BRITAIN'S BIGGEST SAILING MAGAZINE NORTH OF THE SOUTH

yachting life

www.yachtinglife.co.uk Volume 36 Issue 01 September 2011 £2.80

EXCLUSIVE

First UK Press Test On The New Arcona 410

'Overall We Were Impressed With The Sailing Performance Of The 410. It Was Long Legged, Quick, But Easily Handled.'

'The Rig Is Big And Powerful... Allied To A Maximised Waterline Length'

Arcona's Nev

AN INVESTMENT TO BANK ON

THE SUCCESS story that is Arcona seems to continue unchecked. Careful to keep their ambitions realistic they deliver a refined, beautifully finished product to a discerning market year in year out. The Swedish company are still building around 60 boats each year, they build only to order and their range is now selling steadily around Europe, *writes Andi Robertson*.

In Britain, Tony Bottomley and the team at Arcona UK sell around 16 boats per year, with the economic wind blowing in the right direction and with a bit of luck they may sell a few more, maybe 17 or 18 boats in this coming sales year.

The new 410, just launched, is already leading the sales charge into the new year. They have sold eight of this brand new model already, with five coming to or already in the UK.

Scotland and the north of Britain has been good for Arcona. Aside from the fact that it is a mature market which is less influenced by the slings and arrows of an economy linked, for example, to city bonuses and property profits, up here cruising boats of this genre are both cruised extensively and cherished. So a performance cruiser which is stiff, easy to handle, but appreciably quick and head turningly attractive, really does win hearts…and northern sales.

The 410 is unmistakably from the same recipe book as the 370 and the 430, built to the same method and ethos. So the key attributes remain firm: the substantial galvanised chassis grid to deal with all the rig and keel loads in a hull that is, vacuum bagged sandwich construction over a Divinycell core.

The rig is big and powerful but easily handled.

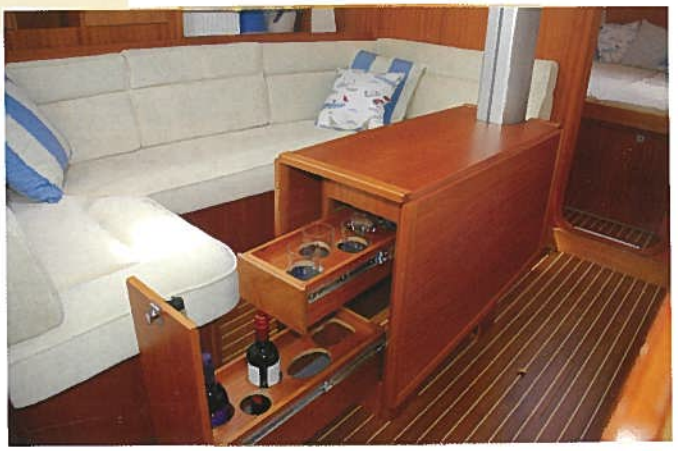
The hull shape and form is updated with a slightly wider, more powerful stern profile and the maximum beam carried further back, so that a proportionately wider waterline beam means a steeper, bluffer sheer. The bow is straight and plumb forming minimal overhangs. The forward sections are fine, hollowed with a slightly scalloped entry for the first two or three metres. One key to the 410's undoubted speed is the maximised waterline length.

It is a good looking boat for sure, more purposeful in appearance in some respects, but it is beautifully executed throughout with a wonderful simplicity.

What we especially like is that there is the minimum of fuss, with few bells and whistles throughout the boat. The company is owned and run by dyed in the wool sailing enthusiasts who are true to their market, rather than trying to expand their margins, so they do tend to encourage simplicity and what works for them. Hence, for example, they don't contract out the interior to a flash Italian design house for the want of a signature. And from my particular perspective, I think that is a shrewd strategy. Buyers will quickly latch on to a small design quirk as a reason not to buy and move on.

