

Domestic market stirs into life

BUOYANT EXPORTS MARKETS AND A WARM SUMMER SEEM TO HAVE FINALLY INJECTED SOME IMPETUS INTO A SLUGGISH DUTCH MARINE SECTOR

WORDS: BELINDA SNELL

Marine firms in the Netherlands reported a healthy 2.5% increase in sales in the first half of 2018, news that lifted spirits at the recent HISWA In-Water Boat Show in Lelystad, near Amsterdam. Strong performance was led by boatbuilders that cater mostly to foreign markets, along with marine equipment suppliers whose products aim to simplify the boating experience while lowering costs for boatbuilders and end-users too. “We’re seeing real growth of 2.5%,” Geert Dijks, director of Dutch industry association HISWA, told *IBI* on the show’s opening day. “That’s a lot and makes this year look very promising.”

That said, the picture is far from perfect. HISWA represents some 900 members across a dozen sectors, including yards, marinas, charterers, naval architects, sailing schools and repair and refit services, and not everyone is enjoying growth. Dijks told *IBI* that there’s a surplus of empty moorings at Dutch marinas, and that new boats from 9m-14m (29ft-46ft) are difficult to sell – particularly sailing yachts, which require a certain level of nautical expertise.

Nevertheless, Dutch boaters took to the water in record numbers this year, thanks to an unusually warm summer that helped lift sales of small, open sloops and weekend cruisers. “Our sales more than doubled compared to last year, in quantity and turnover,” says Bernard Menken at



▲ Intender 950: a tender/cruiser mix

Menken Maritiem, builder of the Newport Bass, CAB, Piet Hein and Hudson range of small sloops and motorboats. “We sold more than €1m of new-builds in 2018 and 14 boats were handed over to new owners.

“Orders in hand for 2019 have already exceeded €1.5m and the sales season has only just started,” he adds.

One of Menken’s best-selling models,

The Fast CAB XL, is a 7.25m (24ft) tender that combines the comfort of a luxury dayboat with the sailing characteristics of a speedboat. It comes with shaft-driven inboard diesels and can reach speeds of up to 33kt with a 280hp Steyr engine.

“There’s a trend towards straight lines, dark colours and more

comfort in the dayboat segment,” says Menken. “We made some alterations to The CAB XL for our Norwegian agent and ended up selling the new version to five Dutch customers at the HISWA show. We also have more than 10 running inquiries.

“The CAB XL and The Fast CAB XL are selling very well,” he adds. “As of today we have eight of these boats under construction. Total orders in hand is 16 boats varying from €40k to €340k.”

At Interboat, director Jerry Schuitem told *IBI* that a stable economy and fantastic summer weather helped boost demand for dayboats and weekenders across the country. “Our sales in the second quarter were up by 15-20%,” he says. “The Intender and Inter cruiser models are performing best because of the demand for high levels of comfort and more speed.”

Interboat recently introduced two new tenders with modern lines and spacious seating areas – the Intender 650 and 780. “They replaced the 640 and 760, which were on the market for six years,” says Schuitem. “We increased the comfort level again; for example, a door in the transom for easy access to the swim platform, and with the 780 we designed a closed toilet compartment in the bow. We always try to improve our models to get them on a higher level.”

MODERN DESIGN, CLASSIC LINES

Schuitem says the trend right now is for easy-to-maintain boats that blend modern design with classic lines. In 2019, the company will introduce its biggest tender yet – the 9.5m Intender 950. Sporty yet elegant, it will be a mix between a tender and a cruiser with plenty of outdoor space. “Germany is a growing market for us, but with the new Intender 950 we are targeting the Mediterranean,” Schuitem adds.

The biggest ‘eye-catcher’ on the Intender 950 will be an XXL solar bed located centrally on the longitudinal axis.

“We’re seeing real growth [in the Dutch leisure marine market] of 2.5%. That’s a lot and makes this year look very promising”





STATS & FACTS

COMPILED BY ARLENE SLOAN



ECONOMIC INDICATORS

- GDP growth (2017)
3.2%
- GDP growth (2018)
2.7% est.
- Number of adults (2017)
13.2 million
- High net worth individuals (2017)
255,000 (+10%)
- Home prices (Q2 '18)
+10.4%
- Consumer confidence (Sep '18)
19.0 (but still -2 pts)



BOAT MARKET INDICATORS (2017)

- Industry turnover
€2.17m (+1%)
- Boat Exports (2017)
€1.5m (+8%)
- Marine companies
4,120
- Marine employees
21,500
- Marinas
1,160
- Boat park
502,000

Source: HISWA



SUPERYACHT STATISTICS (2017)

- Number of deliveries (over 30m)
21 (+17%)
- Value of deliveries
€1.2bn (+28%)
- Global superyacht market share
14% in units, 29% in value
- Average yacht price
€57bn (+10%)
- Number of yards making deliveries
10
- New orders
22 motoryachts, 1 sailing yacht

Source: HISWA Holland Yachting Group

It will also have an L-shaped sofa with six adult-sized seats, and an outdoor bar area with cooking facilities. As for the control unit, it can be positioned centrally in the back of the boat – as usual in sloops and tenders – or sheltered behind the windshield on the starboard side.

The Intender 950 will be available next summer with a choice of a 65hp-300hp inboard diesels with propeller shaft, promising speeds of up to 45km per hour.

