

Va-va Broom

With a new designer and a new look, the 370 punches Broom into the 21st century

REPORT BY MARK TURLEY

Howling winds and a big, frankly unpleasant sea. Not your favourite conditions. Then we are testing a Broom today, so it doesn't seem so bad. It might be its old-school solid build, or its serious cruising reputation, but a Broom always seems to instill some calm and confidence in a skipper.

On the other hand this is a new kind of Broom. The family run company that had been building boats for well over a century is no more. In its place is a new owner and, importantly, a new designer. So will the serious

cruising ethos be retained? More importantly, how will we and the 370 deal with this big sea?

Design and build

Perhaps the first point to make is that the relaunched line-up, which will eventually run from 30 to 50ft, is getting a top-to-toe redesign and refurb courtesy of designer Graham Warren. However, it has not simply been a matter of finding new door knobs and fabrics. Some of this has involved moulding modifications, such as here on the 370, which

has undergone some major surgery on its back end. The hull's waterline length has been increased slightly. It now pushes out aft under the more generous bathing platform, forming what amounts to a fixed tab that automatically helps keep the bow down.

This aside the major portion of the hull is the same as the 365's; a medium vee, with wide chines and a shallow run of keel to help keep things on track. Above the waterline the transom topside now cants back to provide more space for the aft deck seating, allowing a shallow U to wrap around the rear coaming

The brief...



The management buyout of this well respected builder has bought about a host of changes in terms of manufacturing and the feel of the boats. So with their updated models hitting the water, I was keen to find out what the boats had gained... and, just as importantly, what may have been lost. **Mark**

LOA: 37ft 7in (11.46m)

PRICE: from £296,521

TOP SPEED: 26 knots

BUILDERS: Broom Boats Ltd

ENQUIRIES:

www.broomboats.com



BOAT REPORT

BROOM 370

PHOTOS: WILLIAM PAYNE



Scan the QR code to watch the Broom 370 in action



rather than the old 365's athwartships bench. Beneath this, the aft cabin now benefits from a handsome panoramic window instead of a couple of hatches.

All these tweaks are useful improvements on top of the usual Broom fundamentals such as good width sidedecks, robust build quality and not least their Easy-fold canopy system that simply clips in place along the windscreen when needed, or pushes back like a pram hood when the weather cheers up.

Boarding is easily achieved through the break in the guardrails when alongside, with proper topside treads fashioned into the engine air intakes, while from astern port and starboard stairwells run up to the side decks. Handrails are provided here, but it feels a bit vulnerable once the accompanying guardrails disappear, especially since the bulkier seat coamings tend to push you outboard slightly. Extending the rails down a further tread is the simple answer.

The aft deck is very cockpit like and it is definitely a matter of being inside the boat rather than perched on a raised aft deck especially once the neat sliding side decks doors are shut. The helm is a two-person affair and there is a moulded sideboard cum wet bar across the way. Stowage is provided under the rear seating and if the usual contoured double bench for the helm is ordered, then there is stowage within this too. If you opt for pedestal seats – like here – then the amount of deck stowage gets a bit tighter although fender holders are fitted to the bow as standard. The foredeck is equipped with an electric anchor windlass and there is access to the chain locker.

Inside job

The reworked sharper look is in evidence inside as you descend down the open tread companionway and it really gains momentum thanks to Broom's new design partner. The first thing that jumps out at you is the chaise longue-style seat running down the port hand side, the second it how composed yet uncluttered it feels. We wonder if it has something to do with door catches, or lack of (they're hidden) and the straight-edged joinery,

it's cherry in this instance but oak comes as standard. Add a useful dash of extra light thanks to deck head skylights and a few mirrored surfaces and you've the recipe for a 21st century interior that still manages to look inviting rather than plain, meaning that the Broom DNA hasn't been lost, just given a refreshing shot in the arm.

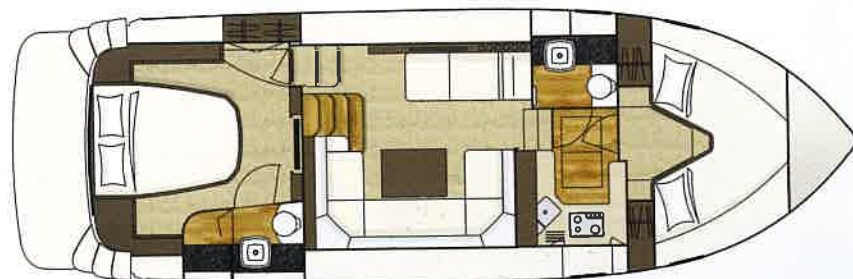
The saloon's chaise longue takes a bit of getting used to but for all its quirkiness it is very comfortable and the end part breaks away too, so it can be pulled to the dinette to square the seating. With no space for a lazarette, stowage can be an issue on aft cabin boats and the absence of obvious locker catches makes it easy to think there is little or none here. In fact there is plenty. Much of it comes by way of readily accessible drawers rather than the usual top loading lockers beneath the seating, and there is a neat bottle locker and space for a pop-up TV within the slimmed down sideboard outboard of the chaise.

