

BOAT REVIEW

# The AMAZING IMEXUS *Powersailer*

STORY & PHOTOGRAPHY PETER SCOTT

**I**t was September 2009 and an email from the Head of Foreign Trade Department, Jack Sobieszczanski, at Poland's Imexus Yachts had just dropped into my Inbox.

Sobieszczanski had sent the email asking my advice as to the prospects of Imexus Yachts

in the Australasian market. To be honest, until that day, I'd never even heard of Imexus however Sobieszczanski's profile of his company made interesting reading. Despite the worldwide economic downturn, this Polish company had created a popular 28 foot powersailer - a hybrid trailer sailer that doubles as a planing hull power boat.

Although this concept is not new, McGregor have been building these versatile yachts for years, I was rather taken by the design of their 28 footer.

While the company had been established since 1994 and started producing the Imexus range of powersailers in 2001 - their







range now includes a 37, a 24 and 22 footer as well - they had not, until that time, looked to the international market as a sales medium for their boats.

Sobieszczanski and I exchanged emails during the latter part of 2009 and my last communication with him was that Imexus were looking to introduce their flagship powersailer to the Australian market in 2010, to coincide with the Australian boat show circuit.

I'd heard no more from Imexus in the intervening months until I received a call in early March from the Australian importer. By chance, I was to travel to Sydney the next day and quickly accepted an invitation to test their first Imexus 28 on Pittwater that day.

As luck would have it, the weather had done us no favours, however we decided to make use of the little breeze around and headed straight from the airport to Pittwater. We were quickly aboard the Imexus power sailer and from first sight, I was considerably impressed with the design and finish of this Polish product.

Although trailerable, our test boat was on a fixed mooring and as we drew closer

in the tender, the Imexus 28 appeared as one of the biggest 28 footers I had encountered. For a trailerable yacht, the Imexus 28 has incredible freeboard - I would venture to say as much as a mid 30 footer. Her planked gleaming white hull with an unique transom fitted with a 90 horsepower outboard and immediately noticeable features such as a prominent bow sprit and a well engineered mast lift and lower system make this Imexus 28 a viable option for those owners seeking the best of both worlds - power and sail.

While I have often used the term 'big volume' when describing boats of smaller dimensions, the Imexus 28 is indeed a boat that does fit the description. It had incredible volume for a 28 footer and largely because of some clever yet simple design features and the substantial freeboard.

I was even more surprised to learn that the Imexus 28 can be fitted with outboards up to 130 horsepower and Imexus also offers an inboard option - either a 130 horsepower Cummins MerCruiser or Volvo Penta diesel - simply amazing!







Out on the water, the Imexus was quickly into stride. Although the rig is by no means large, it suits the Imexus to a tee and is easily operated by one person with a simple winch system that also powers the centreboard. The rig has a single spreader, back stay, cap and lower shrouds anchored to chainplates fitted neatly against the coach house so as not to impede deck movement. Travelers are mounted either side of the coach house roof. As standard issue, the 28 comes with a jib and mainsail. A genoa and roller furlings are options.

The yacht has twin rudders which are easily retracted, a retractable centreboard and a water ballasting system which gives the powersailer added stability when under sail. When used as a power boat, the 780 litre ballast is easily pumped out.

Despite its water ballast, the Imexus 28 is self righting. The ballast system is easy to operate. The fill valve is located on the stern and the air vent is under the vee berth. To prepare for sailing mode, simply unscrew the air vent valve and lift the stern valve. The ballast tank will fill in less than 10 minutes.

As a hybrid hull, the bow has a fine entry and this allows the powersailer to perform with more than impressive credentials under sail. She can be a little tender when not fully ballasted but heels well and while probably not a true competitor, would acquit herself well under handicap.

The Imexus 28 points reasonably well - much better than I had expected of a hybrid hull and trimming the boat is an easy operation. All lines are colour coded and the winches and brakes are easily accessible from the cockpit. The cockpit has good volume and is uncluttered. A conventional layout features non slip side bench seats (cushions are an option) with sizeable built-in storage lockers and a fold up skipper seat which exposes a walk-through transom.

Here the true hybrid qualities of the yacht are displayed. There is a sturdy stainless steel fold away swim ladder, transom storage, a deck shower and bilge pump and none of these features in any way impede the overall usefulness of the transom area.

