

Broom 39KL

With a well-proven hull, a versatile aft-cabin layout, safe decks and a well sheltered exterior helm, it's an excellent vessel for serious cruising. Would it, we asked ourselves, make an ideal leader for MBM Club cruises in company? **REPORT BY MARK TURLEY**

As one of the last British builders to continue offering a mid-sized aft-cabin cruiser, Broom have secured themselves a valuable niche in the market. The popular 38CL earned itself a reputation as a solid, comfortable sea boat with excellent cruising potential, so when its successor, the 39KL, was launched last year we expected great things.

It might have been a heavily revised version of the 38CL, rather than an all-new boat, but given its pedigree we were keen to find out what it had to offer. Besides, we had an ulterior motive.

After six happy seasons with a succession of flybridge Sealines, we felt it was time to choose a different boat to lead MBM's cruises in company, and something from the Norfolk-based Broom yard was an obvious contender. We were already big admirers of the 38CL, and the 39KL promised to be even better.

Of course, it would be foolhardy of us to splash out (even if it is the company's money!) on a boat we hadn't yet sea-trialled. Thankfully, MBM readers Roy and Alice Stoner were happy to step into the breach, lending us their 39KL for the day before we

committed ourselves to leasing one from Broom dealers Boat Showrooms of London.

DESIGN & BUILD

Andrew Wolstenholme's original excellent underwater lines for the 38 have been retained, with a full run of keel and ascending hull body as it runs to the transom, and there are barely any alterations to the topsides and superstructure. The boat's '39' designation comes from the fact that the bathing platform is more generous.

Access up from this to the aft deck is now

via a short moulded stairwell on the port side of the transom, rather than the previous ladder arrangement. Access through the coaming has also been modified, with a single aft doorway instead of one out to each side deck, and one upshot of this is improved seating provision.

The aft deck also houses the boat's only helm station. There's no interior helm on any of Broom's CL or KL models, the idea being that the hefty exterior screen and canopy provide all the protection you need, and more space is left down in the saloon for domestic comforts.

As you would expect from a Broom, there are cabins forward and aft, and an upper saloon with plenty of seating. But within this template, two alternative layouts are now available.

The more conventional arrangement, as on our test boat, has a secondary U-shaped dinette, on a lower level forward of the saloon, opposite the galley.

The recently launched 2+2 alternative does away with this, in favour of a small separate utility and storage area, which has in turn allowed a little more space to be made available for both the upper saloon and

the forecabin. The idea is that this will better suit owners who intend to cruise for long periods with no more than four people on board, and therefore don't need an occasional berth.

As ever with Brooms, much of the fit-out comes courtesy of their joinery workshops, and is of a high calibre. Mouldings are used where they make most sense — for example,

in areas where surfaces are going to get wet — rather than wherever possible to save costs.

✓✓✓✓
Build quality, and the ability of the hull, will not disappoint.

ACCOMMODATION

Access from the aft deck to the saloon is via a short run of well angled, open-treaded steps. In our test boat's conventional layout there is also a neat door out to the port side deck, although you give this up if you opt for the 2+2 layout as an extra settee takes up this area.

Otherwise the conventional Broom layout presides, with a sideboard incorporating a drinks cabinet along the port side and a U-shaped settee opposite.

A few more steps down, forward, is the galley to starboard, opposite a second seating area which serves as a dinette. There is plenty of natural light here, and good ventilation courtesy of opening portions of window and deckhead vents.

We were less happy with the stowage in the saloon and dinette. To get at the spaces within the various seat-bases, you first have to remove wedge-shaped cushions which lock each other in situ, and then lift clear separate wooden covers. It's all a bit of a fiddle, and does not bode well for your prospects of keeping the very smart upholstery in good nick.

We were also surprised to find that the lower dinette's seat locker is open to the side

of the hull and the bilge. Broom tell us they are are looking into improving this.

In contrast, the U-shaped galley's fit-out is impeccable, with every locker wood-lined and very practical considerations such as fiddles built into all flat surfaces. The work surface, fashioned out of Avonite, incorporates a good-sized inset rubbish bin.

Standard equipment includes a one-and-a-half-bowl sink, a decent-sized fridge with a freezer box, and an almost domestic-sized hob, oven and separate grill. If you prefer your food 'naked', then a microwave can be supplied as an extra, as can an extractor over the hob.

The sole here is carpeted, and getting at any of the hatches that access the bilge, holding tank and seacocks is simply a matter of rolling it back. A hinged stair tread gives way to other ancillaries, such as the holding tank discharge pump.

