

On test



Hanseatic muscle

SEE ME
AT G124-
132



The new 50-footer from German boatbuilder Hanse got a warm welcome at the Southampton Boat Show. **Duncan Kent** took her for a sail

Although the Judel/Vrolijk design team created her as a fast cruiser, at 14 tons dry the Hanse 505 is no lightweight flyer.

Instead she relies on her powerful rig, long waterline and hydrodynamic hull lines to ensure fast passage times and an exciting sail.

Her deep T-keel keeps the ballast where it's needed and gives her a decent righting moment. She also has a high-aspect, balanced spade rudder that extends almost to the keel foot.

Sporting a low-profile coachroof, she has decks that are almost completely clear of obstructions, allowing you to wander about barefoot without the risk of stubbing a toe and avoiding any possible line snags. There are also several dedicated sun-lounging areas and a grand total of 19 flush hatches and portlights.

Her hull is still laid up by hand to ensure complete evenness of the moulding and a balsa core above the waterline helps keep weight down and improves insulation. Bulkheads are bonded to the hull sides and deck for increased stiffness and, common

with the entire Hanse range, waterproof epoxy-based vinylester resins are used throughout.

An important part of the design brief was to make it possible to sail this oceangoing cruiser single-handed if necessary, so all the sail control lines drop abruptly from the mast-step turning blocks into channels beneath the deck, re-emerging just ahead of substantial Lewmar 55AST primary winches (electric on our boat) on the cockpit coaming, just forward of the two helming positions.

Although this does indeed allow the helmsman to trim both sails without

leaving the wheel, there's an some inevitable jiggerypokery with the rope clutches under certain circumstances – if the double-ended mainsheet is on the portside winch and you want to tighten the kicker, for instance.

Our test boat had electric primaries and in-mast furling, which simplified things when it came to reefing her down, but initially we had trouble unfurling the vertically-battened sail due to it jamming up in the mast slot.

A second pair of 55AST winches is provided for the optional downwind sails, a couple of feet further forward on the coamings. Sadly, these cannot



Neat and tidy

All the sail control lines are led aft via channels under the deck, exiting via clutches right by the helm, where two sizeable electric winches can be used to set and trim both sails



Power surge

Close-hauled she powers her way through the chop losing very little momentum

Elvstrøm's high-performance fast cruising laminate (FCL) versions for a further £7,393.

Under sail

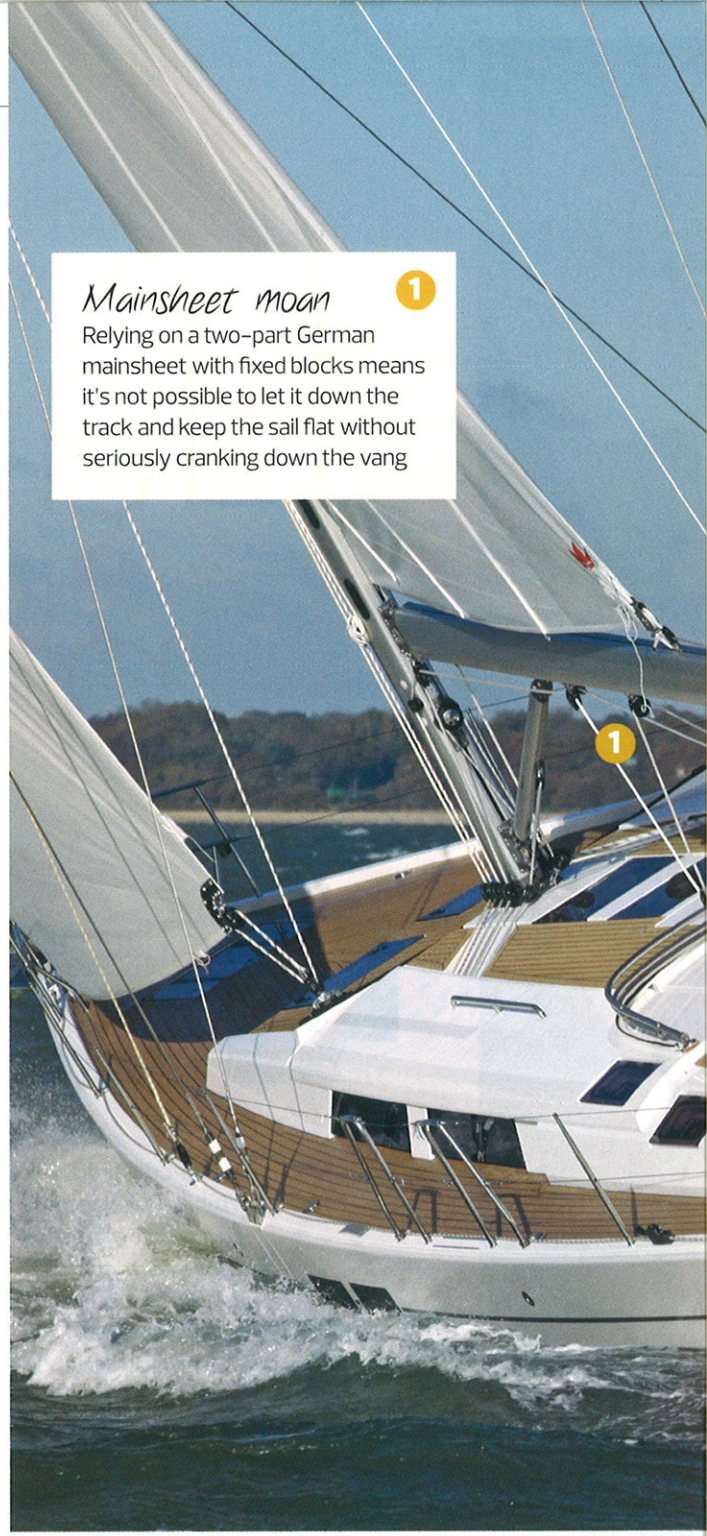
It was a fairly typical November day when we sailed the H505 – a strong nor'easterly with frequent gusts of cold, heavy air keeping us on our toes. Once we'd managed to free the mainsail we set off under full sail into the Solent, where the true wind clear of the land rose to the top end of a Force 5.

