

By Reid Bandy



I've never been a person who enjoys an out-of-the-box powerboat. I typically pick up junkers, rip them apart and turn them into what I want. After years of fixing up everything from small center consoles to a Jersey 40, I bought my Jarrett Bay 53, *Reel Flare*. She's hull No. 6 from Jarrett Bay Boatworks in Beaufort, North Carolina.

What I like about Carolina boats is their "bow-high" orientation, deep forefoot and pronounced rocker, which give them flattering following-sea characteristics. I learned from my Jersey 40 that some New Jersey-built boats tend to roll and ride on their chines in a heavy following sea, which can lead to a broach and lying beam-to. Not good when you're running an angry inlet.

I was making trips to Wanchese and Oregon Inlet to look for a North Carolina boat when I stumbled upon my Jarrett Bay 53. It was a "That's it!" moment. The boat had been used hard and chartered heavily, but she was exactly what I wanted. I've made all sorts of modifications to the interior and done extensive work to the exterior, including a complete paint job. She's had three power plants: her original 735-hp Detroit Diesel 8v92, a 1,200-hp MAN LZ and the 1,015-hp Caterpillar C18 she has now. She cruises at 25 knots, and she'll do 30 knots in the corner.

What I love is her ability to trudge where I need her to go and get me back safely — without feeling as if I am going to get my ass handed to me if the weather turns. It's a three-hour trip out to the canyons from Ocean City, Maryland, where I fish for white marlin, tuna and mahi-mahi.

And it doesn't hurt that she's great at raising fish. I enjoy every second I use her. 🐟

*Reid Bandy is the owner of Bandy Boats and Elite Auto Body in Annapolis, Maryland. In addition to his Jarrett Bay 53, Bandy fishes a 35-foot express that he built. He's also restoring a 1955 Rybovich 36 (hull No. 18).*

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