

Southerly 110



This shoal-draught 35-footer embodies all that is special about the Southerly range of swing-keel offshore cruisers. Duncan Kent reports

Most yachts with seven-foot draught can't access the upper reaches of tidal creeks, but this one can. Hauling her 2.18m keel into the hull reduces her draught to just 72cm.

Renowned for their swing keels, the Southerly range has proven popular amongst sailors who like to go creek-crawling or stop in anchorages where only ducks dare venture. However, with that keel fully down, the impressive draught gives excellent performance to windward.

The Southerly 110, introduced in 1999, was the first of the marque to sport 'modern' features such as canted twin rudders and a near-plumb bow. Does she still feel modern, 16 years later? I sailed one recently to find out.

Performance

We joined owners Chris and Sarah Elphick on board *Wind Rose* on a gusty day with the wind varying from 8-14 knots true. Owing to time and tidal restrictions we stayed inside Chichester Harbour, so the water was reasonably flat.

Despite having a relatively small self-tacking jib, the 110's mainsail was powerful enough to drive her at a good cruising speed. Sailing close-hauled, we maxed out at 7.1 knots through the water with 17 knots of wind over the deck, and Chris reckons she's good for an average passage speed of 6.5 knots in most conditions. On a broad reach she slowed to 5 knots with the small jib shadowed by the mainsail and virtually redundant.

She's perfect for sailing into shallow waters and confined areas



Southerly 110 – Performance on test

Point of sail	Apparent wind angle	Apparent wind speed	Boatspeed
Close-hauled	35°	12-16 knots	5.6-6.4 knots
Fetch	60°	12-16 knots	5.8-6.8 knots
Beam reach	90°	10-15 knots	5.4-6.2 knots
Broad reach	120°	8-10 knots	5.0-5.4 knots
Run	180°	8 knots	4.2 knots

I've sailed a Southerly 110 in much rougher conditions and found her to be surprisingly stiff and well balanced in a seaway. She was also dry on deck and gave us a comfortable ride even when fighting our way around Portland Bill with the wind blowing hard against the tide.

In light airs she's a dream to sail – light on the helm, directionally stable and swift to accelerate in the gusts. With the self-tacking jib she's a little sluggish through tacks in light airs, but the advantages of such an easy setup are obvious. She is perfect for sailing through shallow waters and confined spaces.

At the helm

The helm area is minimal due to the lack of a cut-out around the wheel. Thankfully the wheel is fairly small and the Whitlock direct steering and twin rudder set-up is light yet responsive under sail. Lack of prop wash over the rudders could make manoeuvring under power very tricky without a bow thruster, although these were pretty much a standard item, despite being on the options list.

The mainsheet is easy to reach on its short track in front of the binnacle, but the sheet for the small self-tacking jib feeds to a winch on the coachroof, so you have to clamber forward to trim it if you're sailing singlehanded.

Design & construction

Southerly's trademark ballasted swing keel is electro-hydraulically operated

from a joystick at the helm. The hull is moulded with a recess around the keel aperture, into which is bolted a massive, 2.2-tonne cast-iron ballast plate. It stands slightly proud of the hull and offers considerable protection when taking the ground. The 1.1-tonne cast-iron swing keel further increases resistance to heel, as well as improving her pointing ability to windward.

The hull is solid laminate below the waterline and double thickness around the ballast plate. Topsides and decks are balsa/glassfibre sandwich for lightness and insulation. All internal bulkheads are bonded to the hull and deck, whilst the deck itself is bolted and bonded to the hull for maximum strength and integrity.

Sailplan

The 110 was available with two rig options. The standard sailplan was a masthead rig with swept spreaders and the option of an in-mast furling or single-line slab-reefed mainsail, along with a 120% furling genoa. Alternatively (as with our test boat),

USED BOAT TEST

Even with a small self-tacking jib her mainsail is powerful enough to give good cruising speeds



buyers could opt for a 7/8 fractional rig with a smaller self-tacking jib. On both rig variants, the twin-spreader Seldén mast is supported by cap, intermediate and aft lower shrouds, which are all led to a single chainplate each side, mounted against the side of the coachroof.

Deck layout

Her cockpit might be considered narrow, but in fact it's the ideal width for bracing oneself when heeled and has comfortably angled seatbacks. The helming area is separated by the mainsheet traveller, which crosses the cockpit between the seats ahead of the binnacle, within easy reach of the helmsman. Our test boat had the self-tacking jib with its single sheet on a coachroof winch – a neat arrangement, but there's no chance of trimming the jib sheet without leaving the wheel.

A split backstay and lift-up helm seat allow easy access through the large transom gate, where there's a telescopic boarding ladder and a single, small step in the transom, which isn't ideal →

Owners Chris and Sarah enjoy the Southerly's solid feel



PHOTOS: COLIN WORK

The owners

The owners of our test boat, a 2007 model named *Wind Rose*, are Chris and Sarah Elphick, who bought her when they retired from running a busy Sussex veterinary surgery in 2010. They have a long history of sailing, starting many years ago when they sailed their 24-footer to the Med and

cruised around for several years.

