



SPENCER 69

A 96,000-pound sports car that runs on water and can fish

BY GARY CAPUTI

The yard was humming when I arrived to check out one of Spencer Yachts' newest launches. Daniel Spencer, vice president, told me his company had numerous boats under construction, with hulls being jig-built in the Manns Harbor facility across the sound from the Wanchese yard where they are crafted into beautiful, high-performance sport-fishing boats. It's no wonder they're busy. Spencers have been tearing up the tournament circuit, furthering the company's reputation for building seaworthy fish-raising machines with a modern Carolina look that turns heads at the dock and on the water. Case in point: *Inappropriate*, a 69-foot feast for the eyes, was tied up behind the yard's main sheds.

ALL PHOTOS COURTESY SPENCER YACHTS

This is a popular size for Spencer because it's big enough to travel anywhere your fishing exploits take you but fast and nimble enough to be a genuine threat in tournaments. This one was built with input from her master, North Carolina native Daniel "Backlash" Davis, one of the most experienced sport-fishing captains on the water today. He had concerns that stem from the fact that the vessel will be making trips to the Pacific and back.

"I went all Caterpillar," Davis says. "Engines, generators, even engine controls, because if something requires service or parts, there are Cat distributors almost everywhere, and it's one-stop shopping. If I had another brand of generators and controls, tracking down service providers could become a nightmare outside the United States."

ENGINE ROOM

The heart of *Inappropriate* is her engine room. It houses the twin C32 ACERT diesels paired to ZF transmissions and a matching set of Cat C2.2 21.5 kw generators. There's plenty of room to access the engines, Racor filters, priming pumps and all the support systems housed there. There's a Dometic Spot Zero water-polishing system, a backup transfer pump to move fuel from the center storage tank to the outboard feeder tanks, a Stingray raw-water pump for the transom

livewell, a desalinization unit, a Dometic ice maker and a Mach5 freshwater pump that draws from two 200-gallon freshwater tanks.

SALON AND GALLEY

As you enter from the mezzanine through the J.R. Beers electric door, there is a cabinet with the power-transfer controls and starter for the gensets, so you don't have to tramp through the salon with wet feet to get underway. The salon is done in earth tones, with a carpeted living area and a large, U-shaped Van Brunt couch to port with storage beneath and in the armrests. A matching love seat faces the couch, with more hidden storage space. The galley is done in teak, with granite countertops, and features Amtico faux teak and holly flooring for durability. A four-person dinette is



to starboard, opposite the galley, with a large flat-screen TV behind it. The galley is fitted with a two-burner stove, microwave, pull-out Keurig coffee maker, pull-out cabinets and four 30-inch Sub-Zero drawers.

SLEEPING

ACCOMMODATIONS

The four-stateroom design was laid out per customer order, with an aft master on the port side at the foot of the stairs to the companionway. It includes a full-size bed, cedar-lined hanging closet, full head with shower, freshwater flush toilet, vanity and sink with



SPECS

LOA: 69'	BEAM: 18' 6"	DRAFT: 5' 4"	DISP: 96,000 LB.	FUEL: 2,000 GAL.	WATER: 400 GAL.	POWER: TWIN 1,925 HP CATERPILLAR C32 ACERT DIESELS
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In the bow is the VIP suite, which features an oversize pedestal bed that stretches the full width of the hull with rod storage beneath it. Amenities include two hanging lockers, two long cabinets, a Bomar hatch with privacy shades, a full head with shower and additional cabinets for clothing.

a waterfall-style faucet. Opposite is the captain's quarters, with a large lower bunk and a smaller top bunk. Access to the Seakeeper 9 gyro is made easy by simply lifting the base of the lower bunk. Just forward is a head and shower, with entry from the companionway and the captain's quarters. A second bunk room, dubbed the crew quarters, is forward a cabinet for the washer and dryer.

COCKPIT

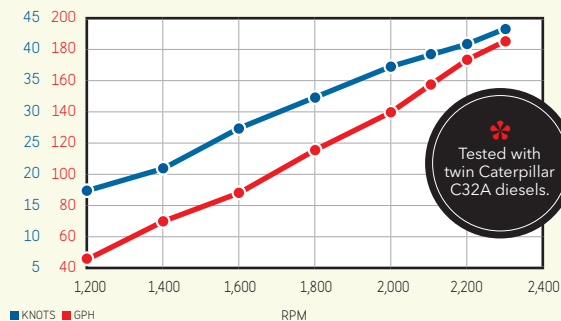
The cockpit boasts a teak deck and step up to a wide mezzanine couch with air-conditioning vents through a gap in the back cushions to keep you cool. Underneath is a large freezer box and a two-level ice chest. Also in the mezzanine deck is a storage compartment, an engine-room access hatch, a drink box and a slick bait

box, with custom trays aft of a large storage cabinet with a grill on top. All of the refrigerated boxes can be switched from freezer to fridge at the touch of a control panel just inside the engine-room hatch.

FLYBRIDGE

My favorite part of the boat incorporates a modern center-console design

with two forward-facing lounge chairs. They are high enough to see everything around you and low enough that the captain's view is not impeded when in use. Guest seating is all molded in, with four cozy chairs that hug you in rough seas, and there are hatches everywhere to accommodate all manner of small to midsize items that you need when traveling but



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never seem to have a place for. The hardtop height is low but ample, and the helm command center features three large Garmin LCD screens and controls. The teak helm pod supports the stainless steel wheel and single-lever controls. Overhead is access to an old-school teaser reel set up to Davis' specifications, with two Precision Auto electric reels built around a pair of Penn Senator reels. "When something breaks on one of these, I can get parts at any Penn reel dealer in the world," Davis says. "And they can skip a daisy chain away from a blue marlin faster than any other system on the water." The helm chairs and fighting chair are by Release Marine, and the beautiful tower from PipeWelders perfectly complements the sleek lines of the boat. Davis had a lot to do with the design of the tower helm station too. He wanted the wheel and controls offset to the starboard side so he can slip his arm through the legs of the top when it gets rough, and to have room for a second person to share the view.

PERFORMANCE

Unfortunately, Oregon Inlet was all but closed after recent storms, so we opted not to run aground trying to navigate it with the new boat and did some speed and handling runs on the sound. Having fished other Spencer boats of similar size, and knowing that the hull dynamics on this one were relatively unchanged from earlier builds, I am confident in saying that it will please the most



demanding captain under almost any sea conditions. Out on the sound, Davis throttled up, and the boat accelerated at a surprising rate, quickly racing to 37 knots at 2,000 rpm, burning 140 gallons per hour. There was a profusion of crab-pot buoys, and Davis began a series of quick-handling maneuvers to avoid them, with the boat responding in sports-car-like fashion to every input from the helm. Want more speed? You've got it. Pushed to full throttle, the big Spencer almost pins you to the seat on its way to 43 knots, ridiculously fast for a vessel of this size yet the hull handles it with ease. Davis reported the boat was as nimble in reverse as it was in forward, so chasing a hot blue marlin is almost ho-hum easy. The boat carves tight turns with ease, and the combination of speed and handling left a smile on my face. ☺