

PassageMaker[®]

—The Trawler & Ocean Motorboat Magazine—

BIGGER IS BETTER

**OUTER
REEF**

70



**PERSONALIZED ONBOARD
TRAINING AT ITS BEST**

**THREE@SEA: NORDHAVN 43
FAMILY CRUISING ADVENTURE**



OUTER REEF 70

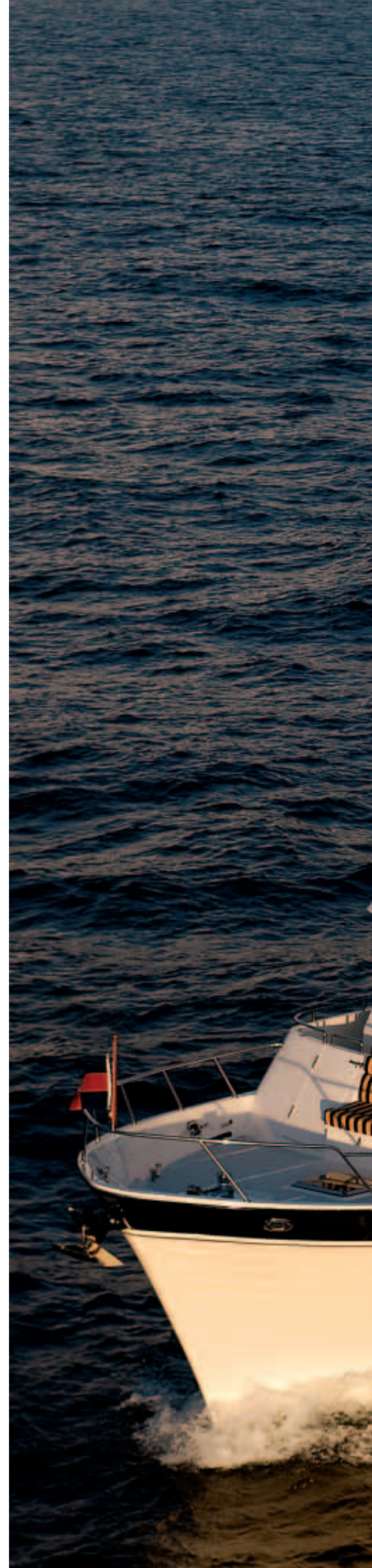
Bigger & Better

Story By Chris Caswell

Photography By Neil Rabinowitz

OK, I admit it. Size really does make a difference. Lest you think you've picked up a copy of *Hustler* by mistake, let me hasten to say that a fine example of this dictum is the Outer Reef 70 seen on these pages. It is essentially a stretched version of their 65-footer, but, oh my, what a difference!

Not only do those 60 inches make a quantum improvement on the interior and on deck, but they make the boat even more fuel efficient because of the longer waterline. It's a win-win that doesn't add appreciably to the price of the yacht, and as a result, Outer Reef hasn't sold a 65 since they introduced the 70.







A settee is built into the Portuguese bridge, turning the high-bulwarked and railed foredeck into a pleasant lounge area at anchor.

When Outer Reef president, Jeff Druke, found that many of his customers loved a particular boat but “wanted it a bit longer,” he made the decision that all of his hull molds would be longer than initially needed. The mold for the Outer Reef 65, for example, can be used to build a boat as long as 72 feet. “I refuse to just tack on an extension to an Outer Reef,” he says. “Every hull is monolithic one-piece construction.”

At first, the requests for longer hulls were because people wanted cockpits added, either for fishing or just as water-level access for diving or boarding a tender. But when the opportunity came to stretch the 18-foot, 6-inch beam hull to create a non-cockpit 70 (actually 71 feet 6 inches), the die was cast.

The accommodations forward of amidship remain essentially unchanged by the extra length, leaving the full-beam master suite and the two guest cabins as they are on the 65. One optional layout on the 65 was to turn the lazarette into a two-bunk crew cabin with access either through a transom door or via a door

in the hanging locker of the master stateroom. The transom door is less than ideal at sea or in bad weather, and no owner wants the crew trudging through his private quarters.

With the 70, however, the added length contributes 3 feet to the saloon and 2 feet to the cockpit (and lazarette), thus solving both problems. While there is still direct access to the crew quarters and engine room through the transom for use in port, a much more civilized stairwell in the aft corner of the saloon provides all-weather secure entry to the crew area.

SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

One look around the crew area on the 70 and it's clear that Druke and the Outer Reef designers clearly understand the adage, “A happy captain makes a happy ship.” Aboard *Good Times*, the 70 shown on these pages, the crew quarters should make for a very happy captain and crew, indeed. A private captain's cabin with a queen-size berth and direct access to a large head with shower is to port, and a comfortably sized crew cabin with bunks is to starboard, sharing the single head. The area also has a mini-galley to make it self-sufficient, and even if you don't want to carry a crew, this area makes perfect sense for teenagers (and their loud music) to have some independence.

