

NEW DESIGN

HATTERAS 64 CONVERTIBLE

Hot Rodder Thanks to a new design, the 64 has more to offer By Dudley Dawson

In Hollywood, legends quietly fade away, but in New Bern, North Carolina, they just morph—into new models. There is no other way to look at the new Hatteras 64-foot Convertible other than to view it in comparison to the legendary 65-foot Convertible of the 1980s and 1990s, one of Hatteras' best-selling sportfishermen ever. While popular in its own right, the 65 was a stretch of the earlier 60 Convertible and eventually those molds were further lengthened to create the awesome 70-foot Convertible.

The 64 Convertible is a completely new design with a wider hull and distinctive styling, but fans of the 65 and 70 convertibles will feel right at home, especially after a walk through the accommodations. The 65 was a three-stateroom boat, with the master stateroom forward, a guest cabin to port, and a small third stateroom that usually became crew quarters. This little cabin had upper and lower twins tucked into an aft corner under the galley sole, alongside the washer/dryer and utility room: not exactly a four-star room. What it did offer was a location amidships, so it was the most comfortable spot at sea.

The 70 used its additional length to advantage by stealing more space from under the galley, and the little cabin became a spacious full-beam master stateroom. The forward cabin, formerly the master, became the VIP. The port guest cabin shifted to starboard, and the old upper/lower twins moved to port in its place.

The new Hatteras 64 Convertible, rather remarkably, seems to offer everything that was in both the 65 and 70



EASY RIDER: Upholstered seats give the cockpit audience relief (above); the 64 is beamier and has convex bow sections to reduce impact (below).

convertibles, in a length that's shorter than either. It has a forward stateroom that's nearly identical to the 65's master and the 70's VIP. The master stateroom is, like that on the 70, a comfortable full-beam area under the galley sole.

The space between the master and VIP staterooms is available in several versions. The standard arrangement has a third cabin to port, and the space to starboard is incorporated into the master suite as a huge hanging locker. All three staterooms have en suite heads with showers, with the VIP head serving as the day head as well.

An optional arrangement plan adds a small fourth cabin with upper and lower twins—shades of the 65 Convertible—squeezed into the space taken by the master hanging locker of the three stateroom version. This cabin shares the VIP head, and it's here that I'd make a change, keeping the VIP head private and using the port head for the two smaller cabins and as a day head.

Variations on the two arrangement themes offer the choice of a queen berth or twins in the port stateroom, an office/den in place of the little starboard cabin, and a double-and-twin berth three-guest cabin in place of the island-queen VIP stateroom forward.

As you compare the 64 to the earlier 65 and 70, you can't help but wonder how the designers at Hatteras managed to offer such accommodations in a shorter hull. The answer lies in proportions. Remember that the earlier boats, though longer, were evolved from the 60 Convertible, which had an 18-foot beam appropriate to its original length and horsepower. When the new 64 Convertible was redesigned from the keel up for greater length and increased horsepower, the beam could be and was increased to 19.5 feet.

In addition, modern diesels are churning out more power per cubic inch, so for equal



power, the engineroom could be made a bit smaller. The result is not just more beam but more length in the accommodations as well.

Much like the 65 and 70 convertibles, the 64 carries an open galley to port, a U-shaped dinette to starboard, and a comfortable saloon aft. Devotees of fishing action on 65 convertibles, who have spent many marginally comfortable hours watching the action from atop the lockers at the forward end of the cockpit, will join me in appreciating the new 64's upholstered aft-facing seating between the saloon's aft bulkhead and the cockpit.

Since the first Hatteras, a 41-foot Convertible named *Knit Wits*, was built of fiberglass in 1960, the company has continually evolved their construction to incorporate proven advances in methods and materials, with the emphasis on "proven." While a Hatteras may not be the lightest boat on the water, no one who's been caught in a sudden blow has ever questioned the marque's solid construction and seaworthiness.

Hull bottoms are solid but sides and superstructures are foam cored. Vinylester resins are used for gelcoats and skin coats below the waterline for blister resistance. Structural bulkheads, soles and frames are resin infused, and rudder shelves are pultruded fiberglass. Fuel tanks are UL approved, are built of fiberglass, and are fully tested before being glassed into place between the main longitudinal stringers. Moderate propeller tunnels are molded into the hull to reduce draft, and trim tabs are located at the top of the tunnels for maximum effect.

The shape of the 64 Convertible's hull is similar to earlier designs, but with an important difference. As in the days of Jack Hargrave's designs for the 60, 65 and 70 convertibles, the hull remains a modified-V for the new 64, with deadrise

gradually decreasing from the bow to the transom. One change, though, is not readily apparent either on the photos shown here or from dockside, and that is the shape of the hull's underwater forebody. Hargrave always gave the bow sections just a hint of concavity. My own hull designs for Hatteras, including those of the 54 and 60 convertibles, carried bow sections that were essentially straight. The new 64 Convertible, as with other models recently designed in-house at Hatteras, incorporates a slight degree of convexity forward. The theory is that convex sections will help reduce impact accelerations in heavy seas; I'll be looking forward to seeing whether the effect will be apparent to the average captain.

The Hatteras 64 Convertible is now in production and scheduled to be introduced to the public at this fall's Ft. Lauderdale International Boat Show. We'll let you know more about those convex sections after we've had a chance to test the first hull. □

Contact: Hatteras Yachts, (252) 636-7201; www.hatterasyachts.com. Reader Service # 182.



LOA: 63'10"
Beam: 19'6"
Draft: 4'10"
Fuel Capacity: 1,950 gal.
Displ.: 100,000 lb., estimated full load
Power Options: 2x Caterpillar C-30 or 32, 1,550 to 1,800 hp each; 2x MTU 10V(CR) or 12V 2000, 1,500 hp each
Design: Hatteras Yachts

ROOM SERVICES:

Redesigned for greater length and increased horsepower, the 64's added beam benefits the saloon as well as adding volume to the state-rooms.