Prior to the Southerly they owned a lifting-keel Feeling 32, but found her a little twitchy and unstable in rough weather. 'This boat is much stiffer and feels more solid,' says Sarah, 'and is the height of luxury after some of our past boats'

USED BOAT TEST

Key cruising features

Her Whitlock steering is quite light but there's good feedback from the twin rudders

Two Selden sloop rigs were offered, fractional or masthead

Fractionally rigged boats have a self-tacking jib to ease sail handling

She has a lifting helm seat and a wide walk-through at the stern for easy access to the water

While the big windows and hull portlights let plenty of light in, she lacks ventilation

Her rigging and deck gear are substantially built, with ample reinforcement where it's needed

Rob Humphreys, renowned for high-performance hulls, has given her sleek underwater lines

for showering off the back.

Her coachroof is quite high so the handrails are easy to reach going forward. The side decks are also wide and uncluttered, and she has a high, capped toerail, which provides a foothold for crew getting around on deck when she heels over. The deck cleats (including a mid-ship pair) and her twin bow roller are substantially made and stoutly attached.

Living below

A deep bridgedeck and steep companionway makes access below decks somewhat tricky, but it feels quite secure.

Southerly started building what it called 'raised saloon' (RS) models shortly after the 110 was born, but even in the standard format the 110 has a fairly high coachroof, which means there's bags of headroom down below.

The galley and nav station are raised up, which gives the chef stunning all-round views outside through the large windows and allows the navigator to see forward under way, as in a deck saloon yacht.

Two more steps down lead you into the saloon, with its large, U-shaped seat to port and long, curved settee opposite. Although there's plenty of space here for dining, resting and entertaining for up to eight people, the keel box at the after end limits access around the table. This, together with the high galley bulkhead, makes it feel just a little cramped.



The saloon table and seating are generously sized, but access isn't great

The forward cabin is rather poky for a 36-footer and features twin crossover bunks rather than a vee-berth, although the lower berth has a side infill to make a narrow double. Using it mainly for stowage, Chris has sawn the top bunk in half, leaving the remaining shelf as spinnaker stowage. A folding bike sits on the other bunk.

The aft cabin is a different story. It has a large, offset double berth measuring 1.83mL x 1.70mW (6ft x 5ft 6in), loads of clothes stowage in tall lockers and a wide desk/dresser. Headroom is somewhat limited (1.5m) but there is access to the well-appointed heads, which has 2m of headroom, lots of light and plenty of elbow room.

Chart table

This is a great navigation area with a large chart table and instrument console, a dedicated seat and good chart stowage. Add an autopilot control and, with the excellent view ahead, you have the equivalent of a deckhouse in which to both pilot and sail the yacht in the shelter of the cabin.

A very comprehensive electrical switch panel is installed in the chart table upright.

Galley

The 110's galley is positively huge, thanks to the design incorporating part of the keel box below the worktop.

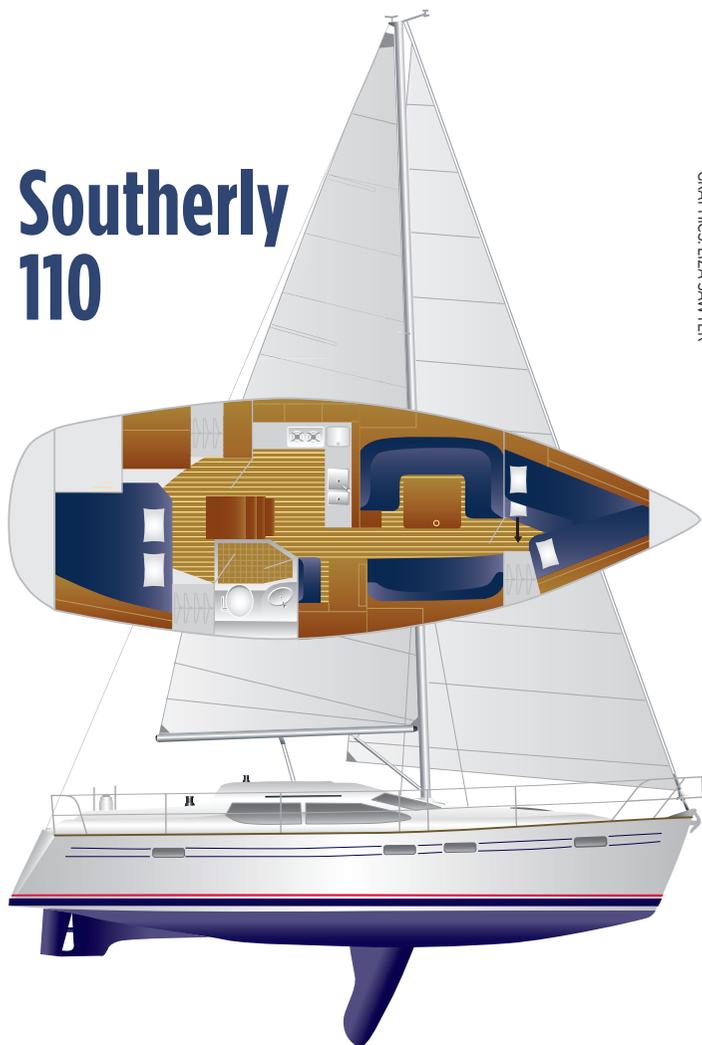
Being raised up keeps you in touch with people in the saloon as well as giving you a panoramic view around the anchorage.