The yacht is controlled by a steering wheel - a sporty stainless steel wheel on a console set slightly to starboard of the centreline. Engine performance gauges including a tacho, fuel, water and trim are set below the wheel. There is space atop of the console to mount a GPS if required. A compass has been mounted on the starboard side of the







forward bulkhead adjacent to the cabin entry. The mainsheet traveler is mounted just forward of the console.

The pushpit, pulpit and stanchions are of polished stainless and the safety lines are a good height with snap sections around the cockpit.

The deck has clean lines and movement around the deck is unimpeded. The yacht has a distinctive and well engineered stainless steel bow sprit with teak slats which allows for the carriage of a substantial anchor and chain and a sizable chain locker keeps everything below deck.

The mast lift system is pinned at the bow and its operation is simple and effective. Remove a single pin and the mast is lowered.

The cabin entry has removable perspex washboards and a sliding panel above. Once below, be surprised by the interior volume.

Again a conventional layout, there is a spacious forward vee berth, a fold-up centre table of which the base conceals the centreboard when raised, and a portside galley. The head is set to starboard and can be fitted with a shower. The head is full height with a moulded vanity basin and storage below, opening porthole and a portapotti.

There is a full beam bunk under the cockpit and the finish is very good. Padded bulkheads and an overhead opening porthole and good head height make the aft bunk a comfortable place to retire.

The entire cabin area has a comfortable ambience. There is ample storage under the forward vee berth, bottle storage in the base of the table, pigeon lockers and book shelves.

The galley, although not large, is serviceable. There is a stainless steel sink, a single ring gas burner stove and Waeco fridge which is inverter powered.

Other features include clipout carpets, overhead hatch and opening portholes which give plenty of air flow and light refraction. The light oak joinery works well with the deep burgundy upholstery and the cream carpet.

The Imexus 28, in terms of standard fitout, is very well presented. There are fire extinguishers fitted, a VHF radio, good lighting and electrical panel.

However the real test is performance. I have previously mentioned her characteristics





while under sail and while good, it is her power mode that is surprising.

With water ballast loaded, the vessel runs bow down however once the ballast is removed, the Imexus 28 has all the performance characteristics of a similar sized power boat. She is quick onto the plane, no bow lift whatsoever and is very manoeuvrable.

My only complaint was the position of the throttle which didn't make access that easy but certainly didn't impede the operation of the boat. The manufacturers rate the vessel with either a 130 horsepower inboard or outboard at 22 knots maximum.

Our test vessel with a 90 horsepower ETEC displayed a top speed of 19 knots. That is a tremendous advantage to have when the weather suddenly turns sour and the best course of action is a run to home port or a safe anchorage.

The Imexus 28 powersailer is a surprisingly

versatile yacht. It can be trailered, berthed in a marina or on a mooring and offers both power and sail propulsion. In addition, the Imexus offers a good standard of accommodation for at least four people and its potential as a cruiser should not be underestimated.

The Imexus 28 power sailer is perhaps one of Europe's best kept secrets, however I am sure this clever hybrid will have a notable impact on the Australian market, particularly given its pricing and the strength of the Australian dollar against the Euro.

The Imexus 28 is one of the more exciting vessels to hit the Australian market for some time.

<b>SPECIFICATIONS</b>	<b>LOA</b>	28ft (8.5 metres)
	<b>LWL</b>	26ft 2" (8.05 metres)
	<b>Beam</b>	8ft 2" (2.5 metres)
	<b>Draft</b>	1ft 1"/4ft 9" (.3/1.45 m)
	<b>Displacement</b>	3302lbs (1300kg)
	<b>Water ballast</b>	730 litres (750kg)
	<b>Centre Board</b>	152lbs (60kgs)
	<b>Hull construction</b>	Hand laid moulded fibreglass
	<b>Fuel capacity</b>	65 litres
	<b>Fresh water</b>	24 litres
	<b>Holding tank</b>	24 litres
	<b>Accommodation</b>	4+ people
	<b>Engine</b>	Evinrude 90hp outboard
	<b>Cruising speed</b>	4 - 8 knots (sail)
	<b>Top speed</b>	19 knots (power)
	<b>Mainsail</b>	16 square metres
<b>Jib</b>	12.2 square metres	
<b>Warranty</b>	Manufacturer's warranty	
<b>Base price</b>	\$57,310 + delivery	
<b>Price as tested</b>	\$112,000	
Test boats supplied by Church Point Brokerage, 122 Crescent Road, Newport, NSW Phone 02 9999 4188 www.churchpointbrokerage.com.au   www.imexusyachts.com		