



C&C Landfall 38

A solid cruiser from the '80s. By **John Kretschmer**

Twenty-seven years after the first hull rolled off the line in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario, the C&C Landfall 38 is being rediscovered by a new generation of cruisers. In many ways this stylish design, with its moderate-draft fin keel, balanced rudder, uncluttered lines, and genuine aft cabin, was ahead of its time. It was an early performance cruiser before the performance-cruiser trend caught on. Yet it never quite caught on. Back in those days of huge production runs, the Landfall 38 was considered a moderate success at best. Part of the problem was the sticker price; it was an expensive boat then, but it isn't now. With

asking prices ranging from below \$50,000 to just over \$70,000, the Landfall 38 is solid value on the used-boat market.

George Cuthbertson and George Cassian began building and selling boats under the C&C name in the mid-1960s. Their timing was perfect—at least for a while. The psychological impact of the oil embargo in the early '70s, a growing environmental ethos, and new fiberglass production techniques fueled a boom in the sailboat industry. Sleek, fast, and well engineered, C&C sailboats quickly became one of the most recognizable brands in North America. The company focused on performance

boats and helped coin the term “racer/cruiser.” As cruising became more popular in the late '70s and early '80s, C&C made a halfhearted entry into the expanding market for dedicated cruising boats by introducing the Landfall series.

While the bigger boats in the series, the Landfall 42 and 48, struggled to compete with the likes of Morgans and Gulfstars, the Landfall 38 had a difficult time against teak-laden double-enders from Taiwan. The 180 Landfall 38s sold over six years doesn't compare with the nearly 500 Bob Perry–designed Tayana 37s sold during the same period. And that was just one of many look-alike Taiwan cruisers. Ironically, many of the features that made the Tayana 37 popular—full keel, bowsprit, teak decks and trim, dark teak interior—make it more difficult to sell today. The bright, nimble, fast, and relatively low-maintenance Landfall 38 seems more attractive now.

ON DECK

The Landfall 38 has a user-friendly T-shaped cockpit with a good-sized cockpit locker and a stout bridgedeck. The primary and secondary winches are easy to reach from the helm. A raised curved helm seat keeps the helmsman upright at the wheel when the boat heels and helps with visibility. The cockpit seatbacks are a bit abrupt, but quite comfortable for their era. Almost all the 38s have a large folding teak cockpit table.

The mainsheet traveler is forward of the companionway and requires midboom sheeting; this is a compromise most cruisers, including me, are happy to live with. But the nonskid decks were not overly aggressive when new, so be wary if a deck has been painted without new nonskid being added. The genoa tracks are mounted



inboard, allowing for close sheeting angles and easy passage fore and aft along the sidedecks. The keel-stepped mast is known for leaking around the partners, so it could use some sealant. The teak handrails mounted on the coach roof are undersized and sure look nice when they're replaced with stainless steel. The anchor locker is a bit small, and the original anchor roller needs beefing up for serious cruising.

When it comes to finding original or replacement parts for the Landfall 38, or for any other C&C model, contact Rob Maclachlan of South Shore Yachts in Virgil, Ontario, at

www.southshoeyachts.com. Rob, a longtime C&C employee and devotee, has a huge inventory of parts, plans, and knowledge.

The saloon has two excellent seaberths but only one hatch for ventilation. The U-shaped galley has good counter and stowage space.



BELOWDECKS

The interior of the Landfall 38 is unusual. You drop a step into the small aft cabin. It was different in its day, but it works, especially for a couple on a passage. The aft area contains a double berth to port with the nav station to starboard, so the off-watch not only sleeps in a stable area of the boat, but can also be in the cockpit quickly if need be. Some



The Landfall 38 is an attractive performance cruiser with a kind motion to windward. The nav station next to the companionway is secure and functional.

boats have a single berth instead of the nav station to starboard; I consider this an inferior arrangement unless you really need an extra bunk. The electrical panel is tucked beneath the companionway, not an ideal location. The diesel can also be accessed here and from a side panel in the quarterberth, but it's squeezed under the cockpit and is tough to get at. Most boats have a 30-horsepower three-cylinder Yanmar with a V-

drive transmission. This is a reliable and capable engine, and it needs to be; even routine maintenance jobs require contortions.

Continuing forward, the large U-shaped galley, usually finished in white laminate with teak trim, is to port. There are two deep sinks, a three-burner stove, adequate counter space with deep fiddles, and plenty of storage lockers. Some boats have a cutout in the bulkhead panel above the sinks. I'm not sure what purpose this serves other than to facilitate chatting with someone in the aft cabin, but it wastes a lot of potential storage space. Opposite the galley is the head. It is actually large enough to turn around in and includes a separate shower stall. One large head is the way to go on a 38-foot boat; there's no need to sandwich in two.

The main saloon, which is separated from the galley by a sturdy stainless-steel post, usually features a centerline table with settees on either side. Some boats may have a bulkhead table that folds down to port and opens up space in the smallish saloon when stowed away. There are lockers and shelves above the settees on each side. The quality of joinery is, as your mother used to say, "fine." Plenty of white laminate helps accent the teak trim and keeps the cabin bright. The V-berth is small, and you realize what a fine entry the Landfall 38 has when you stretch your feet forward. Ventilation throughout will likely need to be improved.