It is well equipped, has a full-size oven and sinks, plenty of stowage and a large top-loading fridge. It's all topped off nicely with a Corian-style worktop and a sturdy, full-length stainless handrail, although the fiddles are a tad too shallow for my liking.

Maintenance

Access to all the service points on the 110 isn't bad at all and the engine is easily reached by removing the steps at the front or by lifting the box off in the aft cabin. The fuel tank is beneath the galley floor and the water tank is under the aft end of the saloon seating.

Southerly 110



GRAPHICS: LIZA SAMYER

FACTS AND FIGURES

- **Guide price**
£100,000-£160,000
- **LOA** 10.82m (35ft 6in)
- **LWL** 9.22m (30ft 3in)
- **Beam** 3.57m (11ft 9in)
- **Draught** 0.72-2.18m
(2ft 4in-7ft 2in)
- **Displacement**
6,980kg (15,356 lb)
- **Ballast** 3,255kg (7,161 lb)
- **Ballast ratio** 46%
- **Sail area** 54m² (577sq ft)
- **SA/D ratio** 14.99
- **Diesel** 161 lit (35 gal)
- **Water** 187 lit (41 gal)
- **Engine** 29hp Yanmar 3YM30
- **Transmission** Shaft drive
- **RCD category** A-Ocean



Having the chart table and seat raised up allows excellent forward vision

- **Designer**
Rob Humphreys Design
- **Builder** Northshore Yachts
- **Owners Association**
www.soa-forum.org.uk



The galley is well laid out and big enough to cook for a crew of 10!

OUR VERDICT ON THE BOAT

What's she like to sail?

The combination of an easily-handled sailplan, light but positive steering, twin rudders and a fingertip-adjustable keel makes her a doddle to sail and it's simple to get the best out of her in all but the worst sea conditions. No, she's not as stiff as a boat with a deep fin and lead keel bulb, but her ballasted plate puts another ton of weight low down when fully extended, making her a good deal stiffer than almost any other lifting-keel yacht I've sailed.

She has modern underwater lines from the highly regarded designer Rob Humphreys, so she's no slouch through the water either, although her shallow forefoot does result in a little slamming when pounding head-on into big seas.

The canted twin-rudders perform well when heeled and the prop shaft log/skeg increases her directional stability. I also really like having the nav station raised up to give a view ahead when plotting a fix, or to steer with the autopilot from inside.

What's she like in port and at anchor?

The obvious benefit at anchor is that she draws just 0.7m (2ft 4in) with the plate up, so you can get right in close to the beach, out of the swell, with less distance to row ashore.

Below decks, her huge windows and light cherry woodwork result in a bright and airy boat and her galley would suffice in a 50-footer. There's enough room for six to dine around the saloon table, but access around the keel box is restricted on one side.

Sleeping arrangements aren't brilliant for guests, especially with the small forecabin and single (albeit very spacious) heads, but for a couple with only occasional overnight visitors she offers a great deal of comfort. The aft cabin is roomy, although the double berth is not massively long. Stowage is generous and it's nice to have a dresser, but headroom under the cockpit sole is limited to crouching and the clearance above the berth is a bit on the tight side. Two small ports open into the cockpit, but there are no other opening hatches or portlights.

She has an excellent heads compartment with loads of head and elbow room. Big windows mean it's nice and bright, but ventilation relies on one small mushroom vent – a hatch above would have been good.

Would she suit you and your crew?

The accommodation layout would best suit a couple who have occasional guests. The aft cabin is indeed a comfortable master suite with ample stowage and an en suite shower, although headroom in the cabin is somewhat limited.

Earlier Southerlys didn't offer a great sailing experience, but the 110, with her modern underwater lines, twin rudders and deep keel, is much better. She also feels safe and steady. The quality of construction is very good, especially around the keel area. Because of this quality of the build, Southerlys tend to hold their price well and they also tend to look pretty good even after 20 years. They're well equipped for extended cruising and every bit of useful space appears to be converted into stowage.

In summary, she's a well-made yacht that is more than capable of respectable sailing performance and she's a comfortable home to boot. She's just not designed to take a crowd along with you.

Would she suit your style of sailing?

CREEK CRAWLING
★★★★★

COASTAL PORT-HOPPING
★★★★★

OFFSHORE PASSAGE-MAKING
★★★★☆

TRADE WIND VOYAGING
★★★★☆

HIGH-LATITUDE ADVENTURE
★★★☆☆