



MANN MOVES ON

● After more than three decades and 40-plus custom sport-fishers that bear his name, Paul Mann has decided that it's time to turn the page. Paul and his wife, Robin, have retired.

Paul was a charter captain fishing out of Oregon Inlet, North Carolina, when he turned to building boats during the winter—first for himself and then for others. He worked alongside local legends such as Omie Tillet, Buddy Cannady and Sunny Briggs, where he learned the traditional methods of boatbuilding while imparting his own spin. An award-winning craftsman, Paul's interiors became known for their stunning beauty and intricate woodwork, while his hulls were arguably among the best-riding on the water. His passion, as well as the determination and drive to succeed in a competitive, demanding industry, served him well throughout his career. The Dare County Boatbuilders Foundation recently honored the Manns for their contributions to the industry, and they continue to support many important local community projects.

I had the chance to spend some time with Paul and Robin many years ago in Aruba, where they were finalizing plans for the 58-foot *Alina*, with her owner, Eric Mansur. It was fascinating listening to their discussions about the numerous small but important details and decisions that go into a custom boat. A few years later, I was fortunate to fish aboard *Alina* with Mansur in the 2016 Curaçao Yacht Club Blue Marlin Release Tournament. We were faced with 6- to 10-foot seas and



at least 20 knots of wind each day—not uncommon for that part of the southern Caribbean—but the boat handled the sporty conditions amazingly well. I immediately went to work on a profile of Paul for our 35th anniversary edition of *Marlin* in October 2016. One of the first questions I asked was how he achieved that legendary ride: “I started building charter boats to perform well in Oregon

Inlet, which is one of the most treacherous in the world,” he said. “When you design and build a hull yourself, and then spend 250 days a year fishing it, you think about the tweaks you want to make to the next one. That’s what gives us an edge in having a great sea boat.” He also mentioned that he likes his boats to ride just a tad bow-high. “You can always push it over with tabs, but you can’t raise it up,” he said.

With emerging technology as the theme of this issue, I’m also reminded of Paul’s thoughts on tech as it applies to boatbuilding. “We always embraced new ways of building boats; some of it was good, and some of it just wasn’t right for the job,” he said. “The lightest boat isn’t always your friend in the ocean.” Paul wasn’t afraid to adopt modern techniques or materials in his boats, but he never turned his back on the old-school methods, either.

You can bet that the scores of battle-wagons bearing the Paul Mann Custom Boats name will continue to be in high demand around the world. We wish the very best of luck and happiness in retirement to Paul and Robin Mann, from your many friends at *Marlin*.

Sam White
Editor-in-Chief

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