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Storebro 410

ALL THINGS TO ALL MEN



BOAT REPORT JULY 2004

Master & Commander

All boats are compromises, but some boats have fewer compromises than others. We take the stunning Storebro 410 Commander for a workout



At a Glance

Length 41ft 0in (12.50m)
Flat out 28.7 knots
Engines 2 × 310hp Volvo D6
Price from
£326,447 inc UK VAT



Storebro 410 Commander

TEXT DAVID MARSH
PHOTOS LESTER MCCARTHY

What is it that elevates a serious cruising boat from the ranks of the mundane to the gilded halls of the truly great?

Some qualities are those that make any type of powerboat excel. An excellent driving position to keep the helmsman comfortable and secure is important. So is fine build quality, sturdy enough to stop the boat noisily declining into a pile of sawdust and glassfibre shards over the years. If you want to feel at ease driving in congested waters an unimpeded view out is essential. And you need first-class engineering to keep all the machinery running smoothly.

But these qualities are only the starting point for great boats – the owner who wants to go cruising will be looking for something more. Peace and quiet on board so you don't have to shout at each other is a real benefit, especially on long trips. So is the ability to move around safely and easily. It helps to have plenty of light and fresh air inside to stave off cabin fever, along with bags of stowage for the inevitable mountain of cruising paraphernalia. But that's a tall order for any boat, surely?

First impressions

Stepping on board the Storebro 410 Commander, the first thing you notice is how easy it is to move around. With the boat's big bathing platform and grippy teak-laid decks, abundant handrails and split pulpit, twin pilothouse side doors leading out onto the side decks (conveniently adjacent to the break in the guardrails), and the benefit of a second set of internal steps connecting the pilothouse and the flybridge, Storebro could not have made life on board any easier for you.

Stainless radar arch secured with quick-release bolts so that air draught can be swiftly reduced.

Side doors sited conveniently adjacent to breaks in the port and starboard guardrails.



Sure, these benefits are not unique to the 410, but even on far larger conventional flybridge boats it's rare to find side doors port and starboard, and the steps to the flybridge are often tiny, precarious, over-styled apologies for stairs, not the secure, handrail-flanked solution on the 410. My personal obsession with easy movement on board comes from having to drive and moor so many boats single-handed, when the difference between good and bad really tells. Of course, only David 'no-mates' Marsh goes solo boating in a 410, but couples cruising short-handed will benefit just as much.

This wonderful arrangement has knock-on effects. For one thing, with the full-sized chart table at the foot of the internal steps, it's far easier to nip down from the flybridge to do a spot of chartwork, check the radar or keep the crew company, or quickly switch helm stations if the weather changes suddenly. Opening the large side doors and the flybridge hatch boosts the ventilation through the 410 dramatically, and it's a real pleasure to occasionally stick your head out into the cooling breeze when you are driving

from below. Being able to open the side doors and poke your head and shoulders out also allows you to clearly see the usual blindspot as you turn, and to check the view behind for approaching traffic.

Added to these unusual privileges are the excellent visibility from both helm positions at all angles of trim, a 20in-deep (500mm) overhanging window peak that keeps sun out of the driver's eyes and stray light off the non-reflective wooden dash inside, and long wipers that sport two speeds and a variable intermittent. If you like being able to see where you are going, a flybridge boat does not get any better than this.

Driving the 410 Commander

The 410 is unusual for a flybridge boat – it is actually fun to drive from inside! Of course, the excellent visibility and the opening side doors provide two key elements, but the helmsman and navigator's lot are good in other ways. The big dash displays all the instruments directly at the helmsman, and even though navigators get their own full-sized chart table with a drawer



The 410 is unusual for a flybridge boat – it is actually fun to drive from inside!

underneath, the helmsman also has a large, flat fiddled area for charts and almanacs.

Oddly for a boat that very generously sees Simrad's superb £1,200 dual-station RS87 VHF fitted as standard (Tried & Tested, *MBY* June 2004), there are no engine gauges at the upper helm, only warning lights. This is something I felt very uncomfortable with – gauges have often provided me with advance warnings well before alarms have been triggered.



Although the ergonomics of the adjustable seat, the footrest and the wheel hang together okay, the throttles are an uncomfortable stretch beyond the wheel unless you drive standing up. To starboard, the comfortable twin seat is ideal for the navigator or crew wanting an elevated spot from where to watch the world speed by when it's too cold or wet to venture outside. Storebro's attention to detail really shows here – the seat has a deep hinging bolster that flips up to provide more

Top right: underseat storage on the flybridge can be kept dry because there are watertight plastic hatches rather than the usual unsealed lids.

room to pass on the way through the side door.

