



Sea Force IX 94.5 Luxury Performance Sport Yacht

EUROPEAN STYLE AND RUGGED CONSTRUCTION COMBINE IN A WORLD-CLASS PACKAGE

My flight landed on St. Maarten's notoriously short runway and came to an abrupt halt at the far western end. As the jet executed a 180 to make its way back to the terminal, I looked out across the harbor and spied the reason for my trip: *Bonny Read*, a 94.5-foot custom sport-fishing yacht, resting in her slip at the Port de Plaisance Yacht Club about a mile away. Even at this distance, the dark blue hull and imposing white

superstructure were unmistakable, towering over the vessels around her.

GENERAL APPEARANCE

The name *Bonny Read* is a nod to the Caribbean's two most notorious female pirates, Anne Bonny and Mary Read, who were convicted of piracy and sentenced to hang by a British Admiralty court in Jamaica in 1721. Be that as it may, their namesake is a far cry from a crusty old Man-O-War. She is the largest of the

Performance Sport Yacht line available from Palmetto, Florida, custom builder Sea Force IX, and she is as pretty a lady as you'll feast your eyes upon.

Her long sloping sheer extends almost to the cockpit where it drops low for maximum fishing advantage. The dark blue hull is set off by a teak toe rail and bright white house, enclosed bridge and skybridge. The hardtop bristles with antennas, masts, satellite communication and television domes,

twin radar arrays and everything else a sport-fishing yacht built to travel the world's oceans could possibly need. This is a boat sure to be the center of attention in whatever port it enters.

HULL AND CONSTRUCTION OVERVIEW

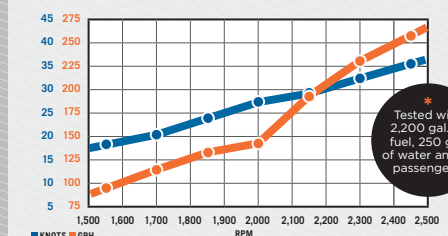
The vessel's bottom uses a hull geometry that the manufacturer claims generates lift over 90 percent of the running surface at low angles of attack, and my time on *Bonny Read* bears out the claim. When the 2,600 hp MTU diesels are pressed hard from idle, the hull rises onto plane almost imperceptibly. The hull features prop pockets and a minimal keel for improved sea keeping while running dead level as opposed to the bow-high entry of some vessels in its class.

The hull is as close to overbuilt as you can get. The manufacturer calls its building process "monolithic construction," and it uses AME 5000 vinyl ester resin throughout the process, with U.S.-manufactured nonwoven glass and double layers of Divinycell coring vacuum bagged for strength without excess weight. All areas where through-hulls, struts or rudder posts extend through the hull receive additional reinforcement before the full-length stringer system and a comprehensive thwartship stringer grid get glassed in place, followed by four main composite bulkheads, a crash bulkhead and hull side beams. The hull is then baked so the laminate is completely cured. Composite floors and soles are bonded to the stringer system and glassed to the hull using West System epoxy before the house, bridge and skybridge are glassed in place to create a single, extremely strong monolithic structure. When finished, the boat isn't the lightest or the heaviest in its class, but it is arguably the strongest. It's also remarkably quiet, due to the composite construction and the comprehensive sound program that's a part of every boat Sea Force IX builds.

> SPECIFICATIONS

LOA:	94'8"
BEAM:	22'11"
DRAFT:	5'8"
DISP.:	160,000 lb. dry
FUEL:	4,800 gal.
WATER:	500 gal.
POWER:	Twin MTU 16V 2000 M94 (2,600 hp)

> PERFORMANCE



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SALON AND GALLEY

Sea Force IX interiors are designed and built to meet each client's desires. *Bonny Read* reflects her owner's preference for a European layout with the galley separate from the dining and salon areas. The doors, tables, cabinetry and paneling throughout the vessel are crafted from quarter-sawn teak derived from a single tree with the grain patterns painstakingly matched. And the boat features lightweight marble and granite surfaces manufactured in Germany and installed

Each Sea Force yacht features a custom interior designed and built to the buyer's exact specifications. On *Bonny Read*, the owner opted for a European-style layout with separate galley and dining areas.



