



Good sailing manners and sleek looks make this an attractive cruiser

## Boat Review

By Adam Cort

# Bavaria Vision 46

A bold new look for the venerable German boatbuilder

According to Bavaria, the stylish new Vision 46 is “designed, from the start, to embody the cruising sailor’s wish list.” I wasn’t paying too much attention to any wish list, though, as we cast off lines on a sunny September day to deliver the new boat from Mystic, Connecticut, to the Newport International Boat Show.

Like the Cruiser line, which Bavaria has been bringing across the Atlantic over the past couple of years, the Vision 46 is a beamy boat with plenty of lounging space aft and generous accommodations below. Some such designs don’t behave very well when they’re heeled dramatically in a heavy breeze—and the forecast was calling for squalls. But it didn’t take long to realize my concerns were unfounded. Sailing out from behind the lee of Long Island, the wind picked up to 15 and then 20 knots, with gusts of 25 knots and more. A few hours later, rounding Point Judith, we were also treated to some pretty impressive swells coming in on our starboard quarter. But the Vision 46 handled it all with ease. Check

one big box on this sailor’s wish list!

### CONSTRUCTION

The large, highly efficient Bavaria Yachtbau factory in Giebelstadt, Germany, long ago perfected the art of quality, high-volume production and this expertise is readily apparent in the Vision 46. The hull is molded in E-glass with an Airex PVC foam core in the topsides and solid glass below the waterline. A fiberglass grid is both bonded to the inside of the hull and secured by the keel bolts to provide rigidity and help support the rig loads.

The deck and house are also cored and attached to the hull with adhesive and screws on an inward-turning flange. The deck-stepped, double-spreader 19/20ths rig comes with in-mast furling as standard in the United States. Two different cast-iron keels are available: a 5ft 6in shoal keel, and a 7ft-deep fin.

### ON DECK

Topsides, the arrangement is as practical as it is comfortable. Sybarites will love the trademark Bavaria drop-down swim platform and the way the cockpit table can be lowered to bench level to create an open-air double berth. Hard-nosed sailors will appreciate the well designed twin helm stations—which include oval-shaped backrest cushions where you can wedge yourself in while on watch—and the cutouts in the hinged helm seats that allow you to swing your leg through and straddle the helm when beating.

Of particular interest is the boat’s offset companionway, with all control lines leading to a single winch to port, à la the latest generation of TP52s and the Farr 400. By moving the companionway to starboard, Bavaria was able to free up more space belowdecks for the galley and centerline sink, and streamline the topsides layout and



The L-shaped settee converts to a double berth

construction processes by eliminating a second winch. If this sounds strange, it's not. In fact, it didn't take long for me to not only get used to the arrangement, but wonder why more boats aren't put together this way.

The boat's slightly overlapping jib is easy on the crew, and all sheets run aft to the boat's twin helm stations. The main is controlled using the same double-bridle arrangement found on the Cruiser line, which takes some getting used to, but works well for controlling mainsail shape.

## ACCOMMODATIONS

Belowdecks, the boat is well finished and well laid out with a host of details that are both practical and well executed. Among my favorites are the deep centerline sinks set in a kind of "island" in the galley space; a retractable nav table that slides

down to create a nice long sea berth in the port settee; a saloon table that drops down to create a double to starboard; and excellent engine access via the companionway steps and quarterberths.

The hull ports and sizeable portlights in the curvaceous cabintrunk provide plenty of ambient light, and joinerwork is well executed. As part of the development process, Bavaria did extensive market research to find out what its customers were looking for in a cruising boat, and it shows. The island sink arrangement, for example, doesn't just put the sinks near the centerline, it gives you a great place to brace yourself when preparing meals in a seaway.

## Our Take

### PROS

- Predictable performance in heavier air
- Wealth of helpful details belowdecks
- Well laid-out helm stations

### CONS

- High topsides create plenty of windage
- Mainsheet arrangement takes some getting used to

The portside quarter-berth can be configured as either a large double for stretching out, or a pair of singles divided by a narrow aisle to provide easy access. The double berth in the owner's stateroom is not only large, but allows good access from either side. (It can be so tiresome having to climb over the foot of a large double when it's time to crash

out at the end of the day!) The two-cabin layout exchanges a second cabin aft for a truly massive storage area, capable of swallowing a vast amount of cruising gear.

