



BEST OF BOTH WORLDS?

ANDI ROBERTSON takes to the water aboard the Dehler 42, a smart, comfortable new yacht that is also optimised for IRC and ORC

Launched at Dusseldorf's Boot this year, the new Dehler 42 follows the 38 and the 46 as the third model update of the four strong line-up for the German marque which has a proud history of producing successful racer-cruisers. The 42 holds true to the new look of the family lineage, a very sleek hull form, new distinctive deck and window lines, subtle slender hull windows and big, flat transom. It is, as usual, from the Judel/Vrolijk design house.

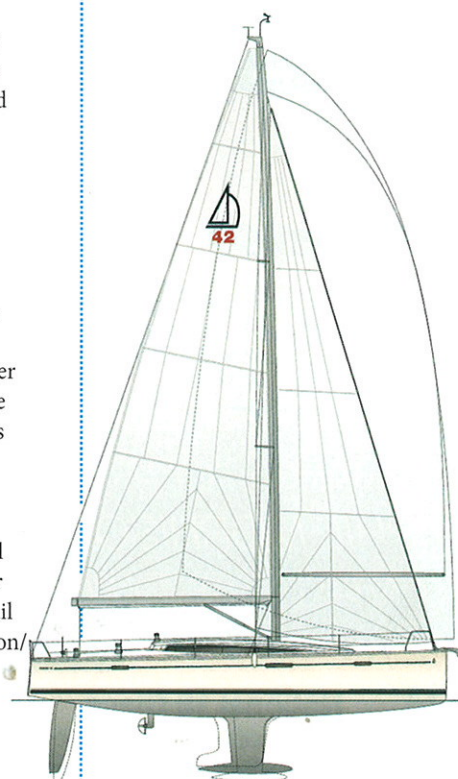
We sailed one of the first production boats at a media test day in Palma, Mallorca. Circumstances dictated we were taken out to the boat in a RIB and sailed for an hour before we parked it back in the Marina.

Dehler remains quite unique in its operation in the cruiser-racer market, continuing to develop and push its performance versions for IRC and ORC racing. In this respect it remains true to the Dehler roots, making historic level rating production boats like the dB2 which won the ¾ Ton World Championships in 1984 in the hands of a young Karl Dehler. The fact that Dehler still campaigns his own Dehler 38 and takes a firm hand in the development of

new boats is an essential part of ensuring Dehler Yachts retains its distinct identity and pedigree. Equally, however, as part of the Hanse Group, which acquired the marque in 2009, Dehler can sell at meaningful prices because of the massive economies of scale and efficient high volume production. Dehler would like to consider that its performance models sit within the Hanse group and are developed along the lines of the motorsport divisions of BMW or Porsche. This is a moot point perhaps but, for sure, there is an active, partisan fan base.

Our test was on the standard cruiser racer model equipped with some nice Elvstrom GPEX 08 Film on Film sails using a 105 per cent jib set on the standard Furlex below deck furler. The spiciest model, however, is the Performance version which has an all carbon rig which is about 45cm taller supporting a bigger main. Upwind sail area increases by over 7m² and the iron/lead deep keel the draught is 2.38m with a heavier bulb but is 650kg lighter. A fully tricked out boat – Intermezzo – has just started racing in Germany and has a stripped out performance interior.

SPECIFICATIONS



LOA Hull length	12.84 m
LWL	11.50 m
Beam	3.91 m
Draught	2.15 m
(standard)	2.40m
(competition)	1.98m (shallow)
Displacement	9.100kg (standard)
	8.450 kg
(competition)	9.350 kg (shallow)
Ballast	2.950 kg
(standard)	2.500 kg (competition)
Engine Volvo	3.250kg (shallow)
D2-40	(39.6hp)
Fresh water	approx. 315l
Fuel tank	approx. 160l
CE Certificate	Total sail area (m ²)
(standard)	93.0
(competition)	99.5
Design:	Judel/Vrolijk
Interior:	Dehler



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HULL AND DECK 8/10

★★★★★★★☆☆

The hull is very similar to her predecessor, the 41, but has some subtle tweaks. The underbody is slightly flatter, the canoe body aft narrower. The hull shape is quite moderate, a smooth flat rise to the hull aft rather than hard chine, nothing too extreme, with stern sections which look like a decent mix of power without too much wetted surface area. The hull is vacuum infused foam sandwich construction using a new laminate schedule which Judel/Vrolijk say has reduced the hull weight significantly. The deck line is sweet and distinctive with the big, angled coachroof

1. The Judel/Vrolijk design bucks recent trends and features less beam aft. The 42 is also easy on the eye

2. Heading upwind, the 42 is responsive and gets into the groove with pleasing ease

3. The nav station slides aft on a rail system, meaning you can face forward or aft

4. Controls are clear and simple

5. The moulded instrument pods are a nice touch

window. The deck is balsa cored. Deck space is excellent, with a moulded in toerail which is subtle but functional. The cockpit is class leading for a production cruiser-racer. The fold down transom is full width and super-simple with no messy aft seat. The space aft for the helm is really excellent with a small outboard seat which is comfortable and secure but can be braced against, perched with one cheek on, or fully weight bearing sat on. Typically on longer stages the helm will sit one leg either side of the wheel pedestals. The cockpit seats are also great: nice and high for good vision but with great angled coamings. There is a large but light cockpit table with big, chromed

handholds. What we loved though is the moulded instrument pods neatly integrated into the cockpit coamings.

