

## Nordic Tug 37 Flybridge



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I got my first view of the new flybridge model of the Nordic Tug 37 at dawn, with the sun rising up through the mist wafting over the Connecticut River, and it was a beautiful sight. There are times when a boatbuilder will add an element to the model, like a hardtop over an express cruiser, and that addition will look like an afterthought. The flybridge on the Nordic Tug looks so natural, you wonder why it took them so long to come out with it.

According to Bob Shamek, marketing guy for Nordic Tug, the first 37 model was launched in 1998. The flybridge concept was spawned by requests from customers, he reported by phone from the factory in Burlington, Wash. 'We built the tooling for the flybridge part almost a year ago. We retooled the pilothouse cabin top to accommodate that for the 2005 model. We really didn't have to do much else to accommodate the extra weight; maybe trim the ballast a little aft. The boat is well balanced to begin with, since the pilothouse is fairly centered anyway.'

Ben Wilde of Wilde Yacht Sales in Essex, Conn., invited me to tag along on the delivery of the new boat to the Newport boat show, and I jumped at the chance. We rode the tide down past the two lighthouses at the mouth of the river and out onto the flat expanse of the eastern end of Long Island Sound. It was a glorious late summer day with just a hint of autumn, cool and sunny. The Sound was uncharacteristically calm, with no swells and hardly any waves more than a foot.

We were accompanied by the boat's new owner, Ron Dejewski, president of a shipping agency based in Stamford. The run was a good five-and-a-half hours, so we had plenty of time to swap boat talk.

**Length overall** 39'10"

**Beam** 12'11"

**Draft** 48"

**Displacement** 22,000 lb

**Fuel Capacity** 324 gals

**Water Capacity** 150 gals

**Bridge Clearance** 9'7"

**Base Price** \$406,600

'We traded in a 1988 aft-cabin Albin on this,' he explained. 'We did a lot of cruising with that boat, plus lots of Coast Guard Auxiliary work. But the brightwork demanded too much attention, and it got ahead of us. We intend to cruise the Ft. Great Circle' in a couple of years, and we wanted the flybridge model so we could have better visibility in unfamiliar waters.

'My wife, Jean, and I always loved tug boats, so the appearance of the Nordic Tug was the initial draw. This isn't what I'd call a Ft. glitz boat," he continued. 'We were looking for a boat to do a year-long cruise in comfort and safety. We were also looking at storage for a year's trip. And we like the layout. It's got plenty of headroom and plenty of shoulder-room.'

The forward stateroom has a queen island centerline berth, with storage underneath and flanked by hanging lockers. 'The overhead hatch is large enough to serve as an escape hatch if that were ever necessary,' Ron noted. The port side guest stateroom has over/under berths, a deep hanging locker and a built-in three-drawer bureau. The top bunk was so appealing, I couldn't resist sneaking in a quick mid-morning nap, and so I can personally attest to its high level of comfort. There's plenty of room even for this bulky boater to stretch out. The two opening portlights provided some nice ventilation.

The head has a vanity with a wide Corian counter and a VacuFlush marine toilet. The separate shower stall is roomy and has its own opening portlight.

I've always regarded the pilothouse as one of the most appealing areas onboard. There are big, double bench seats on either side, and the pilot's seat is adjustable fore-and-aft. The chart table is big enough to unfurl a full-size chart.

The AC/DC distribution panels are separately mounted on the bases of the seats. The DC panel is on the pilot's side. The helm has a nice, teak ship's wheel, and the high dash is recessed to shield the Raymarine RL800 Pathfinder chartplotter screen from glare.

Visibility is good through the three front panes, each with its own windshield wiper. There are heavy-duty sliding doors on either side for easy access to the deck. You can see aft through ports across the cabin top, and there's no bulkhead separating the pilothouse from the saloon, so you can look aft through the big square windows and the glass door leading to the afterdeck.

The engine compartment is accessible through hatches in the pilothouse sole. There's lots of room to service the single 330-hp Cummins diesel and plenty leftover for the Onan 9 kilowatt generator as well. 'Jean likes the engine room as much as I do,' Ron remarked. 'We're both taking a Cummins diesel course so we can both do all the basic maintenance.'

It's three steps down to the saloon, where the galley shows some innovations for 2005. There was an over/under fridge and freezer behind the helm seat, but now those two components have been separated and placed under the counter, the refrigerator forward and the freezer aft, where the range used to sit. Now the gimballed propane stove and oven is in the center of the Corian counter that runs along the starboard side of the saloon. There's a microwave mounted above. This and a cupboard mounted in the aft corner are the only elements above the counter to keep from cluttering up the panoramic views through the big, square ports. Still, there's plenty of storage in drawers and cabinets underneath.

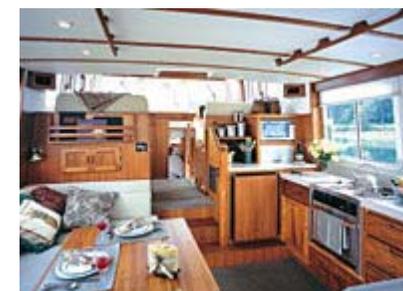
There's also a really deep stainless-steel sink mounted in the counter, a custom touch that replaces the standard sink molded into the Corian countertop. A big hatch in the teak-and-holly sole hides a vast storage locker. A lengthy settee graces the opposite side of the saloon.

There's another vast lazarette under the afterdeck sole. A ladder leads up to the deck on the cabin top. This area, protected by a one-inch stainless railing, provides a full 120 square feet of open-air lounging and entertaining space. A custom mast supports a radar unit, and, since the new owner is active in the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, there's also a red-and-yellow rotating emergency light on top. The mast hinges down for low bridge clearances.

It's just a step up to the new flybridge. The helm is just slightly to port with a Todd pilot's chair. Dual instrument panels lift up from the dash. These are gasketed to keep the electronic displays protected from the weather. Locking latches are available. The panels flank the analog gauges and compass. The stainless steel wheel is remarkably responsive, thanks in part to the large rudder. Visibility from up there is great over the bow, though the hardtop over the afterdeck blocks the view of the stern. A companion chair is also available. The Bimini top had yet to be installed. An expansive L-shaped settee provides plenty of room for guests to lounge.



*The teak dash (above) at the lower helm station is recessed to cut down on the glare on the chartplotter screens. (below) The saloon is bright and airy, and features a reconfigured galley.*



Off of Point Judith, the wind was relatively calm and we were running against a slow current, doing a solid 12.8 knots at 2500 rpm. Just to check the top speed, we steered big loops, running full bore at 2800 rpm. We clocked 15.5 knots running east against the current and 16.3 knots going west. The brochure states that the 324-gallon fuel capacity will yield a range of 1,000 miles cruising at 9 knots.

As delightful as it is driving the 37 from the conventional helm station in the pilothouse, on a day like that it was a joy running from the flybridge. This simple accessory makes for an entirely new experience and makes a tremendous addition to the Nordic line. It was especially fun as we ran up into Newport, taking in the 360-degree panorama of the expansive 'cottages' crowning the rocky shores, past the tall stone walls of Fort Adams, and in through the mooring field packed with yachts and less ostentatious watercraft to the show docks. Unfortunately, I only had time for a quick bowl of 'chowdah' before catching a shuttle for the airport. I left with a feeling that Ron and Jean Dejewski have a lot of cruising fun in store.

*Boats selected for this column are from among the magazine's advertisers.*



*New owner Ron Dejewski mans the helm on the flybridge. The instrument panels flip up from the dash and are gasketed for additional weather protection.*