Under full canvas she was pushed hard, but took it in her stride and powered on through the light chop. Speeds were impressive for a cruising yacht, with the log showing 9.4kn on a close reach, increasing to 10.2kn with an apparent 27kn across her beam. In gusts close to 25kn true she heeled to her rail, but kept driving forward – only threatening to round up when we didn't get to the mainsheet in time. Thanks to her very deep rudder it takes a lot to shift her off her course.

Because of the gusts we rolled away a few feet of mainsail. While this brought her onto a more even keel, it did nothing for sail shape, despite applying plenty of kicker and backstay

Easy sail handling?

In theory bringing every control line back to the primary winches by the wheel means she can be sail single-handedly. However, it often results in a lot of line juggling



Mainsheet moan **1**
Relying on a two-part German mainsheet with fixed blocks means it's not possible to let it down the track and keep the sail flat without seriously cranking down the vang



High aspect rudder 2

Her very deep, high-aspect, balanced spade rudder does a fantastic job of keeping her on course even in the heaviest gusts. Despite this, the Jefa steering system continuously returns a good response and remains light and positive



No chines?

While many of the wide-sterned cruising yachts are reverting to the traditional hard chine design to increase resistance to heel, Hanse's design team appears to have perfected the round bilge



'We pushed her pretty hard, expecting her to shake us off and round up, but she remained doggedly on course'

tension. A mainsheet track might have helped somewhat and a fully-battened main would have enabled us to flatten it out hard and leave her much more able to stand up to the strong gusts.

Saying that, in the conditions she performed admirably and was

surprisingly stiff for a modern yacht. The wizards at JV have also managed to impart a superb motion into this powerful hull, so that she has the feel of a much larger yacht. Rarely did the decks even get wet.

Her Jefa steering was slightly heavy in the strongest gusts, but very precise and gave good feedback to the helmsman. Off the wind, things calmed down a bit and we merrily tore off towards Lymington at 9 knots plus, with the wind on our quarter. Her deep appendages ensure she stays on track, but too far downwind and the main shelters the jib. Beyond 155° you're going to want to hoist a cruising chute or gennaker or you'll be forced to gybe back and forth across your course.

Power up

Akin to almost every production boatbuilder, much of the instrumentation and deck equipment comes in upgrade packs, which can add considerably to the final price. Be realistic and don't be fooled by the "sailaway" price bandied around at boat shows. Often you're better off buying a slightly smaller, but more lavishly equipped yacht rather than going for the largest possible.