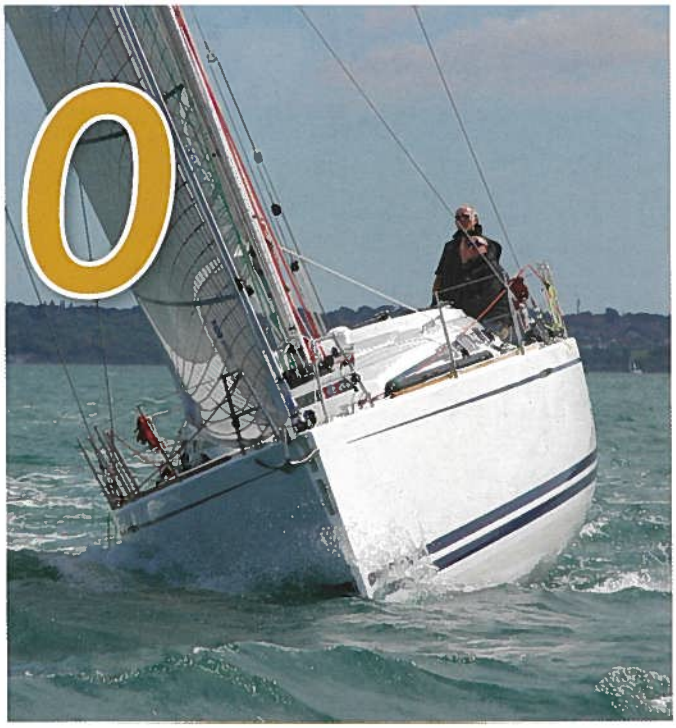
The cockpit and deck layout are spacious and functional. For a 41 footer the cockpit feels big and wide. We like the optional longitudinal foot brace which can be added in seconds, but there is ample secure seating for crew and the coamings are sufficiently deep with good access to and from the cockpit.

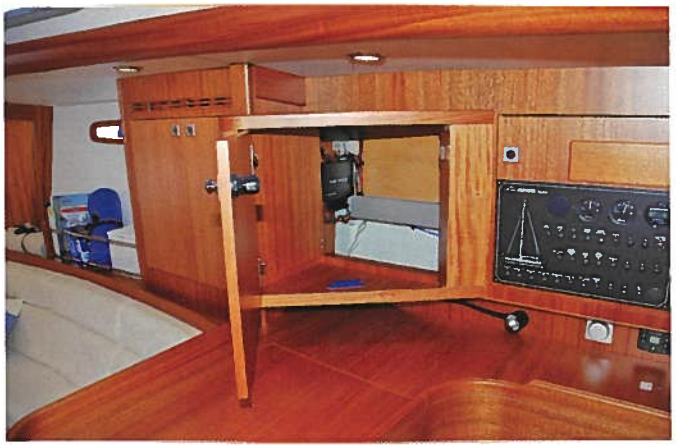
Influence from the UK and



v 410

yachting life BOAT TEST





elsewhere ensured that the open transom wraps round partially, getting a decent balance between safety and security and the advantage of a 'step up and through.'

There is an option to have drop down slats across the opening to maximise the security. Otherwise at the back of the boat there is an excellent deep liferaft locker on the turn of the transom. Then there are two deep lockers on either quarter.

What we struggled slightly with, is the layout of the wheel pedestals, the instrument panel steelwork and the cockpit sole mounted mainsheet track.

The track controls need to fall to hand for the helmsman when sailing short handed. And the vast majority of Arconas will be sailed short handed for most of the time. So this is something which is being looked at. The simple solution is to cleat the traveller off at the height of the helmsman's bench, but that is not really possible given the limited space.

Otherwise the area works really well and there is a good mix of space and security. Up front the forward locker is really excellent with ample space for fenders and a dinghy as well as the usual chain and anchors.

Sail controls are good. The non-overlapping jib runs to a neat floating single line controlled barber hauler, while the German A-mainsheet is run aft to the helm's hand.

The main halyard winches on our test boat, Tony Bottomley's own boat, are electric.

Overall we were impressed with the sailing performance of the 410. It was long legged, quick, but easily handled.

We had perfect sea breeze conditions of 11-13kts out in the western Solent and the 410 was a real delight to sail, with many of the key attributes which we loved about the 430 shining through.

It is a boat which is easy to push hard with finger tip steering throughout our test. Even when the puffs hit there was plenty of good grip and it was easy to translate the extra power into acceleration.

Beating out against the usual chop the boat was dry and pleasingly efficient. It was certainly easy to settle to a groove and then just keep the 410 on track with little attention to the helm.

The inhaulers on the jib allow for some close angles upwind with no obvious loss in speed and what was impressive was the all round smoothness of the performance. There were no humps or hollows. With four on board we really did not work hard at all, but covered

the miles with smiles on our faces, not least because there was little to do to make the boat go well, and yet there was always a reward for small changes in sheet angle or sail shape.