Sales are also up at CooperYacht, a relatively young company that designs and builds motorboats, tenders and sailboats up to 10m in length. "It's mainly tenders that are fuelling the growth, but business overall is growing," says André Tromp, who co-founded the yard in 2009. "That's partly because we've expanded our models, but also because the market is in a positive mood. People have lots of leisure time and boating/sailing is still very popular. We expect more growth in 2019."

Earlier this year, CooperYacht launched two new tenders – the Cooper 800 and Cooper 1000. The latter is particularly spacious, with a comfortable, modern interior that includes a full-size double bed

in the cabin, as well as a sink, large storage cupboard and toilet. The Cooper 1000 is a serious overnight weekender with all comforts on board, and can reach speeds of up to 28kt with a 250hp Yanmar diesel. "It is unique because of its magnificent design, comfort, powerful motor and luxury interior," says Tromp. "You can easily sleep, cook and relax in this tender. Making long trips has never been so easy – or comfortable."

CooperYacht is now working on a smaller model, the Cooper 680, for launch in 2019.

STEEL MOTORYACHT PRODUCTION

As well as sloops and weekend cruisers for the local market, the Netherlands is also a major producer of steel-hulled motoryachts – and those that export are reaping rewards. At Linssen Yachts, builder of the Grand Sturdy range of steel displacement vessels from 10m-15m, around 80-85% of production is exported. "The Dutch market is improving very slowly," says Yvonne Linssen, yard owner. "The economy is booming, but the boating market is still struggling. However, we're

seeing slight growth in our business," she claims. "Boats from 40ft and up is the most popular segment for us."

Linssen overhauled its full range of motoryachts in 2018, adding features such as solar panels, electric sun roofs, new flexible tops and sliding wheelhouse doors for single-handed docking. "The overhaul of our yachts has touched largely on technical build issues with the goal of improving overall comfort," Linssen says.

The company also introduced new versions of the Grand Sturdy 30.0 AC and Sedan, and is now preparing for the launch of its latest Variotop model in November – the Grand Sturdy 450 AC Variotop with hydraulic cabriolet.

"Our best market is still Germany, but the Belgian market is also growing," Linssen says. "We're always looking for new opportunities. This year the US has brought us some orders too."

Linssen hopes to sell just over 70 new and 35 used boats this year (a similar level to 2017), but a shift towards bigger models should give turnover a healthy boost. Linssen also builds boats for Locaboat Holidays, a French charter firm active

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in half a dozen European countries. Until recently, charter boats accounted for just 10% of Linssen's business, a share that has risen to 30%, she says.

Another steel yacht producer is Super Lauwersmeer, whose Discovery, Evolve, Kotter and Empire range of motoryachts are mostly sold on the domestic market. Bastiaan Jousma, who runs the company alongside brother Louis, told *IBI* that business in 2018 is likely to be on par with last year.

"In a market that is struggling and getting smaller each year, we're seeing roughly the same number of orders as before," says marketing director Hans Winter. "There are lots of older people selling their boats and not enough young people interested in watersports, but our market share is growing."

Super Lauwersmeer is working hard to attract new boaters with the use of more modern styling – particularly on its best-selling Discovery line. At the HISWA In-Water Boat Show in September, the company launched its biggest Discovery model yet – the 14.3m Discovery 47 OC with the largest owner's cabin in its class.

"The length and width are enormous, thanks to a full bow and a straight prow," says Winter. The heightened hull ensures unrivalled standing height in the master bedroom, with a cleverly positioned skylight intensifying the feeling of open

space. It is entirely customisable and built from exclusive materials.

"Our customers have higher and higher demands when it comes to design," Winter explains. "They expect modern materials and modern styling."

Anton van den Bos at Neptune Marine Shipbuilding notes a similar trend. Neptune builds the Elling range of GRP motorboats from 14m-20m that are renowned for their sophisticated blend of traditional and modern characteristics. "There's a shift towards slightly more modern interiors," he says. "That's why we requested Tony Castro Design to develop a new interior for the Elling E6. Demand for stabilisers in the boat has also increased dramatically."

MODERN INTERIORS

Neptune's latest model, the 19.8m (65ft)

Elling E6 Highline, is an updated version of the popular Elling E6 that launched in 2016. It boasts an enlarged pilothouse and new interior by Tony Castro Design. "This latest development, which we displayed at the Neustadt, HISWA and Southampton boat shows, has already

received great interest from the public. It's also the model that we plan to show in Ft Lauderdale," says van den Bos.

"Over the last two years, all our sales were for export," he adds. "Germany is our biggest market and the second is Russia, but we expect sales in America to increase next year, thanks to the Elling E6 and our new US dealer."

Like all Elling models, the E6 has a self-righting hull and carries a CE Category A rating for trans-ocean crossings.

Van den Bos expects turnover to hit €10m in 2019. "We've sold eight Elling E4s and three E6s so far this year, bringing turnover to around €9m," he says. "An Elling E6 that we sold to the US will be displayed at the Ft Lauderdale, Miami and Palm Beach boat shows, and I expect at least another two Elling E6s sold

from these shows."

One of the biggest challenges, says Joop Ten Cate at motoryacht producer Brandsma Jachten, is trying to survive in a market that is shrinking by the day. "If you only sell new boats, you will not survive," he says.

But there are still opportunities for companies that offer high quality, fair prices and services such as mooring and maintenance. In addition to building the Luna, North Sea cutter, Federick and Mondial range of steel boats from 30ft-50ft, Brandsma also offers brokerage, repairs, maintenance, and winter storage at its 25,000m² boat yard and marina on the Houkesloot River in Friesland.

