and more especially multihulls, from a little plywood sport cat to a 50-foot aluminium blue-water cruising catamaran. After having forsaken sailing boats for a few years, for a 40-foot motor catamaran, with which he explored the west coast of Canada, he wanted to taste once again the pleasures of cruising under sail. This time the programme he was aiming at was a very long singlehanded trip in the Central American sunshine...after an express construction which had to be completed in a summer!

To succeed in this challenge, Tony dreamed up a curious cruising catamaran the size of a Hobie Cat 16, where each hull can accommodate a seated adult, and whose central nacelle



houses a double berth. This curious craft, called Miss Cindy, has two slim, flat-bottomed hulls whose volume increases significantly in the upper parts, thanks to pronounced longitudinal 'steps'. The whole thing is topped by an imposing, but nicely-shaped coachroof, which occupies almost the whole width of the boat. The tiny cockpit, protected by coamings, ends up in a gantry supporting 100W of solar panels, whilst the two relatively short, wooden masts are stepped on each hull. To simplify singlehanded manoeuvres, they are rigged with fully-battened lugsails which roll around their slim boom via lines which return to the cockpit.

The 'stitch and glue' construction in plywood-epoxy, along with the preparation of the masts and the finishing didn't take longer than the planned three months, and Tony and his beauty were ready to set off at the end of the summer.

The trip began by road. The 250kg weight and



reduced dimensions of the boat allowed it to be loaded on the car roof rack, and thus cover the 2,500km which separates the Vancouver Island in Canada from the Cortez Sea, in Mexico.

Tony and Miss Cindy then treated themselves to a 6,000 mile cruise, which took them along the Mexican coast as far as Florida, passing via Guatemala, El Salvador, and Nicaragua on the Pacific side, then the Cayman Islands, Cuba and the Keys archipelago on the Atlantic side. Not bad for a boat which was built in a few weeks!

Especially as instead of passing through the Panama Canal like everyone else, Tony opted for an original passage from one ocean to the other: after being dropped off by car and trailer on the huge Lake Nicaragua about 20 kilometres inland, he reached and descended the San Juan river to the Atlantic Ocean, tackling a few rapids on the way.

After 7 months' cruising studded with top speeds under sail of more than 15 knots and a passage of more than 400 miles, Miss Cindy and her skipper have shown what a well-designed and well-sailed micro cat is capable of!



### TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS -

#### Miss Cindy

Length: 4.77 m (15'8")

Beam: 2.56 m (8' 5")

Draft: 36 cm (53 cm with the rudders) (14" - 21" with rudders)

Sail area: 18.6 m<sup>2</sup> (200 sq ft.)

Unladen weight: 250 kg (500 pounds)

Load carrying capacity: 200 kg

Web site: <http://turtleislands.net/>

- 1 : Miss Cindy, a small, much travelled catamaran...  
 2 : Miss Cindy attracted the curiosity of everyone, including this pelican!  
 3 : David facing Goliath.  
 4 : An atypical boat for a voyage which is no less so.