GARY CAPUTI (3)

BOATS OF INTEREST

by the company's factory artisan.

A quick walk-through begins aft of the salon where a shaded, open-air dining area features a teak table, a forward-facing upholstered bench seat, port corner seating and stowable folding chairs. An outside stairway leads to the fantail of the enclosed bridge. When you enter the salon through the automated French doors, there's an oversize U-shaped couch to port facing a cabinet with a large flat-screen TV to starboard. An internal artisan sculpted, stainless-steel stairway in the aft starboard corner curves up to the bridge interior. Both stair sets, like all the

curving companionway steps down past floor-to-ceiling cabinets on the right, including one specifically designed for the boat's complement of fishing tackle. Inside, among the rods and reels, is a framed letter announcing the conviction and sentencing of Bonny and Read stamped by the Board of Pilots Commissioners, Port of Key West, and dated Nov. 17, 1721. The passage terminates facing a door to the aft master stateroom where a king-size bed is centered among built-in dressers, two cedar-lined armoires and nightstands capable of holding enough clothing and



“Pushing the throttles to the stops provided a top speed of over 35 knots at 2,450 rpm with the big diesels still quiet and vibration free.”

metalwork on the vessel, are meticulously crafted from mirror-polished stainless steel and flawlessly executed.

The dining area revolves around a beautiful table and chair set that seats eight with cabinet storage for plates, glassware, silver, linens and more. Wine and drink coolers are hidden behind matching cabinet doors. The entire area has recessed lighting and overhead indirect air conditioning to alleviate the need for unsightly vents that create uneven cooling. Up two steps and to the left, you enter the galley with a small dining area, a standing oversize refrigerator/freezer, a commercial oven and a garbage compactor, loads of storage and the owner's prized Miele espresso machine. A stairway at the far side leads down to the crew quarters and engine room.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Continuing forward past the galley, a

personal items for a long stay, indeed. The use of the exotic natural grains of the teak in this room enhances its richness and its expansive feel. A wall-size flat-screen TV faces the bed, and a modern European-inspired master bath is located on the port side.

The companionway leading to the bow accesses additional sleeping accommodations. To starboard is a large stateroom with a queen bed and full head. Opposite that is the “kids’ room,” with triple single beds, two arranged bunk style, also with a full head. And at the bow end of the corridor is another beautifully designed master suite that includes a raised queen bed with overhead skylight, packed with intricate cabinetry and its own private head. All the heavy entry doors are beautifully executed with opposing teak grains, satin-finished hinges, locks and lever handles and magnetic bumpers to prevent slamming



A pair of massive 2,600 hp MTU M94 diesels occupy the huge engine room and give the boat a top speed in excess of 35 knots.



Bonny Read combines classic lines (left) with well-designed fishing amenities (below, center) and helm options, including an open skybridge (below, right) and an enclosed version (left).

when the boat is in motion.

ENCLOSED FLYBRIDGE

The first thing you notice when you enter the command center is the curved-glass bridge consisting of five large monitors set behind non-glare plexiglass atop a full width teak cabinet. The center helm pod holds the monitors and controls for the MTU diesels along with the actuators for the bow and stern ABT-Trac thrusters. Alongside are various Raymarine navigational units, a Simrad AP50 Autopilot, a full-function SMK-Link navigational computer keyboard, the ship's alarm system and more. This is a pilot's dream helm. A Stidd captain's chair sits in the center with twins located to port and starboard. Behind the helm station, a dining and entertainment area features seating for four and a flat-screen TV. Outside, on the fantail, an aft-facing settee overlooks the cockpit action.

