

100-POINT BOAT TEST

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NEW BOATS TRIED & TESTED

24
HOUR
BOAT TEST

Hallberg-Rassy 310

She looks like a traditional Hallberg-Rassy, steeped in tradition, but there's a revolution down below. Chris Beeson spends 24 hours aboard

With her windscreen, blue stripe, brass rubbing strake and sumptuous finish, there's no mistaking her origins, but beneath the solidly seamanlike traditions that have made Hallberg-Rassy the dream boat for *Yachting Monthly* readers, there's a revolution going on here, and tradition has little to do with it.

Hallberg-Rassy has an outstanding record of success at 31 ft. Since the Enderlein-designed Monsun 31 was launched in 1974, the yard has built over 2,150 31-footers. In that time, designs have evolved, following the modern trend away from expensive, heavy displacement, long-keeled Baltic bulldozers, towards the greater speed, comfort and control of today. But now Hallberg-Rassy is leading, not following. The 310 has no chart table.

Performance

We began our test in 20-28 knots of wind from the south. On board with me were Magnus Rassy, chief executive of Hallberg-Rassy, Peter Westfal, a sailmaker for Elvstrøm in Denmark, and YM photographer Graham Snook.

We left Ellös and beam reached west into Ellösefjorden with full jib

and a single reef in the main, making 6.2-8.2 knots with 18-28 knots of wind over the beam. Once out of the fjord's shelter and into the Skagerrak, we bore away north towards Lysekil, goose-winged gingerly on a dead run, making 6.9-8 knots with 18-22 knots of apparent wind over the stern.

After leaving Stora Kornö to port we came up onto a broad reach and headed for Smögen, thundering along at 7.2-8.7 knots with 22-27 knots of apparent wind whistling around our ears. Once out of the lee of the off-lying islands, the wind piped up still further and the waves became steeper, rolling under the port quarter. Despite a slight rumble transmitted through the tiller, she felt gloriously responsive, easily controlled and well weighted.

Tiller in hand, she seems bigger somehow, more solid, and despite the lively conditions the cockpit felt like a sanctuary. But now the 6ft waves were rolling under her broad port quarter and some quick, dramatic tiller adjustments were required to prevent broaching. That worked for a while but it ➔

After 24 hours of barnstorming sailing in winds of up to 40 knots, finally the 310 behaves like a lady, beating at 6.5 knots







The saloon is huge, with amazing light and ventilation. She has the same table as HR's 37-footer and the seaberths (inset) are enormous



Magnus prepares supper in the ingeniously redesigned galley



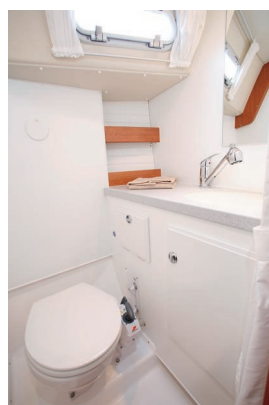
The aft cabin is big but the scupper drain (inset) isn't pretty



Except for the raw water filter, engine access is good



The chart table of the future? Do you need more?



Small heads: secure at sea, but basic fittings missing



A large, comfortable double berth forward, but there's no upper frame for the cabin door

Hallberg-Rassy 310

Key features

The helm feels glorious, views forward are great, and all sail controls are within easy reach

The open transom with acrylic washboard improves cockpit space and bathing access

The cockpit is big, dry and safe. Even in 40 knots, none of us felt the need to wear a lifejacket

Two hatches and four large, opening sideports bathe the interior with light and air

The generous sailplan is easily controlled and the stiff hull forgives most excesses

Great handrails, solid toerails and split shroud bases make moving forward easy

100-POINT BOAT TEST



In November, Smögen was cold, wet and desolate but with the hatches shut and the heating on, the 310 was warm and snug with four onboard

was only a matter of time before we discovered the heel at which the rudder lost its grip. It's about 30°. She goes gently and gives you plenty of warning. With the wind now clocking in the 40s, we furled the jib and bowled along on a deep reach, making 6.7-10 knots under single reefed main before dropping the sail and motoring the last mile along the well-sheltered inside track towards our destination.

Next morning the sun rose gloriously over Smögen. With the wind in the west and still clocking in the 20s, we beam-reached south with full jib and double-reefed main, making 7.1-9.1 knots, surfing to 9.9 knots on 6ft swells, in 21-28 knots of apparent wind.

