

## GOOD START FOR THE COMMUTER RANGE

ASKELOADDEN (legal company name Henrik Askviks Sønner A/S) is the leading powerboat-builder in Norway. The company has more than 100 years of experience in building boats of different types and sizes. During its history, the shipyard located in Hagavik has produced and sold more than 250 thousand boats and is globally famous and recognized by marine professionals and be water recreation enthusiasts.

Askeladden's boats were always built especially for operating in heavy Northern conditions, and have a reputation among craftsmen for the best designs, clever details, and tailor-made technical solutions, which have won many awards and prizes.

Unlike other family-owned companies, Askeladden was not afraid to employ the best foreign designers and ship engineers, and the company develops and tests its boat hulls in the Research Institutes of Sweden and Norway. As a result the powerboats, actually very advanced for their time, were created to be the leading popular models in the boat market for many years.

In 2002, Henrik Askvik, the shipyard founder's grandson and the company owner, decided to make a range of all-weather powerboats. This was a daunting task: by that time, many powerboats designed for the same purpose had achieved great success in the market of Finland including Targa (Botnia Marin), Minor (Sargo Boats), and Nord Star



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Patrol (Linex Boat), as well as Anytec and Paragon in Sweden. In Norway, we couldn't see at that time an equivalent, so Askeladden dared to challenge the other shipyards. However, before becoming a rival to the more experienced players, it needed to consider all the processes and market nuances. In 2004, after two years of continuous research, developments, and the production of prototypes, the company introduced its new creation.

The boat range opened by Askeladden was the Commuter 805 (later the Commuter 8), by today's standards a small boat, with an exclusive design and with an even more impressive sea-going performance. If we can remember, ten years ago Botnia Marin, the inspirer of such projects, owned the largest shaft driven powerboat the Targa 34, Nord Star had a similar 31 ft boat, and Minor had a 28 ft long boat. So the appearance of the 25 ft boat was quite a justified step.

The launch of this model in Norway gradually changed the market balance. The new powerboat with its modern design, without compromising its

operational performance, had many advantages. First was its impressive functionality: a deck-house equipped with both two side and an aft door, three berths inside, a separate toilet, a galley, and of course a whole range of engines with a modern stern-drive and even a double diesel engine capability, which was unavailable for other competitors. In fact, this boat forced others out of the 7-8-m powerboat segment for several years. Over the years, the Commuter 805 has many times been awarded at international maritime exhibitions and has received excellent reviews from the experts, designers, and sailors. The boat has been used both by security services – the police, and by pilots and for long voyages (for example, to Spitsbergen). More than 200 boats were manufactured in total, and can be found today in various parts of the world.

In 2006, the company started to create its flagship – the 11.5 m long powerboat, the Commuter 1105. At that time, one third of the company was bought by American Brunswick. This made it possible to involve the best global engineers



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and scientific companies in its developments. Together with Askeladden, engineers from SeaWay (Slovenia) developed the exterior and overall design, while professionals from Inventas (Norway) worked on the interior and functionalities. As a result, we see transforming rotary sofas, an aft gate, and a new pilot's position, which was recognized as a benchmark at the boat show in Oslo. The US Recaro Nordic series pilot's seat was originally designed especially for this powerboat. For the new boat, different companies offered their top quality products, such as: Helly-Hansen (Norway) – with several options for the passenger sofa, canopy, and some gadgets; Ertec (Norway) – for the windows and hatches, and the complicated bent profile of the side windows and windscreen; and Simrad (Norway) - for the unique (only for this boat) EVO navigation system with a track-point and a remote boat system control and monitoring

unit. On the boat, a 12V mono-bus (the equivalent of a CAN bus for motor vehicles) was installed, and provisions were made for GSM monitoring of the boat's systems on mobile phone displays. Mercury provided the latest Axius control system (with a joystick control) and a Sky Hook DP system for the boat. The boat's hull was designed and tested at the Goteborg Institute lab; moreover, calculations were made for three hull options for different types of propulsion units. Such a fundamental and large-scale approach for a new model creation surpassed the efforts demonstrated earlier by any manufacturer.

This sophisticated and expensive project, second to none on the market, had to create a new niche for all-weather boats – technologically advanced and seaworthy but comfortable powerboats of a superior class. The goals set were very ambitious, and the investments were enormous.





In January 2009, the Askeladden Commuter 1105 (now the Commuter 11) was presented to the public in Oslo. By then, this was perhaps the best powerboat among SUV boats. Sea trials demonstrated its impressive maneuverability and seaworthiness. Furthermore, experts were surprised by the interior space: with a large convertible saloon (2.3 m high overhead), three sliding doors, big windows (with a 2 sq m electrically driven sliding glass roof). Inside the boat, they also saw a fully functional galley with a 120 liter fridge, a sink, and a wall cabinet with a hood. The benchmark driver's position includes an ergonomic Recaro seat with an active shock-absorbing system, and an innovative electric drive steering console with instruments.

The lockable forward cabin has a large wardrobe and plenty of space for storing the personal items of the owner; you could even install a safety locker there. It also has an entertainment system, a TV, portholes and windows and a large circular decklight with built-in blinds and mosquito screens. The boat features the most spacious toilet area in its class: with a shower, stylish wash-basin, and other options on board the powerboat. The aft cabin is also equipped with a toilet and a wash-basin, a wardrobe, and can even have a heated drying cabinet as a separate option. Special attention has been paid to noise insulation, with a double bulkhead separating the engine compartment, plus three kinds of noise and vibration insulation. The manufacturers offer two types of saloon and furniture finishings.

According to Batmagasinet, the Commuter 11 is rightfully considered as the most technologically advanced model in its class. Systems are monitored and controlled in 3 places on the boat or by using a remote control. The boat is equipped with an integrated anti-theft



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and anti-intrusion system, as well as gas and fuel leakage detectors, and all signals can be received by a mobile phone. The heaters and lighting are remotely controlled.

Onboard the boat are forward and aft anchor winches and thrusters, and the boat can be equipped with virtually with all types of engines and drives: Stern Drive, DP Volvo Penta, Zeus POD, etc. In the aft part of the boat you will find a swimming platform and a hydraulically driven crane for a dinghy.

The Commuter 11's hull is vacuum infused — today this is the most advanced method of hull building.

Using this method results in a double structure that is strong and more rigid than traditional methods. The framework includes an extensive longitudinal girder system — a 'spider', which means double the number of longitudinal girders when compared with similar boats from other manufacturers. Surprisingly, the boat weights on average two tons less than its competitors.

The capacity of the fuel tanks is 900 liters, and provisions are made for an increase of up to 1300 liters. With Volvo Penta 370 engines, the boat approaches a speed threshold of 38 knots, which suggests the possibility of achieving 40 knots (75 km/h) with two 400 h.p. propulsion units.





2014 was a make-or-break year for the Commuter range. The year before, the consortium bought out the rights for the production and the brand name from the Norwegian company. Tremendous work was carried out to update and extend the model range. Again, experienced designers and engineers were engaged for the design, and all work has been performed in close cooperation with the Askeladden team and with Henrik Askvikom personally. Both the Commuter boat models will be restyled and re-released as new

Generation II versions, including a completely updated design and layout, and the usage of new materials and technologies. The range of engines has also been widely extended, and new electronic systems have appeared. In re-entering the market, the Finnish shipbuilders have proposed a new brand name – ARCTIC – as well as renaming the 8-m and the 11-m models as the Commuter 25 and the Commuter 35. The first models will be presented in 2016 at the traditional Vene Bat Helsinki boat show.

