

ON THE DRAWING BOARD

Bayliss 60SF

Being a builder of fine sport-fishing yachts is not always as glamorous as it sounds. The problem is that a lot of boatbuilders aren't savvy about their prey (we're speaking of fish, not clients), resulting in an inferior product. John Bayliss has recently joined the ranks of boatbuilders



after a lifetime of serious sport fishing. Few individuals in the boatbuilding industry could better understand the require-

ments of today's modern tournament fishing machines.

Bayliss Boatworks of Wanchese, North Carolina,

has teamed up with Ullberg Yacht Design to build what they feel to be a state-of-the-art machine, capable of handling the demands of tournament fishing while maintaining the simple functionality that comes from superior planning and design.

The Bayliss hull will be built in the proven epoxy cold-molded method, while the superstructure will feature composite fiberglass construction to save weight, reduce noise and minimize risk of wood damage over the years.

The Bayliss 60's interior

BOAT OF INTEREST

ACY 72

American Custom Yachts had never built an enclosed-bridge sport-fisherman when a prospective owner asked ACY's President Dominick LaCombe to build a 65-foot enclosed-bridge fishing boat. LaCombe refused.

"I told him I would look into building a 72-footer with an enclosed bridge," LaCombe told me on one leg of a recent delivery of the lovely 72-foot *Don Teo*. "But we couldn't get the right look in the smaller boat, especially with the headroom the owner needed on the bridge and in the stateroom."

Speed and good looks are LaCombe's hot buttons. ACY is noted for fast, pretty boats with clean lines that also catch fish like crazy.

I arrived early to take a look at the underwater lines and running gear and was impressed. There was almost nothing except shafts, struts (with recessed base pads) and gleaming fabricated stainless-steel rudders to interfere



with a clean flow of water over the faired bottom surfaces. Even the big transducer for the fish finder/bottom machine was recessed into the internal keel member and could be seen only by crawling under the blocked-up hull and looking straight up. Nothing protruded!

Because the owner loves to cook, it's easy to understand why the roomy galley with its attractive work surfaces and top-grade appliances marks one of the boat's focal points. The *Don Teo* has four staterooms below, and even the smallest — an over/under berth cabin — is relatively roomy. The owner's and guests' staterooms are spacious and beautifully appointed.

The engine room was as good as it gets: sparkling white with custom stainless-steel raw-water plumbing fabricated in-house. All daily service needs from oil dipsticks to fuel and oil filters were easily accessible. It was as well laid out and finished an engine room as I have ever seen — a captain's or engineer's dream come true.

"Our sea chest incorporates a secret design we won't even show to the mass-production guys," LaCombe told me. "And look at the spread on those shafts — that's why she maneuvers so well for such a big boat."

All ACY boats are constructed of cold-molded wood with Kevlar and fiberglass laminates as inner and outer skins. Cabinets, bunks and all interior furniture and feature surfaces are made from any of a number of different core materials, depending on the strength needed for the partic-



LOA	60'3"
BEAM	17'7"
DRAFT	4'10"
WEIGHT	55,000 pounds
FUEL	1,200 gallons
WATER	250 gallons
POWER	1,300-hp DDC/MTUs
PRICE	N/A

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will be a three-state-room/three-head layout with a nearly symmetrical design that saves labor and cost.

The boat's fly-bridge layout is standard tournament fare — two helm seats, console with the usual array of electronics, Palm Beach-style helm and controls, and seating for up to six forward of the console.

The power in hull No. 1 and No. 2 will be supplied by 1,300-hp DDC/MTUs, putting this boat well in the 40-knot range.

layout can be completely tailored to the owner's specifications (within reason). Hull No. 1, however,

ular application. Even some of the most lightweight composites are finished with beautiful, fine-grained wood veneers.

After carefully twisting our way through the shifting sands of St. Lucie Inlet in Stuart, Florida, we headed offshore. Before turning south toward Palm Beach and Fort Lauderdale, LaCombe asked Capt. Scott Boegner to head northeast, into the building sea from a passing cold front. The strong northwester that was swinging to the east had already built up a decent swell, and a steep chop was rising.

The big boat barely felt the seas. But the strong northerly wind threw enough spray when we quartered into the waves that for adequate vision at our 30-plus-knot cruising speed, we needed the large electrical wipers mounted on the wraparound glass windscreen. On our run down-sea, the *Don Teo* tracked straight and true in the following sea as Boegner and I sat in the sophisticated, and comfortable, Recaro helm seats. Just before entering Palm Beach Inlet, Boegner and I had a brief play with the aft bridge-station controls. It would be easy to see the chair and any angler or crew while fighting a fish.

If anyone wants to go explore exotic and isolated new blue marlin grounds on one of these boats, you know where to find me!

SPECIFICATIONS

LOA	72'0"
BEAM	20'0"
DRAFT	5'6"
WEIGHT	119,000 pounds
FUEL	2,650 gallons
WATER	400 gallons
POWER	1,800-hp DDC/MTUs
PRICE	N/A

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BRIDGE REPORT

Willis 63

Throw your preconceived ideas about bridge design out the window before you step aboard the new Willis 63, a highly custom boat built by Mark Willis in Stuart, Florida. You'll find no standard fare here — no overhead boxes, fish finders positioned way to the side of the helm or even fancy

port side are a LINK depth readout, Simrad/Robertson AP22 autopilot, Fireboy engine shutdown, Northstar 961XD chart plotter and a MD1500 flat screen display for the Furuno FCV-1200L sounder. To the right: a Seacall 7000 DSC controller, SEA 235 SSB, Horizon Spectrum VHF and another MD1500 flat-screen display for the Furuno radar.

Ergonomically speaking, I found the console about 2



DAVID RITCHIE

lifting electronics consoles. Instead, Willis has fashioned a unique three-sided, vertical-helm console unlike any I've seen.

Positioned centerline on the bridge, the Willis 63 helm sits 52 inches tall and does a great job of organizing all electronics into a usable area. The center panel sits just forward of the pod helm and single-lever controls, and contains the Cat engine monitors, trim tab switches, controls for the synchronizer and low-idle features, and actuator switches for the pneumatically controlled Lexan lids that cover the left and right console panels.

These lids (two each per side, split top and bottom) raise and lower with a flip of a switch to give easy access to any component while keeping everything clear of the elements. The polarization reduces glare on the water.

Behind the lids to the

or 3 inches too tall for my comfort, but then I'm not a tall guy. However, the advantage gained in space on the rest of the bridge makes the design work. The area behind the bridge is plenty spacious for the two Murray Brothers helm chairs, with loads of maneuvering space around them. A small door to the right of the helm offers easy access into the console's innards where the black-box modules are located. And in front of the console, a large L-shaped settee offers seating for six and loads of rod storage. The forward port and starboard corners house a freshwater washdown and insulated drink box.

Thanks to the unique layout, the beautiful mahogany trim and the hardtop's cool, blue underside, everything aboard this bridge is definitely easy on the eyes.

— David Ritchie