The well-equipped galley comes complete with 11/2 bowl sink and full-on cooking appliances still manages a useful amount of free Avonite work surface and reasonable storage, although bulkier items will have to go in the lined sub-sole locker. The heads favour Avonite work surfaces

too, and again the use of mirrors and free-standing porcelain basins give them a light, roomy feel even though it is just the aft cabin's en suite that benefits from a separate shower stall. However, be wary of the shower seat here as, being Avonite rather than teak, it's going to be a cool surprise for anyone who fancies sitting down.

There's a widespread use of mirrors in the aft cabin, helping to spread space, light, and your reflection, about. Again stacks of storage include a dressing table, and the extended transom window above the central berth is an attractive feature.

The 370's forecabin is fitted with a vee berth arrangement complete with neat, shared bedside table, but there is the option of an offset double. Storage here is by way of a decent sized shelved cupboard and a large hanging locker plus further storage under the berth.



GALLEY



CROCKERY STORAGE



SUB-SOLE STORAGE



RAW WATER STRAINERS



BACK-LIT STEPS



SALOON

Interiors Sharper style and sophistication

The makeover has been more a question of styling than a radical shake-up of the aft cabin layout.

Only the tradition of sideboard running down the port side of the saloon has been partly cast aside in favour of the chaise. All the practical details remain, not least the full-blown galley and twin toilet compartments, but the feeling of light together with the joinery's clean, straight

lines gives the 370 a surprising sophistication that only good design can invoke. There are going to be dissenters to the new look of course, but for all its sharper styling, it is still an inviting experience. The only down side is that none of the surfaces benefit from a fiddle.

STORAGE



FORECABIN



FORECABIN



SALOON



FORECABIN HEAD



AFT CABIN



AFT CABIN

AFT DECK



SLIDING DOOR



Exterior

Room for six and a deep bathing platform

The aft deck is cockpit-like because the coamings – inboard of the sidedecks – cosset you well away from the topsides. The downside of this is that it is not as large as if it ran full width. Even so there is room for six to sit around the table, with the new U-shape to the seating making it easier to get convivial.

Other noticeable alterations to the earlier model are the use of frameless windows, not least to the new picture window across the stern and the more generous, 3ft deep bathing platform.



BATHING PLATFORM & TRANSOM WINDOW



SIDE DECK ACCESS

From the helm

Excellent canopy system and enhanced visibility

HELM



It has been a long while since builders of this style of boat, which are invariably destined for use in northern Europe, have bothered with an inside helm position. Which means that the outside one has to be particularly well protected and the hull – with any luck – gives a clean ride that doesn't put up too much spray.

To fulfil the former requirement the 370's screen is a decent height plus there is then Broom's signature Easy-fold canopy system that clips hard and fast in place between screen and radar hoop. This standard fit canopy arrangement really does do an excellent job and with the rear portion in place, the aft deck battens down much like a wheelhouse.

As to the helm's actual console and seating, the more refined square dash is tidily laid out and as well as room for electronics, there is still space for a folded chart and a couple of handy, deep fiddled bits trays. Visibility is completely unimpaired and reflections onto the screen reduced thanks to the console's dark finish.

One option to seriously consider is the offer of an extra warm air blower fitted through to the aft deck, which then also includes demisters for the screen.

Performance & handling

We tested the 370's predecessor in particularly pleasant conditions, but this time we encountered much messier ones. A North Sea stiff breeze running parallel to the Norfolk shore that was aided and abetted by plenty of large, steep holes opening up in a particularly unorganised manner.

Clearly, the sea state did not lend itself to much frolicking but the boat's pedigree meant we had no qualms in getting to grips with it. We kept up a useful 14 knots when heading into this decidedly ugly, awkward sea. The planing hull feeling more like a semi-displacement as it eased nicely through the waves, rather than falling heavily into troughs and getting knocked about. There is often the tendency to ease back more and more on the throttles until you find yourself wallowing in displacement mode and the world looks bleak indeed. There's no such thoughts here as the no-nonsense seakeeping meant the fitout uttered not even a squeak.

While just to stress the hull's kindly manners even the vanity products used to dress the toilet compartments stayed in situ, and no, we checked, they hadn't been glued down.

Such conditions inevitably put up quite a bit of heavy spray but the hull was happy to push the bulk of this away and surprisingly little found its way back aboard. That said, rather than tempt fate, we selflessly kept the heavy duty canopy in place, just to check it was as watertight you understand.

Running with the sea, we could open the

taps further and pushed comfortably along at 21 knots at 3600rpm, 400 revs off the engines' maximum. Broom's own test figures – taken in more serene conditions – show 22 knots at 3500rpm and 26 knots flat out. From our own findings and checking back on figures for the 365, these seem entirely reasonable and, in deference to the conditions during our trials that made accurate readings impossible, we

have used them in the performance table. Casting an eye over this throws up the interesting point that the hull, which is just as happy to sit in the mid-teens as the low twenties, has much the same level of efficiency – with a mpg of around 1.2 – irrespective of which speed suits your mood or the prevailing sea state. Noise isn't an issue either, with levels in the saloon a quiet and rattle-free 75dB(A).

