have long been an admirer of the Maxi brand. Designer Pelle Petterson’s ability to blend speed, good looks and solidity into a yacht was often unparalleled and I would still hold up the Maxi 1100 as one of the finest yachts of its type. It was therefore a great shame when production ended in 2011, following long-standing financial problems.

News that Poland’s Delphia would take over the brand a year later seemed worthy of cautious optimism, particularly once it became clear Delphia would retain the services of Petterson as designer. Now in his mid 80s, he made his name as an Olympic medallist in the Star and Soling class, before branching out into design. Early on, his prodigious talent was showcased in the design of the Volvo P1800, an iconic Swedish sports car roughly equivalent to our Jaguar ‘E’ Type. Later he chose to focus on yacht design and a number of iconic boats followed. Understandably, Petterson is something of a national treasure in his native Sweden and even has his own line of clothing these days. I was fortunate to meet him in 2011, the very week that Maxi went out of business, in fact.

Naturally in a reflective mood, he pointed to the Swedish tendency toward perfectionism as the problem and said that, in Maxi’s case, far too much time and money had been spent developing one new boat – the 1200.

Fast forward five years and Delphia is producing a version of that very yacht. In many ways it looks like a match made in heaven.

As a Swedish boatbuilder, Maxi had an illustrious reputation for fast cruisers. Sam Jefferson finds little has changed with the brand’s move to Poland.

**NOTHING LOST IN TRANSLATION**
of Pelle Petterson combined with the extreme efficiency and cost effectiveness of Delphia. In the past some people have sneered at Polish boatbuilders, but there really is no reason for this. In fact, every third yacht produced in Europe these days is built in Poland. They clearly know what they are doing. For Delphia, the acquisition of the Maxi brand gives it access to a market populated by the likes of X-Yachts and Dehler. The question is, does it work?

Swede dreams

First impressions are pretty good. The design of this 40-footer is modern and progressive, but with enough individuality styling to make her stand out from the crowd. In common with so many

plumb bow and vertical transom with moderate chines that allow a good deal of heel before becoming immersed. She features a 2.7m, L-shaped keel (although a sportier 2.3m torpedo keel is also available) and a noticeably deep, high-aspect rudder, hinting at high performance, particularly when married to the generous fractional rig. She has fairly moderate beam, suggesting an easily manageable boat. But while the cockpit feels big and features a well proportioned bathing platform that folds up to create a nicely enclosed space. There is a generous amount of storage, while the pair of black carbon wheels come as standard and certainly give the feeling you are on a sporty yacht. The decks are uncluttered, with all running rigging hidden from view beneath channels set into the deck. The most notable and dominant feature, however, is unquestionably the mainsheet set up in the cockpit.

Surprisingly for a yacht at the performance end of the cruising market, there is no traveller, and the old dilemma of what to do with the mainsheet has been solved by placing a single electric winch in the centre of the cockpit. This is raised to waist height by being placed on the cockpit table and means it can be easily accessed from either helming position. To make things even easier, push-button controls are positioned right next to the twin wheels, so you only have to lift a finger to trim the mainsail. The genoa is controlled by twin winches directly in front of the two helming positions, meaning all basic controls and tuning possibilities can be easily accessed from either

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I have always maintained that just because you are cruising you shouldn’t have to settle for some dog slow boat that is absolute misery to handle. Maxi takes that ethos and runs with it. The solidity of the yacht also means she is exciting, reassuring and easy to handle in rough conditions. She is a yacht you could take bluewater cruising with confidence, yet she would also be at home pottering around the Med or racing around the cans. Delphia has managed to keep production costs down but in retaining Pelle Petterson has also kept the essential ‘Maxi’ character. This certainly doesn’t feel like a scooped-up Delphia. I quite liked the central winch arrangement and it certainly makes the yacht extremely easy to sail singlehanded, although some may bemoan the lack of a traveller. I was also surprised that a bow-thruster came as standard, as this seemed like overkill on a 40ft yacht and damages her racing credentials slightly. That said, it seems churlish to complain. The interior is well put together, modern and solid, with arguably the best heads compartment in its class. All in all, I was impressed.

**THE SPEC**

- **LOA:** 39ft 11in (12.2m)
- **LWL:** 34ft 9in (10.6m)
- **Beam:** 10ft 4in (3.14m)
- **Draft:** 6ft 6in (2.0m) (deep bulb) or 6ft 8in (2.07m)
- **Ballast:** 6,900kg (15,212lb)
- **Displacement:** 24,700kg (54,488lb)
- **Engine:** Volvo D1-30 28hp
- **Sail area:** 120sq ft (18.64m²)
- **Sail area/ displacement:** 130 degrees
- **PRICE (BASE):** £180,000
- **As tested:** £180,000
- **UK Dealer:** Regatta Yachts

**ALTERNATIVE YACHTS**

- **X-Yachts X4**
  - **PRICE (BASE):** £203,000
  - **PRICE (BASE):** £203,000
  - **As tested:** £203,000
  - **UK Dealer:** Regatta Yachts

**DEHLER 38/42**

Dehler lies close to Maxi on the performance scale and the Judel/Vrolijk-designed 42 is brand-spanking new, with sleek styling and a high level of comfort at a very competitive price. There is no 40- footer in the range.

**J/122E**

Near the top of the performance-cruiser spectrum is the J/122E, which combines serious racing credentials with a surprisingly high level of comfort. She has proved a consistently strong performer on the coding circuit.