

Hylas 46

by Bill Lee

You are probably wondering why a report on a prominent new cruising vessel — in this case the **Hylas 46** offered by Caribbean Yacht Charters — flags a charter company and not the manufacturer's yard. Well, when it comes to Hylas, CYC's Dick Jachney is why we in the United States have ready access to this family of sailboats from Taiwan's Queen Long Marine in the first place. Jachney has found in the Hylas line standards of quality, value and performance that make as much sense in the context of a working charter fleet as they do in the context of a serious and diligent owner seeking a top product. The company offers the boats on a private ownership basis and on a purchase-and-charter basis as well.

The Hylas 46 is the continuation of a very successful run of semi-custom center-cockpit boats. Earlier models came off

With 6'8" standing headroom and a finish of the finest kind, the main saloon aboard the 46 is in a class of its own.

the drawing boards at Sparkman & Stephens; this one is a German Frers' design, notable for its modern fine entry and wide midship beam brought aft, its fin keel and its deep semi-elliptical spade rudder balanced off a partial skeg. In the true spirit of earlier Hylases, the 46 is also notable for an interior comfortable enough to border on plush, and systems scenarios hard to beat for their meticulous installations.

The cockpit in its midship configuration is high and compact but very comfortable, with easy foot bracing

across for the crew when heeled. Helmsman seating is comfortable both when level or heeled and then either from windward or leeward. All running rigging is led back to the cockpit for convenient sail handling.

The rig by Kemp features double spreaders and split lower shrouds; the section is hefty enough to waive the need for runners. Our test model flew a conventional-hoist mainsail with full battens and lazy jacks. I consider this arrangement superior to a mainsail that stows in the mast because it makes for a larger roach, real battens, a sturdy headboard and a better all-around shape of sail. Also, with conventional hoist the mast itself can be lighter for the same effective strength.

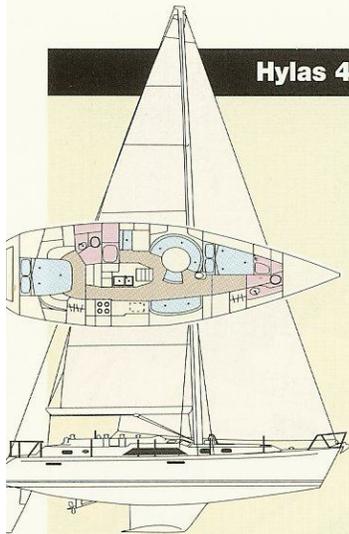
Many view the Hylas line as laid out for charter purposes because of how these boats are marketed, but I consider the

Hylas 46 to have a distinct owner-optimized bias once you venture below. The aft state-room and head are grand with a 60-inch-wide, larger-than-queen-size island berth, extensive storage, a usable desk, good ventilation and lots of room to walk around in. This differs from the forward state-room, which has a less regal feel about it given a berth width of 42 inches in the center. Bareboat charterers wedded to separate but equal accommodations might note this, but in truth both quarters are private and it should be noted that each is provided with its own head.

In the hands of a private owner the 46 is eminently comfortable. The layout allows passage to the owner's accommodations aft on either side, down the starboard side by way of the galley and the port side by way of the head. The main cabin table is notably versatile — a small cocktail table in its normal mode, a large dining table once raised, expanded and simply converted. The main settee can become another double berth when needed and the starboard settee converts to twin bunks. General interior construction is what I like to call that of a wood boat built into a glass hull and deck, and it is quite well done. Storage below is extensive, and deck access storage is more vast than that aboard most comparable center-cockpit yachts.

Typically the Queen Long yard in Kaohsiung has done a first rate job putting the boat together and this is evident as much in the hardy feel of the vessel under way as in any close inspection of glasswork and structural components behind the finish. Construction details are ABS approved. The hull is laid up with solid glass for impact resistance and strength, while the deck is cored with end-grain balsa for stiffness and reduced weight. The keel is cast in lead and ex-





Hylas 46

LOA: 46'3" (14.1 m.)
LWL: 40'0" (12.2 m.)
Beam: 13'9" (4.19 m.)
Draft (deep): 6'0" (1.83 m.)
Draft (shoal): 4'10" (1.47 m.)
Ballast: 12,346 lbs. (5,600 kgs.)
Disp: 27,777 lbs. (12,600 kgs.)
Sail area: 1,287 sq.ft. (119.6 sq.m.)
Mast above water: 63'0" (19.2 m.)
Ballast/Disp: .44
Disp/Length: 194
SA/Disp: 22.5
Fuel tankage: 100 gal. (378 ltr.)
Water tankage: 200 gal. (757 ltr.)
Auxiliary: Yanmar JHTE 62-hp diesel
Cabin headroom: 6'8" (2.03 m.) max
Designer: German Frers
Base price: \$309,000 (Sailaway)

**Caribbean Yacht Charters/Sales Inc.
P.O. Box 583, Marblehead, MA 01945
Phone (617) 599-7990**

ternally hung with no less than 15 one-inch keel bolts. The engine is located beneath the main companionway under the galley island; there is excellent access at the front with further access through panels on the other three sides. Plumbing and thru-hulls are meticulously labeled and easy to reach. And, certainly worth noting, the Hylas 46 gets the electrical panel award of the year both for access to wiring and for the superb quality of its installation.

We sailed the 4'10" shoal-draft Scheel-keel version, although she is also available with a 6'2" fin keel for stiffer and more weatherly performance if shoal draft is low on your list of priorities. We enjoyed puffy, reaching conditions in 10 to 18 knots of breeze, and we flew a full main and full 135-percent overlapping genoa. Unreefed she was a bit tender in the more prominent gusts — as one might expect — but I ascribe this to her powerful SA/Disp figure of 22.5, to the shallow keel with its higher center of gravity, and to the vessel's fixed three-blade prop simply because a boat encountering drag responds less positively to the rudder. Her lines, quite sharp forward and very full aft as we noted earlier, are modern and fast; in breezy conditions the combination of a deep fin and a folding low-drag prop would prove exhilarating.

Frers' design has sophisticated performance written all over it.

The 46 shows good attention to safety features, which include very generous, substantial grab rails over the Dorade vents, high lifelines, clean decks, a secure cockpit and a sturdy, well-supported rig. The non-skid is first rate. In my Boat Of The Year inspections I did not find safety harness pad eyes installed in the cockpit, and I feel that any serious offshore vessel should have them as standard equipment; pad eyes for side deck jack lines are a good idea as well. She is equipped, however, with excellent teak and stainless rub rails running full length just beneath the sheer. These represent a serious and sensible item often omitted on cruising boats whose sleek, unembellished topsides invariably show the scars of docking and rafting episodes well before their time.

The Hylas 46 comes with extensive standard equipment and an abundance of top-quality name-brand gear, all within the sailaway package price of \$309,000. I deem her a "must see" for any serious cruiser considering an attractive semi-custom purchase in a value-conscious production wrapper. Plan to visit the upcoming Newport, Rhode Island, or Annapolis, Maryland, sailboat shows and see a new 46 for yourself.