



BUDDY DAVIS 70

KEEPING A SOUTHERN TRADITION

By MARSHALL BRODIE

It's easy to spot a Carolina built sportfisher, even in a crowded marina. What makes them so distinctive? Generally an exaggerated flare at the bow, a sharp entry, graceful broken sheer and the gentle tumblehome at the stern. I would argue that Carolina boats are some of the most aesthetically pleasing vessels around. Buddy Davis yachts are a prime example. The fact that they still look as handsome as ever is a credit to Dr. Ira Trocki. He acquired Davis Yachts in 2003, moved production to New Jersey and made a number of changes to the boats, but has maintained the Carolina form and function.

I found the latest Davis, the 70-foot sportfisherman, docked at Miami Beach Marina. Once out of Government Cut, three- to five-foot seas made for an informative sea trial. The 70 is an excellent head sea boat thanks in part to the deep forefoot and sharp entry that knife through the waves smoothly. Despite the generous flare we still took on a fair amount of spray at higher speeds due to windy conditions (designers haven't yet figured out how to control the weather). The hull of the 70 transitions to a relatively flat aft running surface, resulting in good stability and fuel efficiency. Fully loaded with 2,200 gallons of fuel and another 300 gallons

of water, the 70 still took only eight seconds to plane. Bob Weidhaas, President of Davis Yachts, explained that the starboard prop was damaged the previous day. The vibration, while not severe, was certainly noticeable and most likely was the reason our top speed was limited to 33 knots. Weidhaas says the 70 has run 35 knots and has a comfortable cruising speed of 28 knots with the big Cats spinning at 1,950 rpm. At that speed, fuel consumption is around 100 to 105 gallons per hour, says Weidhaas. Shallow draft prop tunnels shave a foot off of the draft to four feet, six inches, which makes a big difference in the Bahamas and the Florida Keys.



The Davis 70 is also a fine handling boat. Crank the wheel over and the 70 quickly comes around in a tight turn. The big Davis backs down hard with a minimum of fuss while keeping the cockpit dry. Water that did come in never made it past the gutters and quickly drained out. At a fast troll, the Davis 70 generates considerable surface foam but still trails two distinct trolling alleys for your lures. Slow trolling with live baits leaves an absolutely clear wake. The 70 proved to be quite steady, whether heading down, up or beam to the seas. This is a very comfortable boat to be in while sitting in a trough when live baiting.

UP TOP

The new 70 sports a traditional open flybridge (enclosed version is also available) with a centerline helm and a portside companion seat. There is plenty of room aft of the seats. The captain, however, can still see the aft half of the cockpit so as to keep an eye on the angling. A notch in the brow allows the captain to see the bow pulpit for docking. The flybridge is well ventilated, as a sunroof in the hardtop helps to funnel air through the bridge deck. If that is not enough, air-conditioning vents in the helm should keep the captain cool, even in the tropics. In typical Davis style, the hidden electronics panel rises electrically from the helm. As the test boat is hull number one, it is still a work in progress and the electronics suite is not yet complete, but there will be plenty of space for multiple large screens.

Unusual for an open flybridge convertible is the interior stairway instead of a typical cockpit ladder. The gracefully curved stairs are much easier to climb for young or old, and may result in a more social bridge. However, competitive fishing captains will most likely insist on a traditional cockpit ladder for faster access. Tucked away overhead are two manual teaser reels with an electric available as an option.

COCKPIT

Like most large semi-custom sportfishers of this quality, the 70's cockpit includes pretty much everything you could want and more than enough space for anglers and mates to work in unison. The cockpit incorporates a teak deck, handrails to make boarding the The Davis 70 is also a fine handling boat. Crank the wheel over and the 70 quickly comes around in a tight turn. The big Davis backs down hard with a minimum of fuss while keeping the cockpit dry. Water that did come in never made it past the gutters and quickly drained out. At a fast troll, the Davis 70 generates considerable surface foam but still trails two distinct trolling alleys for your lures. Slow trolling with live baits leaves an absolutely clear wake. The 70 proved to be quite steady, whether heading down, up or beam to the seas. This is a very comfortable boat to be in while sitting in a trough when live baiting.

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Like most large semi-custom sportfishers of this quality, the 70's cockpit includes pretty much everything you could want and more than enough space for anglers and mates to work in unison. The cockpit incorporates a teak deck, coamings and covering boards with fine joinery work. Inwale storage compartments hide mops, gaffs, wash downs and hot and cold showers for a clean neat cockpit. The elevated mezzanine allows spectators to comfortably watch in the shade under the long overhang. A design feature I appreciated was the port and starboard steps with well-placed handrails to make boarding the yacht safer and easier.

The engine room access is on midline, which leads to the aisle between a pair of 1,825-hp C32 ACERT (Advanced Combustion Emissions Reduction Technology) V12 Caterpillars. I like an engine room with plenty of headroom. The 70 delivers with six feet, four inches. Thick insulation helps to keep the living spaces quiet and cool. A single 25kW generator is standard, and a second is an option. ▶

Davis 70 as tested	\$4,600,000
LOA	70'
LOA with pulpit	73'6"
Beam	19'6"
Draft	5'6"
Draft with tunnels	4'6"
Displacement	100,000 pounds
Fuel	2,200 gallons
Water	300 gallons