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Düsseldorf

Boot Camp

A walk around the world's biggest boat show *by Peter Nielsen*

As if there was any doubt, January's Boot Düsseldorf show once again lived up to its billing as the world's top boat and watersports show. A quarter of a million boat nuts flocked to the massive exhibition center on the banks of the Rhine for the nine-day event. Although this show caters to just about anything you can do on, in or under water—from fishing to wakeboarding, surfing, canoeing, kayaking, scuba diving, kiteboarding or paddleboarding—you'll no doubt be happy to know that, unlike power-centric mixed shows Stateside, it's sailing and sailboats that draw the biggest crowds. Hence, this is now the prime venue for boat-builders to introduce their new models.

As always, there was no shortage of new product for boat aficionados to feast their eyes upon. Bavaria unveiled—literally, the boat was enveloped in a white shroud—its new **Cruiser 34**, which features the now obligatory twin wheels along with a three-cabin layout that looks ideal for coastal cruising with a young family.

Dehler introduced a pretty new 42-footer, a fast sport cruiser that looks just as sharp as the 38 and 46 that preceded it. No hull chines or twin rudders for the **Dehler 42**—designers Judel/Vrolijk are sticking with the tried and tested deep fin, deep spade rudder and balanced hull combination they've been refining for so many years.

The Europeans do this kind of boat really well, and there were several other debutantes of the sport cruiser ilk. Sirena Marine showed its new **Azuree 33C**, a colorfully decorated boat that shows lots of original thinking. Various elements of the interior can be unbolted and removed at will to optimize accommodations for cruising or racing.

Italia Yachts brought two new boats, both featuring the clean styling

and first-rate build quality this relatively new brand has become known for. The 42ft **Italia 12.98**, a nicely laid-out cruiser that would take one or two couples along the coast or around the cans in great style, and the **9.98**, a finely honed sportster that benefits from the latest thinking in deck layout and sail handling gear.

At the opposite end of the hall, the classy new **Solaris 47** sat alongside its two bigger sisters, minus keels and rigs, in an artsy display that showed off these boats' immaculate moldings and keen styling. With a self-tacking jib and all sail control lines led aft to the helm, it's designed to be easily handled by a couple while still providing a rewarding platform for a race crew.

The queen of the sports cruisers, though, was the new **Swan 60S**. Although it shares a hull with the 60FD, which has been around a for a few years, everything else is new, from the rig and deck plan to the accommodations. It's a design in which the scale has tilted from out-and-out performance to a more accessible cruising layout that harks back to older Swans, but in a thoroughly modern package.

CONTACTS

Astus astusboats.com

Azuree azuree.com

Bavaria Yachts bavariayachts.com

Beneteau beneteau.com

Dehler Yachts dehler.com

Delphia Yachts delphiayachts.com

Dragonfly Boat dragonfly.dk

ePoH epoh.eu

Fountaine Pajot fountaine-pajot.com

Garcia Yachting garcia-yachting.com

Italia Yachts italiayachts.it

Lagoon Catamarans cata-lagoon.com

LA Yacht la-yacht.de

Nautor's Swan nautorswan.com

Solaris Yachts solarisyachts.com

Wauquiez wauquiez.com

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In terms of hardcore cruising boats, one of the standouts was the **Garcia Exploration 52**, a bigger version of the twin-rudder, swing-keel aluminum workhorse aboard which Jimmy Cornell transited the Northwest Passage in 2015. If you want to go high-latitude sailing in comfort and maybe break some ice, this boat is for you. If not, perhaps the **Delphia 46DS** would work. It's a capacious long-distance cruiser, well decked out for the long haul, with a choice of keel configurations to suit just about every sailing style.

Like so many boatbuilders, Wauquiez had a financial day of reckoning a few years ago, but emerged from its crisis in good shape. The new **Wauquiez Pilot Saloon 48** offers her crew a panoramic view out of the deckhouse and luxurious accommodations to go with it. Beneteau had the new **Oceanis 41.1** on display and going by the lines to get on board this should be another strong model for them.

The logistical difficulties of transporting big multihulls means there simply are not as many of these on display as the strength of the market would indicate. However, to commemorate its 40th anniversary Fountaine Pajot brought along its new **Lucia 40**, a roomy, handsome boat from the Berret/Racoupeau team. Lagoon, not to be left behind, showed its replacement for the long-lived 420, the **Lagoon 42**, which shares the high-aspect mainsail/self-tacking genoa of the bigger VPLP designs in the range.

Danish trimaran builder Quorning had a strong display, including the revamped **Dragonfly 28 Sport**, which now has a wave-piercing float design for added buoyancy at speed. Another new arrival was the **Astus 16.5**, a small trailerable tri that looks just the thing for a breezy Saturday afternoon.

As always at Düsseldorf, the real fun is in prowling the darker recesses of the halls to see what inventive smaller builders have come up with. To my mind the star of the show was the exquisite **LA28** daysailer, whose lovely cold-molded contours were clad in khaya mahogany. The daysailer craze seems to have died down in the United States, but it's thriving in Europe.

