

Boat Report

# NIMBUS 37 TRAWLER

*How many practical living spaces can you fit into a 37-footer?  
Sweden's attempt at the record is now available in the UK.*

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Nimbus Boats of Sweden have always been prepared to explore unconventional layouts for their designs, aiming to achieve practical and versatile craft for serious family cruising.

The accent is on multipurpose spaces, separated sleeping areas and usability, whatever the weather. A typical example is their latest model, the 37 Trawler, which packs more living areas into its length than many vessels 20ft longer.

We saw the plans for the 37 a year ago. Our first chance to test it came this summer, when it arrived at Offshore Powerboats, the UK importers.

## Design

The hull of the 37 Trawler is the same as that of the 37 Carisma, and the previous 4004 model. It is shallow-vee, with a deadrise of approximately 13° amidships, 12° at the transom. The bottom sections are rounded rather than flat, convex at the keel and flattening out to the chine.

A knuckle just above the waterline stiffens the topsides, and prevents spray creeping up the hull, but there are no other sprayrails under the water. A keel runs 60% of the length of the boat, giving some security when grounding, and helping to protect the sterngear.

Propulsion is by conventional shafts and rudders, but with the engines running through V-drives. This allows them to be mounted aft under the cockpit, freeing valuable space under the saloon for extra sleeping accommodation.

The layout of the boat comprises an aft cockpit, a flybridge, an upper wheelhouse, a lower saloon and galley, and double cabins forward and amidships.

## Interior

Entry to the accommodation from the aft cockpit is via a central sliding door, followed by two steps



**Clockwise from left: the settee in the saloon benefits from a large table and plenty of light from a sliding window. The galley opposite has plenty of equipment and work surface. Battened sides help give a warm feel to the forward cabin. The wheelhouse is linked to, but separate from, the rest of the interior accommodation, with room for up to four people. Up a flight of stairs from the interior helm is the spacious flybridge with a compact instrument console.**

down into the saloon/galley.

To port is a four to six-person C-shaped settee, around a good size table which hinges open to double its size and drops to form a third double berth. Lockers under part of the settee and a shelf provide stowage space for anyone sleeping here.

Opposite is a large C-shaped galley, with room for two people to work together. Its equipment includes a two-burner gas hob, a gas oven, a double stainless steel sink, a half-height fridge and a top-loading freezer chest. Under the sink is a locker, inside which you find the rather frail-looking plastic gas-bottle stowage. Two drawers and small cave lockers outboard of the fiddled worktop complete the stowage.

A large sliding window over the galley and a matching one on the other side of the saloon provide light and ventilation.

Joinery throughout the boat is in American cherry, adopted by Nimbus in preference to their previous teak on environmental grounds. The wood apparently only takes 10 years from planting and reaching maturity, yet still has a rich glow to it, and is durable and easily worked.

The soles are finished in teak, with holly stripes, further protected where appropriate by blue carpet. We were pleased to see that this has bound edges, and press-studs to keep it in place. So often we find raw-cut carpet, which may look alright when the boat comes out of the showroom but quickly frays after it has been rolled back a few times.

Three steps lead up from the saloon to the wheelhouse, one of the 37's surprises. Three or four people can sit up here, with a bucket helm seat to starboard, and a two or three-person seat opposite. Sliding doors on both sides give immediate access to the side decks, and allow good ventilation whichever way the wind is blowing. Further light and air comes from an opening hatch overhead and the doorway aft to the flybridge.

The helm console is simple but adequately equipped. A ready-use panel to the left of the vertical wheel has metal flick-switches rather than the more usual plastic rocker switches, and beyond them is a mimic panel for navigation lights. The engine instruments are mounted forward in their own panel, with a small chart area in between. A log/speedo and echo-sounder are located in an overhead





panel. There are three large windscreen wipers with individual switches, while three-speed demisters ensure good forward vision.

Ahead of the port seat is a large fiddled navigation area which would take a folded chart, with stowage for more underneath its perspex lid. A cave locker will take instruments or passengers' valuables.

Three steps lead down forward from the wheelhouse to the cabins and toilet compartment. Their doors are grouped around a small lobby, where a hatch in the sole gives good access to the seacocks, the echo-sounder transducer and the log impeller.

