

TUNA FOCUS

Twisted: Oceanville builds a heavyweight tuna machine

Text and photos by Brian Robbins

We have a tuna sandwich for you this year, with some vintage photos from the Cadario family nestled between two tuna chasers: the brand-new 44' Twisted and Warning Shot – a Northern Bay 36 lengthened by 2-plus feet. Let's head out.

WESTPORT ISLAND, ME – “There’s *no way* he’s going to be up on plane before he gets to me.”

That was what I was thinking, standing on Alex Rogers’ float below his house on Westport Island, Maine, watching his brand-new Twisted swing around and head back towards me. Alex had made a couple passes for the camera with the tricked-out Calvin Beal 44 at cruise speed; this one was going to be a full-bore fly-by,

but I figured there simply wasn’t enough room for Twisted’s 750 John Deere to spool up and do its thing in the relatively short distance between us.

But it did – big time – and the hefty (“44,000 lbs., full of fuel,” Alex had told me) 44-footer gracefully climbed out and settled onto her run for the camera, blowing by me at 20 knots-plus.



Twisted hooked up and running.

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I smiled and nodded my head; pretty darn cool.

The path to a 44

Alex Rogers has had his share of boats over the years; besides several production sportfishing models, he's owned some hulls familiar to CFN readers, including a WEBCO 26, a 35' Duffy, and a Lowell 43.

Alex first crossed paths with SW Boatworks in Lamoine, ME and their model line bearing designer Calvin Beal's name in 2018; that's when Alex talked with SW's Stewart Workman about building a Calvin 36.

"SW did a great job – on time and on budget – and it was a fantastic boat," says Alex. There was one thing, though: he just wanted more of it. A Calvin 44 was just the ticket.

As popular as the 44'x17'6" model has been since SW acquired Calvin's molds in 2008, it's hard to believe the noted Beals Island designer/builder almost gave up on the 44 before the first one was even built.

Calvin Beal Jr. began the strip-planked plug for what was to be the largest model in his self-named line of hulls in 2006.

"I wanted to have a design out there that wouldn't be outdated in a few years," Calvin says. "The demand was for bigger and bigger boats."

Which it was ... until the bottom fell out of the boat market later that year. "At that point, I almost gave up on the 44," says Calvin, shaking his head. "But my wife Jeannine told me to keep going. I finally figured, 'I've started it; I might as well finish it.'"

The wide 44-footer was an eye-catcher, for sure – but there just wasn't much of a market for anything ... no matter what its dimensions were.

Enter Stewart Workman, who at that time was a finisher of whatever hull his customers came to him with. Stewart told Calvin he was interested in having some molds of his own.

"My wife Alice and I had talked about it," says Stewart. "The economy had gone to hell in a handbasket and boat building had gone with it. But it

