

# BOAT REPORT

# NEPTUNE 42

## ON THE CREST OF A WAVE



TRY running any 40ft cruiser on all points of the compass through Force 7 seas and you will get a good idea of its abilities. Try the same exercise from an outside helm position and you are likely to get wet. Such experiences were ours onboard the Neptune 42 — although some members of the crew sensibly decided to view proceedings from the warm and comfortable wheelhouse. This trawler yacht from Taiwan certainly didn't disappoint, pushing through confused seas to create clouds of spray in a manner so typical of well-found displacement cruisers.

The boat is currently the larger sister of a four boat range imported by Neptune Yachts. The emphasis on the 42 — designed by American Todd Harris — is certainly on spacious living. Three layout options are available; these provide between 4-6 permanent berths, with a dinette in the saloon converting to create a further double.

### Exterior

The Neptune 42 is designed to better the sub-10 knot cruising abilities of traditional displacement cruisers. To this end, the hand-laid GRP hull is of hard-chine form, with sections flattening aft which generate the lift required to exceed waterline speed.

A fine, raked bow and deep forefoot serve to enhance both the seakeeping abilities and character of the boat.

A single keel develops around one-third back, following the forefoot line, and finishing forward of the propellers. Twin shafts are supported on P-brackets, with rudders located immediately aft of the three-bladed propellers.

With its 14ft 4in beam, the Neptune has lots of deck space and with teak-topped rails fitted at a sensible height, a stroll around the decks is as pleasurable as it is safe. Bulwarks



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complete the feeling of security and these feature closed fairleads for the inboard cleats which are fitted forward, aft and amidships. The anchor is stowed on a GRP platform which showed a marked tendency to flex, but nevertheless, managed to support the weight of three adults when investigated further.

Moving back aft, a ladder with four teak treads provides an easy method of climbing on board from the full-width bathing platform. A raised coachroof over the aft cabin gives room to store the tender, which can be recovered and launched using the mast and boom as a derrick. The mast is heavily built, well supported with substantial stainless steel shrouds, and provides an ideal location for deck lights which come as standard.

Steps from the aft coachroof lead up onto the flybridge, and a stainless steel guard rail runs safely to hand from the deck to the flybridge seats. There is enough seating room for six people or more, whilst generous lockers with louvred doors are located in the flybridge apron to keep ropes, fenders and other deck gear out of the way. The deep, tinted windscreen gives some protection to the occupants from wind and spray, but could do little for the crew in the lively conditions that we experienced.

The upper helm position is centrally located, featuring duplicated engine controls, a large steering compass, and instrumentation which was sensibly mounted behind a perspex screen on the test boat. A large, stainless steel wheel, teak decking (which is a worthwhile extra that was fitted to the test boat) and plenty of grabrails complete what is a well above average flybridge area.



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Acres of teak abound in the saloon (above), aft cabin — fitted with single berths in the test boat (top left) and galley (above left). The flybridge (left) is a particularly attractive area, with both apron and windscreen affording a reasonable measure of protection against the elements.

## Interior

Entry to the saloon is via port and starboard sliding deck doors; you step onto polished teak floors which look gorgeous, but can be lethal when wet. Most owners would probably lay carpet here, which would make it safer and more cosy for entertaining. The dinette unit on the starboard side provides enough room for six people, and the table lowers to form a double berth with the infill cushions supplied.

The lower helm position is to starboard, with engine instrumentation neatly laid out. Twin lever engine controls fall easily to the right hand. These strike our English eyes as somewhat unusual, but are very smooth and positive in operation, and especially useful for slow speed manoeuvres — albeit with the slight risk of using the gear lever instead of throttle or vice versa in an emergency. The main electrics panel is situated under the wheel and contains individual breakers for every electrical circuit. The electrics are impressive, with clearly labelled wiring throughout the boat making fault finding easy. We were also pleased to discover that the

owners manual includes one of the best wiring diagrams we have ever seen.

Hand-crafted teak is the dominating feature throughout the boat; the doors are particularly appealing with their semi-circular tops and louvred panelling. Moving aft down three steps into the owner's stateroom reveals a queen-sized double bed. Ample storage spaces include a dressing table to port alongside a cavernous hanging locker, while there are more lockers and drawers along the starboard side. Locker lights come as standard, and operate with micro-switches on the doors.

An en-suite toilet/shower compartment continues the feeling of space, and the shower unit is fitted with a hip bath. We were surprised to see that the basins were china, a change from the usual plastic or stainless steel varieties. A holding tank and macerator pump for the toilets is also fitted as standard, with changeover valves for overboard discharge and pump-out.