Once inside the islands west of Salto, we brought her up to 40-60° and made 6.9-7.6 knots, leaning into the 22-28 knots of apparent wind. Back in the shelter of Ellösefjorden, we restored her to full sail to see how she went upwind. With a gusty 16-20 knots of apparent wind she made 5.6-6.5 knots upwind at 30-32° to the breeze, which felt a little pedestrian after the rollercoaster ride we'd enjoyed, but is entirely respectable for a 31-footer.

Design

She's a good looking boat. The sheerline sweeps gracefully up to the bow, improving volume below the foredeck and softening the look of the coachroof. There's a fine entry at the stem, and the bow is hollow before filling out to maximum beam at the companionway. Below the waterline, sections forward of the lead fin keel are rounded for smoother upwind performance and the run flattens

and 22.6 for the Elan 310. She's neither rocking horse nor rocket ship. It's also worth noting that she has the longest waterline length at 28.92ft, which will boost speed, particularly when she's heeled.

Construction

The hull is hand-laid GRP, with a closed cell Divinycell core above the waterline, with solid laminate below. The deck is also cored, but has solid laminate in load-bearing areas. Hull

'She's neither rocking horse nor rocket ship and her long waterline length will boost speed'

aft. Coamings and windscreens enclose the cockpit, creating a secure feeling and keeping you dry.

She's the stiffest new 31-footer with a ballast ratio of 38.6 – great for shorthanding. The next nearest is the J/97 at 35 and the average is in the mid-20s. She displaces more than most but has the canvas to compensate, with a sail area-displacement ratio of 18, compared to 16.2 for the Legend 31, 18.6 for the Océanis 31 – near average –

and deck are laminated together.

Below the mast base, a steel beam runs down to the stiffening grid beneath the cabin sole. The lead keel is attached to the keel stub by nine M20 stainless steel bolts and self-aligning bearings connect the stainless steel rudder stock to the cockpit and hull. Electric cabling is ducted where possible and large limber holes drain bilge water into the keel stub. Below the waterline, all hoses have double clips.

Sailplan

She has a fractional, deck-stepped rig by Seldén, with two sets of sweptback spreaders. Sail area is split fairly evenly between the main and non-overlapping jib, with a recessed Furler furler, so balance is fairly easily achieved and tacking is simple. The split backstay has a 24:1 tensioning system and the mainsheet is 6:1, on a cockpit-wide 4:1 traveller, making adjustment of both mainsail and rig tension very comfortable.

Deck layout

All control lines, including the genoa car tweekers, lead aft, either to the Lewmar 16 halyard winches or the Lewmar 40 primaries. The open transom, sealed at sea with a drop-in acrylic washboard with cutaway drains, works very well with an S-shaped tiller. With no transom coaming you get huge 6ft 7in long cockpit seats and great access to the bathing platform.

Above the huge cockpit locker to starboard, there's another simple idea we liked – the nav light switches are built into the coaming, beside the autopilot and engine controls. You don't have to yell below to get them turned on. ➔

Had we needed to move forward, there's an excellent handrail on the side screen, handrails running the length of the coachroof and deep, teak-capped toerails. We also liked the bronze scupper drains that empty any shipped water below the boot top to prevent streaky topsides. Moving forward, between the cap shrouds outboard and the genoa tracks and lower shrouds inboard, is simple and secure.

At the bow there's a deep anchor locker with rubber seals but a windlass would need to be mounted on deck. That might well be necessary anyway as there's no fairlead from the bow roller, offset to starboard, to either cleat. To fly offwind sails, there are stainless steel fittings to port for a bowsprit.

Living below

Hallberg-Rassy has taken a completely fresh approach to use of space with the 310. The designers turned the L-shaped galley 90° clockwise to open up that corner of the saloon and moved the heads forward to open up the space still further. Also, as Magnus's research revealed, most coastal cruisers do little if any paper chartwork, so why bother with a chart table?

The result is a huge saloon with 6ft headroom throughout. It's 10cm (4in) longer than the 342 saloon and has the same table as the 372. Light cascades through the two hatches and all the sideports open too, so ventilation is excellent. At night, the saloon is lit by four reading lights and six saloon

halogens on dimmers, thanks to the CAN bus wiring system.

Seat backs lift to create two settee berths 6ft 5in long and 2ft 8in wide, each with its own reading light behind the seat backs. There's stowage below the settees, aft of the water tank and engine battery to port and fuel tank to starboard, with further stowage in lockers outboard, in shelves and in the locker below the saloon's vanity table.

