



Island Packet 460: Best in Show

By returning to a time-tested concept and refining it to the highest degree, the Island Packet 460 earned top honors as *Cruising World's* 2009 Domestic Boat of the Year. **BY HERB McCORMICK**

OVER THE LAST SEVERAL YEARS, NAVAL architect Bob Johnson and his fellow craftsmen at Florida's Island Packet Yachts have made some interesting choices when introducing new models to the line. For example, the lines, deck layouts, and accommodation plans for the IP 465 and 485, respectively, all developed around the notion of a roomy center cockpit, while the 41-foot SP Cruiser ventured into altogether new territory as a hybrid motorsailer/trawler employing a unique enclosed deckhouse. Yes, they were distinguished boats in their own right, but they were in some ways departures from the tried-and-true aft-cockpit formula on which the company's foundation had been built.

So, perhaps unsurprisingly, when Johnson sat down to conceive a new model for 2009 (not coincidentally, the company's 30th year in business), he chose an evolutionary, rather than a revolutionary, approach. As with the highly successful IP 40, 420, and 440, the result—the Island Packet 460—is an aft-cockpit, double-stateroom/head cutter designed expressly for the comfort and requirements of two couples, which in actual practice generally means a cruising couple and their occasional guests.

If the response from the 2009 *Cruising World* Boat of the Year judging panel is any indication, Johnson and his crew absolutely knocked it out of the ballpark. For after extensive trials last fall at the U.S. Sailboat Show in Annapolis, the new IP 460 was named the magazine's 2009 Domestic Boat of the Year and Best Long-Distance Cruiser.

"Bob Johnson knows his audience, and he plays to that audience very effectively," said BOTY judge Ed Sherman of the American Boat & Yacht Council. "This is a very capable offshore cruising boat that hits its intended marks just perfectly."



LOA	48' 9"	(14.86 m.)
LWL	38' 1"	(11.61 m.)
Beam	14' 4"	(4.37 m.)
Draft	5' 0"	(1.52 m.)
Sail Area	1,148 sq. ft.	(107 sq. m.)
Ballast	12,000 lb.	(5,443 kg.)
Displacement	32,000 lb.	(14,515 kg.)
Ballast/D	.38	
D/L	259	
SA/D	18.2	
Water	260 gal.	(985 l.)
Fuel	160 gal.	(606 l.)
Mast Height	62' 0"	(18.92 m.)
Engine	75-hp. Yanmar diesel	
Designer	Bob Johnson	
Price (base)	\$570,000	

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BOTY panelist Tim Murphy concurred: "I think Bob Johnson nailed what he was aiming for in this boat."

So what, exactly, sets the IP 460 apart? Let's start with the accommodation plan and, more specifically, the forward stateroom, for if Johnson's obvious aim was to maximize the contentment and enjoyment of the owners, he certainly would need to get their primary living quarters



DOWN TO THE DETAILS

- 1 On the IP 460, an enclosed head and shower in the owner's forward stateroom were deemed best in show by one BOTY judge. The cabin also features an off-center island queen and lots of room in which to move about.
- 2 Lifeline stanchions on the 460 have been moved to the toerail, which effectively widens the side decks, reducing clutter.
- 3 The 460's self-tending staysail is flown from a Hoyt jib boom. Both the staysail and genoa have roller furling, making sail-plan adjustments easy from the cockpit.

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wraparound U-shaped galley, with its digitally controlled fridge and freezer units, big double sinks, and generous counter space and storage lockers, is equally impressive. The second stateroom and head compartment, located aft and to port, and the saloon forward, with a clever folding dining table and a settee that converts to a third double bunk, if necessary, are also well-designed and executed.

The 460's functionality and ease of operation is beyond skin deep; in fact, if the devil is in the details, this IP must've been thoroughly exorcized. Systems expert Sherman discovered a laundry list of innovations, including the fold-out engine-room door exposing the oil and fuel filters and a dedicated secondary electric fuel pump alongside an override switch to facilitate fuel-system bleeding; programmable, dual-output voltage regulators, to isolate and differentiate starting and house batteries; and a crossover battery switch right at the helm station for optimum power management. The list goes on and on.

Topside, the 460 is set up with the classic IP cutter rig, with a high-cut

yankee, a staysail on a Hoyt self-tacking boom, and a furling mainsail with vertical battens. Though certainly an aft-cockpit configuration, there's an ample aft deck for lounging (the cavernous accompanying lazarette has oodles of storage, plus space for an optional generator), and it offers access to the swim ladder and aft swim step. A dedicated propane locker has room for a pair of 10-pound bottles. The hefty teak caprail and stainless-steel handrails provide a real source of security when moving about.

With its "Full-Foil" shallow-draft keel and ample volume and displacement, the 460 fits in the moderate- to heavy-displacement category of contemporary yacht design. Yet in the final analysis, what put the boat into the winner's circle was its very reasonable performance under sail. On a pleasant Chesapeake Bay afternoon with the wind topping off at around 12 knots, the 46-footer registered speeds measured via GPS of 6.5 to 6.7 knots just slightly cracked off the breeze. Sliding off to a beam and then a broad reach, the boat still maintained about 6 knots. Given the 32,000 pounds of displacement, it was an impressive outing.

Under power, at 3,000 rpm, the boat made a solid 8 knots, but the wheel was bearish with a good amount of prop wash. Easing back to 2,400 rpm, steering was smoother at a more manageable 6.5 knots.

It's hard to criticize the 460, though the BOTY judges were unanimous in their disenchantment with the self-tacking staysail arrangement, which they felt added unnecessary clutter to a busy foredeck and obscured the view of the yankee's telltales. The staysail would be a useful tool in reefing weather, but a removable inner stay and hanked-on sail could also prove an efficient alternative. However, this criticism should be contrasted with the company's long experience utilizing similar staysails on other models.

The IP 460 comes with 10-year warranties on the hull and deck, but BOTY judge Ralph Naranjo had a further endorsement. "It's a solid boat that'll have a 30-year life before you have to concern yourself with anything," he said. In these challenging times, for the lucky owners of the winning IP 460, that's music to the ears.

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right. And, man, did he ever. The owner's cabin features an enormous island berth along with an adjacent bathroom—the term "head" does not suffice—with a shower stall that Murphy decreed "the best in the show, bar none."

Utility, of course, is every bit as important as coziness (perhaps even more so), and in that vein, two other areas of the interior layout deserve special note. To starboard, the 460's navigation station is exquisitely rendered, with a big desk; a plush, electrically controlled swing-out seat; and an expansive adjacent panel for circuits, electronics, and communications. Likewise, the