Down two steps from the saloon, the forward area is where most of the changes are made with different layouts. The first version features another queen-sized berth, set in a

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◀ cabin which is the match of its aft equivalent — including a large toilet/shower compartment (the L-shaped galley on this version moves up to the saloon, set to starboard and aft). A second version — the 'three cabin' features a busy forward area, with the galley to port, and a double cabin opposite; twin bunks fill the space right forward to port and there is still room for a toilet compartment opposite.

Our test boat was configured as the third version, with a galley area to port, and a toilet/shower compartment opposite. Forward of this, the guest cabin has two vee berths, which convert to a double with an infill cushion. A hanging locker to port and large lockers under each berth provide plenty of storage. Light and ventilation is provided by two opening ports, and an opening aluminium foredeck hatch.

The galley is spacious and reflects American design influence with the size of its fridge/freezer, which runs on mains or 12 volt supplies. A four burner cooker with oven is standard, and a double stainless steel sink with mixer tap completes the cooking department. Once more, storage space abounds, with every conceivable area utilised and doors fitted on all lockers.

## Engines

The steps lift up to give access to the engineroom, which can also be entered by lifting hatches set into the saloon sole. Down here, the theme of quality design and construction continues: two very large Racor filters/water separators immediately catch the eye, all pipes and wires are neatly clipped back and labelled, the engine bearers are massively constructed, soundproofing tiles line the sides and deckhead, whilst easily removed floor boards keep both feet and tools out of the bilge. This is an engineroom to keep the engineer happy.



The Neptune 42 is the first boat we have tested to be fitted with Cummins B series engines — a new range which has been in the offing for some time.

The lowest power option of twin 4BT 150hp diesels would look lost in this full-width space — there was certainly more than enough room around the test boat's twin Cummins 6BT5 9-M units, whose maximum rating of 210hp is achieved at a lazy 2600rpm. This straight-six, turbocharged 6-litre diesel has all main service points located to-hand, and it was good to see a full guard covering the alternator/pump drive belt.

Whilst on the subject of safety, four automatic fire extinguishers are fitted, one in each corner of the engineroom. Bilge pumps were limited to one electric and one manual — both draw from the area below the engineroom, the bulkheads having limber holes. Watertight bulkheads and electric pumps would be preferable. Twin 12V batteries supply the electrical requirements, although there is no separate domestic circuit.

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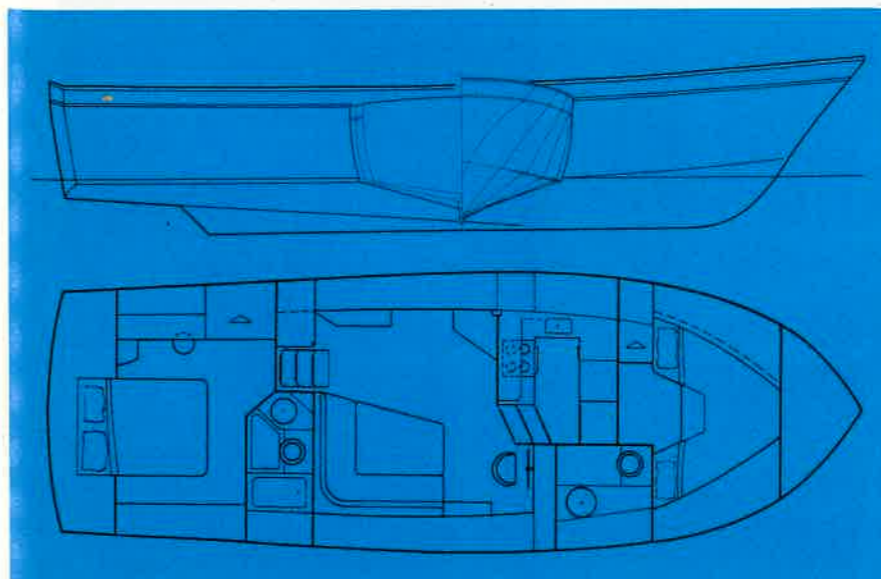
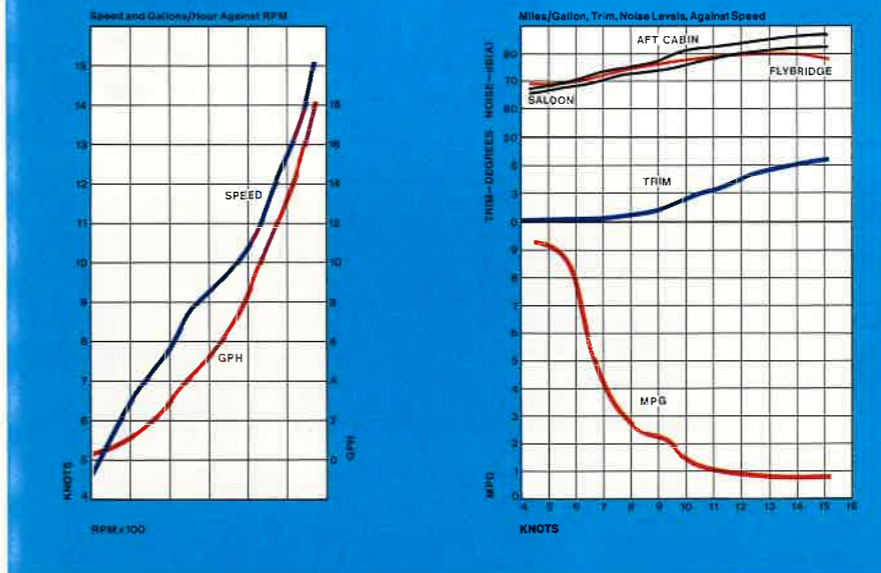
## Neptune 42