Drivers will find no surprises in store. As the 410 powered upwind at full speed and crossed the wake of our photo boat, the flybridge remained reasonably dry. The boat has seven turns lock to lock – a real handful in theory, but in practice the first two turns provided all the turning response a cruising boat driver could wish for.

With the tall, upright styling and impressive 6ft 5in (1.96m) saloon headroom, the only thing you need to bear in mind is the inevitably slightly higher windage and centre of gravity of this type of modern trawler-style boat. Potentially these boats are marginally more prone to rolling in big quartering seas, and more sensitive to heeling in cross-winds or catching the wind in a marina. But aboard the 410, the fast-acting trim tabs should take care of the heel, and the obviously effective 9hp bow thruster will lend a hand in windswept marinas. We had relatively undemanding conditions during our test, no more than Force 3, so these comments are conjectures, and should be treated as considerations, rather than problems.

Storebro's 410 is a boat so quiet you have to be careful not to drive flat out all the time. With the two hatches closed, the loudest noise you can hear on the flybridge is the water cascading off the chines, so there's little sense of speed. Volvo's new D6 310hp diesels are partly to blame. With common-rail injection, 5.5 litres displacement and no compressor, it was inevitable that they would be quieter than the Volvo engine that might otherwise have been fitted, the 3.6-litre KAD300.

But much of the credit for the relaxing noise levels must go to Storebro's soundproofing department – they surely have a whole team of experts. They consistently produce boats with subdued noise levels that allow normal conversations to take place, even if driving flat out. Only in the aft cockpit do you need to raise your voice a little, but even here the 410 is quieter than a lot of far larger craft, including the magnificently engineered Fleming 75 and the Grand Banks Aleutian 64. Of the boats I've tested, only the 9.4-knot Linszen Grand Sturdy was significantly quieter. On long cruises, this peace and quiet is a godsend.

Right: chart space galore – the helmsman and navigator won't be complaining.



On deck

What the perfect cruising boat can never have too much of is storage space, and thanks to the voluminous lazarette the 410 has plenty. This non-slip, rubber-floored expanse could easily swallow a liferaft, a deflated tender and a big ball fender, along with numerous plastic bins that could provide compartmentalised storage for odds and ends. All the under-seat lockers are sealed with watertight deck hatches, and the bathing platform provides two further self-draining lockers – ideal for additional fenders if the four in the stainless basket across the transom need supplementing.

The 410's deck has some excellent practical detailing. Best of all are the workings of the blue aft cockpit covers. They can be unzipped, quickly rolled up and secured very tidily (beneath their



Good galley storage thanks to the eye-level lockers, which are often missing in galley-up layouts.

permanent covering flaps) around the perimeter of the flybridge overhang. Endless fiddling with unco-operative canopies can really take the shine off a relaxing day's boating, and these are as effective as any I've used.

A rubber bumper runs around the perimeter of the bathing platform (I wonder why all boats don't do this?), and Storebro fit a stainless rail here for tying on tenders and stern fenders to protect your rear in the typical Med marina mooring.

At the other end, the anchor chain is kept separate from the warps in the foredeck locker and there's a safety line securing the anchor chain. Although the teak on the side decks is a £4,300 extra, Storebro fit a splash of grippy teak where you need it most – around the windlass and over the anchor platform. All three pairs of tall 12in (300mm) cleats will accept big mooring lines, although on a £326,447 boat, a second set of springs would surely not break the bank.

Accommodation

Sometimes, less can be more. Compared with 475 Commander (*MBY* December 2002), the 410 has lost around 6ft (2m) and the second guest cabin, but – if anything – it hangs together even better. With no third guest cabin competing for space, the second cabin can spread its girth over the centreline, providing more room inside. And the separate shower compartment in the ensuite owner's heads felt larger. The saloon still provides the unmatched practicality of a dinette directly opposite the galley, and although the twin seats to starboard are smaller than the 475's raised settee and table, these comfy forward-facing seats are far more practical for the crew or navigator. The 410 is a boat that 'breathes' easily.

Storebro have found a good ergonomic compromise between upright dining and loafing with their comfortable saloon seats. One of the 410's very few shortcomings is evident here; the seat-bases are very difficult to prise loose and wedge back in, and under-seat drawers would make the storage here much more accessible. Kids would have struggled to reach our prototype boat's high fixed table, but photos of a later version show a more practical adjustable hi-lo column.

Side doors and internal flybridge steps notwithstanding, the layout is unremarkable, it is the detail that makes the 410 such a good cruising boat. Every single step inside has a grippy rubber strip along its edge, and all the wardrobe doors have circular ventilation holes cut in. Cooks get a good deal too, with heaps of dedicated stowage for crockery, cutlery, glasses and bottles.