"We're satisfied in terms of maintenance and our covered marina is 100% full," Ten Cate told *IBI*. "But new boat sales are down by more than 50% this year. People are interested, they're just delaying their decisions. We remain positive, however, as we think more companies will exit the market, meaning less competition."

Meanwhile, Brandsma will continue to develop new models and adapt them to reflect the industry's

changing demographics. "People under the age of 55 don't buy boats anymore. They have other things to do," he says. "Boats under 12m are very difficult to sell."

The Mondial 37, launched by Brandsma earlier this year, is an easy-to-handle, compact trawler that feels much bigger than its 11.5m length.

COMPACT AND EASY TO HANDLE

Thanks to an extra-wide cockpit, the boat has generous seating in the salon and a wheelhouse that can comfortably seat up to six people. The flybridge has wide walkways and high railings for added safety, and inside is a fully-equipped kitchen, an owner's cabin with separate shower and toilet, and a small guest cabin. Currently in development are two larger models – the Mondial 40 and 42. ➔

“There are still opportunities for companies that offer high quality, fair prices and services such as mooring and maintenance”



One obvious advantage of the Havenlodge range of 'floating homes' is their growing popularity on the rental market. "Around 80% of our customers are buying for investment," Djerme Uitvlugt at Havenlodge told *IBI*. "We've already sold 24 units and expect more growth in 2019."



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Sandra van der Velde at Pedro-Boat says demand for used boats is strong in the Netherlands, particularly for 10m-14m vessels priced under €150,000.

“We can’t give exact figures, but I can tell you that the number of second-hand boats that we’ve sold this year has increased,” she says. “But we’ve also noticed this for new-builds. At the moment we have several orders and have already delivered several new boats this year.”

Pedro delivered a new Levanto 40 in August. The latest member of the Levanto series is based on the Levanto 38, but with a steel bulwark and stylish stairs leading from the aft deck to the bathing platform. The 12m seagoing yacht is CE Category B certified, allowing users to explore beyond rivers and inland waterways.

The company also delivered a new addition to its H2home series at the end of last year, the Pedro H2home 1490. Designed to explore lakes and canals, the floating holiday bungalow is supported by two steel floaters to achieve minimal drag in the water. The superstructure consists of 80mm composite sandwich panels.



Clever design and construction are key elements of the new 10m Load Master – an all-aluminium, multi-purpose vessel with 100% electric, diesel or hybrid engines from Load Master Boats. It has a 3.2m beam and a large, flush deck devoid of unwanted equipment. This demo model (pictured) is powered by a 19kW electric motor and its bollard pull is roughly 3,000Nm, which is plenty for manoeuvring or emergency brake actions. Load Master is working on 12m and 15m versions too. Visit www.load-master.nl to find out more.

“In terms of trends, every customer has their own wishes,” says van der Velde. “We respond to this by listening and working with the client to realise their dreams.”

At Van den Hoven Jachtbouw, the trend is towards larger boats that offer better use of space and a high degree of comfort.

BUILDING BIGGER

“We’re seeing more and more demand for larger yachts,” Michelle van den Hoven told *IBI*. “Next year we’ll release a 21m vessel from our Executive Line for the first time, but our smallest model, the Executive 1500 Mk2, is still very popular.”

Van den Hoven introduced the third unit in its steel-hulled Executive 1500 Mk2 series earlier this year. The 15m yacht has two spacious cabins – both with double bed and bathroom. The owner’s cabin even boasts a walk-in closet. “We believe that no other 15m yacht has more space than ours,” van den Hoven claims.

The first Executive 1700 Mk2 was launched in July. Designed by Arnold de Ruijter, the yacht’s distinctive features are the windows on the side of the ship, level with the owner’s cabin. Its layout is similar to the 1500 Mk2, but with a small third cabin.

“One of the biggest trends right now is to have as many large windows as possible,” says van den Hoven. “We’ve been using structural glazing since 2017, even in the curves of the salon window, so that you get a 360° view. We’re also using a larger window in the 17m and 21m models.”

Acting on specific client requests, Van den Hoven is now turning its sights on the aluminium powerboat market. Together with designer René van der Velden, best known for his work at Moonen Shipyards, the company has reached the final stage of development of the Voyager 1800 – an 18m fast displacement yacht that will be propelled by twin six-cylinder Volvo Penta 725hp engines for speeds of up to 21kt. Dutch naval architect Fred van Dorrenstijn is working on the first 18m hull and there

are plans to increase the range with various models from 15m-24m.

“With our new fast-sailing aluminium concept, we are trying to take a new route, but this will not mean that the steel Executive line will be put in the background,” van den Hoven claims. “Constant innovation is very important.

A product that is good must continue to develop, because it can always be better.”

Also keen to enter the motoryacht market is KM Yachtbuilders (KMY), best-known for its Bestevaer line of custom-built aluminium sailing yachts from 48ft-100ft. “I believe the sailing market in general is shrinking a bit,”

says Eeuwe Kooi, yard owner. “Sailors are getting older and young people prefer to divide their time with other things.

“We have not launched it yet, but we’re working on a KMY motoryacht,” Kooi confides. “We’re talking with two well-known Dutch naval design offices to see what the motorboat will look like, but it will have a distinctive and recognisable look, built from aluminium, with a maximum length of 15m. The focus group are ‘former sailors’ but we hope that others will like the design too.”

