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by  
PETER A. ROBSON



## North Pacific 49 Pilothouse

*A heck of a lot of trawler at an excellent price*

**N**ORTH PACIFIC YACHTS WAS founded in 2004 by father and son team John and Trevor Brice in an attempt to build the perfect cruiser. Over the past decade, the company, under Trevor's leadership, has overseen the production of more than 100 single-engine, China-built trawlers from 28 feet to its new flagship, the 49-foot NP49 Pilothouse. Over the years, North Pacific's have earned a reputation for their quality construction and excellent value.

**Design and Construction** The most noticeable departure between the NP49 and previous North Pacifics is the move from aft sloping pilothouse windows to forward sloping windows, which in this reviewer's eyes, makes for a much beefier and more well-proportioned design. This is part of the next generation look for North Pacific. The stepped sheer line is another attractive departure.

The new hull mold features many of the attributes that make the North Pacific line solid, seaworthy and comfortable long distance semi-displacement cruisers. The fuel-efficient hard chine bottom helps reduce roll in a seaway. The full keel makes it easier to maintain a steady course and serves to protect the propeller and the large barn-door rudder from log and grounding damage.

The entire hull is solid, hand-laid glass, and, as most builders are doing today, epoxy barrier coats are applied below the waterline to protect against osmosis. I quite like the "planked" look of the hull which helps break up large expanses of gloss white fibreglass. The hull is reinforced by hollow fibreglass stringers, which are molded separately and glassed into the hull while it is still in the mold. And, because they have no wood, they can't rot. The superstructure and decks are mostly Nida-cored (a very

strong synthetic honeycomb), and in areas that require additional strength, resin-soaked marine plywood is added to the mold. To reduce noise and vibration, rubber is used between the aluminum grid deck frame and the floors. The hull-deck joint is a standard shoebox fit, epoxied and glassed.

**On Deck** The exterior of the NP49 was designed for low maintenance, with no woodwork to oil, varnish or refinish. While previous models had aluminum framed windows, all new North Pacifics are being fitted with polished stainless frames, which should be more durable over the long run. The elimination of side decks has allowed a full width saloon, which offers quite a bit more interior volume.

Boarding is via a transom door or port or starboard bulwark doors. The swim platform is integral to the hull and the

test boat was fitted with sturdy staple rails. The cockpit is spacious and, because it is covered, it provides protection from both rain and sun. The bridge deck—accessed via a cockpit ladder or external stairs from the forward deck—has plenty of room for a 12 1/2-foot dinghy or other water toys. The helm station has duplicate controls, as expected, and a double helm seat. Aft of the helm to starboard is a molded L-shaped dinette area with table. On the port side is a linear bench seat. The test boat was fitted with the optional hardtop, integral to the radar arch, which looks great and protects the helm area.

Down on the foredeck, raised bulwarks are topped by 1 1/4-inch stainless handrails, making it safe to move about in any weather. Those handrails, which also surround the bridge deck, are thru-bolted into aluminum backing plates molded into the fiberglass, making them extra sturdy. There's a wide bench seat molded into the front of the coach roof. The anchor locker has lots of room for chain and fender storage in separate sections.

**Interior** The interior is accessed via a sliding cockpit door or from forward through one of the two pilothouse doors. The interior woodwork is all teak with a satin finish while the soles are gloss teak and holly over plywood. The quality of the finish is excellent—to the point where the grain on the walls, cabinet and drawers are ▶

The flybridge has all the features any skipper would want plus an optional folding hardtop radar arch.



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book-matched. Another sign of fine craftsmanship is that all the screw heads are hidden (though access panels have removable screw caps). Yet another sign is that the solid teak trim on the corners of countertops and table tops is steam-bent, not cut and miter jointed.

The headliner panels (there's a minimum of six feet, eight inches headroom throughout) are velcroed in place so they can be removed if necessary to access lighting and wiring. Accent and task lighting throughout is by low-wattage LEDs.

Custom layouts are offered for the saloon, but the test boat had a practical raised dinette to port (convertible to a berth) and two upholstered chairs to starboard.

The U-shaped galley is essentially integrated into the saloon, which means the cook is always part of the action. The test boat's galley had Staron (similar to Corian) countertops (granite is optional), overhead cabinetry, duel deep stainless sinks, electric three-burner glass cooktop with oven (propane is optional), full-size 14-cubic-foot fridge/freezer, plenty of under counter drawer and cabinet space and room for a dishwasher, trash compactor and microwave oven. To starboard, across from the galley is the pantry with plenty of additional storage.

Overall the saloon/galley area has a warm, homey feel to it and the added beam gained from the lack of side decks makes it appear palatial. Large windows with low sills provide excellent natural light and visibility. Four opening windows provide cross ventilation. Hatches in the saloon sole provide easy access to the engine room—without having to tear the room apart.

The pilothouse has a traditional layout, with an expansive helm area with lots of flat space for laying out paper charts and a settee and table aft and to port. That settee folds down to provide yet another berth. There's plenty of windows that provide good visibility, even aft, and sliding doors, opening

windows and defrost (heated air) fans will assure a clear windscreen.

