

FJORD 40 OPEN

Masterly Mark II

European Power Boat of the Year

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THE FJORD 40 Open made a stunning Australian debut in mid 2007. Built by German yacht manufacturer, Hanse Yachts, the Fjord 40 was strongly influenced by the innovative Wally Yachts design.

We tested the strikingly different 40 footer after its Australian debut at the Sanctuary Cove International Boat Show and was in awe of its design characteristics and performance capabilities. Twelve months later, the Fjord 40 now bears the title of European Power Boat of the Year and to be honest, I am not surprised. One of the most striking features of the Mark II is the gleaming pearl green metallic finish on the hull which further serves to distinguish the Fjord 40 from its peers.

National dealer for Fjord, Windcraft at Pittwater in Sydney, recently invited us back to check out the next generation Fjord 40 - simply called Mark II. To appreciate the ingenuity behind the development of the Fjord 40 requires an understanding of the commitment of Hanse Yachts to the manufacture of award winning boats, whether power or sail. They are a dynamically driven company with a clear understanding of market trends and applications. They identified a market requirement for a boat with outstanding sea-going capabilities which embraced the latest technology and could be used as a day boat, family weekender or for fishing.

The strong aerodynamic Wally hull has been

retained but the Fjord 40 Mark II has many additional features which will strongly enhance the market appeal of this conceptual cruiser. There have been some major structural modifications which have resulted in an increase in cabin height and a completely redesigned interior. The robust yet stylish hull, quite pronounced reverse chines and full length strakes give tremendous stability and surefootedness.

In addition, a single 1,000 litre stainless steel fuel tank replaces the previous twin 500 litre tanks. The Mark II has an upgraded power plant in the Volvo IPS 600 series and an impressive Raymarine electronics package including radar and auto pilot which have been added to make the Fjord 40 a long



distance cruiser. Other additions include a 6kVa genset, air conditioning, improvements to the cockpit galley as well as a completely concealed anchoring system and a passarelle for boarding

Essentially, the Fjord 40 is an open design which gives enormous deck space, both fore and aft. The deck is full teak as are the capping rails atop the bulwarks. Entertaining is courtesy of a large outdoor dining table and reversible cloth trim lounges. The Fjord 40 Mark II has a number of neat additions such as stainless steel bottle and glass holders set into the top of the unstained teak table and net fender storage

in the side coamings. The Fjord has no transom due to its open deck design however, there is ample storage compartments aboard.

A major enhancement to the Mark II version is the cockpit galley. The release version of the Fjord 40 lacked somewhat in galley facilities however the manufacturers have done an excellent job with the revised design. The galley is mounted aft of the main targa supports. The Mark II retains the companionway access from the cockpit to the centre console and saloon however there is now a port and starboard galley console. The port console features a food preparation

bench with smoked acrylic top and below one of two refrigerators onboard.

The starboard side console has a recessed stainless steel electric hot plate. In the locker below are three self closing drawers with opposite the hotplate is a stainless steel sink and fold-down mixer tap. The second refrigerator is located in the locker below the sink. Both starboard modules have acrylic fold-down tops. The galley configuration works well for onboard entertaining.

Other neat additions to the Mark II include fold-down steps on both sides of the cockpit console helm while in the bow section



fully concealed Lewmar windlass, stainless steel anchor and deep anchor locker make anchoring easy. The unique design of the anchoring system allows the stainless steel anchor channel to fold up and rest on the teak bow rail.

The Fjord 40 Mark II retains the flush mounted pop-up alloy cleats and the teak capping rail as well as the large sunpad lounge which when fitted, conceals the large saloon hatches.

The really great design feature of the Fjord 40 is the walk-around deck. Although the deck is a split level design which has allowed

for more head room below, the single step up to the foredeck is by no means, an inconvenience.

Of equal importance is the fully electric engine hatch lift which provides access to the engine bay. As with the release version, the Mark II has an uncluttered engine bay equipped with Seafire suppression system and the very best of filters and through hull fittings.

The sporty T-shaped smoked acrylic hardtop has been retained as has the impressively strong one piece windshield. Entry to the saloon has been moved to a more central

position and while three bolster racing seats have been retained, the split is now opposite to the original version with the skipper's bolster centrally located and a bolster set on each side. The bolster seats are a touch higher and a stainless steel foot rest has been added for extra comfort. In terms of support, if you were to push the Fjord 40 hard in challenging conditions, the bolsters are as good as I have seen, even on Category One offshore racers.

The helm and dash retain their racing performance style and while the previous version of the Fjord 40 powered by Volvo IPS 500 series topped 39 knots, the big



IPS 600 series is even faster. Just how much we will leave to be discovered on your test drive but suffice to say, the Fjord 40 open is quick, very nimble and superbly stable. There are only a couple of boats I would put in the same category of handling and performance as the Fjord however the sheer exhilaration and satisfaction gained from driving the Fjord is second to none. It just feels so stable and has power to burn. This boat would be as safe as a house offshore with its self draining decks, optional stainless steel transom rail and remarkable buoyancy and stability.

At the helm, the skipper has a host of analogue gauges to monitor the IPS power plant's performance including rudder indicator and sumlog. The Raymarine instrumentation and VHF radio are world

class and pride of place on the dash is the proven E120. The Fjord 40 has the responsive Volvo electronic throttles and of course, the IPS joystick which, the more I use, the more I fully appreciate its manoeuvrability and docking capabilities.

In addition to the sporty dash, sports steering wheel and full instrumentation, a Plastimo offshore compass is mounted in the skipper's direct line of sight on the saloon roof.

Th subtle but obvious changes to the cockpit and dash are a definite improvement and obviously impressed the European Power Boat of the Year judges. Moving the throttles to the starboard side of the dash is a definite improvement and allows the skipper more

control rather than relying on a throttle man.

Below deck, the changes made to the Fjord 40 Mark II have definitely made the cruiser a true weekender with no real reason to doubt the Mark II's application for longer liveaboard periods.

The step-down sump has been retained in front of the acrylic sliding hatch and once below, the saloon exhibits true apartment style qualities. Owners can choose from either mahogany or American cherrywood but whichever timber is used, the result is a rich, warm yet spacious saloon on what is, ostensibly, a low profile boat. The hull depth obviously contributes to the internal space but due credit to Hanse's interior designer -