KMY hopes to introduce the new yacht at boot Düsseldorf 2019.

STEADY DOES IT

Despite challenges in the sailboat market, Kooi told *IBI* that 2018 was a year of steady progress. The company delivered three small yachts in the Bestevaer 45 PURE range and two custom yachts of 49ft and 66ft. “We’ve just started construction of a Bestevaer 72 and a fast transport tender for a river in Uruguay, which is a very exciting project as it is not something we do often.”

Early next year, KMY will start building a 77ft exploration yacht for a well-known sailor. The company will also deliver the 78ft *Nanuq*, an 85-tonne polar explorer that it has been working on for almost three years. **IBI**

“Constant innovation is very important. A product that is good must continue to develop, because it can always be better”



Dutch superyacht firms exploring new territories to stay ahead of the pack



THE DUTCH SUPERYACHT SECTOR IS BOOMING- BUT BUT FAR FROM RESTING ON THEIR LAURELS, BUILDERS AND SUPPLIERS ARE LOOKING BEYOND THEIR COMFORT ZONES TO MAINTAIN MOMENTUM

WORDS: ROBERT WIELAARD

◀ Amsterdam is becoming increasingly popular as a superyacht destination in its own right

The 2018 Monaco Yacht Show had yet to open that day when Heesen Yachts was already briefing 200 or so superyacht industry types on its good fortunes. The breakfast event at a swank Monaco hotel quickly felt like a victory lap. A fast, shaky video. Indigo laser beams stabbing the darkened hall. Loud, thumping music. Then, silence and from a raised lectern CEO Arthur Brouwer let fly the sunny news.

Heesen expects its turnover in the years ahead to rise by 30-40% from some €150m today. Six deliveries made 2017 a banner year. In 2018 Heesen has 12 yachts in build and will soon start on its first 80m; a 57m Explorer Yacht of 1400GT and a 57m aluminium-hulled of 800GT.

In the Dutch industry, Brouwer's jubilant outlook is not a one-off. As he spoke, Amels announced the sale of a 74m Limited Editions, a yacht that in three years has become the world's most successful in the 75m segment.

"Dutch builders and their suppliers face the future with confidence," says Jeroen Sirag, export director of HISWA Holland Yachting Group, which comprises

35 builders, suppliers and industry partners. The Dutch saw their market share in the value of global superyacht deliveries surge from 21.6% in 2016 to almost 30% in 2017. They took 23 orders in 2017 and launched 21 superyachts valued at €1.19bn. In other words: the price of a Dutch yacht of 30m and up these days averages €57m, the highest ever recorded.

To retain high-end market leadership, the Dutch have taken on a market-disrupting mood, with impressive results.

BOLD MOVES

At Monaco, Britain's Sunseeker picked Icon Yachts to build its next flagship – the Sunseeker-161 – in aluminium and with Van Oossanen Naval Architects' fuel-saving Fast Displacement Hull Form. Sales director Sean Robertson said Sunseeker needs to build bigger and in metal. This first foray into metal hulls via a Dutch builder is a bold move, especially amid the uncertainty created by Britain's impending exit from the EU. But then, 60% of Sunseeker's business is with continental Europe. →



SUPERYACHTS | NETHERLANDS



▲ Amels' 242 with exterior styling by Tim Heywood



▶ A SeaXplorer 75m by Damen

Icon builds new yachts to 80m and up, handles refits and reconversions and just added a shed of 130m x 30m x 28m. Van Oossanen patented its FDHF in 2009. It secures speed efficiency over a yacht's entire speed range. In vessels of 15m and up, the FDHF achieves fuel savings up to 20%. Last year, Van Oossanen began marketing the Fast Displacement XL hull.

REFIT REVISITED

Dutch builders and suppliers are putting refits at the top of their to-do lists after years of cranking out high-end yachts that never returned for upkeep or refits. That business ended up at Mediterranean yards, notably La Ciotat Shipyards near Marseille. It now handles 10% of the global refit business.

"Building yachts was always our core business," says Feadship marketing and brand manager Farouk Nefzi. "Refits are a new business model. What we are seeing is Feadship refits done by outsiders that can be of a poor quality. That harms our name and a yacht's value."

Huisfit, the refit arm of Royal Huisman, is working on two massive schooners: the 93m (305ft) Lürssen-

built *Eos* and the 90m (295ft) *Athena* Royal Huisman delivered in 2004. Last year, Royal Huisman acquired refit room near Amsterdam – the former Holland Jachtbouw site – and ample refit capacity in northern Germany.

Balk Shipyard – the Netherlands' premier refitter with an annual turnover of up to €20m – plans to add 1,000m x 300m of dock space by 2022. "That's three times bigger than what we have now," says CEO Daan Balk. "I expect my turnover to double."

The HISWA Holland Yachting Group trade lobby used the Monaco show to explain to the industry its unusual collaboration with the Port of Amsterdam to make the Dutch capital a superyacht destination, replete with new build and refit facilities.

SUPERYACHT HUB

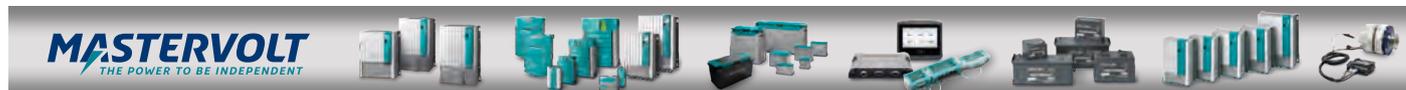
"Shipbuilding is in our DNA," says Alma Prins, Port of Amsterdam's commercial director Superyachts. "We want to build a superyacht hub with builders and suppliers in Amsterdam." She estimates a superyacht yard can generate 200 direct jobs and another 200 for suppliers.