First, you're bound to want instruments and an autopilot, so the £10k navigation pack is a must – plus extra, of course, should you want radar and/or AIS. I also couldn't imagine going bluewater cruising without a beefed-up battery bank, anchor windlass and cockpit shower – so that's the £5,890 cruising pack you'll want as well.

The good news is that she comes with a good number of goodies that are usually found on the options list, including a powerful 72hp Volvo diesel, so no engine upgrade is required. She happily motor-cruises at 8 knots at an economical 1,800rpm and will make over 9

Nav station

A proper chart table with bags of space for instruments and good stowage for pilot books and charts

1

1

2

Plenty to hold onto

Going below under way, I appreciated the shallow companionway steps and noticed there was always a good 'grab spot' within reach as I worked my way forward

2

Choice interior

Hanse probably offers more interior options than any other production yacht builder. Its catalogue contains more than 30 upholstery options and four different wood types for bulkheads, floors and cabinets



For video of this test, scan the QR code with a smartphone or see www.sailingtoday.co.uk

knots at 2,500rpm. Twin fuel tanks give her a decent cruising range, too. I might be tempted to change the fixed prop for a folding one for ocean passages.

Accommodation

As usual for a modern bluewater cruiser of this size, a number of variations in the accommodation layout are offered as standard. There's a choice between a single owner's suite or two double cabins forward, but also an option to include a crew cabin, large heads/shower or utility room/workshop, just aft of the saloon.

A further option, only likely to be used in charter situations, is for a deck access only crew cabin to replace the generous sail locker in the forepeak. In all layouts there is a separate toilet and shower forward of the saloon and a head/shower behind the chart table.

Her saloon is spacious and, thanks to all the hatches and opening ports,

light and airy. There is seating for six around the half-folding saloon table and a banquette provides extra seating, stowage, a bottle locker and ice-bin, and a sturdy backrest for the cook under way.

The standard galley includes a sizeable front-opening, drawer-style fridge with options for freezer, microwave, coffee-maker and wine cooler. If you opt for the utility cabin, then choices include a larger fridge/freezer and a dishwasher or washing machine. It's all sensible bluewater equipment, although the latter would likely warrant the additional installation of a watermaker.

Her navigation station has a proper, forward-facing chart table with room for instruments alongside and good stowage. A comprehensive electrical breaker/switch panel with tank gauges and meters is supplied, as well as a touch-activated lighting panel for the interior LED lighting.

Going below under way, there was always a good 'grab spot' within reach. While she has a spacious interior there are few areas where you are groping for a decent handhold. ✦

HANSE 505 Boat test

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000kg (30,900lb)

8,830lb)

(129m²)

in 2 tanks

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75 diesel (53kW/72hp)

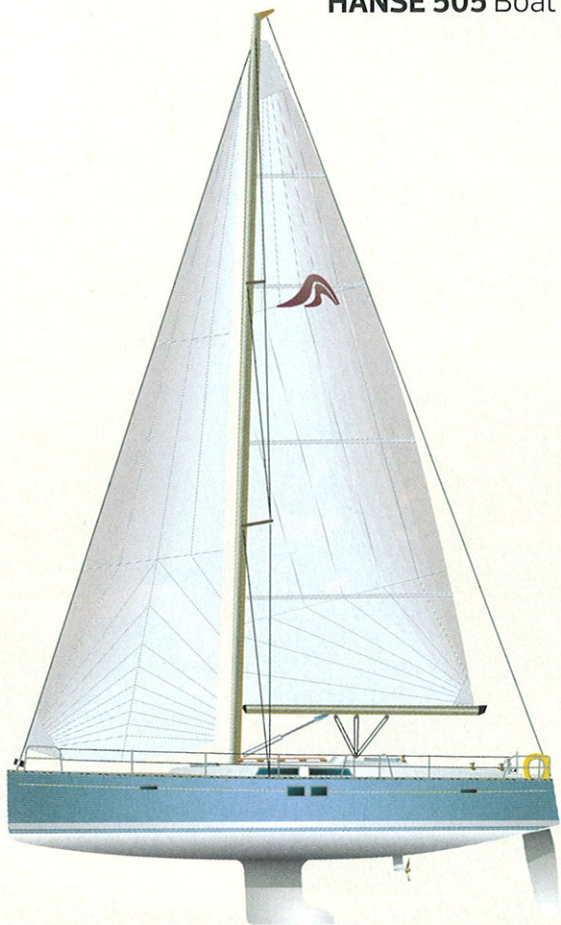
drive/3-blade fixed prop

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