



tournament riggers, a Release Marine fighting tuna chair, fresh and salt wash-downs, cockpit, mezzanine and fish-box drains, a livewell, an Eskimo shaved ice maker, four teaser reels, and a mezzanine freezer compartment were among a long list of must-haves — it was his wife who insisted that the interior be up to her standards of comfort and luxury.

“I was involved in everything inside: the three-stateroom, two-head layout, the colors of the wood finish and the fabrics, and even the kind and shape of the moldings and trim,” Patricia commented as she explained the design process to me. “Paul fabricated a foam mock-up of the inside exactly where everything would be, so I could actually see and feel the layout.”

As we headed out, Roberto, one of two mates we had on board that day, looked up at the bridge from the cockpit and said “*Norte*” as he nodded to Capt. “Butch” Cox. *Qualifier*, another Paul Mann boat out fishing the area, had called us in to a bite on the single-sideband radio. Besides being 2 feet longer than *Qualifier*, *Alina* had something else aboard that day that set her apart from the other Mann boats out there (there are six altogether in Isla Mujeres) — Paul Mann was one of our anglers.

Like a lot of the builders that operate in the exclusive enclave of North Carolina’s famed Outer Banks, Mann made his name charter-boat fishing before turning to building boats for others to enjoy. Growing up in the shadow of area boatbuilding legends like Omie

EQUIPMENT

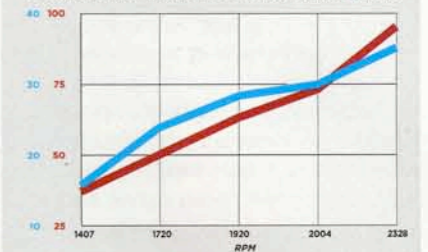
- ZF gears and controls
- Two Phasor Marine 21 kW generators
- Rupp 41' outriggers with triple spreader
- Palm Beach Towers

SPECIFICATIONS

LOA:	58'9"
BEAM:	18'
DRAFT:	5'6"
DEADRISE:	N/A
WEIGHT:	62,000 pounds
FUEL:	1,354 gallons
WATER:	275 gallons
POWER:	Twin Cat C18 1,000 hp



PERFORMANCE



PAUL MANN CUSTOM BOATS
Manns Harbor, North Carolina
paulmanncustomboats.com

Mann vs. Fish

Sailfishing Isla Mujeres in Paul Mann’s Latest

BY CAPT. KEN KREISLER

The day dawned with muscular gray clouds instead of sunshine — remnants of a deep-trouged front that had swept across the Yucatan the night before, leaving behind enough wind to get the sea up. *Alina*, the 58-foot Paul Mann-built sport-fisherman we were fishing out of Isla Mujeres, Mexico, slid over a big wave — it was a bit bigger than the heave we were running in — before setting out our lines at the first sighting

of a flock of seabirds descending from up high. For a moment the horizon disappeared behind us as the massive, broad-backed shoulders of the wave rolled away. *Alina* had arrived at the dock a week before, after completing her shakedown trip from Manns Harbor in North Carolina, enjoying leisurely stops in Wrightsville Beach, Savannah, Palm Beach and Key West before topping off her 1,354-gallon fuel tanks and making the poke across to Isla Mujeres.

Alina’s proud owners, Eric and Patricia Mansur, make their home on the island of Aruba. “This boat,” Eric said as he looked out the large salon windows at the rolling sea on our way to the Isla Banks, “is a dream come true for us. We had it built for our family, [and it’s] a hard-core fishing boat, so it serves two functions.” And while Mansur made sure his boat had all the necessary fishing amenities — a gated tuna door, a pair of 41-foot triple-spreader Rupp



Tillet and Warren O’Neal, who have long been considered the creators of the Carolina style, Mann learned from some of the very best. “I started mating on charter boats when I was 18, and by 20 I had my captain’s license,” he said. “All of us that ran boats usually helped boatbuilders build boats during the winter for some income and something to do. That’s how the whole Carolina thing began: fishermen building boats for

“Mansur made sure his boat had all the necessary fishing amenities — a gated tuna door, a pair of 41-foot triple-spreader Rupp tournament riggers, a Release Marine fighting tuna chair.”

“Paul fabricated a foam mock-up of the inside exactly where everything would be, so I could actually see and feel the layout.”

fishermen. I built hull No. 1 when I was 28 years old, and when that first person came along and asked me if I could build them one, well, there it goes. Fishability, and the capacity to run and perform well, is a given on a Paul Mann.”

During the early years, Mann carried all he had learned to the next level and admits that boatbuilding came relatively easy to him. “I was always a pretty savvy carpenter, and found that if I could see it, I could build it. More to the point, I was really interested in boat design, especially the bottom — why and how it does what it does.”

