

Perfect match

Moving from power boats to yachts can be a difficult transition but **Phil Ross** discovers one owner who found the Hunter 40 a good first choice

MAIN IMAGE:
Roller furling
everything
makes an easy
short hander.

INSET: Plenty of
space to move
around the side
deck. One has
to be careful as
the hatches are
not suitable for
foot traffic.



Revamped US yacht brand Marlow-Hunter has hit the ground running with the first in its line of yachts designed to rejuvenate the iconic craft.

The Hunter 40 debuted this year at both the Sanctuary Cove and Sydney boat shows. Since the first one rolled off the US production line in March, Australia has sold two and there are approximately 50 worldwide so far.

According to Ed Penn at US Yachts in Sydney the H40 is designed specifically for extended cruising and live-aboard comfort. Marlow-Hunter has focussed on safety and strong construction for all the models in its World Destination series of yachts including the H45, H50 and H50cc (centre cockpit).

Sea change

Owners of the review boat were most helpful in outlining what factors led them to choose the Hunter 40.

Steve Jurd from Sydney was a long-term power boat owner with some sailing experience. He and his son spent two years researching what would be the best boat for them to begin their cruising life.

"We originally looked at 36 footers as being the best to learn to sail and then upgrade later," said Jurd. "But the cabin space was the winner on the Hunter."

"I came out of powered sports cruisers and this boat has a much better cabin layout and more spacious.

"For example the galley is way better."

Indeed the galley is a neat, tight set up with beefy Corian benchtops and a double burner stove with oven. Hunter even supply a six-place setting of dishes, bowls and mugs.

Opting for the two cabin layout means the aft main berth is a full queen size bed and includes a separate chair, bench space and storage compartments.

The aft cabin headroom of 175cms maybe something about yachts with which Jurd is learning to come to grips but does not detract from his enjoyment, "we probably won't move up in boat size as originally planned. It is a lifestyle decision."

In keeping with Hunter's long held philosophy of cosy interiors the saloon layout goes against the grain of most European designs and provides the navigation centre its own forward facing seat.

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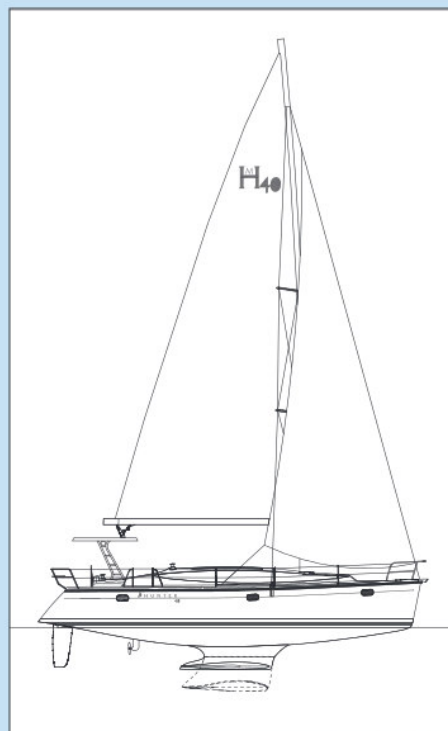
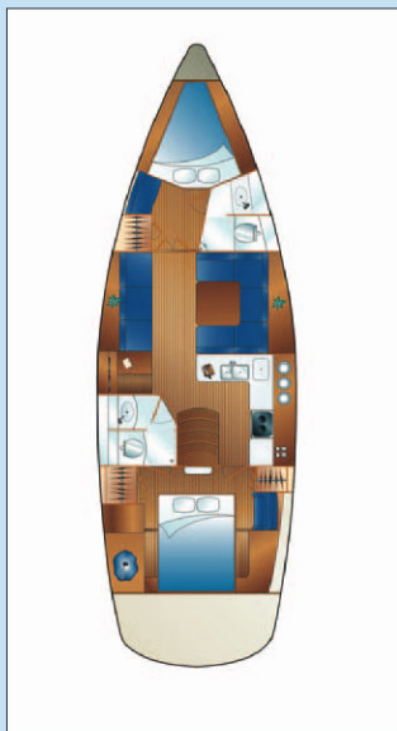
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YACHTING AUSTRALIA