Ericson 38

COMPARABLE BOATS

Morgan 38 Several versions (Morgan 382 and 383) have similar lines and interior layouts. www.morgan38.org

Cal 39 This boat has a more performance-oriented fin keel and balanced spade rudder but otherwise similar dimensions and layouts. www.calyachts.org

Irwin 38 This boat has a narrower beam and longer overhangs, but very similar accommodations and deck layout. www.irwinyachts.com

Ericson 38 A solid offshore cruiser that's known for good sailing performance. www.pacificseacraft.com



The narrow stern shows the IOR design thinking of the early '80s.

UNDER SAIL

The Landfall 38 has a soft motion in a seaway, and this arguably is the most important design feature of any cruising boat. The helm is light and adapts well to self-steering, another key to happy cruising. The boat is easy to handle, yet still very rewarding to sail—another hallmark of a good design. Several years ago I delivered a Landfall 38 from Fort Lauderdale to Newport, Rhode Island. We saw a variety of conditions over 1,000 miles and seven days, including an ugly gale in the Gulf Stream off Cape Lookout. With two reefs in the main and a deeply furled headsail, we took the blow on the chin—actually about 50 degrees off the chin—slowly fore-reaching. The boat didn't miss a beat and handled well in pretty rough conditions.

CONSTRUCTION

C&C was a pioneer in composite construction, and almost all its boats, including the Landfall 38, have balsa-cored hulls and decks. This is often a red flag for potential problems, but most Landfall 38s have aged gracefully and structural problems seem to be uncommon. Annoying issues like leaks around deck fittings and the hull-to-deck joint are more common. It's important to sound the deck carefully to make sure that leaks have not led to delamination of the core.

While most C&C models featured a black anodized aluminum toerail, the Landfall 38 has a handsome teak caprail. This was a concession to the marketing department, which had the challenging task of convincing consumers that the Landfall was really a cruiser, not just another racer in disguise. The coachroof is distinctive with two large black portlights aft and forgotten portlights forward. ■

CONCLUSION

It's a nimble early performance cruiser that's up to the rigors of offshore cruising. The interior is comfortable and the hull lines

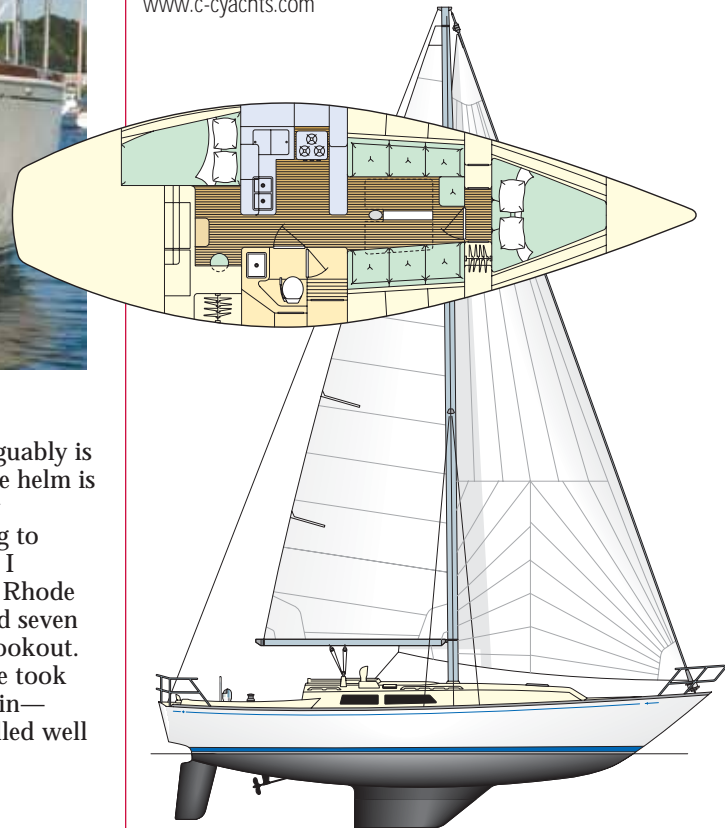
are classic. So, if you're looking for an affordable, quality older boat that's fun to sail, take a good look at the good old C&C Landfall 38. It just may surprise you.

BUILDER'S SPECIFICATIONS

LOA 37'7", **LWL** 29'7", **Beam** 12', **Draft** 4'11"/5'8", **Displacement** 15,000 pounds, **Ballast** 6,500 pounds, **Sail Area** 649 square feet (100% foretriangle). **Power** 30-hp Yanmar. **Price** \$50,000–\$70,000 (depending on age and condition).

Builder

C&C Yachts, Fairport Harbor, OH; 440-357-7223;
www.c-cyachts.com



Designer

Rob Ball/C&C Yachts

Information sources

While the boats C&C builds these days are very different from the Landfall, www.c-cyachts.com has info on both new and discontinued C&C models as well as a list of owners' associations and rendezvous. www.cncphotoalbum.com is packed with info on a wide range of C&C boats that are no longer in production. Look here for old brochures, owner contacts, and even the history of C&C and designers' comments along with pictures.

Calculated data

PHRF rating	144
Displacement-length ratio	254
Sail area-displacement ratio	17 (100% foretriangle)
Ballast-displacement ratio	40%
Capsize screening value	1.9 (below 2.0 recommended for offshore sailing)