

Gemini Legacy 35: A New Cat in Town

The sure-footed, upgraded Gemini Legacy 35 catamaran is a fresh take on a proven favorite.

by Mark Pillsbury

In 1995, multihull sailor, designer, and boatbuilder Tony Smith made a splash with the launch of his Gemini 105M. Thirty-three feet long and with a beam of just 14 feet, the Gemini was large enough for serious cruising, comfortable enough to live aboard, had retractable daggerboards for upwind sailing and gunkholing in the shallows, and could fit snugly within a conventional boat slip. Plus, the little cat had staying power. Over the ensuing 17 years, his company, Performance Cruising, located on a creek just outside of downtown Annapolis, Maryland, built more than 1,100 of the 105M, an impressive run considering that most production builders change models seemingly with the seasons.

Now his daughter, Laura Smith Hersfeld—who in 2009 became president of the company that's now called [Gemini Catamarans](#)—anticipates that the newly launched [Legacy 35](#) will enjoy a similar reception.



Billy Black

Under sail, the Legacy 35 is easy to handle and tracks straight, thanks to shallow keels on each hull.



I boarded the brand-new model on a blustery Chesapeake Bay morning following the U.S. Sailboat Show in Annapolis last fall. It was a heck of a day for a sail and a good morning to be on a dry, sure-footed cat that took the gusts in stride. I'd hitched a ride out on the Zodiac used by our Boat of the Year judges, so the Legacy 35 was already under way with the square-topped main hoisted when I climbed aboard and was greeted by Gemini's Robin Hodges. As the inflatable roared away, we rolled out the 120-percent genoa, set on a Hood furler, and we were off, too.

Judging from the breeze, we wouldn't need the code zero set on the optional [Seldén](#) sprit. With the wind hovering near the mid teens and gusting higher, we were quite comfortable with boat speeds that ranged from 5 knots up into the 7s, depending on the point of sail. The Lewmar steering and twin rudders were smooth to the touch as we tracked along and then tacked. If there was one thing I might've wished for, it would've been another winch at the helm station when we jibed onto starboard tack. Both the mainsheet and starboard jib sheet are led through stoppers and share the same winch, making it a bit of a dance to center the main and cast off the genoa simultaneously. Robin said they were working on a solution.

The Legacy is about 2 feet longer than the 105M, which it's replaced in the company's line, and while there's some family resemblance—father Tony collaborated with Glenn Henderson, Warren Luhrs, James Osteen, and the team at Marlow-Hunter on the project—it's a completely new boat from bow to stern. (Hunter Marine, now called Marlow-Hunter, has been building boats for Gemini since 2010.)

With the Legacy, a single centerline outdrive has been replaced by a pair of 15-horsepower shaft-drive Yanmar diesels that push the boat right along under power while providing all the agility that cats are known for, thanks to the twin screws set well apart.

Down below, a large, U-shaped couch and table face aft, spanning the bridgedeck. The galley is amidships in the starboard hull, with cabins and double berths fore and aft. The port hull is the owners stateroom, with a head aft, a nav station amidships, and a spacious cabin forward of the mast; the queen berth is set athwartships so one can climb in from the foot of the bed. Three ports provide lots of light, and the view forward is delightful.

Throughout the interior—headroom is 6 feet to 6 feet 3 inches—rich cherry woodwork and a wood sole create a sense of warmth. My one question after our test sail: How can a guy get to spend a week sailing the new Gemini in the shallows of the Florida Keys, or perhaps the Bahamas, in warmer breezes?

[Click here to see more photos of the Gemini Legacy 35.](#)

GEMINI LEGACY 35

LOA	35' 4"	(10.77 M.)
LWL	32' 0"	(9.75 M.)
BEAM	14' 0"	(4.27 M.)
DRAFT	2' 10"	(0.86 M.)
SAIL AREA	656 SQ. FT.	(60.9 SQ. M.)
BALLAST	N.A.	
DISPLACEMENT	9,800 LB.	(4,445 KG.)
BALLAST/D	N.A.	
D/L	134	
SA/D	22.9	
WATER	60 GAL.	(227 L.)
FUEL	36 GAL.	(136 L.)
HOLDING	18 GAL.	(68 L.)
MAST HEIGHT	46' 0"	(14.02 M.)
ENGINES	TWIN15-HPYANMARDIESELS	
DESIGNER	TONYSMITH&THEMARLOW-HUNTER DESIGN TEAM	
PRICE	\$225,000	
GEMINI CATAMARANS		
(410) 626-2720		
www.gemini-catamarans.com		

SEA TEST

WIND SPEED	10 TO 17 KNOTS
SEA STATE	MODERATE CHOP
SAILING	
CLOSEHAULED	5.3 KNOTS
REACHING	7.0 KNOTS
MOTERING	
CRUISE (2,300 RPM)	5.2 KNOTS
FAST (3,800 RPM)	7.5 KNOTS