**Engines:** Twin Cummins 6BT5 9-M diesel engines. 210hp

**Conditions:** wind force 5-7, Sea moderate.

**Load:** Fuel 66%, Water 100%, 3 crew.

Noise	dB(A)								
rpm	knots	gph	lph	mpg	range	trim	Saloon	Aft cab	Bridge
700	4.4	0.5	2.2	9.23	2696	0.0	67	68	69
900	5.5	0.6	2.8	8.87	2591	0.5	68	69	69
1100	6.3	1.0	4.6	6.17	1802	0.5	69	71	71
1300	7.3	1.9	8.6	3.83	1118	0.5	72	75	73
1500	7.7	2.5	11.2	3.13	915	0.7	73	75	74
1600	8.8	3.8	17.2	2.32	676	1.0	74	77	78
1800	9.3	5.2	23.6	1.79	521	1.5	75	80	78
2000	9.7	6.6	30.0	1.47	428	2.0	76	83	78
2200	10.3	8.7	39.6	1.18	345	3.0	78	83	79
2300	11.4	11.1	50.6	1.03	299	4.0	78	84	79
2500	12.8	13.5	61.4	0.95	276	5.0	82	86	81
2600	14.4	17.8	81.0	0.81	236	7.0	83	87	79
2650	15.1	18.1	82.4	0.83	243	7.0	83	88	79



## Handling and performance

We certainly had the right weather to test the Neptune 42, but the vessel proved to be more than a match for the conditions. We ran at 12 knots through the seas and at all angles to see what happened, but such treatment failed to reveal any vices. In following seas, the bows were buoyant enough to lift on each wave and — combined with the shallow stern sections — kept the boat running true, with no signs of broaching. Quartering seas produced wet decks, but no problem; head seas were taken on the nose with lots of flying spray and the occasional thump from the larger examples.

The twin 210hp Cummins were quiet, powerful and economical. Low noise levels were achieved despite the lack of soundproofing in some areas. The fuel consumption was miserly at low speeds; indeed, if you wanted to travel at 6 knots, the boat could probably tackle the Atlantic using its twin 146 gallon tankage. At 10 knots, the mpg figure is 1.26, which gives a range of over 360 miles; at full throttle, the top speed of 15 knots is achieved at the expense of 0.83 mpg, 240 miles range and a 7° bow-up trim.

## Conclusion

Considering the battering we gave the Neptune 42 and the quantity of water we managed to throw over it, we were delighted to see that none of the windows leaked — a testimony to the quality build of the boat. The standard of joinery is up to the best Taiwanese traditions — faultless everywhere — as is the general standard of construction throughout. The Neptune is a tough boat designed to go places. If your idea of boating is to see the world, then this one could be the answer for you — it would be wasted (albeit competent accommodation-wise) as a permanent fixture in the marina. ■

LOA	45ft 9in (13.9m)
Length of hull	41ft 11in (12.8m)
Waterline length	36ft 8in (11.2m)
Beam	14ft 4in (4.4m)
Draught	3ft 3in (1m)
Displacement (half load)	10.5 tonnes
Fuel capacity	2×146 gals (1325 lt)
Water capacity	134 gals (600 lt)
Designed by:	Todd Harris

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