Sirag says attracting global superyachts to Amsterdam is bound to stimulate "our industry, especially the refit sector." Linked to the Port of Amsterdam promotion, is the idea to create a northern European superyacht route linking Amsterdam to such cities as London, Oslo, Bergen and Stockholm. As word of the superyacht campaign spread this year, already 10 superyachts visited the Dutch capital, says Prins.

Feadship has been a catalyst. In 2015, it asked the port about good access to the open sea for deliveries and sea trials. It opens its Port of Amsterdam facility – its fourth yard – in early 2019. Amsterdam is linked to the North Sea by a deep, 21km canal. Its port authority has initially identified a dozen or so superyacht locations, some near the city's historic heart.

Drawing superyachts up north is rooted in market data showing the emergence of new, younger, more adventurous owners – people for whom Mediterranean and Caribbean parties hold little fascination. "Superyacht owners are increasingly looking for something new and original," says Sirag. "Amsterdam is perfectly placed, in terms of geography and refit facilities, to benefit from this sea change in attitudes."

Damen Shipyard, owner of Amels and global shipbuilding giant active in 120 countries, is becoming a huge market-disruptor. Since 2010, it has built nine yacht support craft and will launch at least three SeaXplorer yachts in the years ahead. In designing the latter, Damen – annual turnover €2bn – has reeled in the expertise of Isle of Wight-based EYOS Expeditions that stages hundreds of expeditions a year to isolated



places, hot and cold. EYOS has infused the SeaExplorer with true expedition DNA.

“Amels has my respect!,” says EYOS founding partner Rob McCallum. “They just took a back seat and let us do our work. We generated 150 design points.” Damen’s first SeaXplorer, available from 55m-100m, sets sail in 2019. The 2nd in 2020, the 3rd in 2021. Significantly, Damen has put the bar high. The term ‘explorer’ (or ‘expedition’) yacht is meaningless if the vessel operates outside design specifications – a very common occurrence.

At a minimum, an explorer yacht has propulsion to crush through significant ice, extra storage for gear, fuel, provisions, staff and guides to last – in the SeaXplorer case – 40 days without a port call. It has a hull that can take a licking in heavy seas. And at least two helicopters in case one breaks down on ice or uninhabited land, miles from the yacht.

OUT OF THE COMFORT ZONE

At Monaco, Royal Huisman left its comfort zone of large, classic super sailing yachts. It introduced its Pura project that lets buyers shape the hull, deck and superstructure, but not the mid-section of a 40m performance sailing yacht. There are different bow and stern profiles and interior layouts.

Pura was Royal Huisman’s second outing from its comfort zone in 2018. In the summer, it announced that “after many hours of deep conversation over a period of years” it will build a motoryacht, called Project Phi. Meanwhile, Royal Huisman’s Rondal unit is engineering cutting-edge solutions for sail and motor yachts. Right now, it is thinking out loud about electric winches with variable maximum load levels.

CUTTING DELIVERY TIMES

Spec-building has become more common in the Dutch industry to slash delivery times in half – it can take three years to build a yacht costing tens of millions. Faster deliveries also benefits investments.

For its new 80m project, Heesen Yachts developed a patented I-Beam construction format. Brouwer says it is easy to underestimate the financial risks Dutch builders take. He told his Monaco breakfast audience: “The risk is not always a matter of design. There are always substantial risks in global threats and trade frictions.”

Nor does market-disruption guarantee success. In 2006, the 87m *Maltese Falcon* was launched bearing the 3-masted Dynarig, an extreme design by Gerard Dykstra, founder of Dykstra Naval Architects. The second Dynarig appeared this year on the 106m *Black Pearl* built by Oceanco. A 12-year hiatus! The computer-steered Dynarig is a very efficient source of propulsion, but it appears not an extremely popular one – yet. So, has its time finally come? Will we see more soon? Oceanco and Dykstra managing director Thys Nikkels are staying mum for now. **IBI**

“The risk is not always a matter of design. There are always substantial risks in global threats and trade frictions”



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THE DUTCH MARINE EQUIPMENT SECTOR IS RELISHING INCREASING DEMAND FROM OEMS KEEN TO OFFER CUSTOMERS THE VERY BEST IN FUNCTION AND ONBOARD COMFORT

WORDS: BELINDA SNELL

Dutch suppliers of nautical equipment are reporting healthy sales in 2018, with demand for cleverly designed, easy-to-use products that improve the overall boating experience rising at yards, distributors and retail outlets across the country. Exports appear to be growing too.

“The number of newcomers to boating is still rather low in Holland, but we’ve just had the best summer in 50 years and boaters have had plenty of opportunities to enjoy their time on the water,” says Twan Bogert, CEO of ASA Boot Electro. “Our sales are up by 5-10%.”

ASA Boot Electro is a wholesaler of technical products, materials and systems for yacht-builders, installers, service centres and watersport retailers. The company focuses on advice, sales and support for electrical and hydraulic systems onboard motor and sailing boats, superyachts and small commercial vessels.

“We’re getting more inquiries for hydraulic systems and stabiliser systems,” Bogert says. “Comfort on board is also very important.”

