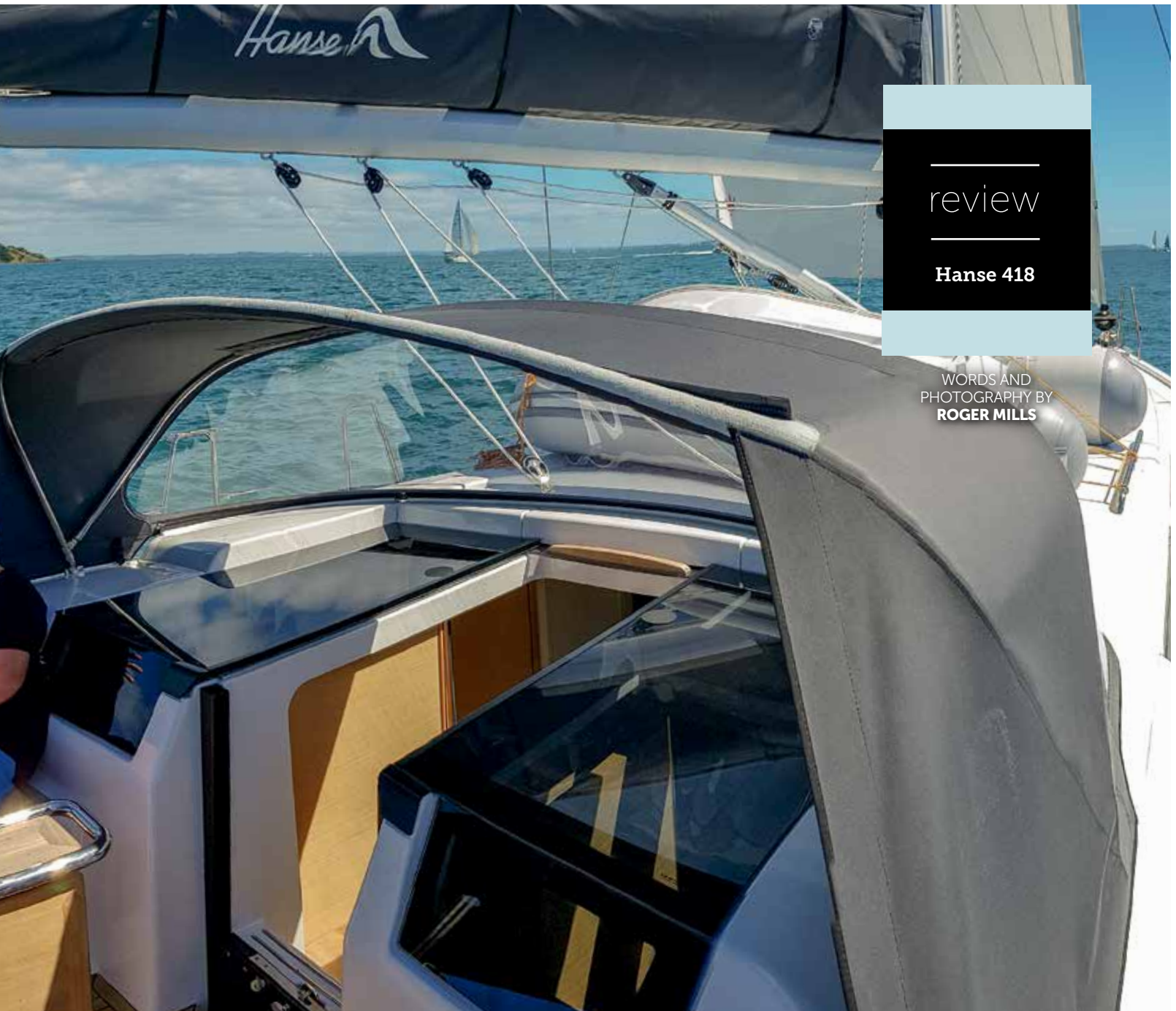




GROWING INDEPENDENCE

The recent Windcraft Owners' Regatta provided the perfect opportunity to explore Hanse's new 418 – the upgraded replacement to the popular 415.



review

Hanse 418

WORDS AND
PHOTOGRAPHY BY
ROGER MILLS

H

eld annually on Auckland's Hauraki Gulf, the Windcraft Owner's Regatta is a celebration of the three yacht brands the company represents – Hanse, Dehler and Moody. It offers yacht owners an opportunity to meet one another – to share life-stories and sailing ideas.

