

MOTOR
BOATS TESTED

Nimbus 30 Nova S

Will this solid, practical walkaround with an unusual transom design appeal to watersports lovers?

REPORT BY MARK TURLEY

One of the endearing things about this successful Scandinavian builder is that it's not averse to trying something new, which is odd, as it is often considered practical and conventional. The difficulty has always been in trying to get these design ideas to blend seamlessly together. So has this new, rather alternative 30 S achieved something special?

Exterior

Apart from the open run-through of bathing platform and cockpit, the other interesting feature is the asymmetric side decks. There's an easy to move along 11 in (28cm) sidedeck to starboard and a slither off to port. The former is bordered by a good depth of gunwale, which not only makes it simple and safe for the crew to move around but also means people are much more likely to use the foredeck area. A hatch here lets into a locker but rather than simply one large void to take the chain, it has a false bottom so ground tackle and warps can't get in a tangle.

Back aft, the bathing platform also boasts some stowage and seeing as the boat is ideal for watersports usage we were impressed by the ladder, which has been designed with good handholds to help swimmers out of the water.

As to the transom arrangement itself, either just the centre section can be opened up to provide a thoroughfare or the whole lot can be removed, transforming the area into a gigantic aft cockpit. You can then use this extra space to add extra furniture of your own, to supplement the settee to port. In fact, Nimbus even start you off with a wooden chair which tucks tidily away in its own stowage slot when not in use. Beneath the settee there is lined stowage plus the gas locker, while a lazarette the other side of the central engine hatch provides plenty more storage.

The 'wheelhouse' portion of the cockpit is well protected by coamings, a good high screen and an easy-to-fold-away canopy. As with practically every Nimbus ever built, the fore part of the U-dinette flips over to face the direction of travel and there is room for two here to lend a hand with the watch-keeping. Pilot books and back-up charts can be squirreled away under the Perspex covered coaming, while a false bottom to the under seat storage gives access to the batteries.

Across the way the galley might not be large but it has a two burner hob and the benefit of a proper oven, which is a great a boon on a 30-footer. There is also

Design & Build

Nimbus has featured a 30-footer in the Nova line-up for some time now, but while the original has a more conventional sportscruiser layout this new 'S' model — based on the same planing hull — shakes things up a bit. Firstly, it's unusual as it's a hybrid between a walkaround and a sportscruiser, which makes for an interesting layout. It also has a 'soft' transom made up of three sections of removeable railings that can be completely taken away to reveal a huge all-in-one cockpit and the bathing platform area. This is great for extra space and watersports, as it is all on one level, but with no hint of a lip or gunwale you feel there is a possibility that you might, inadvertently, end up with wash hopping aboard.

Move further forward and the main cockpit area towards the helm can be battened down from above to make a canvas-topped wheelhouse, complete with dinette and galley. Hiking the galley up here has freed up more space below and while the original 'R' model has a very grand cuddy, this layout has two separate cabins with a toilet compartment and screened off shower stall.

The finish is typically Nimbus with plenty of smartly turned out mahogany woodwork and

Design & Build

All this packed into 30-foot, it should be pokey but it's not



mouldings which are all nicely finished. And, as ever, plenty of detail is worked into both, with lined lockers and handholds everywhere, plus some cleverly worked in stowage.

“The steering is as easy going as the ride”



FACT FILE
Nimbus 30 Nova S
LOA: 29ft 8in
(9.05m)
PRICE: from
£144,017
TOP SPEED:
31 knots



Soft-top wheelhouse is compact but well packaged

a useful, dedicated crockery drawer, a godsend in any galley, which helps to keep things nice and tidy. Plus there's the odd cupboard or two for your food items, pots and pans and a neat

hide-away sink.

The decent-sized fridge is located behind you under the settee and if more general storage is needed there are plenty of lockers tucked under the dinette.

Accommodation

Two great cabins, shame about the legroom in one



Accommodation

Go down a couple of steps and you find yourself in a lobby area with a folding door through to the forecabin. This arrangement feels quite cuddly-like because of the padded backrests that border the outboard shelving.

Having said that, it easily doubles as a day cabin if you



A useful crockery drawer makes life easier

need a bit more space should the weather close-in. There's loads of lined storage, good headroom and it has a warm snug feel. The same goes for the midships cabin and again there is space to stand and dress, plus good consideration over storage. The only tight spot is when it comes to legroom across the berth, even if in length and actual sitting headroom it is fine.

