

Mainship 43

BY PIERCE HOOVER

It wasn't easy catching up with the latest addition to the Mainship fleet. After its public debut at last fall's Annapolis Boat show, hull No. 1 of the 43 Trawler was on the move, logging several thousand sea miles on a return cruise to Florida, a transit to the Gulf, then back to the East Coast. By the time I came aboard in Stuart, Florida, this new model had the equivalent of an average season's worth of use. Yet it was none the worse for wear.

With a balmy January day ahead and no plans other than a trip down the St. Lucie River to blue water, Mainship's Jim Krueger had ample time to provide a leisurely but detailed tour of the company's latest offering.

We started in the engine room, which is accessed from the cockpit rather than the saloon. This design feature eliminates voids and hatches in the single-piece cabin floor, which not only helps keep tools away from the upholstery, but also translates to lower sound levels while underway.



Sitting Indian style in the engine room's wide and uncluttered center walkway, we easily ran through a routine systems check and had a good look at the mechanicals. This boat was fitted with the largest available engine option — a pair of 540-hp Cummins turbo diesels, which were mounted shaft forward on beefy steel rails and mated to ZF Marine V-drives. This configuration frees up space aft of the engines, leaving ample room for the genset and extras, such as a dive compressor or watermaker.

Overall, the engine room was as ship-shape as expected and sported a number of less-expected items, such as an Algae-X fuel-polishing system, NiCad house batteries and a pair of outsize raw-water cutoffs and shunts adjacent to the central alleyway. This system can rapidly divert the raw-water pickups into the bilge in an emergency and convert either or both engines to 540-hp bilge pumps. Other highlights of the mechanicals include a 24-volt electrical system and an impressive 800-gallon fuel capacity.

Topside, the 43 displays a profile nearly identical to the company's current 40 and 34, with the signature extended hardtop that flares amidships to provide both a sheltered cockpit and an extra-large bridge deck packed with creature comforts. As expected, the exterior featured top-quality hardware and powder-coated aluminum doors and window frames, and was free of maintenance-intensive brightwork. For those who don't need the "second story," the 43 is also available without the flying bridge.

A walk-through of the interior revealed a number of attractive and



The Mainship 43 presents a familiar trawler profile but delivers performance that rivals many convertibles and express cruisers (above). A generously proportioned head (left) and galley (right) are among the highlights of a layout designed for living aboard.



FOREST JOHNSON (3)

innovative features and details. There was a lot to like, and more to write about than space permits. Like the company's current 34- and 40-foot trawlers, the 43 is not only a product of an in-house design team's considerable experience, but also was shaped by extensive customer feedback.

The market asked for what Krueger describes as a "me-centric" layout — meaning the available space is skewed in favor of a live-aboard couple rather than a weekend horde, with generously proportioned spaces in the head, master stateroom and saloon. The second stateroom is equal parts utility/office

space and guest quarters, and there is ample storage capacity throughout the boat. Overall, the 43 provides an interior environment that very much has the feel of a home afloat.

The other thing the market asked for was a good turn of speed. Here again, the 43 delivers on customer expectations. For several years, Mainship has used the term "fast trawler," signaling

SPECIFICATIONS

LOA: 43' 4"

Beam: 15' 6"

Draft: 3' 8"

Fuel Capacity: 830 gal.

Power: Twin 370- to 540-hp diesels

Price Range: \$514,000 to \$660,000

Information: 800-578-0852

www.mainship.com

their boats' ability to climb out of displacement mode and run at speeds in the high teens when appropriate.

The latest model takes trawler performance to a whole new level, especially when it is fitted with the larger engines. When brought to life, the throaty twin turbo diesels brought back memories of the sportfishing convertibles I operated in years past. Advancing the throttles furthered this sense of

déjà vu, as the boat came quickly on plane and was running comfortably in the mid-20s at three-fourths throttle. Under optimum conditions, this boat will reach almost 30 knots, creating a few surprised looks from operators of express cruisers who can't believe a trawler is overtaking them.

Higher speeds demand a correlating increase in fuel burn, but as with the company's other semidisplacement models, the 43 is not an "all-or-nothing" performer. The operator can select a desired cruise speed on the basis of schedules and economics, and enjoy either frugal displacement-speed operation, a fast passage or a sensible midrange cruise. With its ample fuel reserves, this boat has significant range, even when operated at higher speeds, and it offers a level of creature comforts and functionality not found on express cruisers or convertibles of similar size. ⚙