I was tickled by the **ePoH**, a high-powered skiff for the mere mortals among us—it has “training wheels,” ski-shaped floats attached to the hiking rails that hit the water if things get squirrely and prevent the boat from pitchpoling. Less time in the water, more time on it—sounds fair.

Düsseldorf is also the place to spot new trends in boatbuilding and design. This year’s takeaways: yet more emphasis on concealing lines belowdeck, and more “snouts”—long anchor platforms that double as tack points for A-sails, often covered by a fiberglass molding. Faux-teak decking is being used on more and more boats, and ash and oak interior trim is in, as are lifting keels, perhaps because crowded mooring fields are driving boats closer to shore. **S**





Euphoria 54

A luxury cruiser that looks beautiful and sails like a dream *by Adam Cort*

In an often all-too-underwhelming world, there's nothing like having your expectations exceeded, as mine were when I first saw the new Euphoria 54—and that was before we'd even had a chance to go sailing. When it came time to take the boat out for a spin, my expectations were nothing less than blown away.

CONSTRUCTION

Founded in 2006 in cooperation with Italy's famed luxury-yacht builder Azimut-Benetti Group, Sirena Marine has plenty of boatbuilding know-how in its DNA, and it shows in the Euphoria 54's build quality.

The hull and deck are infused in vinylester with foam coring above the waterline and a series of carbon stringers for stiffness. Two different T-keels, both with iron fins and lead ballast bulbs, are available—one, a high-aspect fin drawing 10ft, another a medium-aspect blade drawing 8ft for more shoal waters.

The topsides are slightly beveled from bow to stern a few inches below the hull-deck joint, and there are subtle chines aft. The boat carries just a hint of sheer, which does a great job of tying together the plumb bow and reverse transom—no surprise given the fact it was drawn by famed naval architect German Frers.

The single rudder is crafted in carbon fiber and controlled via twin-wheel JP3 steering. The standard rig is built around a Seldén aluminum mast, but our test boat carried a wonderfully executed carbon mast and boom from Hall Spars supported by discontinuous rod rigging.

ON DECK

Though billed as a luxury performance cruiser, the Euphoria 54 sure looked to me like a fun boat to race. The helm positions, which include storage under each seat, include foot chocks for support and afford a

clear view over the low, curvaceous cabintrunk of the blade jib. The primaries are well positioned for grinding (not that any grinding is actually necessary, the winches being Harken electrics) and there's a fixed attachment point for an A-sail on the stem immediately forward of the boat's belowdeck Reckmann furler. (An aggressive fixed sprit is also available.) A Navtec hydraulic backstay adjuster comes standard, and the adjustable Harken headsail jib leads lie close alongside the cabintrunk to either side of the mast, providing nice tight sheeting angles.

Not that the boat doesn't also do a fine job of addressing the creature-comfort needs of its passengers.

Aft, the transom not only drops down to produce an enormous swim platform, but it reveals an expansive dinghy garage that will serve equally well for storing water toys and other nautical paraphernalia. In a nice touch, this space can also be accessed through a large hatch in the cockpit sole between the helms. The rest of the cockpit includes a pair of long benches that stretch from the helms to the cabintrunk. The benches include nicely beveled backs and have a foldout dinette in between. Nothing fancy here, just plenty of space to relax in.

Forward, flush Lewmar hatches and substantial stainless steel handrails punctuate a vast expanse of teak encasing both the cabintrunk and side decks. In the case of the Euphoria 54, this teak is standard—not an option—and the overall effect is drop-dead gorgeous. All lines run belowdecks for a very clean look.

The foredeck includes a spacious sail locker, complete with access ladder, and the anchor is deployed via a nifty retractable stainless/bowsprit roller, making for an uncluttered bow under sail.

ACCOMMODATIONS

The accommodation plan is straightforward, with an owner's stateroom

For video of the Euphoria 54 visit sailmagazine.com/video

in the bow and paired quarterberths aft of the companionway, each with its own shower/head. The overall look is definitely Euro-chic, with clean lines and the joinery done in a very light "lime-washed oak," all extremely well executed. There's the option of a crew cabin in place of the sail locker in the bow.

The owner's stateroom is one of the best I've seen aboard a boat with this LOA. With great side access on either side of the double berth, plenty of stowage space, a nice little work desk to starboard and a fun little lounging space snuggled up against the hull window to port, this is a stateroom that makes for one heck of a space to relax in.

Midships, what struck me was the nav station. It's huge! And while some might see this as wasted space, I'm one of those who believe a nav station is not just a great place for getting some work done, but for hanging out as well, especially on passage. The standard navigation package is Raymarine. However, B&G electronics are also available.

