

## **FREEWING RIG**

I was very happy to recommend the Freewing rick to all my clients following my first sail with the rig on Loch Ness. And least two have been ordered. Selling the rig to them all was not at all difficult, in spite of the extra cost above that of a conventional rig.. The advantages are readily seen by most sailors.

In my view, there could not be a better time in which to introduce a rig such as this. There has been a lot of interest in new rig types in recent years. All are seeking greater efficiency and ease of handling. The restrictions of the standing rigging on conventional masts is evident when compared to the unstayed rig.

The best comparison is with the Aerorig, which has been very successfully promoted around the world. There is an advantage in be being able to claim Freewing as preceding Aerorig in terms of initial development, ie it is not a copy or improved version.

The similarities are in the general outline and the materials used. The differences are in efficiency. I have sailed with several different Aerorigs and a number are fitted to my catamaran designs. I have owned an Aerorig. I find Freewing a more interesting responsive and responsive rig to sail. This is due to the wing leading edge effect, which is more efficient than Aerorig with its more rounded fixed leading edge to the sail. The removal of the drag from conventional stays to the mast is a major factor. The ability to rotate the rig 360° is an important safety factor.

There is also the comparison with the less successful Walker Wingsail - which basically failed but it did attract attention to the use of wings and alternative rigs in general.

The one factor that is currently holding back the general acceptance of carbon rigs of any kind is the cost. If substantial cost cutting could be achieved, the world market would be wide open. The potential is enormous.

Derek Kelsall  
Catamaran Designs.