The central helm console has all the usual controls and room for two 12-inch flat screen multifunction displays. There are side-by-side helm seats and a wooden, destroyer-type wheel.

The forward accommodation spaces are customizable and options include two- or three-stateroom layouts, or two staterooms and an office. The accommodation spaces, as per the saloon, are finished in rich teak woodwork with teak slats on the stateroom side walls.

The cosy and inviting master stateroom is forward and features an island queen, good shelf space, tons of storage, a wall of drawers and a "real" hanging locker. Its huge opening port-holes are more like windows.

The portside guest stateroom features two single berths that can be pushed together to make a double, as well as a third, fold-down bunk.

There are two heads: an ensuite to port for the master and a shared guest stateroom/day head across from the guest stateroom. Each has a separate molded fibreglass shower stall and freshwater flush electric toilet. Owners can choose between under-mount or raised sinks.

In the hallway between the two staterooms is a storage room that can be utilized as a linen closet or fitted for a washer/dryer, or an extra freezer.

**Engine and Systems** The test boat was fitted with a single 5.9 litre, 305 horsepower Cummins QSB diesel. It was mated to a ZF85A transmission (2.5:1 reduction) and a 2 1/4-inch diameter shaft with dripless shaft seal and a four-blade bronze propeller. Because that engine no longer meets the latest emission standards, all future yachts will be equipped with the larger Cummins 6.7 L, 355 hp QSB diesel. However, larger engines are also available. The test boat was equipped with a 160-amp alternator, six kW Northern Lights generator and a 2,800-watt inverter/charger. Battery power is ample and consists of 12-volt 220-amp AGM batteries and includes three house, two for the thrusters and windlass, one engine start and one generator start. A Side-Power electric bow thruster is standard and a stern thruster is optional.

Both fuel and water tanks are built ▶

- 1 The interior has a minimum of six feet, eight inches of headroom.
- 2 The master suite is cozy and inviting.
- 3 These two single berths can be pushed together.
- 4 The raised portside dinette turns into a berth.
- 5 The helm station has side-by-side seats and a wooden, destroyer-style wheel.



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using vinyl ester resin, glassed to the hull and gelcoated on the inside to assure that no fibres make their way into the system. Both fuel and water capacity is exceptional. Standard fuel is 500 gallons though that can be increased to 930 gallons. Freshwater is stored in two 175-gallon tanks. Cabin heat is provided by a four-zone Hurricane hydronic system.

The layout of the engine room is extremely clean, with aluminum checker plate flooring and virtually no wiring or plumbing visible anywhere. Instead

they are hidden in dedicated chases with easy-to-remove covers. With only a single engine, there is ample access all round. Despite being built in China, pretty well every component is sourced in North America and as such can be serviced and/or replaced anywhere in the world.

**Underway** The test boat was equipped with bow and stern thrusters, so leaving the dock in Anacortes was a snap. Fuel economy, thanks in part to the single engine, was exceptional. At 7.1 knots



(1,500 rpm) we were sipping fuel at the rate of 3.5 miles per gallon (two gallons per hour). At 8.2 knots (1,800 rpm), we were still getting two miles per gallon (4.1 gph) and it wasn't until 9.7 knots (2,200 rpm) that consumption began to reach the one gallon per mile point. Top speed was 11.1 knots at 2,650 rpm. Trevor Brice, who was at the helm, said that he expected almost identical fuel consumption figures even with the larger engines. Acceleration was good as was the turning ratio, with no slip page or cavitation. Overall, engine noise was minimal and the 49 performed very well, though the wind and seas were relatively calm.

**Concluding Remarks** The NP49 offers a heck of a lot of value. Not only is the build quality excellent, there is tons of interior space and storage for cruising or living aboard. Big fuel tanks mean an impressive range of more than 1,700 miles at 7.1 knots or 1,000 miles at 8.2 knots. As hard as we tried, this reviewer couldn't find fault with anything about the NP49. It is clearly a very well thought out and well executed yacht. **BY**

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### THE SPECS

|                                    |   |            |
|------------------------------------|---|------------|
| <b>LOA</b>                         | 15.8 m                                      | 52'        |
| <b>LWL</b>                         | 14.3 m                                      | 46' 10"    |
| <b>Beam</b>                        | 4.7 m                                       | 15' 5"     |
| <b>Draft</b>                       | 1.5 m                                       | 4' 10"     |
| <b>Displ.</b>                      | 21,722 kg                                   | 48,000 lbs |
| <b>Fuel</b>                        | 1,893 L                                     | 500 USG    |
| <b>Water</b>                       | 1,325 L                                     | 350 USG    |
| <b>Holding</b>                     | 246 L                                       | 65 USG     |
| <b>Power</b> (as tested)           | single 5.9 litre, 355 hp Cummins QSB diesel |            |
| <b>Power</b> (std on future hulls) | 6.7 Litre, 355 hp Cummins, QSB diesel       |            |

**Built in China and sold in Canada by North Pacific Yachts**

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