



Fjord 40 Open

If there was one craft that really turned heads at the recent Sydney Boat Show it was the Fjord 40 Open. This amazing craft doesn't just break the rules on sport cruisers, it throws the book out the window.

Love or hate it, the Fjord certainly is a 40-footer that doesn't go unnoticed at the dock or underway.

This craft certainly got tongues wagging at the Sydney show and it's no surprise given its dramatic lines and very different hull shape. It also comes as no surprise it was designed by the same international team that created the magnificent Wally maxi super yachts. Like the Wally yachts of the Mediterranean, the emphasis is on uncluttered deck space rather than closed-in cabins.

In fact, the Fjord 40 Open is one big open cockpit with high bulwark sides designed for pleasant and very comfortable day boating.

A central helm position behind a large retro-windscreen provides seating for up to three in plush pedestal seats. And behind that, the real heart of the boat – a spacious deck lounge that can seat upwards of 12 people.

There's also an on-deck galley behind the driving station that doubles as a wet-bar. All of which seems a sensible idea given the obvious entertaining possibilities of this boat.

With its almost brutal flat topsides and square bows the Fjord 40 really does challenge your thinking about boats, and how they are used. It particularly challenges the need for overnight accommodation and enclosed cabin space.

Builders, Hanse Yachts of Germany, are no strangers to risk. This group created one of the

world's biggest yacht companies by being bold and investing in cutting-edge sailboat designs. Now they're taking the same avant-garde approach to powerboats and it's got the industry talking.

Not only ultra modern in style, the Fjord 40 also features advanced epoxy fibreglass construction that saves weight and maximises performance. It also incorporates the very latest motor Volvo Penta IPS drive systems as standard.

This boat is certainly not about winning the mass market, but will appeal to the discerning boater who likes to stand out from the crowd.

Oh, I might mention it does have overnight accommodation. Discreetly tucked under the foredeck is a luxury ensuite sleeping cabin ideal for a couple staying overnight.

Like the Wally yachts, the Fjord has lashings of teak decking and teak gunwale caps with no rails, or even cleats to spoil the clean lines.

A black Targa top and windscreen give the Fjord an almost military appearance. And those sharp lines do translate to an impressive top speed just shy of 40 knots.

As you step from the dock to the stern boarding platform you immediately appreciate



This boat will open your mind and question any preconceived ideas of what constitutes a great sports cruiser. James Hill reports.

the open plan approach of Fjord. The boat seems to have the deck space of a much bigger craft and hence is a great platform for partying or general cruising. It goes without saying you're dependent on good weather, however, that's true of most boating.

And imagine how the Fjord would look cruising in any waterway like Hamilton Island or Sydney Harbour. It's a real head-turner with a mix of traditional teak and ultra-modern appearance.

The totally open transom affords easy entry either side of the central lounge area. And the low-backed upholstered lounge units are grouped around low coffee tables. Reversible seat backs meanwhile allow you to arrange the seating into a conversation area, or in rows for sightseeing.

The deep bulwarks make it easy and safe to move about the whole cruiser from bow to stern deck. There are no rails forward, but aft you do get inside rails for added safety.

Clever use of stowage space is a key feature of this boat and includes a huge stowage locker under the deck galley. There are also pop-up cleats and a clever bow locker that houses

both the electric anchor and its foldout anchor launcher.

After a quick check of the onboard features we fired up the twin turbo diesels and set forth from our tight marina berth. This proved far easier than I had imagined, thanks to the optional Volvo IPS Docking system that allows the skipper to operate the Fjord sideways, or in any direction via a joystick.

Peter Hrones gave an impressive demonstration with this joystick extracting us from the Bayview anchorage without touching anything. This feature alone wins you over to the Fjord 40.

Once clear of the marina we switched from the joystick to the main helm and throttle controls and zoomed off. Being a relatively lightweight craft the Fjord 40 leapt easily to the plane and hit 30 knots very quickly. With full throttle (3500rpm) we were doing around 39 knots flat out.

The Fjord 40 not only moves quickly. It also handles like a speedboat, banking very easily to the turn and handling pin-sharp like a German sports car. Driving is definitely one of the real pleasures of owning this craft.



Peter Hrones says he's been surprised by the response to this boat. It was exhibited purely as a promotion for the Fjord brand, however, show response is such he now has a number of firm orders well ahead of the arrival of the cruiser (cabin) version.

Having sampled the Fjord 40 I can well see why this Nordic newcomer has fired up so much excitement. It's a boat with some real application to our boating lifestyle, it's brilliantly suited to summer harbour cruising and would be perfect for cruising to lunch spots like Marina Mirage, or Darling Harbour.

There's something of the retro-speedboat about Fjord, yet that does not detract from its very modern and contemporary styling.

The Fjord 40 Cruiser with enclosed wheelhouse should also be an interesting boat for our market. It shares the same angular lines and teak decks, but with more enclosed living space it will suit the family boatie a lot more.

And how much dollars are we talking? The price of the Fjord 40 Open starts at \$650,000 and goes up to about \$730,000 for the boat as



tested with bigger Volvo Penta 600IPS motors and IPS Docking system. It costs a bit more, and goes even faster with the bigger Volvo Penta 800IPS motors fitted.

Our boat also had the optional light grey-coloured hull that sets off well against the teak decks and dark grey lounge upholstery.

Underway, the Fjord 40 was an impressive sight at full cry with the war-canoe bows well clear of the water. The Vee bottom ensures the craft rides quite soft and certainly very comfortably for the seated passengers. You do get a bit windswept in the side walkways, but otherwise life is pretty comfortable aboard the Fjord 40 even on a winter's day.

The concept of the long waterline soon reveals itself as we sliced through bigger waves and boat wash. The bows simply chop through the rough stuff and ensure there's no real slamming.

At lower speeds the long waterline ensures the Fjord 40 is easily driven and therefore not heavy on the fuel. Indeed, the motors didn't work too hard at the cruising speed range of 16-28 knots. Fuel consumption was an easy 50-litres per engine hour at 28 knots. So with 500-litre fuel per engine you obviously have plenty of cruising range with the Fjord.

Below deck is sheer modern city apartment with square island berth and a mix of mahogany

panels, soft vinyl and mushroom-coloured bedspread. I particularly loved the bathroom with its laid teak floor and telescopic shower with trendy raised basin on a black vanity unit. The only drawback was the rather low headroom over the double berth.

I believe the cabin headroom will be improved in the final production model, however, in the process this will mean the sun lounges on the cabin roof won't have as much privacy. But that's the trade-off with boat designing.

Peter expects a few other things to be tweaked in the final production boat, however, you can be sure they'll retain the generous instrumentation panel with space for two navigation screens. The drop-base pedestal seat also ensures you can switch from the seated to standing drive position in a matter of seconds.

Overall, Fjord 40 Open is going to bring a fresh approach to boating that can only help in the long run.

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Specifications: Fjord 40 Open

Length overall	11.9 m
Beam	3.9 m
Displacement	7,700 kg
Fuel capacity	1000 L
Water capacity	300 L
Engines	twin Volvo Penta 370hp diesel
Price as tested	\$730,000

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