

BOAT TEST

Hylas 48

Made for the sea

This robust offshore passagemaker is tricked out with creature comforts, sophisticated systems and a seakindly nature



HYLAS 48

By Greta Schanen with photography by Billy Black

It's not every day that you sail with a Boston terrier as a bo'sun, which made it a nice surprise when Bikini peeked her head out of the cockpit as I boarded the brand-new Hylas 48 at Mears Marina in Annapolis, Maryland. She was anxious to get underway, and I couldn't wait to put this new Dixon-designed passagemaker through its paces.

Bill Dixon has designed a shapely hull and deck with wraparound windows that help minimize the look of the tall deckhouse and center cockpit. With a 42-foot waterline and a 14-foot 6-inch beam that is carried aft there is plenty of room for accommodations.

It was a hot and sticky morning in early October following the U.S. Sailboat Show, but there was hope that the wind would fill in. In the meantime, Christian Pschorr, service director for Hylas, showed me around Hull No. 1, which had recently arrived in the U.S. from Queen Long shipyard in Taiwan where Hylas Yachts have been built since 1985. The family-owned company has built more than 500 Hylas yachts, and the 48 joins a long list of semi-custom oceangoing cruisers built of hand-laid fiberglass known for their durability. Below the waterline, the 48 has two epoxy barrier coats and three coats of bottom paint. The beefy construction also includes fore and aft watertight bulkheads.

"The yard continues to improve its building techniques in a conservative way, and the

48 has some composite bulkheads to keep it light and strong," Pschorr said.

The H48 has a solid-lead 6-foot 6-inch fin keel and the rudder is mounted on a semi-skeg. In a departure from previous models, the H48 has a saildrive, which allows the engine to move forward in the boat for better weight location and to reduce vibration when under power.

On deck

The side decks were wide and free of clutter and I found it easy to make my way to the foredeck. Fiberglass nonskid is standard, but Pschorr said about 15% of owners opt for teak.

Hull No. 1 was fitted with a Selden rig with three slightly swept spreaders and an in-mast-furling mainsail. All boats come standard with Doyle sails. The boat also was fitted with the optional furling self-tacking jib/staysail on an inner forestay and the genoa was on the optional Furlex electric roller furler tacked to the stem. A code zero can be flown from an optional sprit. The beefy stem fitting featured a double anchor roller and a Maxwell windlass, and the bow was covered in a protective stainless cover. The anchor locker had enough room for two anchor rodes.

All hardware and winches are Lewmar. The boat comes standard with four dorade vents for good ventilation below. Lines run aft from the mast to a bank of clutches



- 1 The Hylas 48 is made for offshore sailing with stainless grabrails where you need them.
- 2 The large wraparound cockpit has a teak cockpit table that fold flush against the steering pedestal, freeing up space in the cockpit and companionway area.
- 3 The split backstay creates unobstructed access to the swim step and the aft deck area has cavernous lazarettes.
- 4 Bikini the Boston terrier shows her captain Christian Pschorr the new waypoint.
- 5 The flexible sailplan includes an in-mast roller-furling mainsail, a self-tacking working jib set on an inner forestay and larger working genoa.

on the starboard side. The large cockpit has wraparound seating with jaunty navy-striped cushions, and there was room for a crowd to dine around the cockpit table that folds flush against the steering pedestal, opening up access to the companionway.

The pushpit is stainless tubing that runs the full length forward to the side gates for extra safety. It's a step down from the cockpit to the aft deck area that features cavernous lazarettes and access to the rudder post where a full-size emergency tiller can be set up. There are two steps down to the swim transom and ladder, which has four stainless grabrails to assist when boarding the tender. The H48 comes with a second boarding ladder that attaches at the side decks that is two part: used full length for boarding from a dinghy or shortened to use for reaching low finger piers.

Down below

Heading below, I was struck by how light and bright it was in the semi-raised saloon. The boat was finished in light teak, with a solid teak-and-holly sole. Even the mast was finished in teak. Being semi custom, the choices for interior layout and finishes are nearly endless. There are at least a dozen different layouts for the saloon alone. The test boat had a large settee wrapping around the dining table. The opposing settee was too far for dining seating, but a movable bench seat can be used for seating or, with the cushion removed, used as a cocktail table. The forward-facing nav desk is to starboard behind the settee and is large enough to spread out charts.

The in-line galley is located down on the port side. The Force 10 three-burner stove and oven and large refrigerator and freezer are outboard, with the large double sink inboard underneath the companionway steps. With plenty of places to brace, this galley would be comfortable to work in when sailing in a seaway.

Forward is a cabin with twin bunk beds to port, and this space can be designed as an office or workroom. There's a head to starboard and a guest cabin in the forepeak. The owner's cabin is aft, with a large center-line berth, settee and head with a separate shower. At every turn there seems to be a hanging locker or storage cubby.



