

Boat Report

GOBBI

245 CABIN

New from Italy is a four-berth sportscruiser with distinctive lines and plenty of internal space, ideal perhaps for a small family?



Gobbi

You always expect Italian boatbuilders to come up with something a little different, and the Gobbi range is no exception. Now being imported into the UK by P J Yacht Sales, they give vent to some alternative styling ideas while holding to that other Italian trait, a solidness of build.

The line-up runs from a 22ft cuddy up to a 44ft performance cruiser, but P J are concentrating on the smaller end of the range. We were pleased to be invited to test the 245 model, which is a 25ft four-berth family cruiser.

Design & layout

The 245 looks 'big' for its length, thanks to its high freeboard and deep, safe coamings. And this far from diminutive styling is especially apparent at the stern, where the integral bathing platform is close to 3ft (0.9m) above the water level, giving the hull a very square look.

To maximise the boat's internal volume, both in the cockpit and accommodation, side decks have been done away with. A sculpted line swoops down from the quarter towards the bow, and the stern is particularly upright.

Underwater sections are medium-vee, with a deadrise of 14° at the transom and 18° amidships. The chine has a flat of around 3in (8cm), with the full beam of the boat carried well down to the waterline and planing



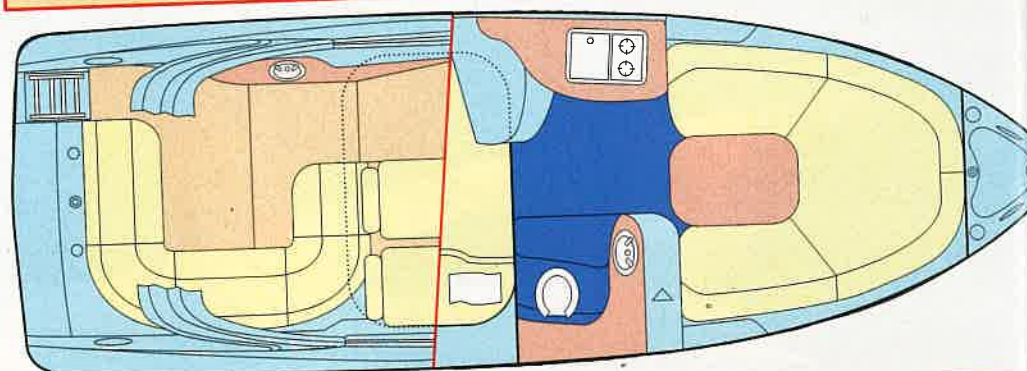
Cabin

The cabin is largely a moulded affair, with plenty of headroom.

The sizable dinette right forward has a moulded table fashioned to stop glasses sliding around, and with a neat insert to keep cutlery in order. It can also be used in the cockpit if required, and acts as an

infill for converting the area into a wide and comfortable berth, measuring 6ft 0in (1.83m) by 5ft 4in (1.63m) and with plenty of space down towards the feet.

The water tank is located beneath the forward part of the seating, and there are a couple of painted-out lockers further aft. A small hanging cupboard to starboard and a smaller locker opposite provide a modicum of further clothes stowage.



Cockpit

The cockpit layout is simple, dominated by a good-sized convertible U-dinette to starboard. The voids beneath are not enclosed, but can be used simply as open stowage.

Opposite there are cupboards within the coaming, one housing the gas locker and the other suitable for general stowage and holding the optional cockpit canopy. There is also a small basin, and below this a manual bilge pump servicing both the engine room and the separate forward bilge.

The helm seats hinge forward to reveal a large locker in their base.



Midships berth

The midships sleeping area, measuring 6ft 0in (1.83m) by 3ft 8in (1.16m), is all but fully open to the main cabin, with just a curtain providing some privacy.

There is sitting headroom, although little provision for clothes stowage; a number of hinged hatches reveal a void beneath the berth, but it is on the shallow side. An opening port gives onto the cockpit.



Galley

A neat combined twin-hob and sink unit is set into the marble-effect GRP worksurface in the cabin, with a fridge below it and

an opening port above.

Stowage for victuals is not bad, although it is always going to be limited on a craft of this size. We like the way the cupboards have decent high fiddles, complete with adjustable dividers.



surface. There are two sets of sprayrails, both fading out well before the transom.

Interior accommodation comprises a roomy convertible U-dinette forward and a curtained off berth beneath the cockpit, sandwiching a well-appointed

galley and a WC. In general there is plenty of space and headroom below-decks.

Engine options are extensive, including single petrol and diesel installations and twin V6 petrols. Our test boat had a single 200hp Volvo Penta AD41 diesel.

Handling & performance

Given the 245's bulkiness, we were not expecting sharp handling or performance, anticipating that it might be rather

Decks

A set of moulded steps make it any easy task to get out through the sturdy screen, bracing yourself with the steadying handhold.

The foredeck has plenty of curvature, but is moulded with an effective non-slip and there are handrails not far away.

