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PAUL MANN 61

Jichi is a singular masterpiece from one of the world's top custom builders

BY PETER FREDERIKSEN

After spending years working under the watchful eyes of Outer Banks master boatbuilders Sunny Briggs and Omie Tillet, Paul Mann built his own plank-on-frame boat in 1988. He captained the boat himself, keeping his charter customers busy with marlin and tuna. His learning curve continued, and some 30 years later, with hull number 137, his latest ride is an impressive achievement, a customized sport-fisherman with luxury-yacht accommodations.

DEBRA TODD PHOTOGRAPHY (2)
COURTESY PAUL MANN CUSTOM BOATS (OPPOSITE TOP)

Built for a seasoned tournament-fishing owner who mixes hardcore billfishing with leisure time for family outings, the 61-foot *Jichi* exudes North Carolina style, from its raked and moderately flared bow to its gentle tumblehome at the stern.

FLYING BRIDGE

With its 18-foot beam, the bridge gives the impression of a much larger boat. Visibility from the centerline helm is superb throughout the 32 points of the compass, so whether running the boat or watching the baits in the wash, the view is totally unobstructed. Three Release Marine helm seats provide comfort for the ride and sport a unique custom satin finish. Room behind the chairs is generous for crew or guests moving about the aft rail. The Mann-made satin-finished teak helm pod is a mark of the builder's craftsmanship. Electronics are protected beneath a clear acrylic panel in a raised pod, and additional equipment is installed in a drop-down box from the custom hardtop.

Flanking the helm are 8-foot-long lounges fitted with Silvertex carbon-colored foam cushions with rod stowage underneath. The three-sided enclosure is made by Costa Marine in a matching gray material. Other notable items include 47-foot Pipewelders hydraulic outriggers, a teak deck and grab rails that are molded into the cabin tops outside of the bridge wings. The boat's finish work

is stellar. The polished pipe Palm Beach Towers tuna tower includes a carbon-fiber buggy top. Another unique tower feature is the offset helm, which allows for a larger Garmin unit in the dash, a smart idea for a skipper who plans to spend long days aloft in the tower.

ACCOMMODATIONS

The teak salon door utilizes a JR Beers electrical actuator, and inside, the workmanship is exceptional, with the grain constant from the ceiling to the floor, which explains why Paul Mann Custom Boats has been recognized nationally as a recipient of North Carolina's Veneer Tech Craftsman's Challenge for excellence in woodworking. Each piece of the cabinetry matches flawlessly and is complemented with unobtrusive hardware, creating a seamless environment of beauty. But equally eye-catching are numerous practical treatments such as

from the white headliner to prevent moisture from staining the material. The interior teak window frames blend nicely with the adjoining woodwork, providing strength and practicality.

The white carpeting in the salon interfaces dramatically with the L-shaped white leather sofa with stowage below to port. Opposite, an entertainment center with a 55-inch Samsung flat-screen television rises from the cabinetry. Forward to port is the C-shaped white-leather dinette, and to starboard the U-shaped gourmet-style galley with Miele and Sub-Zero appliances and rare Brazilian Corasite white-stone countertops. The fusion of the whites with the rich warmth of the teak joinery is a cosmopolitan affair that demonstrates what an experienced owner and a talented boatbuilder can produce with this one-of-a-kind showpiece.

Belowdecks, the three-stateroom, three-head layout showcases Paul Mann's commitment to attentiveness.



SPECS

LOA: 61' | BEAM: 18' | DISPL.: 78,000 LB. | FUEL: 1,631 GAL. | WATER: 275 GAL. | POWER: TWIN 1,925 HP CATERPILLAR C32

M Run & Gun | Boats of Interest

The fully carpeted master suite is to starboard, featuring a queen bed with a custom Mark Van Brunt suede leather headboard, two cedar-lined hanging lockers, a 40-inch Samsung flat-screen television, an Apple TV and an en suite head with a custom fiberglass shower stall. Carpeted crew quarters with upper and lower berths and a pair of cedar-lined hanging lockers are to port. The portside head and shower accommodates this stateroom, and it also pulls duty as the day head. The forward stateroom is a nice surprise and features a Paul Mann trademark of his evolutionary designs. Mann's

boats avoid the exaggerated flare of typical North Carolina custom sport-fishermen, and thus there is notably more floor space that is put to good use. A single upper and a double-wide lower berth make very plush and flexible overnight accommodations for fishing trips and long-range family cruising. Opposite the portside berths is a huge cedar-lined hanging locker that could easily double as a tackle store. Equally humongous is the head positioned forward with a full-size shower stall in the bow. Each stateroom features custom teak sea and bunk rails, carpeted interiors and plenty of storage.



COCKPIT

Paul Mann has built a lot of boats, and his experience enabled him to address a number of wants for the owner, including a specialized live-bait request. A pair of on-deck 100-gallon pressurized livewells keeps hundreds of live baits ready for action. A Hunter pump

routed from one of four sea chests floods aeration-free water into each livewell without stressing the baits. Whether in 6-foot seas or running at speed, the baits appear to be swimming in a farm pond. A customized drainage system directs the water into designated drains threaded into the

kidney-shaped corner scuppers that double as overflow exits. A second pair of scuppers flanks the transom fish box and drains water even in reverse. The result of 10 inches of pipe drainage moves the water off the deck in a heartbeat when backing down hard or when a green one breaks into the cockpit during a fight with multiple sails.

The observation mezzanine is outfitted with tackle stowage, Dometic refrigeration, freezers and engine-room access. Dometic reverse-cycle air conditioning flows through the mezzanine cushions on warm days and delivers heat on those cold winter ones. A Release Marine rocket launcher is centrally located, handling 11 rods. The faux-teak transom blends seamlessly with the satin-finished bulkhead and the Release Marine accessories, as well as the teak decks and covering boards.

ENGINE ROOM

Accessed from the mezzanine deck, headroom below is 5 feet 8 inches on centerline. The twin 12-cylinder Caterpillar ACERT C32s, which develop 1,925 hp each, are tall engines, and a pair of Kohler 23 kW generators is abaft the mains, so you don't have far to go to make daily checks. An Oberdorfer oil-change pump is equipped with quick-disconnect fittings for engines, the Twin-Disc reverse gears and the gensets. Snow White Awlgrip provides a bright finish throughout the mechanical areas.

CONSTRUCTION AND PERFORMANCE

Jichi's hull is cold-molded from a jig. The longitudinal fir framework is reinforced with 1-by-2-inch battens with 1-inch Core-Cell foam between each batten. Three layers of diagonally planked 3/8-inch Okoume plywood with epoxy-encapsulated 1 1/2-ounce fiberglass mat between each layer follow to complete the bottom. Hull sides are three layers of 1/4-inch Okoume, with fiberglass and epoxy between each layer, making the structure totally glassed 100 percent inside and out. With a wet weight of 78,000 pounds, this is not a light boat, but with 10 people aboard, with fuel, fishing and cruising gear, the Caterpillars give it a top speed of nearly 45 knots (at 2,317 rpm,

we saw 44.5 knots at 97 percent engine load). Custom Veem propellers and a modified-V running surface certainly figure into this performance.

On a brutally cold January day, *Jichi* ignored a 5-foot head sea while cruising at 34.5 knots into a 25- to 30-knot north

wind. We were able to fish comfortably in 8-foot seas during a wild bite off Jupiter, Florida, where we released 21 sailfish. The boat performed beautifully, a testament to its Carolina pedigree. Paul Mann and his team of craftsmen have produced another masterpiece. 