The flow from galley to saloon table is much easier and there's bracing against the companionway steps while working in the galley. Stowage is very good, there's a dedicated galley light and two

but there's no bracket for the showerhead, no towel hook and no loo roll holder. Apart from two tiny shelves outboard, all the storage is in two lockers below the sink.

There's 5ft 11in headroom and a 6ft 5in by 5ft 6in double berth in the forecabin, masses of stowage below the berth, good lighting and ventilation but the forecabin door has no upper frame, which compromises privacy. There's a locker and fiddled shelves inside the forecabin, but the hanging locker is outside the cabin – not ideal.

Under power

Our test boat had a 22hp Yanmar engine driving a three-blade Gori prop through a saildrive – the standard spec is two-blade. We made two runs, one with the prop

in standard configuration, the next in overdrive, engaged by slipping the throttle into reverse while moving forward, then engaging forward again while still making headway. Magnus claims that, with a bigger tank, a more efficient high torque engine, the Gori prop's overdrive and a more easily driven hull, the 310 has 80 per cent greater range than the old 31.

She cruises at 2,300rpm, making 5 knots in standard mode or 5.9 in overdrive. In standard mode she delivered 6.2 knots at 3,200rpm and flat out in standard was 3,700rpm, making 6.9 knots. In overdrive, she revved at 3,200rpm flat out, making 7.2 knots, 0.7 knots more speed for the same revs. ▲

'As most coastal cruisers do little if any paper chartwork, why bother with a chart table?'

opening ports for ventilation.

In the aft cabin there's a 6ft 6in by 4ft 6in double berth and two opening ports – the aft facing one is optional. Stowage is adequate in a hanging locker to port and in a fiddled shelf outboard. The studded deckhead is just high enough to sit without banging your head and it would be easier to get at the systems and ventilated stowage below the berth if the mattress was two-piece instead of one.

The heads is adequate for a 31-footer but comparison with the giant saloon makes it feel quite confined – or secure, depending on your view. Light and ventilation are good. The lipped sink, inset space for toes below the lockers and frosted glass hatch are nice touches



With no fairlead from bow roller to cleat, she needs a deck windlass



Moving forward is easy, with great toerails and grabrails



The flush Lewmar hatches light up the saloon and ventilate well

YM's 100-POINT RESULTS

Take a **360°** tour of the Hallberg-Rassy 310 at www.yachtingmonthly.com

UNDER SAIL

PERFORMANCE

We took her to the edge of – then beyond – her comfort zone and were very impressed. On every point of sail she was quick and well behaved, until we beasted her into broaching. Even then, her stiffness made that an altogether less dramatic affair than it would have been aboard most other 31-footers.

9_{/10}

AT THE HELM

Full marks, as it was a non-HR component that caused the tiller failure. She felt lively and precise, with great feedback through the tiller. Views forward were very good, and primary winches, genoa car tweekers, mainsheet, traveller and backstay were all within reach. Having the nav light switches to hand capped it.

10_{/10}

ON DECK

DECK LAYOUT

She loses one mark because off the wind, with the traveller eased right out, the mainsheet drapes over the coamings' gelcoat and flattens the aft end of the sprayhood, and another because there's no fairlead between the bow roller and the cleat, so you'd need a windlass and it would have to be fitted on deck. Otherwise excellent.

8_{/10}

SAILPLAN

Main and jib were easily managed, which is quite something in our test conditions. Finding the right balance was simple and we were able to make any tweaks from the cockpit. The breeze meant we didn't get to play with any offwind sails but the setup looked pretty standard, so no reason to suppose it wouldn't work well.

10_{/10}

BUILD

DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION

Aesthetically, the coachroof forward seems a touch high from some angles (due to the headroom below) but the trade-off seems perfectly judged. She's quick, pretty and the space below is remarkable in a yacht of this size. Construction is up to the standards you would expect of Hallberg-Rassy.