The good-sized toilet compartment enjoys some mahogany woodwork to lift the usual

clinical white mouldings. Surprisingly, on a boat of this size, Nimbus has managed to work-in a shower screen round the toilet area to save the whole compartment from getting splashed. And there are no complaints over storing wash bags and toiletries in here either.

Exterior

A clever layout with plenty of space come rain or shine



Engine Options & Access

Our test boat sported the less potent of the two Volvo installations offered: a single D4 rated to 260hp which gave an easy 30 knots. But if you need that bit extra then a D6 310hp option is also available.

Access is straightforward with a sizeable hatch to the rear of the cockpit lifting on gas struts so that most of the engine is exposed. If something needs a closer look then it is an easy hop down onto the tread plate where the whole unit can be accessed, while the two main DIY service points — the raw water strainer and fuel filter — are

Engine Options & Access

Tidy installation, perfect hp and easy access



mounted on the forward bulkhead, making them easy to get to. We liked how the engine bay is lined with an easy to clean moulding and that most surfaces are also fitted with sound insulation.

Performance & Handling

The 'right sort of horsepower' is an important consideration when buying new as it comes at a considerable cost, so there is no point in letting large amounts go to waste. However, on the other hand, it is equally important not to run the other way, as no one likes a sluggish boat. You certainly won't find the latter problem with the D4, the hull easing into planing mode without a



Plenty of room in the front of the engine bay



Wooden chair and handy locker for extra furniture



A roomy safe foredeck with a useful forward hatch



Remove panels and fenders and voilà — a huge deck!

moment's fuss, and while it is happy to quickly run to its full throttle 31 knots it doesn't resent a more tentative approach either. And although we would like to suggest that you opt for 24 knots at a laid-back 3000rpm the temptation is certainly there to keep things cranked up.

The steering is as easy going as the ride, responding smartly as you'd expect from a stern-drive boat but without anything quirky to catch you off-guard. The sea-state on test was anything but taxing so we made what we could

of the wake pushed up by the much larger Broom photo boat, but again we couldn't find anything to worry us. In fact, the landings were commendably soft given that this is a reasonably beamy craft, plus the sprayrails did a good job of chopping down unwanted spray.

The one thing you do have to watch, though, is slowing down, as that clear-through bathing platform looks like it could ship a bit of water into the one-level cockpit. However, we pleased to say we didn't find it a problem.



The cuddly-like forecabin scores highly as a day cabin



No shortage of stowage and the detailing is high quality



Good headroom in the midships cabin



Wood trim lifts the white GRP



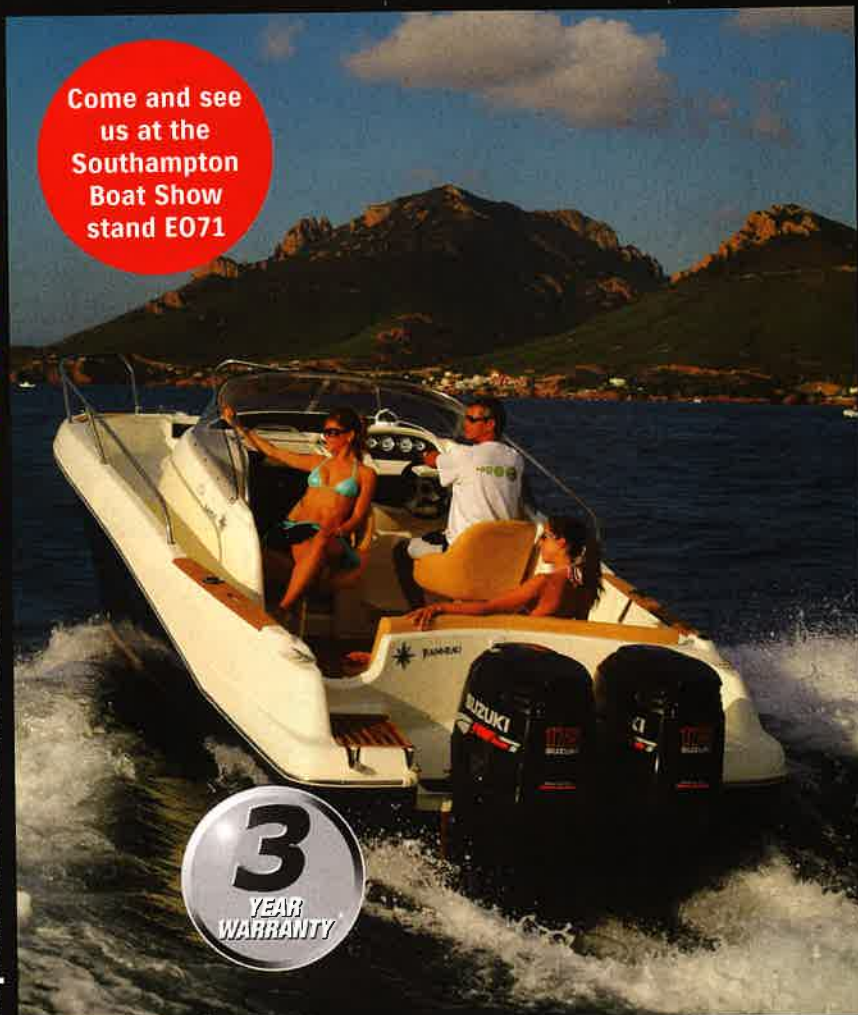
With the Volvo Penta D4 engine the Nimbus offers spirited and dynamic performance