The large forward-facing nav desk is just forward of the master head with separate shower that makes a convenient wet locker on stormy passages, above. The semi-raised saloon is bright with the large wrap-around windows, top. The in-line galley has a three-burner stove and oven, and refrigerator and freezer that are both top- and front-loading, above right.

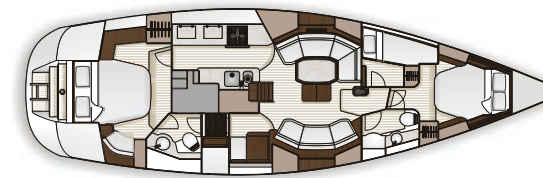


All systems are designed with offshore passagemaking in mind. The fuel management system has been cleverly engineered to move the 290 gallons of fuel between the different tanks through a fuel filter, eliminating the need to bleed the system.

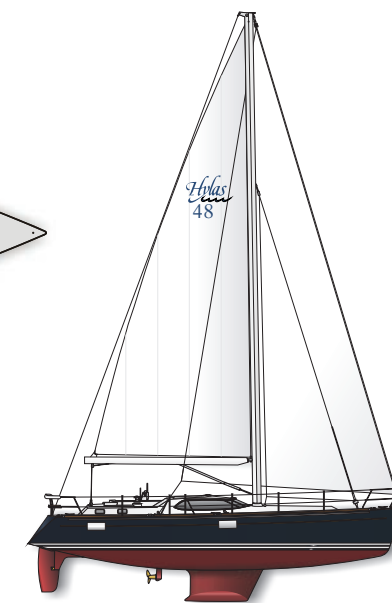
"The fuel polishing systems was originally a client idea that we made standard because fuel sits for long time in the different tanks and you want to get the water out," Pschorr said. "And if you are on a long passage you can move the fuel to the windward side."

Hylas has gone to great lengths to make the mechanical and electrical systems easy to manage. Everything is labeled at the fac-

Hylas 48



LOA 47'11"; LWL 42'4"; Beam 14'6"; Draft 6'6";
Displ. 36,360 lbs.; Ballast 13,111 lbs.; Sail
area 1,373 sq. ft.; SA/D 20.4; D/L 208; L/B 3.3
Auxiliary 75-hp; Fuel 290 gal.; Water 119 gal.



Hylas Yachts
1688 Meridian Avenue, 7th Floor
Miami Beach, FL 33139
786-497-7882
www.hylasyachts.com

Sailaway price:
\$729,000

tory with easy-to-read tags, although some things get a little lost in translation and cold water is sometimes labeled as clod water. The electrical panel is large and easy to read. For power there are three AGM house batteries, and a dedicated battery for starting and one for the windlass with two 80-amp alternators to keep them topped off.

Under sail

It was shaping up to be a beautiful day on the bay and Bikini was ready to sail, so we cast off the lines and headed out Back Creek toward Chesapeake Bay. The Hylas 48 is set up for shorthanded sailing and it was simple to unfurl the main and genoa. The mainsail sheets to a traveler and single winch behind the helm, and with the end-boom sheeting, it provided excellent control. It was easy to reach all winches from the helm and the optional electric jib winches made tacking easy. To tack the genoa, we furled it almost all the way for it to slip in front of the inner forestay.

The fickle breeze provided enough punch to see the potential, and the H48 was able to sail at 3 knots at 32 degrees apparent in the 5-knot breeze, and as the wind built to 10 to 12 knots I saw the speedo hit almost 7 as we dodged the crab pots. Pschorr said the boat can happily reach at 9 knots.

"On the delivery from Newport to Annapolis, we ran into some really rough weather with 30-knot winds and 10-foot seas, and the boat handled it really well. We rocketed south," Pschorr said.

Taking the wheel, the helm felt solid, with the rod-and-gear steering system and integrated autopilot, but this type of system also gives a lighter feel than a cable-and-quadrant steering system. There was good visibility from the helm, and the throttle and Raymarine electronics were easy to access on a pedestal. The large chartplotter was mounted on the cabintop.

The sailing was so relaxing that we didn't realize how far down the bay we had sailed. With more appointments to make, we quickly furled the sails and hightailed it back to the marina under power, easily making 8 knots at 2,700 rpm with the 75-horsepower turbo Yanmar. Bikini and I tucked into a corner of the cockpit enjoying the cooling breeze in the shade of the bimini. Thanks to the bow thrusters we squeezed back into the slip in short order, the easiest doublehanded landing in recent memory.

The Hylas 48 is meant for long passages. With its beefy construction, sophisticated systems for living aboard for long stretches and seakindly sailing characteristics, you just have to ask, "What's the next waypoint?"