

**CONSTRUCTION**

A product of Hanse's large modern production facility in Germany, the 445's hull is solid hand-laid fiberglass throughout, with a vinylester skin to prevent blistering. The deck laminate has a balsa core. A fiberglass "strongback" framework is bonded to the hull to help carry keel and rig loads, and the boat's main bulkhead is securely laminated to the hull and deck to provide additional structural integrity.

Two keels are available, a 7ft 4in deep fin and a 5ft 8in shoal keel, both in a "T" configuration with a long torpedo-like ballast bulb at the bottom. The fractional double-spreader rig, with a tapered aluminum mast, can fly a masthead spinnaker. A slab-reefed, fully battened main with lazyjacks is standard, as is a 106 percent self-tacking blade jib.

**Boat Review**

By Adam Cort

# Hanse 445

A sprightly cruiser that sets a new aesthetic standard

There is something about a traditional boat that just feels right. How can you go wrong with a narrow hull, long overhangs and low topsides? By contrast, creating a thoroughly modern design that captures this same feeling can be a challenge, which is one reason why the new Hanse 445 is so impressive.

This is a boat that violates nearly every traditional aesthetic value you can think of: it's beamy, it's got a lot of freeboard, and it's all angles. Yet somehow, the Judel/Vrolijk design office has managed to blend these elements into a yacht that looks powerful and is uniquely elegant. Better still, they've also managed to create a boat that's a heck of a lot of fun.

**ON DECK**

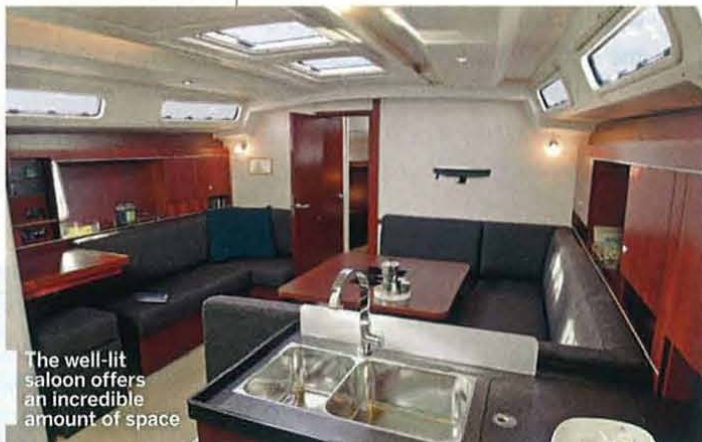
Both the deck and cockpit layout are well designed and functional. The twin wheels provide a wide-open lane to the boat's drop-down swim platform and also allow you to get well outboard when steering.

Thanks to the low cabintrunk, sight lines forward are excellent. Access to the bow is via wide side decks with excellent molded antiskid and low bulwarks. Halyards and control lines are not just led aft, but run directly to the boat's twin helms. Combined with the 445's self-tacking jib, the Lewmar 48 AST sheet winches (electric aboard our test boat) and a well-positioned battery of rope clutches make shorthanding the boat simplicity itself.

Aft of each wheel is a flip-up seat,



The cockpit is configured for both lounging and shorthanded sailing



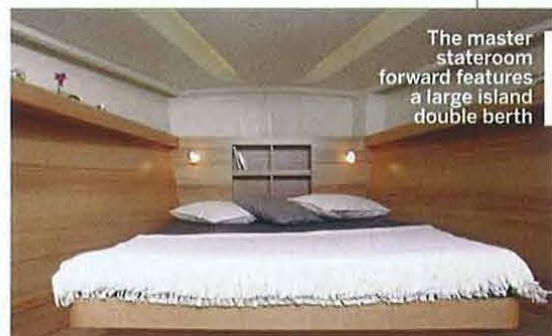
The well-lit saloon offers an incredible amount of space



and the drop-down swim platform includes both a beefy Schaefer tackle and a gas strut to make raising and lowering it a breeze, despite its large size. The large folding-leaf table has a hefty stainless steel framework with handrails to hang onto when the boat is on its ear, and four pairs of beefy retractable mooring cleats help preserve the boat's no-nonsense lines when they are not in use.

### ACCOMMODATIONS

Belowdecks there's a tremendous amount of space for a 44-footer, and the fairly conventional layout makes



The master stateroom forward features a large island double berth

the most of it. Our test boat, a battleship-gray beauty named *Happy Chaos*, was outfitted with twin cabins aft and a single stateroom forward with an ensuite head and shower. You can also specify twin staterooms in the bow, thanks to Hanse's "Individual Cabin Concept" approach, whereby the boat is divided into three sections with different layout options that can be

mixed and matched at will. Hanse offers a plethora of different woods, fabrics and trim colors to suit a wide range of tastes.

