

Broom 430

Broom launched its 430 at Düsseldorf in January. Getting aboard is a first for Nick Burnham in more ways than one

THE LOWDOWN



When it comes to crossing the Channel for the first time there is no finer way to do it than aboard Broom's new 430

SO GOOD

- Low side decks for easy access
- Superb quality
- Fantastic interior volume

NO GOOD

- Adjustable helm seats not standard
- No helm footrest
- Engineer room access slightly compromised

CONTACT

broomboats.com

While I was heading along the coast road between Torquay and Teignmouth late on Sunday afternoon, rain sheeting diagonally across the windscreen, a glance out to sea revealed a disquieting sight: four tankers sheltering close inshore from a turbulent English Channel.

Disquieting because I was en route to Southampton to rendezvous with the Broom 430 I last saw at the Düsseldorf boat show – for a trip across the Channel.

I've done a lot of boating over the last quarter century: I've burned up Lake Erie in the original 'Miami Vice' Scarab; I've got a Levi Corsair so airborne that the props were dry before we landed again; I've cruised into the Cannes boat show aboard a 95ft Ferretti superyacht, defied death in a severe gale in a Boston Whaler Conquest 28 and cruised the Florida Intercoastal aboard a collection of brand new Sea Rays.

But I've never pointed a boat south from the UK and kept going until I hit something solid. My Broom delivery trip, then, was a baptism – and I'd rather it wasn't by fire.

Fortunately, as forecast, the wind dropped by the following morning and a couple of tides up and down the Channel had removed the worst of the aquatic mountain ranges. As we brim the boat on the Itchen the sun even threatens to break through. This trip may not live up to my worst fears after all.

Certainly I've picked the right tool for the job. Based on the Broom 425 but brought bang up to date, the 430 is big, solid and confidence-inspiring. It's a very different layout to typical generic early 40ft flybridge craft. It is typically Broom though, with an aft cabin layout; the helm

positioned on the aft deck rather than having a flybridge strapped to the saloon roof. You lose a little exterior space this way, but the gains are manifold. Deep sides compared to a flybridge, a large protective wrap-around windscreen, and the crew grouped together on one level rather than split between cockpit and up top. It makes for a very protected outside helm, augmented on our test boat by a full-length GRP hardtop complete with gullwing opening

“The 430 is big, solid and confidence-inspiring”

hatches above the helm and a large electric sunroof back aft over the dinette that opens forwards at the touch of a button. The disadvantage of aft cabin boats is often very high topsides, but Broom has swept these down so that it's easy to step off onto a pontoon amidships. There are even gates built into the rails.

Mid-morning, with tanks brimmed and a fridge full of lunchtime goodies, we set off. I'm in good hands; Ben Dandridge, an experienced delivery skipper and instructor, is in charge. Greg Houlston, Broom's sales and commercial manager, is also with us, as is Graham Warren, the design director who oversaw the 430 project. Even Nick Rice, MD of Broom's Jersey dealer Quay Boat Sales, is along for the ride. If it all goes wrong I've got plenty of people to blame!

But there's no hint of that as we sweep majestically down Southampton Water, jink right then left around the Isle of Wight, and head out into the Channel proper.

As the Needles fade into the mist astern, the flat calm of the Solent is replaced by a long low gentle swell, and with the throttles set at 3000rpm the twin shaftdrive Volvo Penta D6-370 motors are pushing us along at 20

knots. Well aware of how chilly it can get at sea, I've dressed accordingly. Long-sleeved T-shirt, shirt, pullover and of course my yellow jacket. Greg is wearing jeans and a short-sleeved polo shirt. Greg has it right. This is the crucial difference of the Broom layout compared to generic flybridge boats. With the gap between the high screens and the hard top in-filled with clear canopies, the cockpit is well protected and warm, something you're unlikely to achieve with a

conventional flybridge boat. It means we can enjoy being outside without having to suffer wind chill.

I'm used to following a cross-Channel track on aircraft VDUs; unsurprisingly, at roughly five percent of the velocity the action happens rather slower. So slowly, in fact, that to begin with I wonder whether the chartplotter is broken. But inexorably the marker plotting our position creeps across the glass, and by 2pm we're scoffing sandwiches (and Graham my

crisps!) mid-Channel. With no autopilot yet installed, we're taking the helm in shifts. I'm always moaning about fixed helm seats but there are no such complaints here. They are adjustable for reach, rake and height, and it's easy to obtain a comfortable position. The only thing missing is a decent foot brace – there's a false section that drops in place to raise the floor level, but it needs a proper angled bar.

There's excitement at 3pm as “foreign” soil is glimpsed >>>



The well-protected helm...



...is on the same level as the cockpit



The aft dinette...