Of the 30-35 brands that ASA Boot Electro represents, Side-Power thrusters, Vimar electrical components and Victron Energy systems are selling particularly well, he says. Linssen, Mulder, Contest and Royal Huisman are among the group’s biggest OEM clients.

IMPROVED SALES

“A number of yards have told us that they have strong order books for 2019, so we’re expecting another increase in turnover of around 10% next year,” Bogert says.

At air-con specialist Clion Marine, reducing onboard power loads and silent operation are the company’s main goals. Clion makes reverse cycle inverter-driven chillers that produce cooling and heating from one machine. With no peak load during start-up, the chillers have a low power consumption



◀ Clion Marine’s self-contained aircon units are ideal for the independent cooling of individual quarters and smaller yachts

and automatic capacity modulation that minimises the amount of energy used.

“We recently supplied a multiple chiller system with a capacity of 158kW on the refit of a beautiful classic 58m motoryacht built by Amels,” says Othni Rigot, sales engineer. “A separate system was also used to cool the shore converters.”

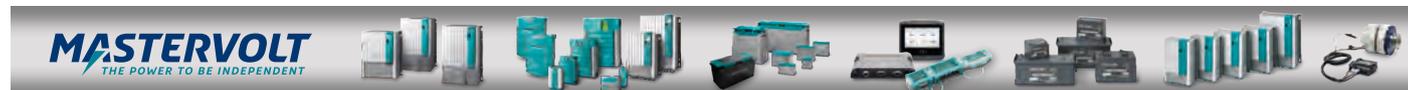
Rigot told IBI that OEMs appreciate the benefits of the inverter technology utilised throughout Clion’s range, allowing for modulated cooling capacities and quiet, energy-efficient operation.

Clion Marine is now looking forward to the METSTRADE launch of a new CMM monitoring

system that allows users to control the air-con on their yacht remotely from a desktop, smartphone or tablet. With the appropriate authorisation, Clion’s technical specialists can investigate the system anywhere in the world and check and diagnose the status of equipment. “With this feature, Clion Marine can secure optimal onsite support anywhere in the world,” says Rigot.

“Our customers only want three things,” Mark ➔

“A number of yards have strong order books for 2019, so we’re expecting another increase in turnover of around 10% next year”



Rutgers, CEO at Allpa Marine Equipment, told *IBI*. “Quality, support and speed.”

Allpa is an independent wholesaler and distributor of technical marine products whose portfolio includes everything from steering controls, motor equipment, propellers, shafts and generators, to hatches, deck fittings, boat seats and other associated items. The company prides itself on its well-balanced range of stock, as shops – and OEMs in particular – require just-in-time delivery. Around 10,000 items are listed in the Allpa catalogue, and its warehouse in Nijmegen, near the German border, stocks more than 25,000 individual items.

“The Dutch market is growing again, albeit step by step,” says Rutgers. “Our German subsidiary is also showing careful growth. Quality products, quick delivery and personal attention are key to success.”

QUALITY, SUPPORT AND SPEED

Rutgers told *IBI* that Allpa’s sales in the first half of 2018 were up 5% compared to the same time last year – that’s off the back of a particularly strong 2017, one that saw revenues jump by 9%.

“Since the back end of April there’s been a substantial uptick in business with generators, motor equipment, controls and other technical products now being sold in substantial numbers, resulting in a surge for the business,” Rutgers says.

The months of March and early April were impacted by unseasonably cold weather, he explains, which resulted in customers launching boats with little maintenance carried out in spring. Allpa is now reaping the rewards as owners catch up on essential upkeep and repairs. Allpa has enjoyed a long relationship with

a number of key brand partners over the years. This year it is celebrating its 30-year anniversary with Spax (former Johnson Pumps) and 25 years representing Seastar Solutions (formerly Teleflex).

“Business has been fairly good for us,” Ton van Dompsele at Dintra Transmissies told *IBI*. Dintra is a global supplier of yacht equipment whose products are aimed at motorboats up to around 20m and sailing boats up to 30m. “We’ve seen our turnover grow by well over 12% this year so far.

“As we are active in both the replacement/repair business as well as new-builds, we have the impression that most of the growth in turnover has come from the results of delayed regular service,” he says. “In recent years, especially from 2008 to 2014, we found that many boat owners didn’t get their installations serviced in the required manner. Instead, they tried to save money by either doing the maintenance themselves or postponing service to the next year and then to the year thereafter. This, rather than hiring a professional mechanic to do the maintenance when it is needed.

“We expect that this delayed service (which results in more extensive and more expensive damage than would normally occur) will continue for a few years to come.”

Until then, Dintra will continue to focus on maintaining high levels of service, replenishing stock, and offering advice and solutions to customers. Dintra also manufactures its own range of Python-Drive CV driveshaft systems that are sold through distributors worldwide. “Our Python-Drive business has seen steady growth over the past 10 years,” says van Dompsele, adding that sales have come from as far afield as China, Thailand and Chili.

PRODUCT INNOVATION

“About 80-90% of our export is Python-Drive product. Domestic sales have been steady over the past years, but there is a shift from complete products like marine gearboxes to spare parts,” he says.

Babette van Waes at Vetus told *IBI* that thrusters are ‘a big thing’ at the moment, and that new product development over the last 12 months should give sales an added boost going forward. Vetus supplies boatbuilders, retailers and dealers with technical equipment for boats 6m-25m, with subsidiaries in 17 countries. The company has around 4,000 technical items in its portfolio that are mostly designed or partly designed by its own engineering team.