Forward of the galley is the day-toilet, which is nicely fitted out in interesting matching-coloured mouldings, and is of a reasonable size given that it is the second WC; as a preference, we suspect that all on board will use the separate shower room back aft.

Looking at the forecabin, you can see why

some buyers might want to opt for the alternative layout which dedicates more room to it. Although the size of the vee-berths themselves is adequate, there is little space left in which to dress. But you do get a hanging locker, a couple of drawers and a locker in the base of the berths.

The aft master cabin is significantly grander, taking up the full width of the hull. The double berth is surrounded by a handsome set of drawers, cupboards and dressing tables, and the en-suite facilities comprise separate toilet and shower compartments, so both can be used at the same time.

The cabin enjoys plenty of natural light, thanks to two transom hatches. The void beneath the berth has been used to house the water tank, while a hatch towards its head reveals the steering gear.

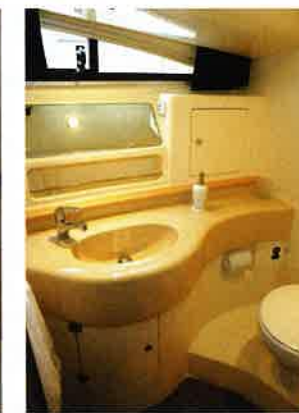
Between the cabin and the saloon is a lobby area suitable for hanging jackets, or accommodating some further enclosed cupboard space. Also inset here, behind a hatch, is the fuel manifold, allowing the engines to be run off either or both wing tanks as required.

Some stowage niggles detract from a practical, well finished layout.

below The standard layout features an airy lower dinette opposite an excellent U-shaped galley, with steps up to the aft deck and the port side deck.



below Not having an inside helm position leaves the upper saloon feeling spacious, with lots of comfortable seating and with natural light flooding in.



above The forward cabin has good-size berths but little standing room. With its en-suite toilet (and separate shower), the aft cabin is much grander.

EXTERIOR

The 39's slightly deeper bathing platform and stairwell, compared with the 38, has markedly improved boarding over the stern. From here, it is simply a matter of nipping through the door in the transom portion of the coaming, instead of having to make your way along one of the side decks.

If, on the other hand, you need to climb aboard straight onto a side deck, this is also easy enough, thanks to a tread set into the topside below a break in the guardrail.

To ensure your progress forward remains equally safe and secure, the 12in wide side decks are protected by guardrails fabricated with a solid (rather than wire) mid-rail, and the coachroof is fitted with a handrail.

This focus on safety is one of the prime factors that draw many potential buyers to a 39KL, and another key element is the very sheltered nature of the aft-deck. With the protective coaming, and the seating located well inboard, the occupants feel very much 'in' the boat.

The windscreen and an easily erected canopy, fastened by heavy-duty clips to the screen, ensure the helm is well protected from the elements. The after seating can be fully battened down under a second portion of canopy.

The dinette has a rather upright seat opposite, and the table is plastic rather than teak, but there's no doubting its practicality. Once the major portion of the three-person helm bench has been rejigged to face aft, there is room for quite a number to gather round.

Stowage is always a thorny issue on aft-cabin boats, which by their very nature have to manage without a lazaret. Lockers in the seat-bases go some way to addressing the problem, but MBM's crew might have to learn to travel more lightly than we do on our Sealine F37.

The flipside is that, without a flybridge, the 39KL's air draught is relatively low at 10ft 6in, once the radar hoop moulding has been lowered, which is a real boon for the many Broom owners who like to cruise inland as well as around the coast.

The mast itself is quite a hefty affair, being the main mounting point for antennas, so to help raise and lower it you can specify either a gas-ram system that assists the operation or a fully automated hydraulic system which does it all at the touch of a button. The second option costs more than £5,000, the former less than half that.

Up the sharp end, there is plenty of clear, flat deck space for dealing with warps, but only a manual windlass as standard for handling the ground tackle; an electric one will cost you an extra £1,200 or so.

Access to the chain is through the forward cabin's bulkhead, there being no hatch in the foredeck. There are 10in (25cm) cleats fitted at the bow, stern and amidships, while four fenders can be stowed in baskets fashioned into the pulpit.

Boarding is easy and you feel safe and secure everywhere.

ENGINE OPTIONS & ACCESS

Broom have never been tied to any one engine manufacturer, and twin-engined 39KLs are offered with either Volvo Penta or Yanmar diesels, in both cases in the 200hp-300hp range. The anomaly is that if you opt for a single engine, for river and estuary cruising, you get a Perkins Sabre unit, of 135hp.

