



LONDON BOAT SHOW'S CRUISER RACER TICKS ALL THE PERFORMANCE AND COMFORT BOXES



MILES Stratton, Michael Schmidt and Partner's head honcho in Scotland and the north of Britain, spent a good few hours, days in fact, on the new Dehler 41 at the London Boat Show early in January.

Though he was instantly taken by its appearance, looks and finish, he soon found that visitors were equally impressed by the brand new 'racer cruiser' from the Vrolijk studio. That there were very few other choices at the cavernous ExCel ensured that the Dehler was the cruiser racer show stopper, writes *Yachting Life* chief test editor Andi Robertson.

'I am a great believer that when a boat looks right it will sail well and from that view point alone the Dehler 41 has a lot going for it. It is well proportioned, is easy on the eye and really just does look exactly what you would expect from a totally up to date modern cruiser racer,' Miles Stratton explains.

'We are starting to get a few enquiries for the boat since the show. It is certainly one we'd dearly like to put a good crew on and see what she would do on the race course, but let's be clear that this is a really good sporty cruiser. That is where the first boat we sold off the stand at London went, to an owner in the West Country, who just fell in love with her looks and now cruises his Dehler 41 extensively.'

'Besides everything else with the boat I was impressed with the quality of the moulding work. I have been in this business for too many years already, but the hull moulding is the best I can remember, especially for a blue hull.'

'Dehler have always had a good reputation for quality and we are looking forward to selling a few more boats, now they are at competitive prices.'

Miles is right, it was easy to fall for the Dehler 41. It is an immediately engaging, good looking, clean and modern cruiser racer which carries the hallmarks of a sporty racer but clearly delivers enough volume to provide a comfortable three cabin interior.

Under Hanse's ownership come the economies of scale, being able to realise such a boat at a competitive price, in line with volume producers placing the new Dehler 41 up against the First 40, with the Arcona 410 falling between the two in terms of price.

The London Show boat was hull number 27 and so far more than 50 have been sold, although it really is going to be well into this season before we start to get real racing performance comparisons to gauge how competitive this Judel-Vrolijk design will ultimately be.

A Dutch owner and team plan to return to race at Cowes Week. Notwithstanding any immediate sales, that might be the next opportunity to see a race prep'd Dehler 41 doing its thing.

In terms of dockside appearance and sailing on the water it's easy to overlook the fact that this is a cruiser racer which offers twin double aft cabins, excellent headroom and an airy interior.

Judel-Vrolijk have kept the proportions tight in each area, but yet produce a hull with powerful, relatively full stern sections, only moderate freeboard, a distinctive sleek coachroof and a spacious, workmanlike cockpit which is not just set up for racing.

The bow sections are subtle with a gently rounded forefoot, plumb stem and is relatively flat sided in terms of flare, in order to produce a decent sized forecabin. The hull is very much orientated towards useful form stability with a moderate waterline beam,



not afraid to build power into quite wide, powerful stern sections.

The hull is made using vacuum infusion sandwich construction with a foam core using vinyl ester resins with solid floor beams laminated to the hull to accept the rig and keel loads. The deck is hand laid up GRP, balsa cored sandwich. The three hullside port lights are subtly styled, disguised neatly even in the light coloured hulls, but we rather liked the dark coloured hull of our test boat for that fact alone.



There are a couple of keel options but the deep, cast iron fin lead bulb, extra low VCG race T-keel at 2.4m draft, would be the preferred option in most circumstances.

The standard 9/10th rig is a twin spreader alloy mast and boom with dyform standing rigging, but again those looking to race seriously may choose the carbon mast and boom from Southern Spars with rod rigging which adds approximately £35k to the price of the boat and approx 10 points to the rating, but the widespread consensus is that both financial and rating costs are well worthwhile, if you are seriously racing.

The cockpit is well proportioned with ample space for the helm and a tactician to samba round each other, so a good helming position, with good foot braces and there's a good working area forward for the mainsheet trimmer. The mainsheet is a single line German A-style which is recessed below the sidedeck, running to a pair of Harken 40.2 Radial winches, which are positioned such that the helm can trim when short handed.

The broad transom comes with a drop



down bathing platform which is rather cute, coming also with an integrated fold up helm seat which really is a gimmick for when you are parked or motoring the boat perhaps.

I'd lose the teak trim on the back patio set up entirely as it ruins the look of the cockpit completely.

Experience of grand prix race boat layout with the twin wheel position and set up, means there are no compromises with excellent GRP/foam pedestals.

Main instrumentation mounting is either over the companionway or the chartplotter on the back of the cockpit table, but most race set ups will go for mast mounted repeaters and helm's repeaters on the coaming which is not ideal, or on the wheel pods.