Mann not only creates great hull shapes; his interiors are top of the line as well. The 81-foot *Georgia Girl* recently topped a field of more than 60 entries to win the cabinetry



category and grand prize in the seventh annual Veneer Tech Craftsman’s Challenge, one of the most respected and well-known craftsmanship competitions in woodworking.

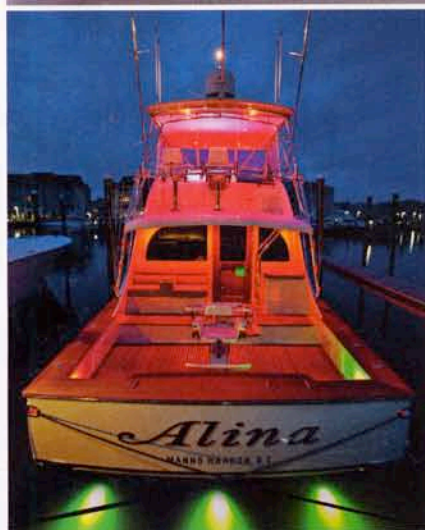
My full day aboard *Alina*, from sunrise till after sunset, in conditions that ranged from big, rolling swells to running in cresting seas, convinced me that Mann has figured things out pretty well. At no time during our run out or getting back to the barn, especially when dealing with substantial

quartering seas, did Cox need to pull her back. We maintained a steady 25 to 27 knots through the slop — topping out at about 30 while racing the sunset — and, when coming off a big wave, *Alina* landed softly, with no pounding or slamming. “The true Carolina boats run best with the weight aft, and we depend on our tabs to push the boat over. Then, when we burn our fuel off, you don’t have to use the tabs,” Mann said while he and I sat in the salon during the morning run. “And





A graceful single-lever Palm Beach-style pod adorns one of the cleanest flybridge arrangements you'll find.



my engine rooms? Well, I've got one way of thinking on that topic: You have to be able to get two hands on anything you're liable to be working on."

After another 10- or 12-mile run, we spotted *Qualifier* running down on a big gathering of birds, her outriggers tick-tocking back and forth in the beam sea. Cox throttled down, and a dazzlingly white, jade-tinged swell of water promptly rose against the transom and, just as quickly, disappeared with a muffled hush, replaced by the reassuring thrum of the boat's twin 1,000 hp C18 Caterpillar diesels. Roberto and our other mate, Rob Belcher, immediately worked at getting our gear in the water. Cox had already lowered our outriggers, and in a matter of moments, he'd swung *Alina's* bow a bit to the west and started looking for cutting fish.

Almost as soon as we had all of our lines out, Mann said, "We got cutters," and Cox was already turning the boat,

as if he already knew the call was coming. The fish were right on top — quite a few, judging from the quick count of the dorsal fins and bills slicing back and forth in the dark water. The birds dipped quickly and then even faster as the leavings, and those whole fish that were still alive, rose to the surface. The whirl of the electric teaser reels signaled the retrieval of the dredge and the teaser lines, allowing Mansur, Mann, Roberto and Rob to work the four rods in the ample cockpit.

The engines backed down 100 rpm or so and Cox moved the boat off a bit to starboard as the anglers reeled in, dropped back and changed positions, expertly maneuvering the rods in a veritable *danza de los pescadores* to avoid any tangles. Roberto's line suddenly tightened up, as did Mann's.

Mansur picked up, and then dropped, a fish. Rob cleared his rod, got it in the holder and stood by to assist the others. Roberto's fish slipped the hook as well, and he quickly put up his rig, waiting to see what would transpire. Mann's fish was on. Cox slid the boat over and the other fishermen moved back into the cockpit to re-rig, allowing Mann and Cox to maneuver the fish dead astern.

As the last man standing, Mann gained some and quickly lost twice as much. Then he lost even more. The line started to straighten out. The fish jumped twice. Then it jumped once more before stripping out more from the dancing rod tip and reel. *Alina* throttled up in reverse, and one of those big seas crashed into the transom. For a brief moment, a shimmering veil of water shot up into the air. Mann got the fish in closer and led it over to the port side, where Rob was ready to grab the leader. After a jump or two close in, the team got a release and the fish slinked away, none the worse for wear.

That's how it went for the rest of the day out on the Isla Banks. We'd get into the fish, lose them, and find them again. I managed to bring one to the transom, as did everyone else in the cockpit that day.

Alina would be staying in Isla for a while before heading home to Aruba and then over to Curaçao for an upcoming tournament. From there, she would fish South American waters for some more competition and more yet after that. The Mansurs and their *Alina* are now part of a prestigious community of Paul Mann custom boat owners that has among its many attributes all the confidence and pride that a well-designed and well-built boat brings. 🐟



***Alina's* spacious engine room holds twin C18s and has enough room to satisfy Paul Mann's "two hands on anything you need to fix" credo.**