SKYBRIDGE

Up one more level, a complete open helm station comes in handy when docking, fishing and on those days when it's just too nice to be inside. It features three LCD monitors, engine monitors, Palm Beach controls, two helm chairs, two aft-facing seats and three forward-facing sun loungers all under the hardtop. The four-spreader Rupp outriggers get deployed hydraulically from this helm station, and teaser reels come



tucked in over the helm seat for easy access when the fishing gets hot.

VESSEL-PROPULSION SYSTEM

The engine room can be accessed via a stairway from the galley through the crew quarters and then aft or through a large, watertight door in the cockpit that first goes through the electrical room, which houses the control panels for the air handlers, A/C, and a fuel-transfer system that includes an Alfal Laval fuel polishing system (standard on all Sea Force IX models) capable of moving fuel from any one of the multiple tanks to any other. There is a full bank of battery switches and a monitoring system for the two Onan 55 kW diesel generators. Pass forward through another bulkhead door and you're in a gleaming white and polished-steel engine room where the two massive MTU 16V 2000 M94 engines, mounted on vibration-reducing mounts, reside. They came mated to ZF transmissions and each drives five-blade Veem props and a hydraulic pump that powers the bow and stern thrusters, and windlass.

PERFORMANCE

The seas were modest the day of our test, the wind blowing from the northeast. As Capt. Angel Merentes powered up *Bonny Read*, it gently rose onto plane — never deviating from a level stance, the MTUs pumping out the power with no vibrations and very little sound reaching the inner sanctum of the enclosed bridge. Acceleration was swift as the vessel's speed rose steadily with the revolutions per minute. Within seconds, the boat pushed along at an easy cruise of 27.5 knots at 2,000 rpm burning 141 gallons per hour, a very respectable performance for a boat of this size and displacement. At that speed, the vessel has a cruising range of better than 900 miles.

Pushing the throttles to the stops provided a top speed of over 35 knots at 2,450 rpm with the big diesels still quiet and vibration free. With the seas running a scant 1 to 3 feet, the water might as well have been dead calm, the ride was so smooth. Merentes heaped praise on the vessel's rough-water performance, having operated it for several months,

including in some far rougher passages. After our test, he was scheduled to run the boat to the Pacific coast of Panama, where it would fish for marlin before heading north to Costa Rica.

We moved up to the skybridge, which serves as the captain's perch while fishing. The owner is a dyed-in-the-wool marlin fisherman, so the boat has to perform while fishing as well as be a comfortable home away from home. At trolling speed, it leaves a clean wake, great for fishing baits and getting those close bites off the transom. When I yelled, “Marlin azul,” Merentes threw her into reverse and started backing down. With boats of this displacement, transitioning from trolling speed to reverse isn't instantaneous, but it was respectable.

Pushing harder in reverse, it showed a tendency for the transom to dig in. This was probably accentuated by the low freeboard of the cockpit, but I've been aboard boats far smaller that buried the transom and flooded the cockpit under similar circumstances. Merentes ran it through a series of lateral moves to show its ability to track a fleeing billfish and close in for the end game. For a luxury yacht, the boat performed admirably.

FISHING AMENITIES

The cockpit features a teak sole with a Release Marine marlin chair on an off-set stanchion with a five-hole rocket launcher backrest. A large livewell in the transom has a viewing window to keep an eye on baits, with a tuna door offset to starboard. Two large, removable fish boxes in the deck on either side of the chair provide access to the lazarette, as do three separate hatches. The deck hardware, like so much aboard the vessel, appeared oversize, strong and very classy. Four large storage areas sit forward of the chair, with a tackle center and a grill.

CONCLUSION

Sea Force IX might not be a household name yet on the dock, but with creations like *Bonny Read* following on the heels of several 81.5- to 91.5-foot luxury performance yachts recently launched, it is fast becoming a builder to be watched and seriously considered. 🌊

GARY CAPUTI (5)