Overall there is ample space in the cockpit with good, effective coamings and the working areas are discrete and safe.

Our standard sail inventory was set up more for performance cruising; the standard 112% overlap headsail set on a flush, recessed Furlex TD300 furler while we flew an easily handled cruising chute off the bow with ease.

A 48:1 cascade backstay system gives ample control of the rig. With the helm side by side with the mainsheet trimmer there is no excuse for poor communication, but equally the boat can be easily sailed by the family or short handed crew in safety and at speed.

The level of hardware cannot be faulted. The short carbon sprit is simple to set with the downhaul permanently set.

We sailed over two sessions and interestingly the two boats felt significantly better in the second appraisal when the breeze was up a little more. I am still not sure what we changed, sailing with a little more halyard tensions I suspect, but the 41 was much more of a revelation in the 9-12kts of breeze than when it was only simply 'good' in the slightly lighter stuff.

Upwind the 41 appeared pleasingly stiff. With only three of us, and at times two, the boat always felt direct and driven rather than feeling like it needed coaxed. The helm was a little more positive than we expected to start with, but that translates to good grip and feel when the apparent wind built.

And when it was lighter there was never the feeling that you were dragging a lot of stern around, the water release was even, with minimal wake. At 10-11kts TWS we were making high 6kts without any real effort and with a little more weight on the rail would surely have been a steady 7. The T-keel is relatively narrow so likes speed before being leaned on, but that said it was relatively easy to keep to a decent groove.

Off the breeze under the reaching cruising chute we happily trucked along in the light to moderate breeze, beam reaching at 8-9kts figures in the same weight of breeze, with the speed dropping away as you opened up the downwind angle.

But again here we were with two people, easy sailing at speeds which would eat miles upwind, reaching or broad reaching with minimum effort.

It is too easy to focus just on racing when this is the true dual purpose boat which would, for example serve you well doing



Cork Week, then cruising the west coast of Ireland requiring minimal adjustments.

The interior space is excellent without ever feeling it steps either side of a divide into either racer or cruiser domain. Standard finish is satin mahogany which gives a warm appearance, with an option to go for a teak finish. Down below functionality does take precedence over luxury or ambience, but not in an obvious way. The finish is neat but commensurate with the price point.

There is generous U shaped saloon seating to starboard around a centreline, drop leaf table with a full length. An insert makes this a good sized double berth, while to port there is a deep, wide full length settee. The nav station is commendable with a large, deep fiddled table and it feels like a working space with ample areas for extra instruments.

Similarly, the galley scrimps on nothing in terms of space and stowage, with a good forward opening fridge, cool box, twin sinks and a twin burner cooker with grill and oven. And there are three deep, excellent drawers. Our test boat had a microwave set into the eye level lockers, which is a useful addition.

Up front there is an option to have an ensuite heads shower in the forward cabin, losing one large hanging locker to starboard. Regardless this is a worthwhile sized cabin where the steep, relatively flat sides to the bow maximise space and the small hull port lights add a little extra natural light and reduce any feeling of claustrophobia.

Overall, the lasting impression of the Dehler 41 is of a good looking boat which ticks all the boxes. Time will tell and we look forward to seeing how the Dehler 41 fares in

this market.

● Miles Stratton confirmed as YL went to press that the current price tag on the Dehler 41 is £179,500 including VAT, delivered and commissioned Clyde and complete with a standard sailaway package.

DEHLER 41

TECHNICAL DATA

LOA	12.40 M
LWL	11.50 M
BEAM	3.93 M
DRAFT	2.15 M (STANDARD) 1.98 M (CRUISING) 2.40 M (RACING)
DISPLACEMENT	8195 KG (STANDARD) 8390 KG (CRUISING) 8195 KG (RACING)
BALLAST	2995 KG (STANDARD) 3265 KG (CRUISING) 2995 KG (RACING)
ENGINE	VOLVO D2-40 (39HP)
FRESH WATER	295 L
FUEL TANK	110 L
CE CERTIFICATE	THE DEHLER 41
IS BUILT ACCORDING TO CE-CERTIFICATION, CLASS A	
MAST LENGTH ABOVE WL	19.80 M
TOTAL SAIL AREA	92.00 M ²
MAIN SAIL	55.00 M ²
FURLING JIB	37.0 M ² (105%)
SPINNAKER	149 M ²
GENNAKER	132 M ²
RIG	I 16.50 M J 4.65 M P 16.10 M E 5.70 M
DESIGN INTERIOR	JUDEL / VROLIJK DEHLER

