

Boat Review: [Hylas 48](#)

The bluewater-bound Hylas 48 is designed, built and equipped for the long haul.

By [Mark Pillsbury](#)
12 June 2019

Cruising, racing, daysailing, chartering: Every sailboat is built to meet a need. But in the course of inspecting and sailing some 20-odd vessels during and after the U.S. Sailboat Show in Annapolis, Maryland, each fall, CW's Boat of the Year judges sometimes have to rely on the builder to make that intent clear.

Not so with the new Hylas 48. From its solid stainless-steel stem fitting and double anchor rollers to a versatile cutter rig, hip-high life lines and robust emergency- steering system, not one of the judges doubted that this was intended to be a long-legged, bluewater voyager.



They were so certain, in fact, they named the Hylas 48 the Best Full-Size Cruiser Under 48 Feet. In being so recognized, the newest yacht from Taiwan's Queen

Long Marine joins a number of its siblings that have received similar accolades over the three generations the family-owned yard has been in operation.

“I’ve always been amazed at how well this boatyard does,” said veteran BOTY technical judge Ed Sherman. “This is a situation where we’ve got an experienced Taiwanese workforce, and they’re artisans. They take what they do seriously, and they do a very good job.”



Sherman’s colleague, judge Alvah Simon, ticked off the reasons he thought the 48 rose to the top of the fleet: “The flow on deck was good, the nonskid was good, the pushpit and pulpit were just excellent. The stanchions were outboard of the toe rail. The vents and hatches were just incredible. I can’t imagine the cost in the stainless-steel work. Lots of good ventilation. Cleats were good. Lifelines were very good.” Simon even praised the size and location of the manual bilge pumps, in close proximity to the helm.

Though the Bill Dixon-designed H48 is somewhat a departure from the builder’s longtime collaboration with Germán Frers, the boat still has the look and feel of a Hylas, with its center-cockpit deck layout and sugar-scoop transom with steps for boarding from the dinghy.

There is a long traveler just aft of the cockpit, mounted on the aft cabin's roof. And forward, the cutter rig provides a self-tacking jib for upwind work and a genoa that's mounted forward of it for light-air conditions or when off the wind. Headsail furlers and the in-mast furler for the main are all electric and operated by switches at the wheel.

Underway on Chesapeake Bay, the Hylas definitely had the feel of a heavier displacement cruiser. In 8 or so knots of breeze, we tacked upwind at a not-too-shabby 5.7 knots – I should mention that the Mamba rod steering delighted the fingertips. Bearing off, the speed dipped slightly with just the jib set but bounced back when we rolled out the genny.



It was the boat's motion, though, that really caught everyone's attention. "It felt very stiff – in a good way," noted judge Tim Murphy. "When we were coming down the Severn River, there were powerboats loading in for the next boat show, doing testing and whatnot, and this was kind of an old-school cruising boat feeling when you'd come through those wakes. She just really powered through."

The H48's hull is hand-laid, solid fiberglass, with vinylester resin and Isophthalic gelcoat. Below the water line, there are two layers of epoxy barrier coat to prevent blisters. The deck, also hand-laid, is balsa cored. Watertight bulkheads

are located at both the bow and stern to enclose the interior in case of a collision.

The boat's deck-saloon interior is stunning. Wraparound windows in the coachroof provide lots of daylight and a panoramic view. The white composite cabin top and ceiling sits atop rich teak cabinetry, bulkheads and furniture, and the teak-and-holly sole radiates warmth. Deep fiddles line the counters, and all edges and corners are rounded – as they should be.

The boat's layout is fairly traditional for a center cockpit. A large dining table dominates the saloon, with U-shaped seating to port and a cushioned bench on the centerline. A curved settee is opposite, flanked by a cabinet forward and the nav station and electrical panel aft, near the foot of the companionway. The sole is raised, which both helps the view when seated and allows for tankage and machinery down low in the hull, where it belongs.



To port of the steps, the galley takes up both sides of the passageway leading to the aft cabin. Counter space abounds, as does storage, both under and outboard. The fridge and freezer are top and front opening, and they are located adjacent to the three-burner propane stove and oven.

To port, a walk-through head and shower also leads to the aft cabin, a cozy compartment that any owner should be pleased to call home. An island queen berth sits on a slightly raised sole. In the daytime, light pours in through overhead opening hatches and ports located to either side and behind the bed.

There are two more cabins forward of the saloon, plus a second generously sized head and shower to starboard. To port, there are double bunks for kids or crew; forward, the guest cabin also has an island queen berth.

On deck, the step in and out of the cockpit is a big one, but the Bimini top's robust frame provides a good handhold, and once inside, there's not a pressing need to leave.

Sail controls all lead to electric Antal winches adjacent to the wheel, and as mentioned earlier, reefing of sails is a push-button affair, as is operation of the bow thruster. Thick seat and back cushions line the seating area, and the tall coamings provide plenty of support for any crew intent on sitting back and enjoying the ride.

All the comfort and convenience has a cost, of course. The price tag for the H48 starts at right around \$730,000; the boat we sailed runs closer to \$850,000. Still, I'll let Simon put that into perspective: "I see real value in this boat because it's solidly put together. It's a very elegant-looking boat, and for a couple that wants that kind of bluewater cruiser, I think they're in for a sweet ride."

Me too.

Mark Pillsbury is CW's editor.

Hylas 48 Specifications

LENGTH OVERALL	47'11" (14.61 m)
WATERLINE LENGTH	42'4" (12.90 m)
BEAM	14'6" (4.42 m)
DRAFT	6'6" (1.98 m)
SAIL AREA (100%)	1,090 sq. ft. (101.3 sq m)

BALLAST	13,111 lb. (5,947 kg)
DISPLACEMENT (Full Load)	44,400 lb. (20,140 kg)
BALLAST/DISPLACEMENT	0.30
DISPLACEMENT/LENGTH	261
SAIL AREA/DISPLACEMENT	14.8
WATER	119 gal. (450 l)
FUEL	290 gal. (1,098 l)
HOLDING	23 gal.(90 l)
MAST HEIGHT	67'0" (20.42 m)
ENGINE	75 hp Yanmar, Saildrive
DESIGNER	Bill Dixon
PRICE	\$846,000