See TWISTED, next page

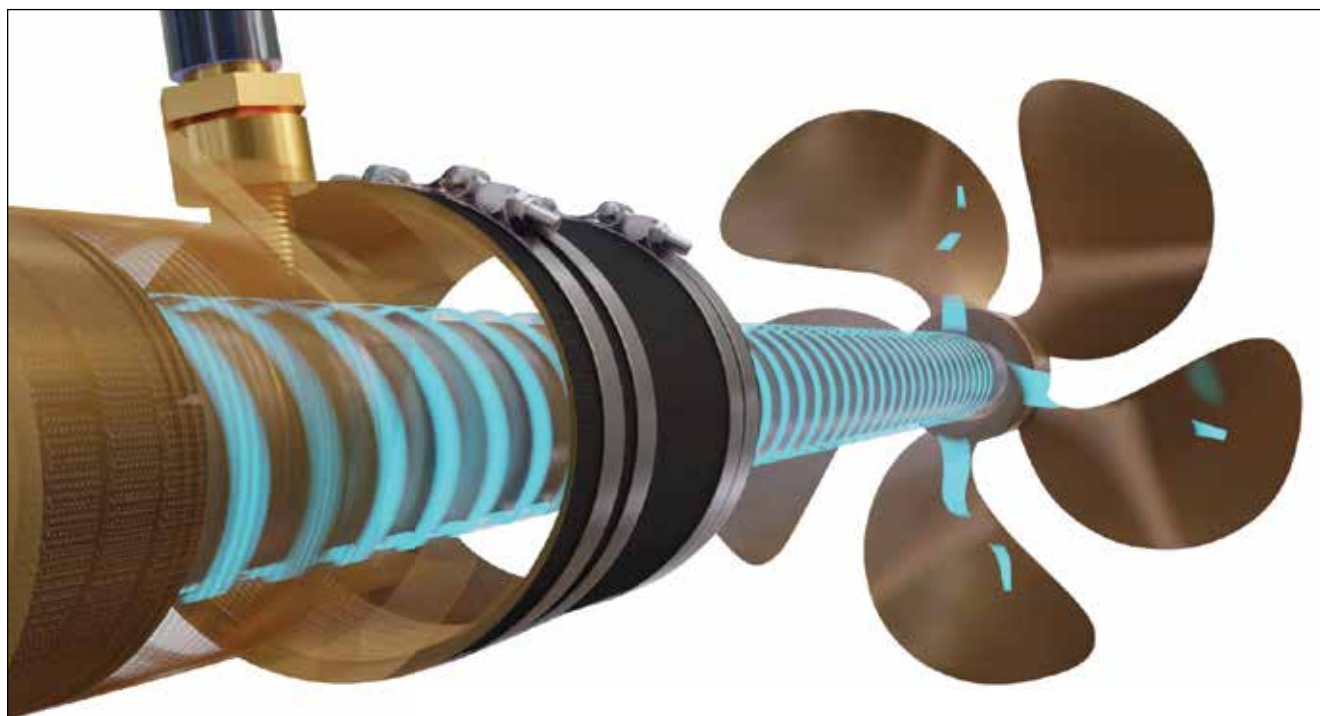


Twisted's 17'6" beam tapers back slightly to a 16'2" transom.

Oceanville modified SW's standard lobster boat molded top, extending it 6' overall

Those guys ... they're just amazing.

— Alex Rogers on Oceanville Boatworks



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Twisted *Continued from previous page*

was going to come back ... and we figured if I didn't have my own line of boats to sell, I was going to be out of business."

Stewart now admits to being "scared shitless" at the time ... but whether you think of him as a clever businessman or a bold gambler, SW Boatworks had some boats to build once the economy began to rebound ... and sales of the Calvin 44 took off.

Oceanville style

Alex Rogers will tell you: he wasn't familiar with Oceanville Boatworks in Stonington, ME, but once he began considering them as a finisher for his new 44, he was impressed.

"The first time I talked to Dale Haley [co-owner of Oceanville Boatworks with partner Tim Staples], I asked him for some references," says Alex. "I think he gave me the list of everybody they've built

a boat for ... and the more people I talked to, the more impressed I was."

Alex says he visited the Oceanville shop in January of 2023 with a set of rough plans: "Here's what I'm thinking," he told Dale and Tim.

"We can do that," they told him.

"When?" asked Alex.

"We can start her in March."



Alex refers to Long Cove Marine's wiring (left) and hydraulics installation as "artwork. Anywhere you look, no matter how tucked away, it's beautiful."



When Alex asked me, "What do you think of this bottom machine?" I thought he was referring to one of the four monitors at the main helm (left), but no. At the touch of a button, a 55" Samsung TV (above) slides up out of a cabinet in the wheelhouse; another click and you can see the bottom on the big screen.



Left, Twisted's outside station, complete with hauler. Right, a fo'c'sle fit for a king (and a queen).



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And they did.

Alex describes Dale and Tim as “wonderful guys – unbelievably smart and talented.

“We never had a conflict where they said ‘No’ – if there was something they didn’t want to do, they’d tell me why ... and it was up to me to decide whether I wanted them to do it or not.”

Tim’s son Dwight was onboard for the project, as well – and is a chip off the old block skill-wise, according to Alex.

“Those guys ... they’re just amazing.”

An elegant heavyweight

As mentioned, Alex chose a 750-horse 6135SFM85 John Deere from Toppin’s Diesel to power his 44-footer. Toppin’s matched a 2.5:1 ZF 500-1A gear to the slow-turning (2200 rpm) Deere. Aft of that is a 2-1/2” driveline from R.E. Thomas Marine Hardware, with a 34”x38” 4-blade from Nautilus Marine handling things on the other end. A 9kW Northern Lights genset shares space in the engine compartment with the Deere.

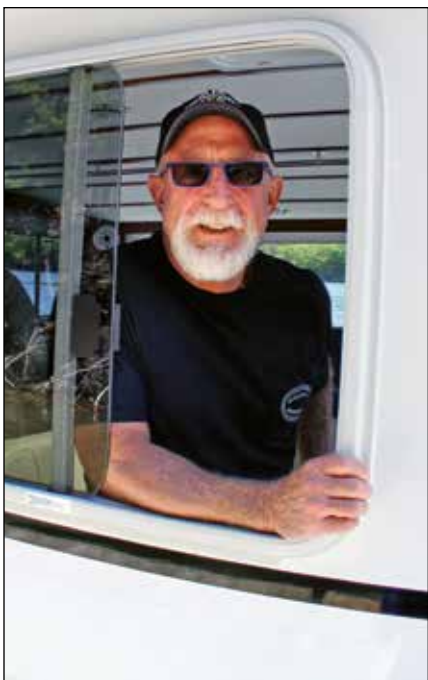
Alex gave Eric Smith and his crew at Long Cove Marine high marks, as well: “They did all the wiring and hydraulics ... I can’t say enough about their work.”

KB Welding handled the metal fab for the project.

Although a 750 may sound modest horsepower-wise for a heavily-built 44 loaded to the gills with elegant accommodations and nifty custom touches, Alex’s theory of “look at the torque” proved itself at launch: 1700 rpm yielded a 12.5-knot cruise with a fuel burn of 19 gal/hr; bump up to 2000 and you’re looking at 17.5 knots and 29 gal/hr; top speed is 20.5 knots.

“Building this boat was great experience,” says Alex. He points at the rod holders.

“Now it’s time to catch some tuna.” ■



Alex Rogers: happy skipper.



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