## UNDER SAIL

The hulls created by the Farr Design office for the current Bavaria line display impressive manners. During our sail the boat remained controllable, even when we pushed it hard under too much canvas. As the wind started cranking up into the high teens, I could feel the helm beginning to load up, but the rudder never once lost its grip. It was more a case of the boat letting us know how it felt, telling us it was time to reef, but also giving us plenty of time to do so without scaring us in the process.

When we did roll away a bit of main, the boat promptly settled back down, as did the helm. Reaching across the swell coming in from the open Atlantic, we regularly topped 8 knots—both with the full main and a bit of a reef—and covered the 40 miles of our delivery in around five hours. Not bad for a cruiser!

## UNDER POWER

The Vision 46 did pretty much everything I asked of it while tearing around in forward and reverse in Mystic Harbor. Because this is a boat with substantial topsides, I would say the optional Dock Control system—whereby a single joystick is used to control drop-down bow and stern thrusters—is a good idea for docking shorthanded in tight spaces and a crosswind.

The boat's 55hp Volvo-Penta engine with saildrive moved us along at 6.2 knots at 2,000 rpm, despite a stiff breeze coming over the bow. Throttling up to 2,500 rpm gave us 6.9 knots of speed, with 3,000 rpm giving us a speed through the water of just under 8 knots. *A*

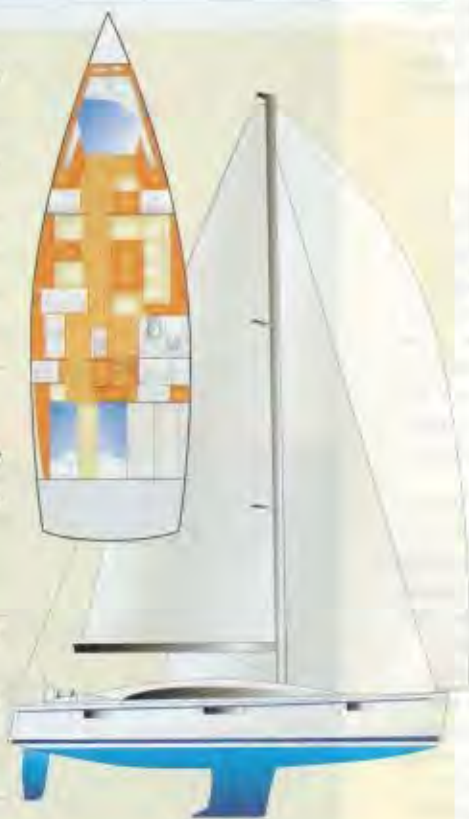
## Specifications

<b>HEADROOM</b>	6ft 7in
<b>BERTHS</b>	6ft 7in x 3ft 8in x 5ft (fwd); 6ft 7in x 6ft 6in (aft, with filler installed)
<b>LOA</b>	45ft 10in
<b>LWL</b>	42ft 2in
<b>BEAM</b>	13ft 8in
<b>DRAFT</b>	7ft 1in (std); 5ft 7in (shoal)
<b>DISPLACEMENT</b>	27,116lb
<b>BALLAST</b>	7,505 (std); 8,157 (shoal)
<b>SAIL AREA</b>	1,109 ft <sup>2</sup>
<b>FUEL/WATER/WASTE (GAL)</b>	55/153/37
<b>ENGINE</b>	55hp Volvo-Penta with saildrive
<b>ELECTRICAL</b>	2 x 135AH (house); 1 x 75AH (engine)
<b>DESIGNER</b>	Farr Yacht Design
<b>BUILDER</b>	Bavaria Yachtbau, Giebelstad, Germany
<b>U.S. DISTRIBUTOR</b>	Bavaria Yachts USA, Annapolis, MD, 855-222-1120, bavariayachts.com
<b>PRICE</b>	\$311,400
<b>BALLAST RATIO</b>	27%
<b>SAIL AREA-DISPLACEMENT RATIO</b>	19
<b>DISPLACEMENT-LENGTH RATIO</b>	161

## Performance

RACER

CRUISER



## Conclusion

The Bavaria Vision 46 combines sharp styling with a wealth of details that make life pleasant afloat, with a hull and a rig that provide excellent sailing performance.