This year's event – from Rangitoto's Islington Bay, around Rakino Island to Owhanake Bay on Waiheke Island – took place in a very light south-easterly and attracted 38 boats. Among them plenty of 415s.

The 415 is well-represented in New Zealand – around 17 at last count – and, given that the hull shape and sail plans of the 415 and 418 are almost identical, I was particularly interested

to see how they compared. And I had the prize seat for doing so – I was guest crew on *Independence* – the new 418.

She belongs to Harley and Lisa Brighthouse and their two boys, Ben and Campbell. She's their first yacht, though Harley has an extensive sailing and racing background – including competing in Etchells against the wily Dennis Connor.

WHY THE HANSE 418?

“We did heaps of research before deciding,” says Harley, “and were taken by her excellent sail area-to-displacement ratio. And the Judel-Vrolijk design team is, of course, highly-regarded. But most importantly, the boat's easily-handled by a small crew and can be sailed single-handed if necessary.”

***Independence* is a yacht the family will easily grow into – discovering much about her charms in the process...**

The family took delivery of boat the *day* before the regatta – so we'd all be learning as we went along! But Harley had already grown his crew into a sharp team.

Plenty of communication between him and son Ben – an experienced Opti sailor. He was stationed on the leeward winch monitoring the B&G instruments. Lisa was keeping an eye on the headsail while Campbell held out the boom.

And we made good progress – slowly we stalked down the yachts ahead of us, tweaking every ounce of pressure from the Elvstrom sails. Coming around the western side of Woody Bay we entered a luffing match with a Hanse 415, *Good Chance*. After some great teamwork we snuck ahead, pleased to have passed a previous Coastal Classic winner!

So, even in light airs, the 418 is obviously no slouch.

Ben checked the chart plotter to make sure there were no obstacles at the northern point of Rakino. We came up hard on the wind, all five knots of it, and trimmed up. Concentration creased the helmsman's brow and an easy silence fell – a good time to slip below and have a look around.

INTERIOR

Talk about headroom! I'm 6' 5" (1.96m) and didn't have to rearrange my hair-piece once!

It's roomy and light thanks to plenty of overhead hatches and expansive hull windows that offer a wonderful view – great for keeping in touch with your surroundings. Incidentally, I'm told those hull windows have been developed by Hanse over the years and today the toughened glass is considered a structural element.

The major differences between the 415 and 418 are, in fact, in the interior. A new deck moulding provides more height and width in the galley and bathroom. Buyers have a choice between two- or three-cabin layouts. *Independence* is the latter – a cabin for each of the boys – and it's better suited for hosting friends.

For owners happy with less accommodation, the two-cabin option features greater under-cockpit storage on the starboard side, with entry from either the cockpit or a door in the galley, as well as a longer galley bench.

The port bunk runs to a well set-up chart table and instrument panel. The main table is a central island. It's narrower than the Hanse 415's but maintains a double leaf, fold-out arrangement which will seat up to seven for dinner.

A clever, pull-out wine rack slides from the table's centre console, with more wine storage in a rack under the cabin



WINDCRAFT RALLY

Team Windcraft NZ – the importer of Hanse, Dehler and Moody yachts – has held an annual sailing rally since 2014 to celebrate the yachts with their owners. This year's rally attracted 38 boats, and there are more than 100 on the register. Of the 38 participating in this year's event, 10 were new boats handed over last year.

floor. Further aft, the L-shaped galley has good bench space and storage lockers, with handy grab rails for food preparation in rough conditions.

The electric fridge has dual access (bench-top as well as a lower, front door) while the two-burner gas cooker is complemented by an oven. A medium-sized gas bottle lives in a rear, self-draining cockpit locker. The 475-litre water tank should be more than adequate for a family weekend cruise.

BERTHS

In the 418 the master cabin's double bed shifts further aft. This makes for a wider berth compared with the 415, so a couple can sleep with their heads towards the bow. It's an impressive bed given the yacht's relatively modest length. With the 415's V berth you're forced to sleep with your feet forward and have to swivel round to get out of bed.

The main bulkhead's also moved aft, allowing hanging lockers (port and starboard) and big drawers under the bed. The master cabin's best feature? The large hull windows which offer great views from the bed.





LEFT She slips along easily in the light airs.

BELOW Quality fittings and finishes are a Hanse hallmark – the 418 has impressive headroom for her size.



Both rear cabins have spacious double berths, again with plenty of ventilation and light coming through a rear hull window and skylights beside the companionway. The port cabin is larger as there is no cockpit locker seat, but the intrusion on the starboard side is minimal.