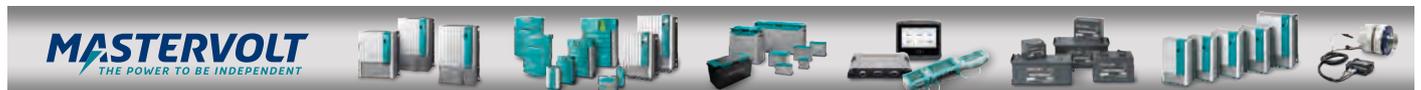
“We’ve launched numerous new products,” van Waes says. “For instance, our new F-line engines, the Maxwell Tasman series of winches, new all-purpose tanks, new models of our traditional electric bow thrusters, the GX-line of generators, and of course our new BOW PRO thruster.”

▼ Allpa stocks over 25,000 items at its warehouse in Nijmegen



TON VAN DOMPSELE
DINTRA TRANSMISSIES

In recent years, many boat owners tried to save money by doing maintenance themselves or postponing service to the next year – instead of hiring a professional



EQUIPMENT | NETHERLANDS



► Gianluca Silvestri, business unit manager at Thetford Marine



Described as a ‘game changer’ for the industry, Vetus BOW PRO thrusters are fitted with proven induction technology, making the use of carbon brushes obsolete. As a result, the thruster is very quiet and has indefinite run-time. The AC induction motor is controlled by the Vetus MCV motor controller. This in-house-engineered motor controller can handle 12V, 24V and AC motors, making the BOW PRO suitable for almost all boats.

“Due to the launch of many innovative products, we expect strong growth in 2019,” van Waes says.

Sun Marine Seats makes wheelhouse and other chairs for the commercial and superyacht industries. “We make chairs for yachts of at least 35m and up,” says Victor Willems, the company’s managing director. “We only provide custom products. Sometimes clients want a particular kind of leather. Or the chair’s height has to be adjusted.

“What we are increasingly seeing is a more demanding client,” he says. “For instance, more clients want arm rests with more controls, like tracking balls to work the radar and other screens.”

RESPONDING TO CLIENT DEMANDS

Sun Marine Seats works with German seat-maker Recaro, a world-class brand founded in 1906. It transforms Recaro automotive seats into maritime seats. “We deliver anything a client demands,” says Willems. “We work from standard Recaro chairs and custom-finish them by making the pedestals, footrests and rails that go underneath the chairs. We have the complete production in our own hands.”

At Thetford Marine, a global supplier of cooking, cooling and sanitation products under the Thetford, Norcold and Tecma brands, product innovation is critical to its success. “We exceeded last year’s performance by double digits,” says Gianluca Silvestri, business unit manager. “Our plans for 2019 are also very ambitious due to positive signals coming from the market. OEMs are reporting strong order books and distributors are investing in spare parts.”

Thetford is based in Otricoli, Italy, but its European

◀ Tecma’s X-Light S toilet and bidet

headquarters are in Etten-Leur in the Netherlands. “The Dutch market is doing really well,” says Silvestri. “There’s solid growth in terms of new-builds, the boats themselves are getting bigger, and news of a strategic alliance between a British and Dutch yard [Sunseeker and Icon Yachts] is further proof of this trend.

The aftermarket is also doing well, he says, as consumers continue to spend money improving their existing boats with new equipment.

Last year Tecma introduced a new macerator toilet with custom carbon fibre for an extra modern, sleek look. ►

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“The X-Light S, with super special, customised and exclusive textures, is the ultimate expression of lifestyle and luxury,” says Silvestri. It is also ultra-light, yet super strong. The weight of the bowl is just 2kg, which, with the other components, means a toilet of less than 7kg in weight – some 19kg lighter than most traditional models.

Tecma has also launched a taller version of its small ceramic macerator Compass toilet. “The range of compact toilets is now complete and offers boatbuilders the opportunity to elevate their level of onboard sanitation on a low budget,” Silvestri adds.

At Mastervolt, a Dutch subsidiary of Power Products LLC in the US, sales in the Netherlands – albeit small, accounting for just 10% of the business – are significantly up compared to this time last year, driven by the addition of the Blue Sea Systems and Lenco brands to the product portfolio. “We’re also seeing double-digit growth in Germany, France and Italy, and the Nordic region is showing above average growth too,” says Mastervolt’s Ton de Winter.

PORTFOLIO EXPANSION

Mastervolt offers integrated electrical systems that generate, store, convert or manage alternating and direct current. This includes digital switching products, energy storage by means of Lithium Ion batteries, and chargers/inverters that are both efficient and user-friendly. The company also handles distribution in the EMEA for Power Products Marine Solutions, offering a range of brands like Ancor, BEP, Blue Sea Systems, CZone, Lenco, Marincor and ProMariner.

“Another driver of growth is the increasing adoption of digital switching into the marine market,” says de Winter, adding that Mastervolt’s popular CZone solution meets that need.

“We’re seeing a positive trend in total power system solutions, supported by Lithium battery technology along with simplification of installation. Traditional

wiring is often cumbersome. With digital switching, you overcome this. Systems are more and more controlled and monitored by digital switching. It replaces switch and fuse panels with networked digital switch interfaces.”

