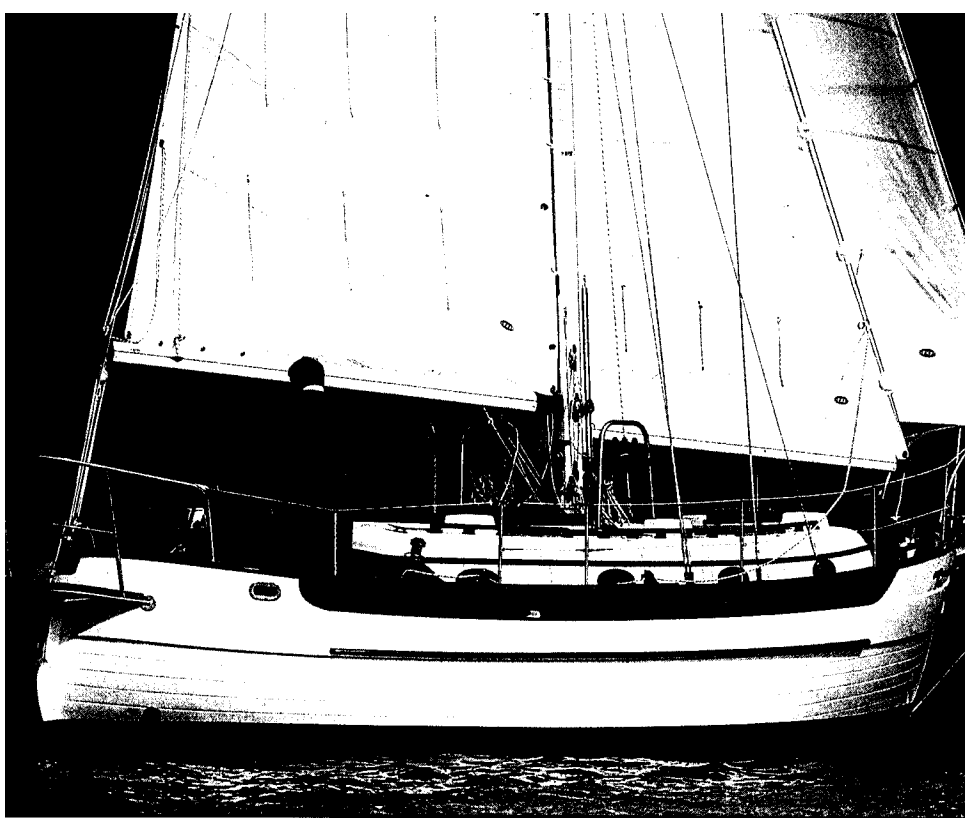


# On board\_\_\_\_\_



The deck gear and layout is traditional. One only hopes never to want to fit another deck hatch.

Photographs by Patrick Roach



## Hans Christian 33

**Finished with all the opulence of a 1920s classic, this is a yacht which will stand out in a crowd**

**T**AIWAN HAS MADE major inroads into the US boatbuilding market over the last 10 years, and one company with a higher profile than most is the Hans Christian organisation, which builds a series of traditional, moderately heavy displacement double-enders. The boats have enjoyed steady demand over the years, but now the strength of the pound sterling against the US dollar has meant that the market has suddenly widened in this country.

The Hans Christian 33 is the smallest in the range. Introduced in 1983 and with 138 built, she has proved very popular. The dominant feature in the Hans Christian's design, and particularly fitting-out, is tradition-- the builders state that aesthetic character is as important as practical qualities.

Items and features not seen aboard production yachts for 30 years resurface on the Hans Christians -- brass and leather-bound gallows, pinrails, chromed dorade cowl and wooden skylights, not to mention a bulwark nearly a foot high surrounding the deck.

Combined with a wealth of chunky varnished teak (decks are laid, of course), plus extensive use of custom-made bronze hardware, the impression on the exterior is of the ideal safe, long-distance cruiser as defined by Hiscock, but 25 years ago. The modern-thinking yachtsman would argue that things have come a long way since then.