To save you from having to hike up the whole saloon carpet for day-to-day engine checks, a couple of lift-out hatches give access to the dipsticks and coolant reservoir, and another pair to the barrel-type raw-water strainers. However, the latter are on the small side, and to get to the starboard one you first have to empty one of the seat lockers.

Neither did we enjoy checking the fuel/water separators. Initial access is not bad, by lifting one of the steps to the aft cabin, but they are squirreled away on the



aft bulkhead, making it more awkward than necessary.

For more major engine work, it would be a matter of rolling up the whole saloon carpet and taking up several loose, but well insulated and snug-fitting, wooden hatches. This done, there is quite sufficient space round the engines to get at all the main service points, with room to stand on the lid of the battery box between the two blocks.

A further battery bank is located ahead of the port-side fuel tank, and there is space here for an optional generator.

As ever, Broom's standards of

engineering are to be commended, even if you need a methodical approach to get at everything.

✓✓✓✓
Engineering quality
marred by poor access.
Good engine options.

below The helm seats three, with good visibility.



below Hatches allow coolant and dipstick checks...



below ...but fuller engine access is more awkward.



above The 39KL's aft-deck has more seating than the 38CL's, and it still feels cosseted and safe.

PERFORMANCE & HANDLING

The day of our test on Roy and Alice's 39KL was one of those clear, almost completely still winter days when it's a pleasure to get afloat, not least because we had the Solent practically to ourselves. All well and good for assessing speed trials and low-pace handling, but not so useful when trying to appraise the boat's sea-keeping.

Fortunately, our previous excursion on a 38CL was a wholly more arduous affair, off Lowestoft in a Force 4-5 running against a hefty tide, so we know for a fact that the hull is a good 'un. It offers a soft, comfortable ride, as well as sure-footed handling once the weather pipes up.

Unusually for a hull which is essentially semi-planing in form, it also remains impressively dry and handles planing speeds with real grace.

Sure enough, the Stoners' 39KL, fitted with a pair of six-cylinder 260hp Yanmars, turned in a top speed of a shade over 25 knots, even when fully loaded with cruising gear and fairly full tanks.

For unhurried passagemaking, you are more likely to slip the throttles back to 3200rpm for a truly relaxed, quiet and surprisingly frugal 18.2 knots. If you want to push on, an extra 200rpm gives the boat nearer 21 knots.

In either case, the hull sits squarely on the water at a natural angle of trim that is clearly comfortable for the crew and for the boat itself — there is no unruly slamming or excessive bow-up attitude, which explains why trim tabs are not fitted, or even offered as an extra.

Given that our Cruising Club escort duties involve being able to proceed comfortably at a whole spectrum of speeds, this hull's broad range of abilities should prove a real boon. Also beneficial will be its well-mannered manoeuvring at low speed, where the keel gives excellent directional stability as well as reducing the effects of windage.

The helm layout is excellent, allowing three people to sit and share steering, navigation and watch duties, benefiting from excellent visibility over the bow, and of course right round to the stern.

Engine instrumentation runs across an angled fascia, while banks of switches lie on both sides of the comfortably set wheel. A lockable adjacent panel houses the main items of electronics, situated within easy view and reach of all, while ahead of this is a good-sized Perspex-covered chart area.

The console moulding is also sculpted here and there with handy nooks and crannies for keeping small items safe.

✓✓✓✓
Very comfortable
sea-keeping and a
useful turn of speed.

SPECIFICATION & VALUE

What you always get from the Broom yard is a solid, well-engineered boat, and in this case it is based on an especially useful hull. You pay a little extra for this build quality, and for the fact that relatively few bare mouldings are used down below, but this premium can be expected to manifest itself in the boat's resale value too.

What you do have to watch is how far you go in hitting the extras list, as there is some shortfall from what is often perceived as part

below Heavy-duty clips fasten canopy to screen.



below Only one raw-water strainer is easy to see.



and parcel of a 'standard' fit-out. Teak decking to the bathing platform adds £1,392 to the bill, for instance, a holding tank another £2,935, and most owners will want to upgrade to an electric rather than manual windlass, for £1,222.

The standard electronics package is pretty basic as well, but on the other hand heating is included within the base price, which is not the case with many rivals.

✓✓✓✓
Not the cheapest boat
to specify well, but its
build quality is evident.

Basically, Broom put the money into building a solid boat, and it is up to buyers where they go next.