At this point, I need to point out that there is no such creature as a “standard” Outer Reef. Each and every one is tailored to the needs and desires of the owner, so the area aft of the engine room is really a blank sheet of paper waiting to be customized. One 70 under construction will have the beautifully finished captain's cabin, but since the owners plan to carry only a husband/wife crew, the rest of the lazarette will be fitted with a workbench and storage, plus scuba compressors and an extra freezer.

I don't want to jump around into different areas, but the added 5 feet also make an immense difference in the boat deck aft of the flybridge. This now allows a tender as large as 20 feet to be chocked easily on the boat deck, which should be measured in acres, rather than square feet. With the tender launched and the chocks removed, you can host your high school reunion here.

Druke also took advantage of the stretched deck to move the crane from the portside location on the 65 to a point in the aft starboard corner. This greatly improves the flexibility for launching the tender if the yacht is moored portside to a dock. The crane can launch or retrieve the tender over the stern or over the starboard side, so it is never blocked.

And then there is the saloon. An extra 3 feet allowed Druke and his design team to rethink the layout as well as add the crew stairs, and they turned the seating arrangement around from the one found on the 65.

As you enter the saloon from the shaded (and,



Top: Large windows and flexible seating create a comfortable living area with the pop-up TV aft. Above left and right: Solving the problem of keeping the pilothouse dark for night cruising, the pop-up teak bulkhead and optional pocket door close off the helm when needed to allow the party to continue in the saloon.

on *Good Times*, soft-enclosed) aft deck, you find low cabinets and an L-shaped couch to port, and a pair of bucket chairs to starboard. What you will first notice, however, is the sweep of vision without bulkheads from the entry doors all the way to the pilothouse windows. Large side windows and the openness make the 70 feel like a far larger yacht. Those side windows, by the way, are 3/8-inch tempered glass and those in the pilothouse are 1/2-inch tempered.

Guests now face aft, with a pop-up TV in the cabinet and a view through large windows over the aft deck, which now has room for uncramped chairs around the large table.

The galley is amidships above the master suite, giving each the benefit of minimum motion in a seaway. Drucek stole a few inches from the saloon to expand the galley, which is no longer the U-shape found on the 65, but a more interesting L-shape. This allows oversized granite



Above: The raised settee behind the helm allows guests to enjoy the view, and even the cook is a part of the conversation. Left: The skipper enjoys a clean and simple dashboard, a large chart table on one side, and a computer station on the other. Notable are the handrails built into the cabinets.

counters (each with teak rails to contain spills) and a huge center island. But, and this is an important point for offshore cruisers, rearranging the galley left the counters close enough together so that the cook can brace against pitching or rolling.

The appliances are all GE Monogram in stainless, and in addition to the usual items, include a dishwasher, trash compactor, and garbage disposal. A stand-up fridge plus drawer freezer is opposite the galley, which eliminated the day head usually tucked in this area under the stairs to the flybridge. It's a personal call for each owner, but I sure like having a convenient head on the main deck. On the 65, I also liked the door from the day head to the side deck, for direct access from the outside without tracking through the saloon.

As I considered the delightful airiness created by the absence of bulkheads between the saloon, galley, and pilothouse, it occurred to me that this could be a problem when running at night. Saloon lights, and certainly the big-screen TV, could cause distractions or reflections in the pilothouse.



The master suite is spacious and comfortable, with a desk to port and oversized walk-in hanging lockers with ample liveaboard space.

But Drucek had the solution: One click of a remote button raised a solid teak bulkhead between the galley and the pilothouse. To fully separate the skipper, a pocket door could also be installed but that wasn't chosen aboard *Good Times*. A very slick idea that solves a problem.

THE CENTER OF IT ALL

The pilothouse is clearly the heart of the Outer Reef 70, and it is likely where guests will gather while under way. A large settee is raised behind the helm for good visibility, with a gorgeous teak table for drinks and munchies.

The skipper lives in lordly grandeur with a single centerline Stidd chair on a pedestal behind a surprisingly simple instrument panel. In an era when 30-footers are delivered with dashboards as complicated as a Stealth Bomber, this straightforward black panel had just a pair of Garmin monitors, twin Caterpillar engine read-outs, a row of rockers for necessary items like the triple wipers, and the joysticks for the ABT-TRAC bow and stern thrusters. There is ample room for more nav or communication electronics, but I found the ergonomic simplicity quite refreshing.

To port of the helm on *Good Times* is a computer screen, remotes for the VHF, and a particularly nice touch, a high sea rail combined with handholds to make standing there secure.