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BOAT REPORT

NIMBUS 30 NOVA S

The skipper is well catered for, right through from the adjustable bucket seat — complete with lifting squab and a clever footrest — to the considered layout of the console which

Performance & Handling

Runs well and everyone can find a comfortable spot



incorporates a ready-fitted Raymarine C80 plotter. The remainder of the switches, gauges and essential controls arc around this and the suede covered wheel, ensuring that everything is just a fingertip away.

Specification & Value

Practically anything borne out of Scandinavia comes at something of a premium but, more often than not, you get a product that reflects this and Nimbus are no exception. However, what is always particularly gratifying about this marque is not so much the good, solid level of fitout and the practical nature of things, but the feeling that someone has honed every detail and utilised every bit of space so that it works the best it can.

We also liked the fact that the bow thruster, teak decking, full canopy arrangement (which includes a full extension piece over the rear

Specification & Value

Pricey, but a thoughtful design and good spec



cockpit) and the electronics are all inclusive. This leaves just the heating to figure in if needed and, of course, a coloured gelcoat (and who wouldn't opt for that?)

Verdict

There are designs that look clever, and there are those that are clever, and rather happily, we are pleased to report that this 30-footer is both. The asymmetric walkaround works well, as does the well protected soft-top wheelhouse. The only reservation is down to the quirky transom opening. While this spacious aft cockpit is a great feature for some, it might worry others.

8/10

MBM rating



Nimbus 30 Nova S technical data

specifications

BUILD	GRP
RCD	B
LENGTH OVERALL	29ft 8in (9.05m)
HULL LENGTH	27ft 2in (8.30m)
BEAM	10ft 1in (3.10m)
DRAUGHT	2ft 10in (0.88m)
DISPLACEMENT	4.5 tonnes
FUEL CAPACITY	66gal (300lt)
WATER CAPACITY	29gal (130lt)

key dimensions

WIDTH OF STARBOARD SIDEDECK	11in (28cm)
HEADROOM IN CABIN	6ft 2in (1.88m)
FORECABIN BERTH	6ft 1in x 2ft 6in (1.88 x 0.76m)
MIDSHIPS CABIN	7ft 0in x 4ft 4in (2.13 x 1.32m)

performance

Engines	single Volvo Penta D4 260hp diesels
Configuration	4cyl, 3.7lt, 2600rpm @ 3500rpm
conditions	wind SW'ly, Force 3, sea calm
Load	fuel 75% water 50% crew 2

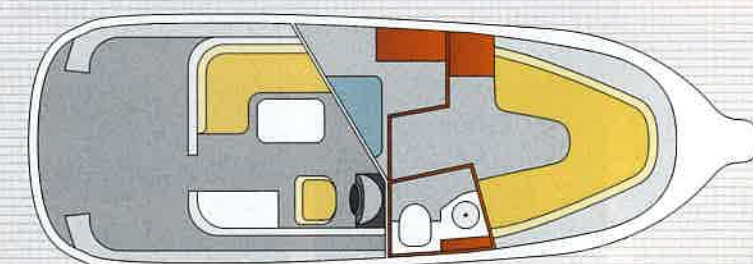
Rpm	knots	gph	lph	mpg	range	noise
2600	18.5	5.1	23	3.62	192	72
2800	21.2	6.2	28	3.42	181	73
3000	24.3	7.3	33	3.33	176	74
3400	29.2	10.5	48	2.78	147	75
3600	31.1	11.5	52	2.70	143	76

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

prices

STANDARD BOAT with a Volvo Penta 260hp diesel	inc VAT £144,017
BOW-THRUSTER	standard
TEAK DECKING	standard
CANOPY	standard
PLOTTER & VHF	standard
COLOURED HULL	£1,683
HEATING	£2,644

BOAT AS TESTED £148,344



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