

by Capt. John N. Raguso

on the water

ALBEMARLE 360 EX

Launched on the big stage at this past Miami boat show, Albemarle's new 2006-1/2 360EX is sure to be at the top of many northeast canyon crews' wish list.

FIRST LOOK

I had the unique opportunity to get a guided tour of this elegant sportfisher from Albemarle's VP Carol Ricketts. Carol has been helping to steer the course of this successful North Carolina boatbuilder for over 15 years and really knows her boats and was able to provide a detailed executive summary of the new 360XF's major systems. According to Carol, this blue-water chariot was put on the fast track by the Don Blount design team, going from concept/design to execution in only 12 months. The fact that Albemarle is part of Brunswick's "Hatteras Collection", which include other stalwart names like Hatteras and recently acquired Cabo Yachts, provides some added corporate muscle to pull this off with a high degree of success.

The cockpit of the 360XF is all business and a dream for blue-water crews who focus on big game pelagic species. It offers a spacious fish-fighting arena that measures 137 inches wide by 103 inches long, which translates to 98 square feet of totally clear cockpit space with a thigh-high 31 inches of cockpit depth to support angler and crew when bringing a large fish to boatside. There's a 20-inch wide tuna door set in the starboard transom corner to slide your keepers onboard with a minimum of effort. When it's time to ice down your catch, this sportfisher is equipped with a pair of convenient insulated fish boxes, with a roomy 56-gallon bin that measures 57 inches wide by 12 inches long by 21 inches deep built-in to the transom cap with a handy overboard drain, plus a lift-out 57-gallon box set under the aft sole that dumps the ice and gurry overboard via a macerator pump-out. A byproduct of removing this fish box is easy access to the running gear. Working forward to the raised bridge deck, there's a fiber-

ALBEMARLE 360 EX

Specifications:

Length- 36 feet, 3 inches (38 feet, 6 inches with pulpit)

Beam- 13 feet, 11 inches

Weight- 25,000 pounds

Deadrise Aft- 16-1/2 degrees

Draft- 4 feet

Fuel Capacity- 595 gallons

Water capacity- 95 gallons

Max Power- Twin Cat C9A 575-horsepower diesels

NEW JERSEY DEALERS:

South Jersey Yacht Sales at South Jersey Marina

1231 Route 109, Cape May, NJ 08204 • 609-884-1600

South Jersey Yacht Sales at Canyon Club Resort Marina

900 Ocean Drive, Cape May, NJ 08204 • 609-884-0880

South Jersey Yacht Sales At Arnold's Yacht Basin

1668 Beaver Dam Rd, Pt. Pleasant, NJ 08742 • 732-899-9666



glass module to the port side of the steps that houses a 24-gallon recirculating livewell above, with a stowage cabinet for your tackle and gear down below. On the starboard side of the steps, there's a freshwater sink fed by a huge 95-gallon tank, four pull-out tackle drawers down under, plus a freezer/cooler area for your baits. Four flush-mount gunwale rodholders are standard (You will definitely need to add a few more here.) with two vertical tower rodholders per side, plus a six-pack rocket launcher overhead.

Stepping up to the raised bridge deck, the center-mounted helm offers excellent visibility of the ocean before you, with plenty of seating for the crew, courtesy of a bench seat to port and an L-shaped lounge to starboard. Each of these roomy seating areas offers dry stowage underneath. The helm features a pair of comfy cushioned pedestal seats manufactured by Release Marine. If you are an electronics freak, no problem, as the Albemarle's helm area offers a spacious 47-inch wide by 12-inch high fiberglass panel set just above the stainless steel steering wheel to flush-mount your favorite array of 10.4-inch and 12-inch LCD control screens. Stepping down a 21-1/2-inch wide companionway into the cabin, there's a full 7 feet of standing headroom, sleeping for four adults, plus a fully functional galley and standup head.

HIGH PERFORMANCE

Rigged with a pair of the optional 575-horsepower Caterpillar C9A diesels swinging four-blade 24 x 35 Nibral props via 1.73:1 reduction gears, this Carolina girl hit a top speed of 35 knots (40 mph) at wide open throttle (2,500 rpm) with full fuel and a crew of five aboard. Backing the throttles off just a bit to only 2 grand, the Albemarle 360XF will really get up and go, providing an effortless cruising speed of 27 knots (31.3 mph) at only 32 gallons per hour, for a net of 0.97 mpg statute and 0.85 nautical miles per gallon of fuel. Factor in the big girl's very generous 595-gallon fuel capacity and your realistic cruising range will approach 430 nautical miles. Translated, there aren't too many canyons in the northeast that you couldn't reach and do extended overnights at given favorable weather conditions. Plus this Albemarle's deep vee entry angle, substantial beef (25,000-pound displacement dry) and wide beam (13 feet, 11 inches) will get you out there and back with good performance and comfort grades.

The standard features list on this sweet sportfisher are a nautical mile long, but include such notable items such as hydraulic steering and trim tabs, a 10-gallon hot water heater,

OTW continued on page 38R

OTW continued from page 22

engine synchronizers, engine-driven emergency bilge pump, electronic single engine lever controls, stainless steel struts and rudders, a trio of auto/manual bilge pumps, 50A dockside service with 50-foot power cord, 9kW freshwater-cooled diesel generator, battery charger, bonded electrical system, automatic Halon fire protection, gel coated bilge area, transom door and much more.

Rigged with the optional 575-horsepower Cat diesels and a Bosch American tuna tower, the MSRP for this blue-water fishing machine is \$511K. The Albemarle 360XF has a lot to offer to those crews looking for a go-fast, go-in-comfort, go-anywhere type of mid-30s blue-water express. For more information, call Albemarle Boats at 252-482-7423, or visit them at www.albemarleboats.com.

