

Shadow Cat concept from Bjorn Johansson

In September 2002 the United States Navy's Office of Naval Research in Washington DC chose Titan Corporation of San Diego, California and Nigel Gee and Associates Ltd of Southampton to design a new vessel for the US Navy. That became the X Craft; a high-speed ship designed to be transoceanic and also capable of carrying out littoral shallow-water operations. Today BMT Nigel Gee have developed a civvie version with Bjorn Johansson design. It's not a yacht but a shadow vessel and BMT and Bjorn feel the ideal design for that task. Somewhat shorter and slower than the 73-m Navy version – that makes 50 knots using 2 LM 2500 GTs driving jets – the shadow version is 57 m LOA and steams at 28 knots. Its shallow draft and that, by implication, of the accompanying yacht make the combo very versatile and capable of getting nearer the beach than, for example, a 90-m yacht that carries the toys on board, and, likely, for less build cost. The design is functional and with very few curves so should be economical to construct. BMT's hull is a unique swath-like catamaran form with waisted waterline sections to improve motion levels in high sea states; the Military version could maintain 40 knots in sea state 4.



The payload is carried within the vessel as the cargo area has a gantry launch and recovery system, and an elevator to the Helo Pad, formed from the only external 'deck' on the vessel. The Shadow Cat can carry sufficient bunkers to re-supply the yacht, embarked aircraft and toys. Stowage is provided too for substantial quantities of spares and consumables for both vessels. The design also features a large and un-obscured helicopter landing deck from where the aircraft is taken by elevator to the hangar below.

The only issue I can imagine with a Shadow Cat is one of painting her grey; you might just invite a bit of unfriendly attention from coastal protection vessels!

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