



been successful in striking that elusive balance between the art of boat construction and technology. She was here, just shortly after her initial launch, to participate in the Big Rock Marlin Tournament. Her lofty riggers defined a new skyline at the edge of the historic town, and her noticeably Carolina-flared bow juttied out with the perfect balance of form and function.

I couldn't help but glance up at her custom Bausch-American Tower soaring above those of the other sport-fishing boats along the water's edge. The exacting symmetry among her bridge, foredeck, sweeping sheer and cockpit area all contributed to her perfectly balanced profile.

**CONSTRUCTION**

Like all Jarrett Bay cold-molded builds, soon after Gary Davis, a third-generation boatbuilder and the company's visionary designer, had completed her hull drawings, *Blank Check* started taking form on the floor of her construction building by being lofted out to full size. This technique gives the team a chance to have a look at the lines of the boat. Once Ramsey, Davis and the rest of the design team approve, the wood jig stations are constructed, along with the mold. They place Douglas fir stringers in that mold, along with the stem, and three layers of Okoume planking for the bottom and sides. These layers are carefully cut, fitted, placed and then glued in alternating directions, resulting in a very strong final product. "The outcome is certainly lighter than traditional fiberglass construction and allows for increased speeds and efficiency," Ramsey says.

The entire hull structure is then glassed over. Now upside down, since it was built keel up, the hull is flipped over and put

of all of its boats. As I approached *Blank Check*, tied up on the outside T of the Beaufort Town Docks, it was quite evident that the builder had, once again,

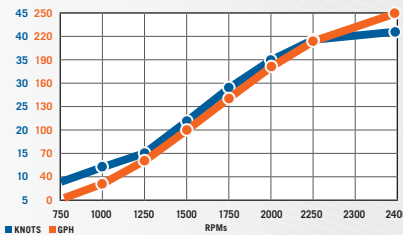


> SPECIFICATIONS

LOA:	77'
BEAM:	21'6"
DRAFT:	5'8"
DISP:	128,000 pounds (dry)
FUEL:	3,200 gallons
WATER:	350 gallons
ENGINES:	2 x 2,600 hp MTU 16V 2000 Series
GENERATORS:	2 x 32 kW Onan



> PERFORMANCE



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# The Art and Pride of the Build

Jarrett Bay's Largest Custom Convertible Balances Technology with Aesthetics

Let's cut to the chase on this one, shipmates. Michelangelo had his *Pieta*, Leonardo da Vinci had his *Mona Lisa*, and now the owner of Jarrett Bay's latest convertible, the 77-foot *Blank Check*, has his masterpiece. And while the comparison of these great art classics to a no-nonsense, horizon-chasing fishing machine might seem like a bit of a stretch, a closer examination of this stunningly beautiful boat reveals the level of ingenuity it takes to bring this kind of boatbuilding art to fruition.

*Blank Check* began on an empty

canvas back in 2010, when her future owner invited Jarrett Bay's president, Randy Ramsey, along with two of his engineers, to Florida for a couple of days of fishing. "He wanted us to see how he used his boat, what his style of fishing was all about, as well as what he required aboard in terms of his family's needs, something as important to this particular owner as having a very serious, tournament-capable boat," Ramsey says. "Once we had that experience — one that really helped us to understand our customer — we knew the right direction to take."

For Ramsey and his veteran crew at the

sprawling, all-inclusive Beaufort, North Carolina-based Jarrett Bay Marine Park, comprising some 175 acres right on the Intracoastal Waterway, the *Blank Check* project took on a very special meaning. "I started out as a charter-boat captain and built my first boat in a tin shed back in 1986. And to see how far we've come in our endeavors to give our owners exactly what they need and want, and for our family here to work with the Doyles on this project, is a source of great pride for us," Ramsey says.

That sense of pride runs deep at Jarrett Bay and is reflected in the uniqueness

on its cradle. "As a cold-molded builder, we start with a blank sheet of paper and have no preconceived notions as to how someone needs to use their boat. We don't have that much invested in any one hull design or build, and in that way, we can be very flexible in making those adjustments, whether big or small, and deliver a truly custom-built boat," Ramsey says. For *Blank Check*, it would be three years before she could splash and strut her stuff with that super-glossy finish courtesy of Alexseal's Cloud White paint.