BOAT REPORT
BROOM 370

"The no-nonsense seakeeping meant the fitout uttered not even a squeak"



Specification & value

The relaunch of the range has not just been about hotting up the interiors and obtaining better efficiencies in the build process. They have also had a useful look at what is included, with windlass, heating, electric toilets, basic electronics and even the cockpit teak – not just the bathing platform and stair treads – getting on to the standard spec.

Inevitably, these costs filter through to the base boat price and when all the sums are done, the Broom still comes in at something of a premium when compared to other boats of a similar length. But then again not many 37ft cruisers can offer this much accommodation either.

Technical data

KEY DIMENSIONS

BUILD	GRP
RCD	B
LENGTH OVERALL	37ft 7in (11.46m)
HULL LENGTH	35ft 3in (10.75m)
BEAM	12ft 4in (3.78m)
DRAUGHT	3ft 4in (1.02m)
AIR DRAUGHT	10ft 8in (3.25m)
DISPLACEMENT	8 tonnes
FUEL CAPACITY	244gal (1108lt)
WATER CAPACITY	82gal (375lt)
WIDTH OF SIDE DECKS	11in (28cm)
HEADROOM IN SALOON	6ft 2in (1.88m)
FORECABIN BERTHS	6ft 3in x 2ft 6in (1.91 x 0.76m)
MID CABIN BERTH	6ft 1in x 4ft 9in (1.85 x 1.45m)

PERFORMANCE

ENGINES	twin Yanmar 6BY260 diesels
CONFIGURATION	6cyl, 3.0lt, 260hp at 4000rpm
CONDITIONS	wind S'ly Force 5, sea rough
LOAD	fuel 75%, water 50%, crew 2

RPM	KNOTS	GPH	LPH	MPG	RANGE	NOISE
1500	7.2	2.4	11	3.0	586	73
2500	9.3	7.9	36	1.2	234	74
3000	15.4	12.3	56	1.3	253	75
3500	22.5	18.5	84	1.2	234	76
4000	26.0	23.3	106	1.1	216	78

Range figures quoted above are in miles based on standard fuel tanks and include a 20% margin. GPH & MPG refer to Imperial gallons. These figures may vary due to weather conditions, air, water, engine temperature, crew numbers, hull fouling, fuel quality and other issues. Noise readings in dB(A) were recorded in the saloon.

PRICES

STANDARD BOAT	inc VAT
with twin Yanmar 260s	£304,668
BOW THRUSTER	£4248
HEATING	standard
ELECTRIC WINDLASS	standard
GENERATOR	£9384
COCKPIT TEAK	standard
COMMISSIONING & ANTIFOUL	standard

BOAT AS TESTED £338,987

Enginebay

A good range of engine options are offered including a diesel/electric one, as well as a number of single and twin installations giving speeds from 7 to 30 knots depending whether usage is going to be largely inland or offshore.

Engine access has often proved a bit of a thorny issue on this type of mid-engined boat, partly due to the layout requiring wing tanks that tighten space outboard of the engines.

Broom, in this instance, have taken the middle road and let in a couple of smallish, removable hatches over the tops of this boat's twin Yanmar 260s so dipsticks and fillers can be accessed. Checking the raw water strainers meanwhile is a matter of delving under the aft section of saloon seating. The primary fuel filters are set under another panel towards the front of the same compartment, so it is all there but you need to get organised. As regards the level of engineering and general build quality, Broom has kept up its usual high standards.



THE VERDICT

It was perhaps inevitable that Broom – steeped in a century of family boat building – would have to change if it were to survive. But at the same time it was important not to drift too far from what the marque is respected for; its stalwart build, practical layout and cruising comforts, with all three factors just as high on the agenda when underway as alongside. The 370 still has all these vitally important assets, plus the modernising, interesting design tweaks that make it a boat – and a manufacturer – for the present day.



Meet the family



BIGGER

395 from £311,360

LOA: 39ft 6in (12.04m)

Similar to the 365's revamp, its slightly larger brother has had much the same treatment. The layout hasn't changed, but it is roomier.



SMALLER

35 Coupe from £185,000

LOA 35ft 0in (10.67m)

A new wheelhouse-orientated model out this summer is full of bright, practical ideas such as direct sidedeck access from the saloon.

The rivals



Haines 400 from £308,000

LOA 40ft 0in (12.20m)

The twin-engine version of this 40-footer is similar money to the Broom 370 while their slightly smaller 360 is almost £60k less.



Westwood A390 from £295,500

LOA 39ft 4in (12.00m)

Broom's other competitor in the aft cabin offers this slightly larger model, designed to look like a steel boat, at similar money to the 370.