To port is the midships cabin. This runs under the wheelhouse, with full headroom over 50% of its area. It has an athwartships double berth, a small seat, a dressing-table and a three-quarter-height hanging locker. The only light comes from a small opening port.

To starboard is the toilet compartment. This is a good size, with a clever layout which includes a separate shower area forward, closed off by a perspex door and with a slatted wooden seat making good use of the curve of the hull. Other thoughtful features include the excellent grabrail along the front of the basin console, which doubles as a towel rail, and the large worktop, with a good moulded lip to keep items in place.

A large locker underneath the worktop, and a sliding cave locker outboard provide ample stowage space for the toiletries of six people, and the moulded finish is neat and practical, with wooden trim giving a luxury feel. The manual PAR toilet discharges overboard or into the optional holding tank; a handpump alongside empties the tank through the hull or a deck fitting.

Forward is the main double cabin, with two wide vee-berths, and an infill to create a double. There is full headroom over the aft area, tapering forward. Stowage is provided by a three-quarter-height hanging locker aft to port, a half-height locker alongside and shelves outboard. A nice touch are the battened sides to the hull, giving a warm feel to the compartment. There is a hatch overhead, and portlights outboard.

Throughout the interior, the finish is to Nimbus' usual high standard, crisp and clean. Extensive use has been made of GRP moulded liners, but their plainness is offset by the simple but effective joinery and wood trim.

## Nimbus 37 Trawler

**Engines** twin Volvo Penta TAMD41B diesels, 200hp at 3800rpm, 6cyl, 3590lt.

**Conditions** wind SW Force 2, sea calm. **Load** fuel 25%, water 0%, crew 3.

rpm	knots	gph	lph	mpg	range*	trim	sound levels dB(A)			
							saloon	helm	fwd cab	flybg
1600	6.8	2.0	9	3.40	420	0.5	75	70	67	64
2000	8.4	3.6	16	2.33	287	2.5	76	71	68	67
2400	9.5	5.8	26	1.64	202	4.5	78	73	69	70
2800	14.1	8.6	39	1.63	201	5.5	79	75	73	72
3200	17.6	11.0	50	1.60	197	5.5	83	77	72	73
3600	21.9	15.6	71	1.41	173	5.5	85	79	74	75
3900	25.2	19.1	87	1.32	163	5.0	87	81	76	77

**Acceleration** 0-20 knots, 10.8sec

(\*allows 20% margin)

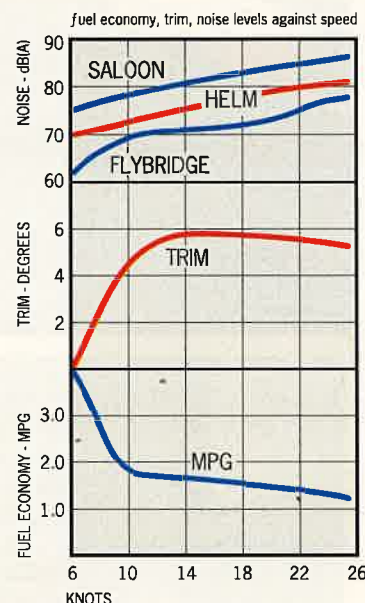
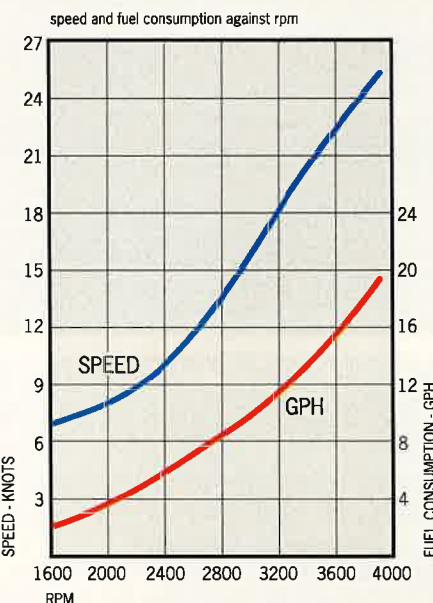
**Loa** 36ft 9in (11.20m) **Air draught** (mast down) 10ft 1in (3.1m)

**Hull length** 34ft 0in (10.5m) **Displacement** 6.8 tonnes

**Beam** 11ft 9in (3.60m) **Fuel capacity** 155gal (700lt)

**Draught** 3ft 3in (1.0m) **Water capacity** 66gal (300lt)

**Price** £142,490 ex VAT as tested



Left: the 37 provides ample space for enjoying the open air, with an aft cockpit augmenting the flybridge. Above right: design features include the mounting of guardrail stanchions on the outside of the gunwale, rubber D-fendering all around and a break in the pulpit, with handrails, enabling you to step ashore from the bow.