**INTERIOR**

Of the many successes that went into the build, one of the most satisfying was Jarrett Bay's ability to provide the Doyle family with the kind of living accommodations they desired. *Blank Check* sports a 21-foot, 6-inch beam, which affords plenty of room to create a spacious layout and well-appointed amenities aboard this competitive-fishing platform.

To that end, the sizable salon, whose couches were designed to be wide enough to sleep on, and the galley, which comes with an overabundance of storage space, are about as good as it gets. Abundant storage is an important theme





throughout *Blank Check*, including on the bridge deck, in the cockpit, under the mezzanine and in the engine room.

An ample pantry/washer-and-dryer room to port and a day head to starboard fill out the space. And because the Doyles needed the room, *Blank Check* comes with a five-stateroom, six-head layout, including master, VIP, a pair of guest quarters and captain/crew space.

As one would expect, the engine room is another place on board where the art of boatbuilding took precedence. There is a separate pump room that also houses the two 32 kW Onan gensets. Not only were the workspaces in all areas great for doing daily maintenance, but they also afforded one the ability to get both hands on anything that might need servicing without any knuckle-busting, elbow-bashing or knee-crunching. And of course, both spaces come fully air-conditioned.

### FISHABILITY AND PERFORMANCE

"I'm the son of a son of a son of a sailor, and my dad was a sport-fishing captain as well," Capt. Danny Hearn said as we sat on the massive bridge deck, overlooking the 225-square-foot cockpit, with its custom Release Marine chair below us, as *Blank Check's* two mates readied baits and rigged the rods for tomorrow's Big Rock Blue Marlin outing. The only reason I was able to get on the boat at all was because my test was scheduled for a lay day during the tournament.

Hearn was and is an integral part of this boat's creation, having worked for the Doyle family since 1993. As a good captain would be, he was involved in her build every step of the way with Ramsey

and his team. "It's a rarity in this business to find this kind of relationship and is just one more facet of what makes

*Blank Check* so special," Hearn says.

Given her international travel schedule, Hearn made sure *Blank Check* would have all she needed to be a competitive threat anywhere she fished. Besides the extra fuel capacity of 3,200 gallons, this formidable boat has all the requisite equipment one would expect and lots more.

The bridge overhead sports a double-hinged opening that accommodates up to 16 rigged and ready-to-go rods. Each of the couches forward of the helm has ample storage space, as does the coffee table. A double freezer compartment easily holds

several weeks' worth of frozen foodstuffs up on the bridge and out of the way as well.

Down in the cockpit, there are plenty of in-sole boxes and extra storage and freezers as well beneath the mezzanine couches. A pair of pressurized livewells, each holding up to 125 gallons, keeps even the most fragile baits kicking and ready to go. And when its time to venture into skinny-water areas, her prop tunnels, low shaft angle and 5-foot, 6-inch draft will take the pucker factor down a notch.

"I'm very pleased with her performance. She's very quick out of the hole, turns on fish just fine, and with the underwater exhausts and those submarine doors in the engine room, is very quiet for those wishing to hang in the salon while we're underway," Hearn says.

Given the windy conditions in the area, getting her off the dock on this particular day was something to look forward to. With no glass-calm water outside, she hit the chop easily, and as the seas grew during the day, she was able to muscle her way through with all the assurance and ease her Carolina-built heritage promised. She gracefully leaned into all her turns and answered the helm with speed and efficiency. We were able to get her up to 41 knots at wide-open throttle and flirted with 30 knots at 2,000 rpm.

The Doyle family has a boatbuilder's magnum opus and, according to Hearn's reports, is enjoying the new acquisition to the fullest. And just to start things off right, *Blank Check* delivered a triple-header white-marlin release on her very first day in the offshore waters during the Big Rock Lady Angler Tournament that took place in early June 2013 — an auspicious beginning for this major statement of boatbuilding art.