RIG AND DECK LAYOUT. 8/10

★★★★★★★☆☆

The standard set up is a 9/10th keel stepped alloy mast from Selden but the rig control is good. Standard spec is a 48:1 backstay control. The German mainsheet system is clean, functional and works well sheeted to a winch a metre or so forward of the helm. This means that in cruising mode the helm will trim the main with ease. The full width floor mounted track is good. Otherwise the Lewmar 40

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Meltemi
Barcelona

Race primaries are also well sited with a good working area for the racing crew but not too far forward for short handed sailing. The slanted coamings are great for the trimming team, even when the boat is very well heeled. The side decks and foredeck represent good working areas, our test boat was trimmed with the teak deck option.

In real terms it could be argued the double aft cabin version lacks deck

Above
Modest beam aft and a soft turn of the bilge make for pleasing lines and an easily driven hull

Below
The recessed traveller and carbon wheels give the 42 a racy feel

accessed storage lockers but, frankly, so often the aft corner and big stern lockers on cruising buses are just filled with extra unused kit anyway.

On the aft edge of the coachroof are a pair of roof hatches which allow the halyard tails to be dropped below. The jib car pullers are easy to operate, while the halyards are of a high spec. In short, this is ready to go racing racer-cruiser featuring the sort of Teutonic attention to detail we have come to admire and expect. I was informed that this aspect was pushed personally by Karl Dehler, who will not compromise. It still speaks volumes that the Dehler 38 won Yacht of the Year and I could see the 42 following suit.

UNDER SAIL 8/10

★★★★★☆☆

We sailed in a 8-10kt Bay of Palma early afternoon sea breeze. It speaks volumes that I could step from the RIB to the helm and immediately have the boat moving well. It has a lovely feel, a nice upwind groove typical of the breed – easy to encourage up to height and hold – but responsive to the finger

tip helm as the breeze eased. Equally when we pressed the boat upwind in the odd puff, the helm retains good traction and feel. Typically we made just shy of 7kt upwind. The foils are a good compromise between low wetted area but with enough surface grip to execute precise low speed manoeuvres. The boat was quick enough upwind and was easy to settle and steer. It is very much a club and regional regatta racer, ideal for modest budget Cowes, Dartmouth, Cork, Spi Ouest type events provided you are equipped with good sails.

The gennaker we had was a little basic for racing use but it did give the feeling that the boat will be happy with as much power running and reaching as possible. It tracked very well, accelerated smoothly in the puffs. And all the mechanical processes worked smoothly through the gybes with us sailing three up.

It is hard to really tell how well the Dehler 42 will do in full race mode. Intermezzo was just about to start its first race series – Kieler Woche – but this will be against a mixed bag of boats, making it hard to get a precise measure of performance. Time will tell.



“ Dehler remains unique in its operation in the cruiser-racer market...” ”

INTERIOR 7/10

★★★★★☆☆☆☆

There are two interior options, one with two symmetrical double aft cabins and a forward owners cabin with en suite heads. The alternative has the port aft cabin as locker space and a bigger forecabin.

I personally still like the idea of a nav station. On the Dehler 42 the nav station is on a rail system, which allows it to slide aft making the port settee a full length berth with a small infill. But also this means the table can be forward or aft facing depending on preference. Typically, for example, this would allow you to set the port settee as a sea berth close to the nav station. The curved locker lids give the saloon a very uniform, modern look. Correspondingly, there is lots of storage space. And the main comms equipment and switchboard are hidden by the same shape of cover.

The L-shaped galley is great with ample working space, a double sink, and front and top loading 130lt fridge.

The finish is perhaps on the utilitarian side with the mahogany satin finish but complemented with good textile liners, while you can be as adventurous as you like with the upholstery and finishes.

VERDICT 8/10

★★★★★☆☆☆☆

As the bigger sister to the successful Dehler 38, the new 42 seems to be sticking to the same formula. It is hard to tell at this stage how competitive it will be in the race arena, but it has all the right components and, as a basic platform, seems to be a very good package. The all round sailing performance sparkles but it is the layout and the attention to detail – the ability to race straight from the box – which is most appealing. It is at heart a family cruiser with all the comfortable accommodation requirements for safe and fast distance and coastal cruising.

Making the switch from cruising to racing mode is as simple as changing sails and replacing the roller furler jib for a choice selection of headsails.

Dehler know their market and have already sold 40 42s since the start of 2016. The majority will be sold as fast cruisers, which will do the occasional race perhaps but the competition options are a moveable feast.

Ultimately, the basic boat represents excellent value for money and with some astute spending a competitive racer-cruiser can be set up without breaking the bank. □



COMPARISONS



Arcona 410

Swedish Arcona Yachts aim for a similar blend of high performance cruising with the potential to cross over into racing when required. The 410 is an older design but is quick and pretty.

LOA 12.2m

Beam 3.9m

Weight 7,800 kg



X-41

X-Yachts' ability to put together a cruiser/racer has allowed it to ride out even the toughest financial storms. The 41 offers one design racing combined with a high level of comfort.

LOA 12.35m

Beam 3.64m

Weight 6,800kg

ANSWER BACK

Peter Thomas of Inspiration Marine

We're delighted Andi enjoyed sailing the Dehler. The new 42 is never only about sailing, but about more ideas generated per every mile sailed. It's about the comfort of a luxury yacht and the performance of a racing yacht; about a design that follows principles, not fashion. Yachts that can be sailed under all conditions.

There are choices of cabin layouts to suit families who weekend on a boat or longer-term cruisers who want to maximise storage.

Add on to that the ability of the owner to select a wooden interior made from their choice of mahogany, American cherry or teak, four different types of cushions fabrics (including real leather) from a range of 30 colours, and you can have the cruising boat you have always wanted – and with all the performance you will ever need.