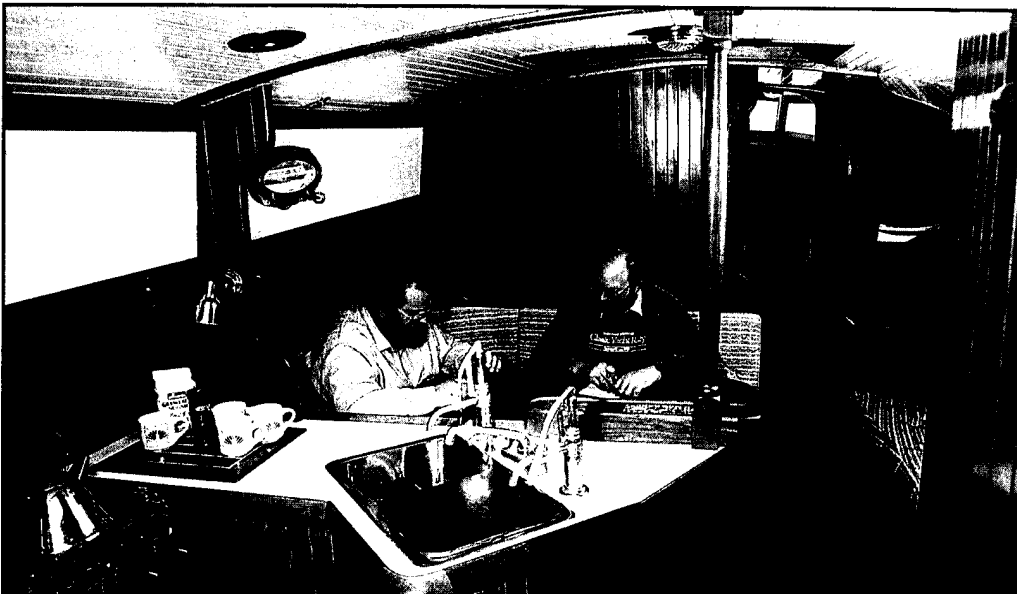
The design of the HC33 is by Harwood Ives and is a blend of traditional and

modern, aiming to achieve the best of both worlds. The keel is set a long way aft, with the rudder fully supported. The hull is, in fact, quite shallow with a hard turn to the bilge (giving significant form stability) and surprisingly fiat run aft. The ends are full and overhangs minimal, offering good waterline length and therefore potential speed. This hull is topped by a generous cutter sailplan.

### Construction

The construction of the Hans Christians is interesting in that they are moulded and the interiors fitted out in Taiwan, but the remaining 40 per cent of the building and

**View from the companionway, looking down on the panelled, all-varnished, saloon and generous galley**



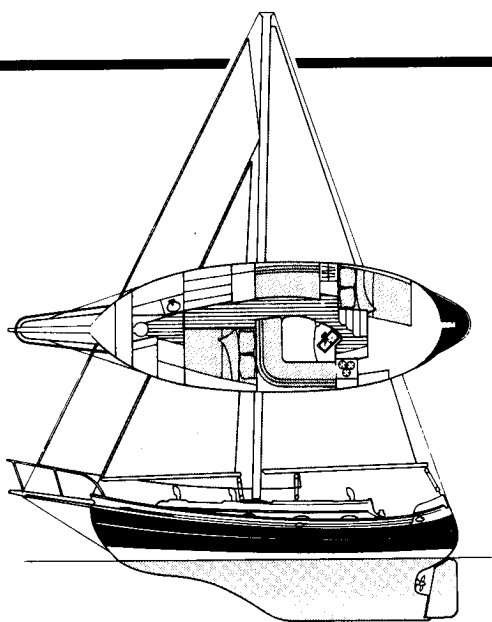
commissioning takes place in the agents' country. Needless to say, to protect their reputation, Hans Christian choose their agents carefully and building is supervised closely.

Maxwell International are the UK importers of the Hans Christian range, and the yacht is fitted out by Elephant Boatyard at Bursledon, with Spencers dealing with all rigging work.

The hull and deck of the HC33 are a solid laminate, the bulwark join being filled with resin and capped with teak. The bulwarks are also skinned with teak. The deck is overlaid as standard, and further teak strips are laid into recesses in the moulding on the coachroof. The yacht felt very substantial throughout.

### Below decks

Going below from the tongue and grooved panelled cockpit, one begins to realise the amount of work that goes into the HC33's



construction (neither can one ignore the prospect of maintaining it in the future). Nowhere is there a plain sheet of varnished plywood, all bulkheads and furniture are beautifully finished in a narrow tongue and groove effect (in fact each piece is individually screwed in place), which gives a superb traditional atmosphere. One could never criticise the visual finish -- it is exemplary throughout -- but delving a little deeper behind lockers and linings reveals that these standards are not maintained throughout.

All the oval-shaped opening ports are polished bronze, and the traditional skylight, with grills, offers just the correct amount of natural lighting.