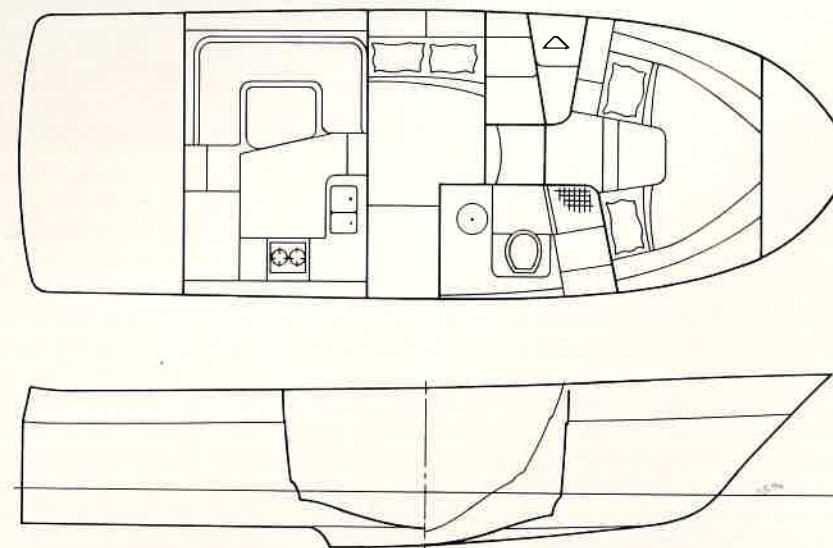
## Exterior

The Swedes believe in enjoying the open air, and the 37 Trawler provides ample space for this with its large cockpit and flybridge, plus the foredeck.

The cockpit is big enough for four to six people, with comfortable cushioned bench seats either side, whose lids lift to reveal large lockers. The sole is comfortably clad in teak, giving a cool finish underfoot in summer, a warm one in winter and a non-slip one in the wet.

A walk-through transom door leads to the large bathing platform. This has two lockers on each side, with teak lids, providing stowage for wet gear (or for the stern anchor which is obligatory for bows-to mooring in Scandinavian waters). A central boarding ladder hinges up against the transom face. Alongside this is a recessed hot-and-cold shower.

We were impressed by the substantial rubber B-fendering all round the bathing platform, providing protection for this vulnerable area. This is matched





by D-fendering around the whole gunwale, which gives you the confidence to nudge up to piles when mooring. There were no fender stowages on the boat we tested, and no obvious place to store them, but future models will have baskets for four fenders on the transom.

A vertical ladder to starboard allows fitter members of the crew to climb to the flybridge. For the slightly less agile, the way up is via stairs from the wheelhouse and a sliding door. These two means of access typify the way the different areas of the boat are linked but separate, providing both privacy and sociability at the same time.

The flybridge itself is a good size, with an L-shaped settee/lounger to port, big enough for up to five people, and a single bucket helm seat.

The latter faces a compact but fully-equipped console. The echo-sounder, log and compass are clearly viewed in a panel ahead, although the engine instruments are set annoyingly down by the helmsman's knees. Single-lever engine controls are more convenient, to the right of the wheel.

So large is the forward apron that it seems a shame to waste the space, and we can see children using it as a play area or a sunlounger when the boat is at rest. The forward-facing screen does a good job of keeping wind off the face when underway, and the stainless steel goalpost mast carrying the radar and lights hinges down quickly for low bridges.

You reach the side decks either from the wheelhouse doors or via teak steps up from the cockpit. The decks are comparatively narrow aft at 6in (150mm), increasing to 8in (200mm) alongside the wheelhouse. A moulded gunwale lip helps to keep you aboard, and best use has been made of the available width by cleverly mounting the guardrail stanchion bases on the outside of the gunwale, though still within the line of the rubber fendering. Beside the wheelhouse there is a break in the guardrail to allow you to step on and off.