Verdict

So, after a thorough trial did we sign up for a Broom 39KL ourselves? After a good deal of head-scratching and calculator bashing, yes we did! Our association with Sealine has been a good one, but it was time to ring the changes, and this boat fits the bill in so many different ways.

The extra accommodation and privacy that comes with an aft-cabin design is a big plus. And we'll be taking delivery of a boat with the original interior layout, which means that there are two separate seating areas for crew and guests to enjoy, with the possibility of sleeping an extra body or two on the convertible lower dinette.

We prefer to helm outside most of the time, so we're happy to forgo an interior driving position, especially as the screen and coaming arrangement offer excellent protection. The raised aft deck also makes for a great socialising area, whether open or battened down.

Finally, the 39's sea-keeping abilities should be perfectly suited to its role as the leader of Cruising Club fleets. The proof of the pudding will be when we set sail on our first event of the season in May. We'll let you know how we get on.

MBM RATING 8/10
✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓

Broom 39KL technical data



ATLANTIC 38

from £301,000 inc VAT
Smallest in a range of quality, sea-kindly aft-cabin craft with a bespoke edge
Tel: 01202 826800
www.hollandboat.nl

AQUA-STAR OCEAN 38

from £317,250 inc VAT
More of a coastal and offshore boat, less suitable for inland waterways use.
Tel: 01481 244550
www.aquastar.co.uk

BIRCHWOOD CRUSADER 400

from £229,500 inc VAT
Three-cabin stern-drive boat, available in aft-deck and flybridge versions.
Tel: 01623 515133
www.birchwood.co.uk

specifications

| | |
|----------------|----------------------------------|
| BUILD | glass-reinforced plastic |
| RCD | design category B |
| LENGTH OVERALL | 39ft 6in (12.04m) |
| HULL LENGTH | 36ft 10in (11.22m) |
| BEAM | 13ft 0in (3.96m) |
| DRAUGHT | 3ft 6in (1.06m) |
| AIR DRAUGHT | with mast down, 10ft 8in (3.26m) |
| DISPLACEMENT | 10.2 tonnes |
| FUEL CAPACITY | 200gal (908lt) |
| WATER CAPACITY | 100gal (454lt) |

key dimensions

| | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| WIDTH OF SIDE DECKS | 12in |
| HEADROOM IN SALOON | 6ft 1in |
| HEADROOM IN AFT CABIN | 6ft 1in |
| AFT CABIN BERTH | 6ft 3in x 5ft 0in |
| FORWARD CABIN BERTH | 6ft 2in x 2ft 8in |

performance

| engines twin Yanmar 6LP-DTP diesels, configuration 6cyl, 4.2lt, 250hp at 3800rpm, conditions wind northerly Force 2, sea calm, load fuel 50%, water 100%, crew 4. | | | | | | | |
|---|-------|------|-----|------|-------|-------|--|
| rpm | knots | gph | lph | mpg | range | noise | |
| 2000 | 9.4 | 2.6 | 12 | 3.62 | 579 | 72 | |
| 2400 | 10.8 | 4.8 | 22 | 2.25 | 360 | 74 | |
| 2800 | 14.5 | 8.2 | 37 | 1.77 | 282 | 75 | |
| 3000 | 16.4 | 10.0 | 45 | 1.64 | 262 | 77 | |
| 3200 | 18.3 | 12.1 | 55 | 1.51 | 242 | 77 | |
| 3400 | 20.9 | 15.6 | 71 | 1.34 | 214 | 77 | |
| 3600 | 22.6 | 21.5 | 98 | 1.05 | 168 | 78 | |
| 3900 | 25.3 | 25.2 | 115 | 1.00 | 160 | 79 | |

Range figures above are in miles, with 20% margin. Noise figures are in dB(A), recorded in the saloon.

acceleration 0-20 knots in 15sec.

prices

| | |
|--|------------------|
| STANDARD BOAT with 250hp Yanmar 6LP-DTPs | inc VAT £264,316 |
| BOW-THRUSTER | £3,685 |
| HYDRAULIC MAST-LOWERING SYSTEM | £5,543 |
| HOLDING TANK SYSTEM | £2,935 |
| ELECTRIC ANCHOR WINCH | £1,222 |
| TEAK DECKING ON BATHING PLATFORM | £1,392 |
| BOAT AS TESTED | £279,093 |

ENQUIRIES

Boat Showrooms of Harleyford Ltd, Harleyford Estate, Henley Road, Marlow, Buckinghamshire SL7 2DX. Tel: 01628 471361. www.broomboats.com

the rivals