Really the set up did just feel excellent. The big main is on lazy jacks and the furling headsail had a good, adaptable shape to the point that the only time we really recalled it was a rolling sail was when it was time to put it away.

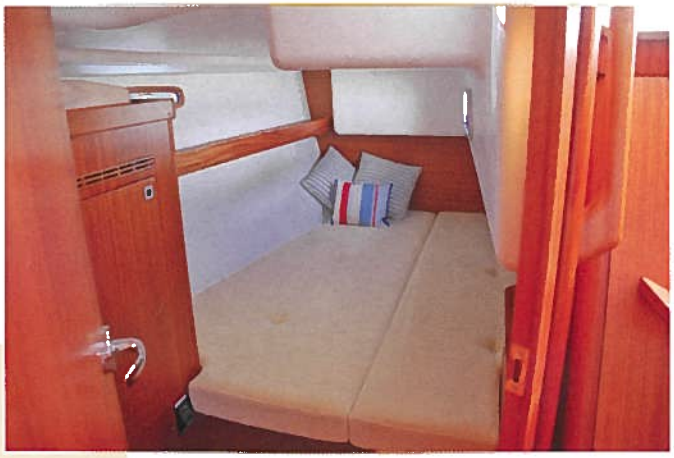
We hoisted the fractional asymmetric for the run back and the boat was equally delightful. The A-sail sets on a short carbon prodder on the bow which is light and easy to handle and really highlighted the ease at which you can sail the 410 relatively quickly but with the minimum of stress.

Tony plans to race his 410 as much as time allows and so has the full pack of two A-sails and two symmetrical kites, but for a cruising set up, a good chute and snuffer would be ideal for those who will be mainly short handed.

But it really did slide downwind nicely with little attention to the helm required. It tracked well and slid easily through the gybes. We had no working speedo, but there is no arguing that the 410 is quick upwind and downwind and I am sure would even give the slippery 430 a run for her money.

The interior is lovely, and proper. It carries all the aesthetic values you would expect from a premium Scandinavian builder, but with loads and loads of natural light, really good space and a conservative mahogany finish.

The proportions are great in the living spaces, with an excellent saloon area including a big fold out table with a clever little drinks cabinet sliding out from inside.



To starboard there is a full length couch seat and the excellent nav station behind. The heads is also well proportioned, easy kept and simple, again with good natural light.

Opposite, the galley is also 'proper' with good prep areas, excellent twin sinks, but with good large cupboard spaces under the sink and on the L-shape.

The twin double aft cabins are most notable for the bed space, but with good living space too. As with the forecabin, they really have kept the sleeping accommodation simple. There is ample 'living' space but they have not gone too far with desks or dressers or trying to fit in an en-suite although this is do-able.

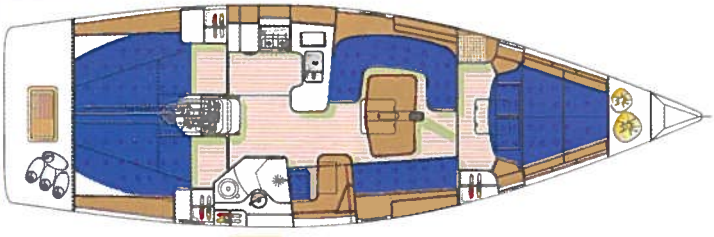
But the net result is that all the cabins feel big, especially the forecabin which has lots of bed area and is light and airy.

Overall the Arcona 410 offers an easy performance at a high level of comfort and simplicity. It is the new standard bearer for the brand, at an ideal size for those moving up the LOA range. And in today's times it is a great investment.

Used Arconas move swiftly and owners are getting more than they paid for them.

Funnily enough Tony Bottomley reports that he is now starting to see younger customers buying Arconas including some bankers who are recognising that there is now no point in banking their bonus, because it is not worth holding money in the bank. They're banking on the boat instead.

And the price perhaps reflects this, thanks to a currently favourable exchange rate with Sweden. As tested; £209,981 ex VAT, ex yard and ex sails.



ARCONA 410

Length overall:	12.20m
Length waterline:	11.20m
Beam:	3.90m
Draft:	2.0/2.25/2.5m
Engine:	Yanmar 50SD 3JH5 CE, 40hk
Displacement:	7.8 ton
Ballast:	2.6 ton
Fresh water:	200 litres
Fuel tank:	150 litres
Sail area:	Upwind 95m^2
Sail area:	Downwind 150m^2
DLR:	155
SDR:	Upwind 25
SDR:	Downwind 48