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NOVEMBER 2008
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BOATS

OF INTEREST

Jarrett Bay 53

True Carolina Flare

By Dean Travis Clarke

Some North Carolina boatbuilders chose to move away from the quintessential "Carolina" look in recent years, but not Jarrett Bay. Even from a distance, there's no mistaking that knife-like entry, foredeck flare and beautiful woodwork. Jarrett Bay's most recent launch, a

53-footer named *Contango*, was designed specifically for marlin fishing and "couldn't be a more perfect fit," according to its Ocean City, Maryland-based owner, Walt Kuhn.

Kuhn owned a lot of other boats prior to the 53, his latest being a Jarrett Bay 42. "The 42 proved

ideal for the fishing we did at the time," says Kuhn, "mostly chunking for tuna out in the canyons. But when I started focusing more on marlin, I felt we really needed a higher vantage point to see the fish. The elevation on the express bridge just wasn't enough. So I went for the flybridge model, which elevates the captain enough that I don't feel the need for a tower."

Performance

Despite its 62,000-pound displacement, the Jarrett Bay 53 more than holds its own against other fishing rockets out there. At wide-open throttle, she flies across the sea at 44 knots, turning 2,421 rpm and burning 170 gph. And although you probably wouldn't want to burn that much fuel on a regular basis, Kuhn plans to travel far and wide on the boat's 1,100 gallons of fuel. And it's easy to stretch out the range by easing back to less than 30 knots where fuel flow is just under 85 gph.

Capt. Peter DuBose ran this new boat during both the Big Rock and the Hatteras Marlin Club tournaments. "I think the performance aspect I like the most has to be the up-sea ride. It's incredibly dry and smooth. The first time we ran out into six- to eight-foot seas, we slowly came up to speed to see how the boat would handle it. We just kept inching the throttles forward, and before we knew it, we were running straight into it at 28 knots!"

DuBose also warns that, "This boat has instant response. Though it doesn't lean over dramatically in a turn, you still need to be careful not to crank it over too hard at cruising speed, or you take the chance of tossing your guests around."



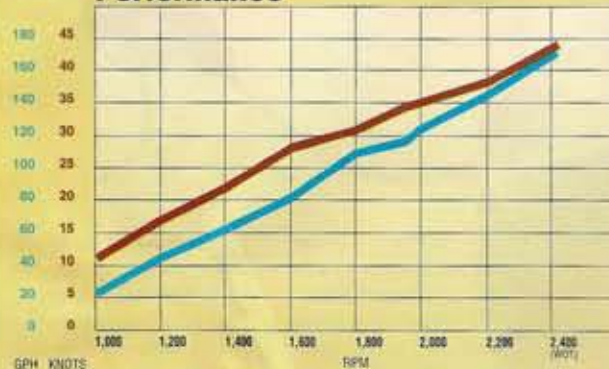
SPECIFICATIONS

LOA	53'2"
BEAM	16'
DRAFT	4'6"
WEIGHT	62,000 pounds
DEADRISE	10 degrees
FUEL	1,100 gallons
WATER	150 gallons
POWER	T 1,500 hp MTU V-10 common-rail diesels



Jarrett Bay Boatworks
Beaufort, North Carolina
252-728-2690
www.jarrettbay.com

Performance



Though *Contango* sports Jarrett Bay's typical sharp bow, it flattens out substantially at the transom, making for a very stable platform in beam-to seas.

"Things got pretty nasty heading back in during the Hatteras Marlin Club tournament one day," says Kuhn. "But we can always find a throttle-setting sweet spot. I judge the ride by whether or not I can mix a day's-end cocktail in the salon while under way. If I can't, we slow down a bit more."

Flybridge

In addition to the obligatory bench seats forward of and alongside the flybridge console, *Contango* boasts a

set of unique bucket seats that provide excellent lateral support in rough seas and are incredibly comfortable. You'll also find

a separate freezer on the flybridge, usually dedicated to storing baits on long journeys. Recently, Jarrett Bay moved to building

electronics consoles that rise from secure hiding places on rams. This 53, however, steps back a bit technology-wise and uses clean and

simple flip-up doors to cover the electronics. You'll also find a recessed area overhead to contain your teaser reels and a beautiful EZ2CY enclosure.

Cockpit

Jarrett Bay enjoys a stellar reputation for its teak cockpit soles and covering boards, and this 53 follows that grand tradition. However, *Contango* also boasts a beautiful and functional mezzanine — unusual on a boat this size. But by removing the transom fish box and putting it under the deck forward of the fighting chair, Jarrett Bay still left room for a huge cockpit, even with the mezzanine. Kuhn



SCOTT TAYLOR (2)

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stipulated that he wanted everyone to be absolutely comfortable when they were not catching fish, and the mezzanine, with its separate air-conditioning unit, goes a long way to help meet that requirement. Additionally, the mezzanine sits high enough so that you can clearly see the entire spread, even when seated.

As you'd expect, the mezzanine also hides a host of fishing and living features such as custom gaff-storage tubes, deep freezes, drink boxes, dry and tackle storage, and even a special bait cooler that lets you transfer baits from the dock to the box in stainless-steel trays.

Engine Room

Like so many things in life, the engine compartment presents a compromise. In order to maintain the low-profile look of the overall boat, you have to skimp somewhere on headroom, and the engine room represents the most likely place. Certainly, all the routine maintenance points rest near at hand on centerline, and no equipment systems are inaccessible. But don't expect to stand upright.



Interior

Kuhn likes his boat to look nice, but be durable enough to allow crew and guests to plop down on the sofa with impunity. To this end, he installs the carpet runners when at sea, and although the upholstery on the furniture looks like suede, it's made from micro-fiber fabrics that resist dirt and stains.

Kuhn also didn't mean for *Contango* to be a "couple's cruiser." So the only double berth you'll find on board is in the master stateroom immediately to port at the base of the stairway, and it comes with

its own private head with shower. Moving forward, over/under single berths line the companionway amidships to starboard, and you find three more singles in the bow. The latter five berths share a single head and shower just aft of the companionway bunks.

Design and Construction

This 53 represents only moderate design changes from past models. "The main changes can be found from the rails up," says Gary Davis, the man who designed the 53. "We added more radius curve to

the front of the house and the cabin sides, and we also raised the sheer line forward, creating a different window line and giving her more pronounced overhangs."

Also, you'll find flawless joinery throughout with the boat's Tricel composite core covered with high-gloss cherry veneers.

Interestingly, most boats today use granite veneers over aluminum honeycomb on countertops to save weight. But the type of granite chosen for this boat has a reputation for being exceptionally brittle when shaved too thinly, so Jarrett Bay used solid, $\frac{1}{16}$ -inch slabs. It's beautiful no matter how you work it.

Built utilizing modern cold-molded construction, the 53 uses three layers of half-inch fir plywood on the hull and three layers of Okoume plywood on the topsides — all encapsulated in resin, then covered inside and out with Alexseal paint. So despite its traditional Carolina lines, the Jarrett Bay 53 resonates with the beat of a 21st-century heart.

ELECTRONICS SUITE

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- Furuno RD30 digital display
- Sirius weather
- Northstar 6100 chart plotter
- Simrad autopilot
- KVH Inmarsat satphone
- Sea Recovery watermaker
- Onan 23 kW generator
- Eskimo ice maker