...converts to a sunpad



Spacious main saloon



Day toilet en suite to guest cabin



Extended saloon with chaise longue



Modern light galley



Fold-down dressing table in master cabin



Athwartships bed takes advantage of view from large transom

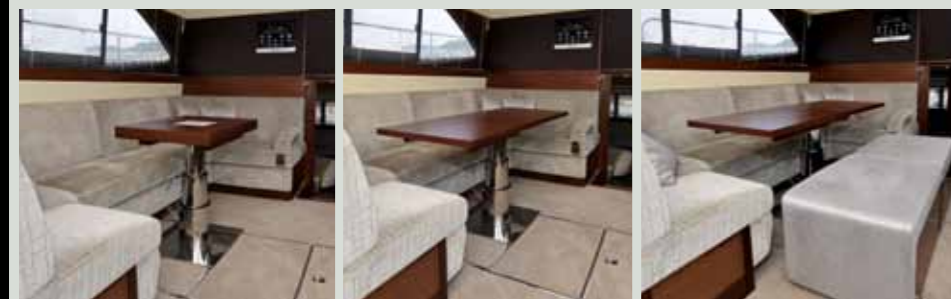


Scissor berths create two singles or a double



Engines accessed via lifting steps

IT'S IN THE DETAIL



Broom has been criticised in the past for being a little dated, but this latest model is the riposte. The interior is a world of sharp walnut cabinetry, contemporary fabrics and smooth well-integrated linings. It's the same story outside where flush glazing graces the superstructure and large hull windows are let into the transom. The hull is a stunning silver-grey, the dash has flush illuminated switch-gear and the cockpit seating is modern and neatly finished.



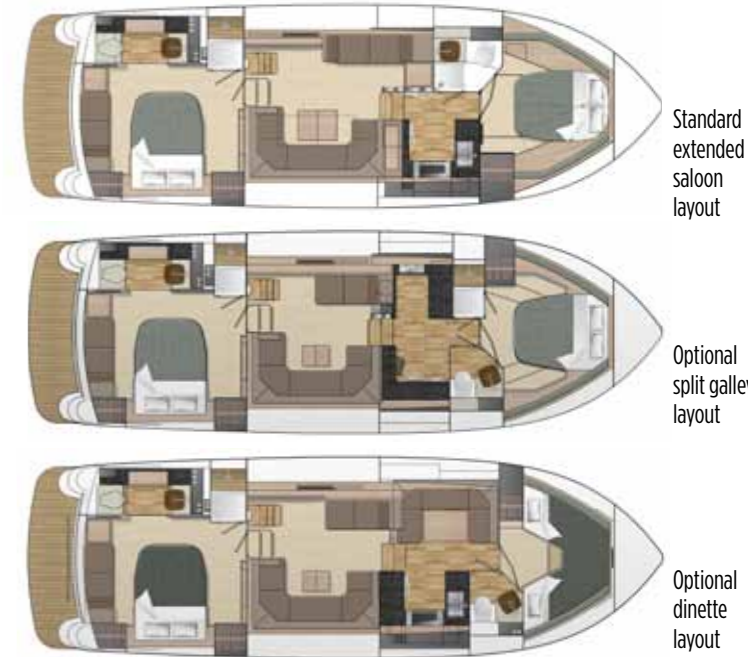
through the mist - Alderney is off the starboard bow. Greg is at the helm as we enter the Alderney Race, a notorious section of often turbulent water caused by fast-flowing tidal streams and a rocky seabed. The 430 has a semi-displacement hull rather than full planing, a concept known for its seakeeping (most pilot boats are semi-displacement) but also for producing a wet ride as it shoulders through waves rather than bouncing over them. Throttled back to 19 knots the 430 demonstrates the former admirably, steadfastly picking its way through the short sharp chop without slamming, yet manages to avoid the latter. There's plenty of water thrown about, but it goes outwards rather than upwards, the wipers barely required.

By 5pm we've given the low-lying La Corbière lighthouse at the southwesterly tip of Jersey a wide berth and run up the short length of south coast to St Helier. It's high water, allowing us to clear the sill with ease and slip quietly into Jersey marina.

With an evening flight booked, there's just time to examine the interior. In terms of layout it's classic Broom, with a palatial master cabin back aft complete with split en suite, and a guest cabin forward with scissor berths giving the option of two singles or a double and en suite access to the generous day toilet. The galley is opposite the day toilet on our test boat, but there is a variety of layouts available, including the option of a lower dinette or third cabin. Dividing these two areas is the raised

saloon which takes advantage of the protected aft helm by shunning an interior helm position, offering instead a comfortable chaise longue opposite the large dinette, the base of which can be used as two stools to augment dining when the table is unfolded to its full size.

The layout may be classic Broom but the finish is bang up to date. Inspired concealed lighting adds warmth, cabinetry is sharply styled, and there's some great detailing in areas such as the fold-down dressing table in the master cabin. While the look might be brand new, the quality is everything we expect from Broom, solidly crafted and feeling as though it will last a lifetime.



SPECS

Build	GRP
RCD	B
LOA	43ft 3in (13.2m)
Beam	13ft 11in (4.24m)
Fuel capacity	286 gal (1300lt)
Engines	Twin Volvo Penta D6-370 370hp shaftdrive diesel
Cruising speed	20 knots
Maximum speed	25 knots
Price	£430,000 inc VAT

VERDICT

A serious cruising boat and the perfect cross-Channel companion

8/10