The foredeck working area is a good one, with the anchor stowed in a slot in a stern platform, and a break and handrails in the pulpit allowing you to step over the stern when mooring bows-to. Teak strips help you keep your feet. The standard electric anchor windlass is sited at the aft end of the platform, with a hinged hatch around it giving access to a foredeck locker which is just large enough for the chain.

The non-slip finish of the side decks continues over the coachroof, but we could not understand the purpose of the raised fore-and-aft strips either side of the centreline. They did not seem large enough to take a lounge cushion, and merely served as something to trip over.

Substantial 12in (300mm) stainless steel cleats forward, midships and aft easily cope with lines.

## Engines

Power comes from a pair of inboard diesels running through V-drives. The standard engines are 200hp Volvo Penta TAMD41s, the other option being the supercharged 230hp versions of the same unit, the KAMD42s.

Two large hinged cockpit hatches, on gas struts, give access to the engineroom. Deep drainage channels round them clear rainwater or spray, but with the aft water tank empty the boat trims down by the bow, and the water can collect at the front of the channels. Another problem with this arrangement is the large fore-and-aft central bearer, which makes it

difficult to climb down between the engines; it is a pity it cannot be lifted out.

Once down in the engineroom, you have good access to the inlet filters on the aft bulkhead. A stowage shelf over the rudder gear prevents them from being jammed, and provides room for a rolled-up inflatable.

A lift-out panel allows access to the inlet valves, the electric bilge pump and the strumbox on the end of the manual pump. This is mounted in the aft face of the cockpit, and easily operated in an emergency; however, we would like to have seen a second electric pump forward, or at least another suction for the manual unit.

The good-size fuel filters on the forward bulkhead are reached by lifting out the steps leading down into the saloon.

Access to the sternglands on V-drive boats is often a problem, since the layout of the propulsion system means they end up under the engine. On the 37 Trawler this has been alleviated somewhat by scallops cut out of the engine bearers, which just allow you to squeeze your hand down the side of the engine. Nimbus use self-sealing glands, which do not require regular adjusting anyway.

## Handling and performance

Slow-speed handling in the marina was straightforward and good, using either the helm or the engines. We had a few anxious moments while one of the gearboxes thought about going into reverse, but once its oil pressure had built up this did not happen again.

Out at sea the boat tracked a straight course, and turned tightly when required. It dealt with the chop comfortably, but we found nothing serious in the waves to tax its hull.

The top speed we recorded on our radar gun with the TAMD41s was 25 knots, at just over 3900rpm; an easy cruise was 17 knots at 3200rpm. At these speeds, our calculations indicated that the engines would be using 19.1gph and 11.0gph respectively, the latter giving a range (with a 20% reserve) of around 200 miles.

Sound levels on the flybridge were excellent at all speeds, and we measured only 72dB(A) at 3200rpm. Down in the wheelhouse we found the noise from the engines a touch obtrusive at higher speeds, 87dB(A) flat-out, although elsewhere it was acceptable. In theory, aft-mounted engines should be more peaceful in the accommodation, but this can sometimes be offset by extra noise from the V-drives.

## Conclusion

Once again, Nimbus have produced a floating Tardis. There are five living areas on the 37 Trawler, each big enough to allow the whole crew to gather, yet separate enough for some to break away on their own. All of them are linked by easy access routes, giving a flow to the accommodation and a togetherness to the party.

If the weather is fine you have the cockpit, the bathing platform, the flybridge and the foredeck, all within sight of each other but discreetly separated; when it turns cool or wet, you have the saloon, the wheelhouse and the forward cabins. All this in a boat under 37ft overall (3ft less if you exclude the bathing platform and stern platform) amounts to a remarkably versatile package. □

## Builders

Nimbus Boats, GKSS  
Hamnen, S-42105 Vastra  
Frolunda, Sweden.  
Tel: (46) 031 29 93 10

## Suppliers

Offshore Powerboats,  
Lymington Yacht Haven,  
Lymington, Hampshire  
SO41 9QD.  
Tel: 0590 677955.