The saloon is enormous and features a sleek Euro-chic aesthetic that belies its practicality. A closer inspection, for example, reveals a number of strategically situated stainless steel handholds, while the L-shaped galley includes plenty of worktop space and

### Our Take

#### PROS

- Easy to sail singlehanded
- Unique cutting-edge aesthetics
- Tremendous space belowdecks

#### CONS

- Windage could be an issue maneuvering in a cross breeze

lots of stowage. *Happy Chaos*'s owner, Toronto sailor Sean O'Brien, told me he'd bought the boat the previous spring and spent the summer cruising with his family. It's not often that I get to test a boat that's fully provisioned for a family of five, but this one had plenty of room for tucking away everything from fenders to a menagerie of stuffed animals.

The O'Brien family has clearly been very comfortable aboard their new cruiser.

### UNDER SAIL

We had picture-perfect conditions out on Lake Ontario—10-12 knots of breeze, with bright sunshine and a slight chop—and the 445 made the most of what the weather gods had to offer.

Beating into the chilly southerly breeze coming off the open lake, our speed over ground topped 7 knots in 12 knots of true wind speed, at an apparent wind angle of around 40 degrees.

Coming about was smooth and easy, thanks to the self-tacking jib. Although *Happy Chaos* is equipped with a shoal keel, the boat stood up well to the puffs, and the helm felt light to the touch. Falling off to reach back through the entrance at the east end of the harbor, the boat responded crisply and maintained good speed as we dodged the traffic headed out onto the open lake. The 445's motion in the chop felt smooth and easy, both when driving and relaxing belowdecks. Hanses are known for their performance, and the 445 is clearly carrying on that tradition.

### UNDER POWER

Despite the boat's high topsides and attendant windage, there were no surprises while maneuvering at slow speed in close quarters. The 445 responded predictably and remained under complete control. Our test boat had a bow thruster, but it wasn't really necessary. Hanse has also designated the 445 as one of the models on which it is offering its new SMS joystick maneuvering system. I don't see the point, but if you absolutely dread docking, feel free to make the extra investment. *A*

Hanse 445

### Specifications

**HEADROOM** 6ft 6in

**BERTHS** 6ft 8in x 5ft 6in x 4ft (fwd); 6ft 10in x 5ft x 3ft 4in (aft)

**LOA** 44ft 3in // **LWL** 40ft 2in

**BEAM** 14ft 4in

**DRAFT** 7ft 4in (std); 5ft 8in (shoal)

**DISPLACEMENT** 24,250lb (std); 24,912lb (shoal)

**BALLAST** 7,716lb

**SAIL AREA** 1,036ft<sup>2</sup> (main and 106% blade jib)

**FUEL/WATER/WASTE (GAL)** 66/120/9

**ENGINE** 53hp Volvo (sailandrive)

**DESIGNER** Judel/Vrolijk & Co.

**BUILDER** HanseGroup, Greifswald, Germany

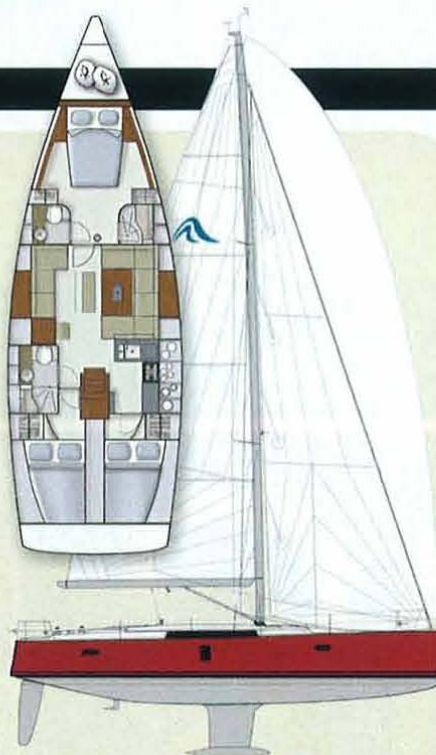
**U.S. DISTRIBUTOR** Hanse Yachts USA, 978-903-0380, usa.hanseyachts.com

**PRICE** \$272,000 base

### Performance

RACER

CRUISER



### Conclusion

The Hanse 445 is one of those boats that was a joy to sail and review. It's not often you find a design that combines a unique new look with practicality, comfort and performance under sail, but Hanse has done just that with this boat. I envy Sean and his family for their great new ride.