Storebro 410 Commander



Cockpit handrails add to safety and provide plenty of scope to hang fenders around the vulnerable transom area.



We like The practical saloon, the excellent view out and the build quality



We don't like The stretch to the throttles at the inside helm



Guest cabin would benefit from extra lighting next to wardrobe.



Hidden beneath the fiddled countertop is a slot that clamps the infill for the twin sinks in place. Most of the storage is in drawer form – the most effective storage on a boat – but there’s also a deep compartmentalised bin that makes good use of the otherwise dead space in the corner. Cooks are unlikely to feel short of space, and the open-plan nature of the 410’s saloon means that galley and general saloon storage can be easily traded back and forth as required. You’re unlikely to find storage space a problem on the 410.

Engineering and construction

Despite being a builder of conservatively styled boats, Storebro have touches of the radical about them. As on the 475, the 410 uses a moulded structural grid to reinforce the hull shell. This gives a far slicker finish, which is particularly evident in the engineroom. They also site the fuel filters and raw-water strainers in the lazarette, rather than the engineroom as is usual, so they are much easier to



The moulded structural grid reinforces the hull shell and provides a superbly slick finish in the engineroom.

check. The strainers have clear tops and the translucent plastic water tanks in the lazarette are just clear enough for a visual cross-check against the electronic gauge – switching to clear bowls on the fuel filters would make it even better. The arrangement leaves as little as possible in the engineroom. Remove the lazarette/engineroom trapdoor, and the sternglands and the gearbox oil are easy to get at. For daily checks, the saloon floor hinges up so you can access the oil and water dipsticks and fillers.

As has consistently been the case over the past decade, Storebro’s build quality and engineering installation is first class. Mind you, it needs to be. Six or seven years ago, yards like Storebro had a tangible lead over the high-volume production boatbuilders – these days the best of the big boys have whittled that lead down to almost nothing. However, Storebro can play their unbeatable trump card in one contest – their boats are still consistently quieter than almost all others.



Far right: aft cockpit covers are superb – they roll up neatly into the flybridge overhang so that they don’t need to be fitted and stowed away each time.

Storebro 410 Commander Datafile

The Verdict

There is no such thing as the perfect cruising boat; owners' needs vary too much. But there are a number of requirements that almost every boater will have. And the Storebro 410 Commander tries hard to satisfy them all.

It sports the sort of elevated build quality that should see it weather the usual wear and tear as well as any cruising boat. And everybody from bantam to heavyweight will find that both its helm positions provide an exceptionally clear view out. The 410 has a fine, accessible engineering installation. And it seems unlikely that anyone other than the most acquisitive of 410 owners would run out of stowage space, even if they planned to go long-distance cruising.

Beyond these qualities though, which plenty of today's better powerboats have, the 410 has two significant characteristics that set it apart. The forthcoming RCD rules governing noise limits may be concerned solely with external sound, though there's little doubt that the strict limitations can only improve life on board. But I've been aboard boats that comply with the new statutes and they were nowhere near as quiet as our 410. In an era when so many boats are good in so many areas, the level of on-board noise represents one of the few things that so many boatbuilders could improve. If you want real peace and quiet on those long trips, the 410 is one of the few boats that can offer it.

Here at *MBY* we have been known to enthuse about the benefits of twin pilothouse side doors, and separate stairs between the pilothouse and the flybridge. The reason being that the few models with this arrangement really do function so much better as cruising boats. The 410 is easier to move around, easier to ventilate properly, easier to handle short-handed, easier to navigate, and easier to see out of safely than a conventional flybridge boat. I spent three years cruising on board the magazine's Nimbus 370 Coupé, a smaller boat with the same arrangement as the 410. Once you've experienced such a boat, you may never want to go back to a conventional flybridge boat. **MBY**

Specifications

Overall length	41ft 0in (12.50m)
Hull length	40ft 7in (12.38m)
Beam	12ft 8in (3.87m)
Displacement	10.2 tonnes light, 11.4 tonnes loaded (loaded = light + 100% fuel & water)
Draught	3ft 1in (1.00m)
Air draught	16ft 7in (5.05m); 11ft 5in (3.47m) mast lowered
Fuel capacity	220 imp gal (1,000 litres)
Water capacity	88 imp gal (400 litres)
Holding tank	33 imp gal (150 litres)

RPM	2,000	2,300	2,500	2,700	2,900	3,100	3,300	3,500
SPEED	10.3	14.0	16.5	18.9	21.4	23.8	26.3	28.7
TRIM	4.0°	4.5°	4.5°	5.0°	5.0°	4.5°	4.0°	4.0°
GPH	5.3	7.9	9.9	12.3	15.4	19.1	23.5	28.2
MPG	1.95	1.77	1.67	1.53	1.39	1.24	1.12	1.02
RANGE	343	311	293	270	245	219	197	179

Speed in knots; GPH & MPG figures use imperial gallons; range in nautical miles.

