

# G-Force Of Nature

With its latest 43-foot catamaran, the team at Skater Powerboats simply outdid itself.

**T**his February in Miami, Yves Belanger joined a rather exclusive club. The owner of Gibson Trucks in Orlando, Fla., Belanger took delivery of the fourth Skater Powerboats 438 catamaran built by the Douglas, Mich., company. Though every Skater fan has a favorite model, the 438 certainly has to be part of the discussion when it comes to the coolest cat Peter Hledin and company have ever offered.

A four-member club where admission requires ownership of a \$1 million-plus custom-built high-performance catamaran? Exclusive club indeed.

Yet big deal as it is, the 43-footer dubbed *G-Force* is not the biggest Skater that Belanger, who lives in Orlando but has a second home in Miami, has ever owned. A few years back, he bought a 46-footer from Skater wheeler-dealer Ron Szolack. The boat, called *Avatar*, was hard to miss.

But the 438 is Belanger's first new build with the company. It is powered by dual-calibration Mercury Racing 1550/1350 engines with M8 drives and boasts an interior—an absolute stunner—from Jamie Borg of Cutting Edge Interiors in Punta Gorda, Fla.

“The build went very, very well,” Belanger said. “Tony (Cutsuries) at Skater did a fantastic job staying in contact with us the whole time. Jamie Borg did a phenomenal job with the interior. My wife and I actually went to his shop to try out the seating.”

John Tomlinson of TNT Custom Marine, the Miami-based facility where Belanger will keep his catamaran, delivered the 43-footer to the show. Along the way, he ran it to 160-plus mph, as Belanger did a few days later after the annual speedonthewater.com Miami Boat Show photo shoot. Tomlinson said the boat likely will





**Yves and Kyra Belanger were thrilled with how amazing their new Skater 438 catamaran powered by Mercury Racing 1550/1350 engines came together. Everything was top notch, from the interior handled by Jamie Borg of Cutting Edge Upholstery to the in-house paintjob with a mesmerizing mixture of blues.**

reach 180 mph with its turbocharged engines in 1,350-hp mode. The cat has yet to be run with each engine pumping out 1,550 hp.

In the near future, Skater will send an insert for the bucket-seat bench to TNT. Once installed, the insert will raise those seats to improve forward visibility for their occupants.

"That is the only thing I want to change—otherwise, it's a perfect boat," Belanger said. "Skater did a great job with the in-house paintjob.

The trailer they built is phenomenal.

"It runs great in rough water; it's a big boat," he added. "It's crazy good. And the torque is just incredible."

Belanger paused, then laughed.

"I had crash boxes in my last two boats—a 41-foot Apache and the 46-foot Skater—and I had gotten used to them," he said, then chuckled again. "This boat is extremely easy to dock. I do a better job parking it than I do parking my car." **SOTW**