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BY MARTYN CLARK

Mainship Expedition

With sensible fuel consumption, solid construction and a nostalgic design, Mainship's new trawler is well suited to local conditions

Mainship's newest trawler yacht, the 41' Expedition, has decidedly Northwest leanings—despite its St. Augustine, Florida, origins. The big walk-around side decks (covered, of course); the upper and lower helm positions located well forward, with excellent visibility over the bow; the covered aft deck; the opening windows and screens in the main saloon, both forward and along the sides—such features are sure to endear this latest offering to any West Coast mariner familiar with the territory and climate of the region, from Seattle to Prince Rupert.

Taking the trawler out into English Bay and facing a light chop and headwind, I couldn't help but feel slightly nostalgic for my years as a commercial fisherman. Despite the upscale interior, the Expedition reminded me of a "wheelhouse" from the old days: a door adjacent to the helm for the skipper to slide open and have a good look around outside from time to time,

opening windows in every direction (though without the leather straps we would use to drop the windows) and a helm position that didn't require any neck-craning to watch for deadheads or kelp.

Design/Construction Mainship Corporation has been building boats for 30 years, and with a weather eye on the rising cost

of fuel, they have geared the Expedition for strength, modest speeds and lightness. As every extra pound above the waterline would take its toll on the fuel budget, the problem the designer faced in designing the boat was keeping it tough while keeping the weight down. As a consequence, the hull below the waterline is solid, hand-laid fibreglass, while above the waterline, the hull sides and decks have a balsa core for lightness and strength.

The stanchions and rails are a robust 1.25 inches in diameter and made of 316 stainless. (With a boat designed to take the bad weather with the good, lighter stanchions would be false economy.)

Each Mainship is designed through advanced CAD/CAM program modelling. This program allows the designers and engineers to test the hulls in advance of construction ▶



Up top, along with excellent visibility, there's plenty of seating for entertaining while under way.

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Above and bottom: With the helm positioned well forward, the saloon provides plenty of space to spread out and get comfortable, plus two leather lounge chairs and a generous dining area.

and evaluate how the underwater configuration will perform with various horsepower ratings, gear ratios and propeller selections. In addition to performance, the simulation gives the builders an accurate prediction of the pressure being exerted on any given area of the hull. From this data, the fiberglass lay-up schematic and placement of stringers (fore and aft strengthening members) can be calculated along with performance in varying sea conditions and with different power plants.

Another interesting feature of the Mainship construction process is that the company

manufactures the molds for the hull and other fiberglass components on huge five-axis CNC routers that are programmed directly from the engineering model. These machines allow tolerances that were unheard of in boat manufacturing a few years ago and allows Mainship to produce "plugs" of superior quality.

On Deck Starting aloft, the Expedition sports a generous flybridge for a 41-footer. An optional feature is the attractive "summer galley," which includes a barbecue grill, icemaker and sink, with eating areas both inside the





The galley's two-drawer fridge and freezer.

“soft top” and out on the stern deck, which is essentially the roof for the trawler’s main deck “cockpit.” The upper helm position is well forward and provides excellent visibility right up to the flaring bow.

On the main deck, one can access the foredeck by walkways port and starboard, sheltered until just abeam of the lower helm position. Forward of the opening centre windshield is a generous area for guests and family members to spread out or sunbathe with room still for handling the ground tackle. Stanchions and railings extend to a bow pulpit where the anchor is housed at the end of a short bowsprit/anchor platform ready for immediate deployment. Fifty feet of chain and 150 feet of rope are standard equipment.

Interior The main saloon is accessed from either the covered aft deck or side deck through a door adjacent to the helm. With the helm position well forward, the rest of the saloon is given over to a comfortable seating area aft with two leather lounge chairs facing a table and settee. The L-shaped galley is located on the port side, across from the doublewide helm chair (which accommodates both captain and mate under way), and contains a three-burner propane stove/oven, a microwave and a seamanlike two-drawer fridge and freezer.

Under the foredeck and well forward is the master stateroom with a generous queen ▶

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On Board POWER

berth and direct access to a head with a real tub and shower. To port is the guest stateroom with two singles that convert to a double with a cushioned insert.

Fit and finish below decks are designed for low maintenance and practicality: Corian countertops; a teak- and holly-lookalike sole, which is really a hard-wearing laminate; stainless appliances and so on. The leather armchairs and flatscreen TV, however, serve as a reminder that, at the end of the day, this is not a workboat—despite the design's historic workboat roots.

Engines and Performance The Expedition is offered with twin engines or a single unit—Cummins or Yanmar. The test boat had a single 380-horsepower Yanmar diesel, and the advantages of a trawler-style yacht for fuel efficiency became readily apparent as we put her through her paces. Our top speed was 17 knots running downwind and with the tide, and since we did fuel consumption trials both with and against the currents, our calculations are based on an average of the two. At 6 knots, we burned just over 2 U.S. gallons per hour; at 8 knots,

just over three; and at 13 knots, just under 15 gallons an hour.

Since the water was relatively calm, it was difficult to gauge the trawler's performance in choppy seas, but when we encountered the odd wake of passing speedboats, she handled the disturbance with very little uneasiness, tracked beautifully and handled sharp turns without throwing the crockery around.

As would be expected, keeping the vessel to modest speeds results in major fuel savings, and at a comfortable 6 knots, the cruising range extends to just under 900 miles and less than half that at 9 knots. A bow thruster is standard equipment for the trawlers sold by the local dealer.

Concluding Remarks The Mainship Expedition was introduced at the Miami Boat Show in February of this year and went into full production in late March. At the time of our sea trial, just after the late-April Victoria Floating Boat Show, six of the trawler yachts had been sold, which works out to an average of one a week, three of them by the local dealer in Vancouver.

It is not difficult to see why this robust little

ship has got off to such a good start, especially in the Northwest—sensible fuel consumption, solid construction and a design well suited to local waters and weather. Options include an Espar diesel furnace, a bimini top, a flybridge galley, among others, but with a long list of standard features and an introductory price of US\$399,000, the Expedition will appeal to those who want economy to extend beyond the engine room. ☛

Expedition

LOA	12.6 m	41' 4"
Beam	4.3 m	14' 2"
Draft	1.1 m	3' 8"
Headroom	2 m	6' 6"
Weight	10,886 kg	24,000 lbs
Fuel	1,136 L	300 U.S. gals
Water	492 L	130 U.S. gals
Power	380-hp single Yanmar diesel	

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