To port, opposite the galley, is a well-appointed bathroom. In addition to the toilet and shower is a good-sized vanity. It's a practical bathroom with a large floor area and clean, free-flowing lines.

COCKPIT

Compared with the 415, all lines leading back to the primary winches are now covered for their full length – it's a lot cleaner and neater. Slots in the lockers give better line access and overall present a much tidier appearance.

The rear box seats of the 415 have been eliminated and there is an option for fold-down seats behind the twin wheels if required. Instead



TOP Dad's happy on the helm, so time for the crew to discuss tonight's menu.

BOTTOM Note how the lines and sheets are hidden in the coachroof – keeps things neat and tidy.



of the seats, the area features large storage spaces under the rear of the cockpit, accessed via two floor hatches.

At almost the width of the boat the fold-down boarding platform is very spacious. It has a cleverly-designed swimming ladder built into a recess for easy swimming access. A shower with hot and cold water is built into the stern.

Seating is generous in such a large cockpit. Access between the twin wheels is great. On the double-leaf cockpit table is a neat rail to hold glasses. A generous dodger and separate bimini keep the sun at bay, with the option of zipping in an infill panel when at anchor.

A B&G Zeus chart plotter – mounted centrally – is readily accessed from either wheel. The B&G instrumentation package includes wind instruments, plotter and autopilot.

Independence's inflatable dinghy tucks neatly in under the boom but does restrict forward visibility. I'm sure other





dinghy storage options are available – lots of the boats carried dinghies on their transoms.

The 418 comes with Selden spars, with single-line slab-reefing controlled from the cockpit. Four Lewmar 45s make up the winch package, providing plenty of handling power when flying a gennaker.

Two keel options are available: a shallower keel drawing 1.74m or the L-shaped keel drawing 2.10m. I understand the new L-shaped keel is rated to have slightly higher 'lift' at cruising speed, compared to the 415's more torpedo-shaped keel. This should translate into slightly higher pointing.

The 418's powered by a 39hp Yanmar with a sail drive and folding propeller. The engine's service points are easily accessible, under the companionway steps. Although an upgrade to 57hp is available, Harley felt that 39hp was more than sufficient for the easily-driven hull, and it saved on weight. The diesel tank holds 160 litres.

GET THE FOUR STROKE ADVANTAGE.

Full Range Available!

**REPOWER SPECIALISTS
SERVICE | PARTS
ACCESSORIES**

Auckland's Only

SeaCraft
MILLER MOYES

50 Cawley Street, Ellerslie
p. (09) 579 9661
e. sales@mmsc.co.nz
www.mmsc.co.nz



RACE FINISH

In the light air we continued our beat towards Waiheke, and with a jostle near the finish line we made our only bad call and missed a wind shift. Still – fifth out of 15 similar-sized yachts in our class is very satisfying considering it was *Independence's* second sail and the crew's first race.

Heading into Owhanake Bay we anchored among the fleet. A few seconds later the boarding platform was down and Campbell was happily doing bombs off the transom.

Even though we had a maximum of 10 knots of wind, the yacht's excellent performance was easily evident – she moves nicely through the water with minimal wake. On her first sail, says Harley, with 15 knots apparent wind just forward of the beam, *Independence* clocked along with 9 knots on the dial.

The 418 is a quality production yacht that easily meets the family's easy-to-sail-short-handed criteria. She's a well-appointed, fast cruiser with flexible accommodation. She's also the result of designers listening to customer feedback and making improvements in a number of areas, from layout, through standard of detailing, to finish. There are some excellent new touches – like USB power outlets on the LED light fittings.

Hanse's design philosophy, says Windcraft's Dominic Lowe, is to bring the luxury and standard of finish of its larger vessels right the way through the range to the smallest boats. I think it's succeeding.

Independence is a yacht the family will easily grow into – discovering much about her charms in the process – and no doubt about themselves. **BNZ**



Hanse 418

PACKAGES FROM \$426,000 incl GST

MANUFACTURED BY Hanse Yachts

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

**Dominic Lowe
Team Windcraft New Zealand
www.teamwindcraft.com**

HIGHLIGHTS

Easy for short-handed sailing

Glorious headroom!

User-friendly cockpit

SPECIFICATIONS

- loa** 12.40m
- hull length** 11.99m
- lwl** 11.40m
- beam** 4.17m
- draft** 1.74m shallow
2.10m L keel, medium
- displacement** 10.10t shallow keel, 9.8t L-keel, medium
- engine** Yanmar 39hp (57hp option)
- mast length** 19.8m
- working sail area** 87m²
- gennaker** 120m²