NB: calculated figures based on standard (idealised) engine propeller demand data. Your figures will vary (sometimes considerably) depending on: air, water, engine room & fuel temperature; hull fouling; sea state; fuel, water, stores & crew load; build weight variations; boatbuilders' changes & extras fitted; propeller and gearbox variations; pressure; humidity; sun intensity; rope-cutters; trim-tab position; exhaust back pressure; running trim; generator use; fuel quality; engine condition; and other factors.

Range allows for 20% reserve 55% fuel, 50% water, 2 crew, no stores 10°C air temp, 10°C water temp, 1,036mb pressure 18in chop, Force 2-3 for speed trials

Cruising	25 knots, 208 miles @ 3,200rpm
Flat out	28.7 knots, 179 miles @ 3,500rpm
Price from	£326,447 inc UK VAT (twin 310hp)
Price as tested	£347,364 inc UK VAT (twin 310hp)
Designer	John Lindblom & Storebro, 2004
RCD category	B (for 12 people)
Contact	Chris at Offshore Powerboats Tel: +44 (0)1590 677955. Fax: +44 (0)1590 671890. Email: chris@offshorepowerboats.co.uk Website: www.storebro.se

SOUND LEVELS dB(A)	Saloon	Cockpit	Flybridge
Cruising @ 25 knots	74	82	70
Flat out @ 28.7 knots	76	83	72

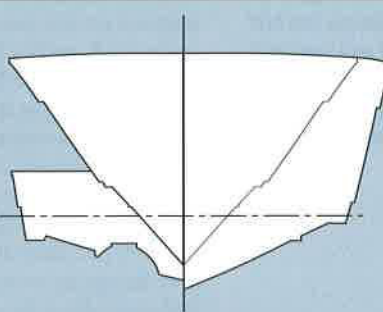
Thumbs up or thumbs down?

UPS

- Practical saloon layout
- Low noise levels
- Excellent view out
- Side doors & steps
- Helmsman's lot
- Build quality
- Voluminous lazarette
- Plentiful handrails
- Light & ventilation
- Cockpit canopies

DOWNS

- Under-seat stowage
- Higher windage
- Stretch to throttles



Engines and drive system

Twin Volvo D6-310; 310hp @ 3,500rpm; 6-cylinder 5.5-litre diesels; 2.5:1 gearbox ratio
4-bladed cupped props; 23in (585mm) diameter; 30in (765mm) pitch

Lay-up weights (reinforcement only)

Deck	9.4oz/ft ² (2.85kg/m ²) plus 20mm foam balsa core
Topsides	12.5oz/ft ² (3.80kg/m ²) plus 20mm foam balsa core
Chine	32.0oz/ft ² (9.75kg/m ²)
Bottom	12.0oz/ft ² (3.65kg/m ²)
Keel	32.0oz/ft ² (9.75kg/m ²)

The Rivals

There are some good two-couple cruising boats out there that can provide alternatives to the 410 Commander. Here are a few that are worth putting on the shortlist. The Belliure 40 (*MBY* December 2003) gives only 21 knots from its soft-riding semi-displacement hull but has three full cabins, bulletproof construction and is spacious way beyond what its 43ft (13m) length suggests. The Atlantic 40 has the unmatched privacy of its aft cabin, a huge open-plan saloon and a dazzling, customisable interior beneath a conservatively styled, non-flybridge exterior. If you're after a very spacious three-cabin, semi-displacement, 25-knot aft-cabin boat with a very competitive price have a look at the Tarquin Trader 41+2.

Similar in hull shape and exterior styling to the Atlantic 40 is the Broom 4150s (*MBY* September 2000). It has similar benefits too, albeit with a more conservative interior. The semi-displacement Nelson 42 (*MBY* April 1999) is built by various custom boatbuilders so you get exactly what you want but at a price that reflects the customisation.

The 31-knot twin-cabin Sabreliner 42 Sedan (*MBY* March 2002) may sport dissimilar 'down east' styling, but it shares the sturdy build quality and many of the practical cruising details that make the 410 so good. Likewise the Grand Banks 42 (*MBY* April 1999), even if it's in a different price bracket to the 410. If the extra £70,000 or so was no impediment, the boat I would be most tempted by is the Hardy 42 (*MBY* August 2003), a great cruising performer with the longest Thumbs up list ever seen in *MBY*.





COMMANDER

The Yachtsman's Yacht



STOREBRO 475 COMMANDER



STOREBRO 410 COMMANDER



NIMBUS 380 COMMANDER



NIMBUS 340 COMMANDER



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