10_{/10}

MAINTENANCE

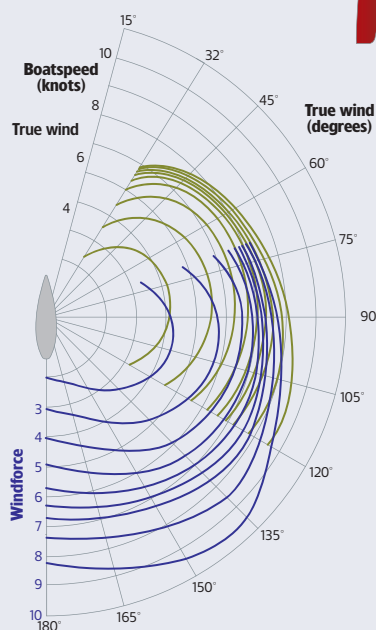
With the exception of the raw water filter, which involves a stretch, access to the engine and associated systems is excellent, via the companionway steps, ventilated wooden panels below the aft berth and a panel in the galley. You can see the bilge, keelbolts and transducers through panels in the sole.

9_{/10}

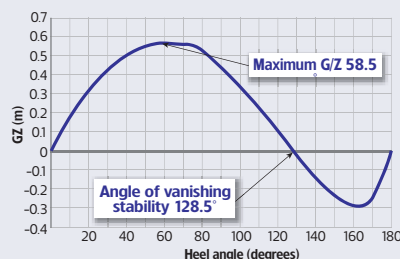
TECHNICAL

Hallberg-Rassy 310

- **Price** €136,123 (c. £118,800)
As seen: €160,473 (c. £139,900)
- **LOA** 9.5m (31ft 2in)
- **LWL** 8.8m (28ft 11in)
- **Beam** 3.18m (10ft 5in)
- **Draught** 1.8m (5ft 11in)
- **Displacement** 4,350kg (9,590 lb)
- **Ballast** 1,680kg (3,700 lb)
- **Sail area** 47.2m² (508sq ft)
- **Engine** 22hp
- **Diesel** 100 lit (22 gal)
- **Water** 200 lit (44 gal)
- **Displ/length** 176.82 (Light-displacement racer)



- **Sail area/displ** 18.01 (Cruiser-racer)
- **Ballast ratio (%)** 38.6
- **RCD category** A
- **STIX** 36.5
- **Designer** German Frers
- **Builder** Hallberg-Rassy
- **Tel** 023 8045 6069
- **Website** www.transworld-yachts.co.uk



BELOW DECK

CHART TABLE

The vanity table is big enough to keep a laptop in place and there's a power point behind the port berth, so she gets some points. Overall, I wonder if Magnus is on to something here. Grand prix racing yachts have been paper-free for years, now the chart table is disappearing too. Will the humble paper chart suffer the sextant's fate?

2_{/10}

GALLEY

Removing the galley bulkhead has really opened up the interior and there's abundant workspace with the optional sink and stove covers in place. Bracing and stowage are more than adequate. The negatives are no strut on the fridge lid, the wasted space aft of the fridge and opening the oven door obstructs the under-sink locker door.

8_{/10}

HEADS

The finish is excellent again and you'd have no trouble keeping it clean. Bracing, light and ventilation are great but it's a bit short on basic fittings. The shelving isn't much use so most of your toiletries and cleaning products would be in the lockers under the sink, which is also where you'd put the loo roll and your towel while showering.

7_{/10}

LIVING BELOW

The saloon is huge for a 31-footer. Finish, light, ventilation, water tankage and stowage are great. There are thoughtful details like the small pressurised water reservoir so the pump doesn't fire up at the slightest twitch of the tap. Both cabins are comfortable, the forecabin has better stowage but the cabin door arrangement is a bit strange.

8_{/10}

100-POINT BOAT TEST THREE ALTERNATIVE CHOICES

1 Arcona 340 £132,000

She's bigger, faster, not as well finished but a touch cheaper. The saloon's a similar size, but she has a bigger heads and a chart table.



2 Southerly 32 £140,000

A more relaxed option for long-distance cruising couples, a cinch to sail and boasting an even bigger saloon.



3 2007 Bénéteau Océanis 43 £140,000

A much more spacious option. Bags of stowage and plenty of pace, but twitchy when heeled over 20° and costlier to run.



TOTAL SCORE

This is a hugely entertaining yacht – fast and fun, spirited but secure, comfortable and capacious, impeccably built and, because of the name, sure to hold her value. The heads is a little tight and short on fittings, and the forecabin door setup is unusual – and not perfect – but these elements help to maximise the living space below, to open it up and allow light to fill it. And it works. But, what do you make of an RCD Category A yacht that has no chart table? Is Hallberg-Rassy leading the way or is this a wrong turn?

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