If I have a complaint with the interior it's in regard to the galley. Equipped with a pair of fridges and a GN Espace OceanChef oven and stove, it's a fine place for preparing meals, with a decent amount of counter space and nice, solid fiddles. However, it's tight "C" configuration means there's no way to step to one side or the other of where you'll be doing your cooking. As a result, if something hot spills while you're in any kind of seaway, you're stuck in the line of fire. Best to wear your foul weather bibs if things ever get rough.

UNDER SAIL

The 2015 fall boat show season was a good one for boat tests, and our sail trial of the Euphoria 54 in 9 to 12 knots of wind on Narragansett Bay was no exception. One of the great things about modern yacht design is the way the right combination of proportions and materials can result in a larger boat that feels solid yet nimble all at the same time—something the Euphoria 54 achieves masterfully.

Hoisting our test boat's North Sails main and unrolling the headsail, we immediately hardened up onto a beat. Once there, the boat acceler-

Euphoria 54

SPECIFICATIONS

LOA	54ft	LWL	48ft
BEAM	15ft 1in	DRAFT	10ft (std); 8ft (shoal)
DISPLACEMENT	39,500lb		
BALLAST	13,660lb		
SAIL AREA	1,789ft ²	AIR DRAFT	83ft 9in
FUEL/WATER (GAL)	105/145		
ENGINE	75hp Volvo with saildrive		
BALLAST RATIO	35%		
SA/D RATIO	25	D/L RATIO	159

What do these ratios mean? Visit sailmagazine.com/ratios

DESIGNER

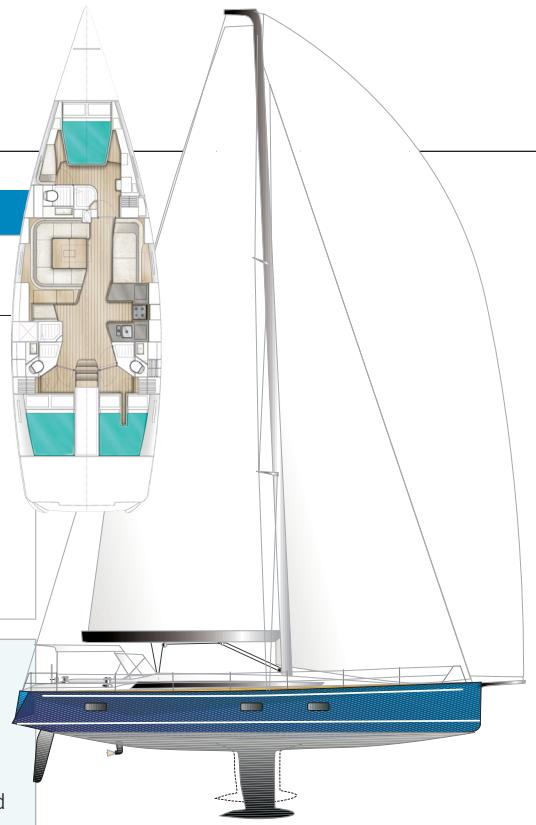
German Frers

BUILDER Sirena Marine, Istanbul, Turkey,

euphoriyachts.com.tr

U.S. DISTRIBUTOR Berthon USA, 401-846-8404, berthonusa.com

PRICE \$825,000 (sailaway); \$1.2 million as tested



ated smoothly, dug in her shoulder and started powering forward like it was on a set of silky smooth rails, sailing a steady 8 knots in 10 knots of true wind.

Coming about the boat stayed fully powered up, tacking through 85 degrees, without even thinking of hesitating as the bow passed through stays. Granted, we didn't have to contend with much in terms of seas, but the boat is such that I'd be shocked if it were any tougher, even in the worst chop. The Euphoria 54's deep high-aspect rudder has all the power you could ever want for throwing the boat around, whether it's tacking, gybing or surfing waves with the A-sail up.

Even more impressive was how solid the boat felt underway, calmly and confidently channeling the wind into VMG as it made its way through the water. This is the kind of speed that will make your racing friends happy, even as it allows the lubbers aboard to remain at their ease. It still never ceases to amaze me how you can sail a modern well-found boat of this size literally with your fingertips.

UNDER POWER

Motoring our way out of Newport Harbor the Euphoria 54's 75hp Volvo Penta engine and three-blade feathering Max Prop shoved us along at 4.1 knots, running at 1,000 rpm. Revving to 2,000 rpm yielded 8.1 knots of boatspeed, and we hit 9.0 knots at 2,300 rpm. Backing down and slow-speed maneuvering was simplicity itself, even in a 12-knot crosswind. The combination of that bigger rudder and the optional retracting bow-thruster makes it possible put the boat pretty much anywhere you want with absolute ease.

CONCLUSION

While it's not hard to create a 54-footer that looks impressive from the dock, creating one that looks even better up close and sails better still is a different matter entirely. The Euphoria 54 does all this and more—a sharp looking boat that sails great and takes exceptional care of its crew by any measure. **S**



ILLUSTRATIONS BY PIP HURN