Refreshingly, Hans Christian have started with a clean sheet when it comes to the accommodation plan, and the combination of generous beam plus a short (but correspondingly wide) cockpit has resulted in very spacious living quarters. Inevitably, with a company who cut their teeth on larger boats (with 38-, 43- and 43-footers), they have scaled down many of the features from her bigger sisters, in particular the enormous double berth forward. The only drawback to this is a saloon which isn't large by any standards, with a fixed table which will only seat four people, plus two more eating on their laps.

The accommodation is otherwise spacious, the most striking feature (other than

the traditional wood finish) being the enormous double berth forward, measuring some 66in wide. The accommodation is almost open-plan, and this comfortable double berth is situated adjacent to a passageway rather than in a cabin of its own. Again, the aftercabin has no door or privacy.

With full ends and long waterline, the forecabin is spaciouly laid out as a heads with separate shower compartment and marble basin. With the inevitable damp of the shower, plus the motion in a fore-situated heads, one might question the practicality of elaborate teak cabinetry in this area.

Stowage throughout the boat is very good indeed (although it tends to be in cavernous areas that need dividing up), and this was particularly so in the galley.

The galley will please most cooks, with plenty of work surfaces, large twin sinks, and ventilation from two opening ports. The icebox is better than most we see, with the sensible alternative of either top or side openings.

The aftercabin has a berth which, at 44in wide, doesn't quite make a double but is certainly a wide and comfortable single extending under the cockpit.

## On deck

On deck, the Hans Christian bristles with tradition and strength. The bulwark gives the deck a purposeful feeling, with meaty over-sized stanchions supported by two bulwark strongpoints. The pushpit wraps around a teak grating platform/bumpkin, and the pulpit offers rails for the bowsprit (which conforms to the deep-sea thinking of following the sheerline rather than being parallel to the waterline). The bumpkin platform and bowsprit take the overall length up to 41 ft (12.6m); no problem when you're heading off for blue waters, but likely to be expensive in marinas when home waters cruising.

We found the foredeck cluttered, partly because of the staysail boom which divided its already small area in half, and secondly by a heavy varnished rope box which claimed a lot of deck space. These, combined with massive mooring bits and the windlass, made the foredeck an uneasy working place. This was in contrast to the

excellent design and layout of the ground tackle, the 45 lb CQR self-stowing on an enormous bronze bow roller alongside the bowsprit.

## Under sail

Our sailing trials of the Hans Christian 33 were frustrated by light and variable winds, in which we didn't think she'd excel. The yacht gives the outward impression of weight, power and seaworthiness, and we had somehow expected that she would need a breeze to get her moving well.

However, setting the mainsail, boomed staysail and No 1 headsail, she slipped along making 3 knots in 5 knots of true wind easily when closehailed, tacking through 95 degrees. Cracking off, with the apparent wind dropping, she still maintained 3 knots. With the wind up a smidgin to 8 knots true, she made a steady 4.4 knots on a reach. Later, the wind dropped to a barely discernible 2-3 knots but, surprisingly, she still ghosted along quite contentedly. The steering has a good deal of weight in it, but it is in the system itself (a bronze-pedestalled cable system fabricated by the Taiwanese builders) rather than any weather or lee helm.

## Under power

Under power, the Hans Christian cruises at 6-6 knots, making 7 knots fiat out. The pronounced cutaway forefoot makes itself felt in the yacht's manoeuvrability under power, which is very good indeed, spinning on a sixpence at slow speed. The big rudder and big propeller immediately in front of it makes turning easy with a swift jab ahead, helped by the yacht's inherent ability to carry her way.

## Conclusions

It is an interesting fact that the majority of Hans Christian class yachts to be bought here very soon head off on long voyages. In this day and age of plastic consumerism, the Hans Christian stands out as a monument to traditional values and looks. She is not a particularly practical boat -- mooring charges will be expensive and maintenance a nightmare if allowed to slip. But when it comes to pride of ownership, clearly Hans Christian have cornered a market where traditional aesthetics are more important than boring practicality. GP

## Specifications

LOA	12.6m	(41ft)
LOD	10.0m	(32ft 9in)
LWL	9.0m	(29ft 2in)
Beam	3.6m	(11ft 8in)
Draught	1.7m	(5ft 6in)
Displacement	8,361kg	(18,400 lb)
Ballast	3,090kg	(6,800 lb)
Engine	Yanmar 3QM30 30hp diesel	
Designer	Harwood Ives	
Builder	Hans Christian Yachts Inc	

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