Our test boat's electric windlass, covered by a hatch which also gives onto the chain locker, is an optional extra. Standard deck hardware includes a pair of 7.5in (19cm) retro-style cleats fore and aft, and a becket for a midships fender; springs will have to be made off on the guardrails.



Helm

The twin helm seats are most comfortable, with a high back for extra support. They are not adjustable, but the driving position is good and the squab hinges up if you want to stand or perch here.

The console fascia is finished in a smart carbonfibre-based moulding which shows through the clear gel as a charcoal colour. The main engine instrumentation is set in a panel ahead of the helm, and adjacent smaller panels house switches and

the like. A large compass is situated in the middle of the dash, and there is room to mount a VHF set and electronic aids, although none are supplied as standard.

We were surprised to find that the pantograph wiper to clear the helmsman's portion of the screen is also listed as an extra; in reality it is a must, even if the boat does give a commendably dry ride.

The battery switch is located in the footwell, along with the remote shut-off for the fuel tank and the remote firing mechanism for the engine room fire-extinguisher.

Toilet compartment

Although adequate in size for basic ablutions, the WC is small enough that the manufacturers have not tried to squeeze in a shower; there is always the transom shower for washing off after a swim.

The basin is a useful size, and there is stowage below it, while a cupboard outboard would take care of washbags and a first-aid kit. An opening port provides ventilation.



Engine room

A large hatch in the cockpit sole, biased slightly to port and supported on gas struts, gives you just enough room to slide down into the enginebay, even if the opening appears a bit tight.

All the day-to-day check points are easy to reach, as well as the main servicing items, although a further small screwed-down panel to starboard needs to come up if you are going to replace the oil filter, and a similar panel



forward hides the fuel tank.

The only thing that might benefit from a change of location is the water/fuel separator, which is mounted on the starboard side of the engine room bulkhead, making it unnecessarily awkward to get at when it could just as easily have wound up on the port side. Given the space available here, it would have been good to see a couple of side bins to take care of engine spares

and cleaning gear; we would like to have seen some more noise insulation too.

In general the installation is soundly engineered and tidy, with cables and pipework run neatly and the batteries lying behind a screwed-down panel.

A manual bilge pump with a diverter services the enginebay and separate forward bilge, and there is also an electric unit for the former.

wayward on straightline stability and hard in any type of chop.

To our pleasant surprise the engine and hull set-up proved us wrong. Tracking was clean and barely hands-on, both at high and even more notably at low speeds, with none of the wanderlust that many outdrive hulls are prone to. The ride was also well balanced and soft, and turns were negotiated in a good natured fashion, cutting smoothly round without heeling too sharply, and then picking up again nicely.

The driving position is comfortable, with wheel and throttle well placed, and a real boon is that you feel perfectly

happy sitting and looking through the screen, the height of the seat and frame being just right for excellent visibility.

Our test boat had been fitted with the optional trim tabs, but these seemed superfluous to requirements, and the hull is largely unaffected by people moving about or by beam winds. The manufacturers put this down to the 245's tendency to plane on a fuller cross-section than other boats, which lift rather more and thus narrow their effective planing width.

Flat-out, we recorded a top speed of 31.5 knots with our single 200hp diesel installation,

whilst fast cruising at 3400rpm gave a well-paced 25.5 knots, 3200rpm brought 23 knots and 3000rpm made for an easy jog-along 21 knots.

Even at the lowest of these rev-settings, noise levels remained fairly high, especially smack over the engine at the rear of the cockpit, where we recorded 86dB(A). The helm position was okay for normal conversation, with a reading of 82dB(A).

Conclusions

We are always glad to find boats which offer a leg-up for families wanting to trade-in a cuddy-cabin sportsboat for something a little bigger, whilst keeping complexity and overheads in check, and the Gobbi 245 does this well.

Its bulky exterior styling is an acquired taste, but then who said every boat should look the same? Its layout works well, its build and fit-out are both solid and well finished, and its ride and handling are extremely pleasing.

All of which makes this a most welcome addition to the small performance cruiser market. We look forward to trying other models in the Gobbi range. □



Bathing platform

Being well above the water and a little on the narrow side, the bathing platform feels a bit precipitous.

The boarding ladder, tucked into a well within the moulding, is a telescopic affair which reaches adequately down below the surface, although an additional handhold on either side on the transom would not go amiss.

A shower is included in the specification here.



BUILD

glass-reinforced plastic

DIMENSIONS

LOA

25ft 7in (7.80m)

HULL LENGTH

24ft 5in (7.47m)

BEAM

8ft 3in (2.50m)

DRAUGHT

2ft 11in (0.88m)
with drive down

DISPLACEMENT

2.85 tonnes

FUEL CAPACITY

88gal (400lt)

WATER CAPACITY

22gal (100lt)

ENGINE

single Volvo Penta AD41P

6cyl 3.6lt diesel

200hp at 3800rpm

PRICE

from £34,830 ex VAT with
single 240hp petrol engine
£45,947 as tested

SUPPLIERS

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