SPECIFICATIONS HUNTER 40

Length (m): 12.57
 LWL (m): 10.97
 Beam (m): 4.01
 Draft (m): 2.03
 Ballast (kgs): 2461
 Displacement (kgs): 8936
 Mast height above waterline (m): 18.82
 Sail Area (m²): 93.46
 Sail area/Displacement: 22.07
 Displacement/Length: 188.5
 Ballast ratio: 0.28
 Theoretical hull speed (knots): 8.04
 Transom beam: max beam: 80%
 Headroom at mast (m): 1.92
 Headroom at berth base (m): 1.75
 Base boat price (AUD): \$324,000

Review yacht supplied by US Yachts with thanks.



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Notice of Event: 30TH RACE

DATE: 1100 hours Saturday 23 August 2014, Darwin Harbour NT, Australia.

FINISH: Village of Anabusa, Ambon Harbour, Indonesia.

COURSE: From the start line east of Stokes Hill Wharf, Darwin Harbour to the finish line of the village of Anabusa, Ambon Harbour, approx. 3°43.3664S and 128°08.0404E, a distance of approx. 634nm. There are no course marks.

ENTRY APPLICATION: All enquiries to: info@darwinambonrace.com.au. All Entry Applications **MUST INCLUDE** a GNI, Indonesian Customs Bond Exemption Certificate. Costs of your personal Indonesian visas are not included.

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View from the rear shows the extreme cut away of the canoe body at the aft end of the boat.

For owner Jurd the twin heads turned out to be a bit of a luxury with only two cabins. He would have gone for a bigger forecabin and only one head if he had considered it better. Both heads, however, exhibit plenty of elbow room with security when seated or showering.

Design upgrade

On our test day it indeed responded well to the helm in the light Sydney airs.

Previous Hunter boats I have tested have the tendency to tip easily on to its tumblehome before powering forward. A large flat aft section on the canoe body appears to negate the old design problem and gives the Hunter a more slippery feel without digging holes in the water.

Jurd and his son have been receiving sailing training from the team at US Yachts and intend to take the boat themselves coastal cruising to the Whitsundays. "It is easier to sail than first thought, I am a 61 year old with a crook shoulder so we kitted the boat up with electric winches and a bow thruster and now it is perfect."

"The guys at US Yachts have been awesome. When looking at different brands we checked out with other Hunter owners and not one said anything bad about them."

The intention is to leave it up north and fly in for some cruising when time allows.

Easy does it

Topside the yacht includes Marlow-Hunter's Travel Arch mainsheeting system which forms the leading edge of the bimini. This allows freedom of movement around the large cockpit.

The roller furling jib sheets run straight aft requiring no tracks on the fore, or side, deck. All other lines and sheets run either side of the companionway under the dodger with large storage compartments for line and gear. This means the skipper has easy access to the jib and the main looks after itself.

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Plenty of light through the hatches and plenty of light at night as well.


A large pop-up table makes the cockpit suitable for entertaining and dining. While the dual helm stations provide ease of handling and easy access to the drop down boarding platform and ladder.

Stainless steel stern rail seating provides a relaxing seating area for company underway. There would still be room to include dinghy davits.

Forward of the cockpit the H40 is structured for short-hand sailing with the optional self-furling sail system. Alternatively, performance oriented sailors may choose a standard sail configuration.

Slab-sided cabin top and spaced upper and lower shrouds means there is plenty of space for movement along the side decks. The standard sails could be easily and safely handled with the canted handrails and lines and a good non-skid surface for mobility.

Both a bimini and a dodger provide excellent protection in the deep welled cockpit. Vision from the cockpit is still good and the boom is raised well off the cockpit floor.

Jurd added around \$35,000 in optional extras to suit his capabilities, which for him makes the Hunter 40 his perfect match. 

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