Mastervolt has always been at the forefront of new product design and development. In the last 12 months, the company has launched the ChargeMaster Plus series, an all-in-one battery charger that can charge virtually any combination of three batteries in a fast and safe way and works anywhere in the world; the Mac Plus DC/DC Battery Charger, a high power and compact DC-DC battery charger with extreme low power consumption at idle in 12V and 24V models; and the Alpha Compact Alternator, a very compact and high power alternator solution that works with Mastervolt’s Alpha Pro III regulator and is an ideal expansion when a second alternator is needed on a standard prepared engine.

“Our goal is to make all our LED solutions as durable as possible and improve their energy efficiency even more,” says Mienco Dijkstra, founder of marine lighting specialist NauticLED. “Our new G4 premium LED bulbs are a good example of this vision as they produce up to 50% more light output with the same power consumption.”

INSTANT SAVINGS

NauticLED’s latest products can be used from 10V-36V DC and some have been optimised to 10V-40V DC. “We’ve developed new RGBW down lights and launched several new bulb models,” says Dijkstra. “We’re constantly improving our electronics and upgrading our listed products.

“Our retrofit bulbs are increasingly used in the bigger boats and superyachts,” he adds. “Most ships have a 24V AC board system, which makes the transition to LED more complicated.

“Our bulbs contain an internal rectifier which ➔



Roodberg’s first-ever hydraulic boat trailer, built in 1978, is still going strong. The design hasn’t changed in 40 years. Peter de Jong, Roodberg’s current owner, told *IBI* that its main use is for moving boats in and out of winter storage. “You can park so nicely with it,” he says. “It easily saves 20cm-30cm of space per boat, giving you an extra metre of rental space.” With less effort or manpower required to move boats, Roodberg’s hydraulic trailer also helps yards and marinas to lower their operating costs. It’s little wonder that the Roodberg trailer has been in use for 40 years. Its reliability and long-service life is testament to that.



rectifies the AC to a DC power.”

The biggest advantage of the use of LED retrofit lights is an instant saving of 80-90% in energy costs. Because LED lights produce almost no heat, the effect on energy consumption is significant. The air-con, for example, does not need to cool the 90% heat production coming from old halogen lights, resulting in much lower maintenance costs and fuel consumption, Dijkstra claims.

RotorSwing Marine, inventor and manufacturer of the electric Magnus effect stabiliser, has improved on its own invention to provide significant roll damping up to 25kt through the adaptive patented ‘RAKE’ function. Just like fighter airplanes, the rotors can now adaptively and proportionally fold backwards to minimise drag. This lowers fuel consumption and is excellent for long trips.

FINDING NEW MARKETS

The most significant reason for incorporating this option, however, was to make the RotorSwing available for fast cruising ships up to 25kt. “The ability to also function as a high-speed cruising stabiliser will expand the scope of potential customers to owners of fast cruising yachts, typically those sailing in coastal regions like the Med and other areas beyond Europe,” RotorSwing’s Rien van den Bergh told *IBI*.

The new generation RotorSwing stabiliser is also an ideal option for refit because little space is needed for the installation and little weight is added to the yacht.

Van den Bergh told *IBI* that demand for conventional RotorSwing stabilisers was stable throughout 2018, but mainly from the Netherlands, Belgium and Germany. “We expect a broadening of the market due to our innovative efforts in developing the ZeroSpeed/High Speed cruising stabiliser,” he says.

“We’re picking up signals that some Dutch companies are investing in aluminium yacht designs that are capable of higher cruising speeds”

“New yacht owners demand that their vessels are able to cruise at higher speeds while not being overly expensive to refuel. These are typically the vessels within the speed range of which the new RotorSwing stabiliser is designed.”

The new generation of high-speed RotorSwing stabilisers should open the way to boatbuilders that demand a wide range of stabilisation capability without the added weight of a gyro stabiliser.

“We’re also picking up signals from the Dutch yachting industry that some companies are investing in aluminium yacht designs which are capable of higher cruising speeds. We feel we are ready to join in this development,” van den Bergh adds.

Noise and vibration consultancy specialists Van Cappellen says the success of the Dutch market has meant that one of the major challenges the sector will face in 2019 will be finding enough skilled workers to maintain the quality of increasingly large vessels.

“2018 has been a very good year for us,” Treeske van Cappellen told *IBI*. “We expanded our team again and sales are up compared to last year due to the increasing number of projects in The Netherlands and Italy. Our focus for 2019 will be to invest in our teambuilding in order to keep quality of our work to the highest possible standard.”

Van Cappellen Consultancy has been providing specialist services in noise and vibration control for luxury yachts and

merchant vessels since 1984. The company has worked on hundreds of sail and motor yachts over the years, ranging from 20m-140m.

“*Flying Dagger* is one of the most recent projects we worked on quite successfully,” says van Cappellen, referring to the 49m Rossinavi superyacht that launched at the Italian builder’s Viareggio yard this year. The yacht received a RINA reward for the quietest yacht in her class (semi-displacement, 31kt).

As for specific trends, van Cappellen says that noise and vibration limits are becoming stricter, and that owners are increasingly conscious of acoustic privacy and footfall noise.

“The challenge we see in 2019 for the Dutch market is to find skilled workers and to maintain high quality levels when dealing with increasingly large vessels. The number of yachts over 100m is still growing,” van Cappellen adds.

Growing demand for electrical onboard power is expected to lift sales at WhisperPower by around 25% this year. Roel ter Heide, owner and director, told

► RotorSwing’s ZeroSpeed stabiliser now comes with a patented ‘RAKE’ function for fast cruising yachts up to 25kt. At higher speeds, the rotors retract back against the hull to minimise resistance

