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Hanse 315 - boat test

By By Fred Barter and Roxanna Maynard, the Mainsail crew

It was one of those days when the sun shone but the wind did not blow. A shame really because one of the chief qualities of this boat is her reputation for being a fast sailing, 31-footer. Lack of wind meant that our opportunity to put this aspect to the test was severely curtailed.

We shall begin by talking about the boats self tacking jib. This is one of the many reasons why this boat would not only be good for more experienced sailors, but also perfect for beginners and those who enjoy single handed sailing. Instead of having to pull at ropes every time you want to tack or jibe, it does it automatically for you and in doing so, provides excellent visibility. Unfortunately it did cause a few problems. As motor boats zoomed across the water, creating a multitude of bow waves and with very little wind, the movement cause the jib to swing from one side to the other with an almighty bang. Though this is a small price to pay



Picture available from www.hanseyachts.com

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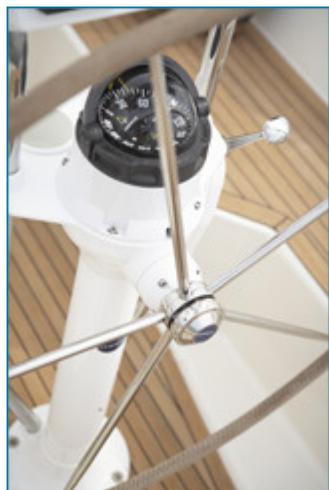
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compared to its other advantages.

One of her other notable features is the remarkable amount of boat you get for your money. Current price for the standard boat is £54,990 inc VAT. But what makes her really good value is the standard spec which includes many items sold as extras on competitive craft. We don't have space to list them all here but visit the direct competitor's websites the Jeanneau 32, www.sea-ventures.co.uk the Legend 32 and the Bavaria 33, both of these can be found at www.opalmarine.co.uk. You can make the comparisons yourselves. She is CE classified A (Ocean).



Picture available from www.hanseyachts.com

If you are willing to spend a little more, however, there is a wide range of extras available from electronics and navigational equipment, to deck hardware and interior decor. The 315 we tested had a wheel rather than a tiller which comes as standard. The steering is very light and only the tiniest movement is needed to spin the boat round. While we motored out of the harbour, the steering was also very responsive, though I fear this wasn't the case while sailing, purely down to lack of wind.

The Hanse is built in what was East Germany in their boatbuilding yard Hanse Yachtzentrum on the Ryck River just a few miles from the Baltic Sea. Before Michael Schmidt came along to buy the premises, the yard mostly built commercial craft plus a few yachts. Schmidt is a well known name as an Admiral's Cup-winning yachtsman and as yacht broker on the Hamble. His experience as a racer has made him resolve to build boats which are not only fast but can be sailed by a family crew. This is a production boat built to a price, but nevertheless the design

cleverly provides a lot of boat for the money.

Although contained in a hull designed for speed the accommodation is adequate but not lavish. The finish inside is impressive with off-white bulkheads, vinyl-covered headlining and a generous provision of red-stained varnished mahogany. We were told that the automated varnishing system applies sixteen coats, resulting in a tough and beautiful finish that I would not want to emulate by hand. In my book the 'Reeds Yacht Buyers Guide' I described the interior as follows: The forward cabin is separated from the saloon by a door. Inside the cabin is a large double berth (2m) long, this can be converted to a single with a chair. There is a locker in addition



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to shelves above the berths. I found a few changes since my last look. The lockers no longer have rattan fronts; these have been changed to solid doors with very smart locks. (See pics) The saloon has two straight settees separated with a folding table. The galley is an L shaped island supplied with a gas cooker with two burners and an oven. The insulated coolbox with a cooling unit is also standard. One of the really unusual features is the provision of an exceptionally large sail locker entered by a door from inside the heads. The aft cabin has a large double berth with the headroom determined by the cockpit under which it sits. There is a forward facing chart table with its own seat. The switch panel is hinged and reveals a very tidy wiring loom. Engine access is easy. There are five opening portlights and four opening hatches. Under bunk lockers are limited by the water tank to starboard and the batteries to port. The overall interior impression is smart and modern. Comfort is provided without the luxury of a more expensive boat. Experienced buyers do a lot of research before they arrange a test sail. I suspect that many will be convinced when they try her, especially if their day includes some wind. Hanse are building 400 boats a year this is a testimony to the quality and design of their range.

If boats can be thought of as cars, the nearest analogy would be to class the 315 as a Volkswagen, this is not derogatory. She is very much the product of German efficiency and careful planning, if you want value for money she is well worth a test sail of your own.

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 **Roxanna Maynard**

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After going to test the Hanse 315 I find myself wondering if I had a spare £55,000 lying around; would I spend it on this boat? I wanted to know what other thought about it and if you think it compares to its competitors.

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