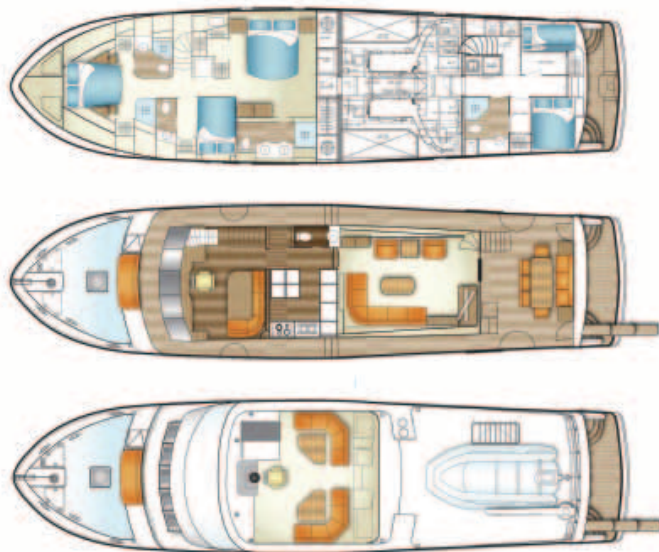
Gentle stairs from the pilothouse curve down to the cabin deck, with a nicely sized foyer that conceals a full-size washer and dryer. Nice touch: these appliances sit in a molded pan so that the inevitable leaks drain directly into the bilge, rather than ruining the teak sole.

OUTER REEF 70

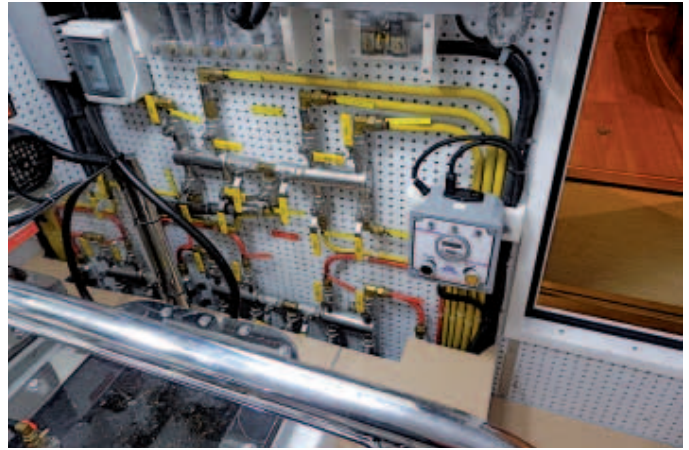
LOA	71' 6"
LWL	65' 6"
BEAM	18' 6"
DRAFT	5' 0"
DISPLACEMENT	101,000 lb.
BRIDGE CLEARANCE	20'6" (mast down)
FUEL	2,000 gal. (standard)
WATER	400 gal.
HOLDING TANK	200 gal.
GRAY WATER	Optional
GENERATOR	Northern Lights 16kW and 18kW
ENGINE(S)	Twin 503hp Caterpillar C-9 Acert
MAXIMUM SPEED	13.8 knots
CRUISE SPEED	8 knots
RANGE AT CRUISE SPEED	2,600nm
DESIGNER	Jeff Drucek/Outer Reef Yachts
BUILDER	Outer Reef Yachts
PRICE AS TESTED	Available upon request

For more information:

Outer Reef Yachts
1850 SE 17th Street
Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33316
954.767.8305
www.outerreefyachts.com



Courtesy of Outer Reef Yachts



Chris Caswell



Chris Caswell

Above left: The captain's cabin is luxuriously appointed with double berth and ensuite head. Top right: Tidy and clearly labeled fuel manifolds make transfers easy and intuitive using the combined pump and fuel polisher. Above right: Nonskid walkways, solid safety rails, and an easily accessible trio of fuel filters mark the engine room.

Directly across from the stairs is a guest cabin with double berth and ensuite head that includes a full shower, while the VIP stateroom is forward with a lozenge-shaped berth and another pleasantly sized head with shower.

The master spans the full beam, with an athwartship queen-size berth, a dedicated computer desk, and an ensuite head that runs along the port side. Clearly designed for long-distance cruising or living aboard, the stateroom has a full walk-in closet forward plus another walk-in closet on the aft bulkhead. A watertight and soundproof door in the aft closet leads to the engine room, allowing the owner easy access and providing an emergency exit from the engine room as well.

The flybridge is pleasant, with an impeccably finished hardtop shading a pair of settees with tables. The skipper has another centerline pedestal chair behind a smaller version of the clean dashboard in the pilothouse. Separating the seating from the boat deck are a pair of fiberglass consoles that create an outdoor kitchen with barbecue, sink, fridge, and lots of storage. Surrounding the boat deck are double stainless steel rails atop coamings, and the weld work on these falls

into the jewelry category. Each weld is fully polished and, in fact, the stainless steel fabrication from the engine room exhaust supports to the bow and side rails is truly exceptional.

While the owner of *Good Times* doesn't have a Great Loop of the eastern United States in his immediate plans, Drucek created a cleverly hinged electronics mast that reduces the air draft to just 20 feet, 6 inches. An almost invisible hinged panel in the back of the hardtop opens to allow the mast to swing backward, and since this is not planned to be a regular occurrence, the mechanism relies on old-fashioned block-and-tackle rather than hydraulics. For an upcoming 70 that plans to transit even lower bridges, the Outer Reef team devised a way to lift the entire hardtop off and secure it to the foredeck, reducing the height of the yacht even more.

An enclosed bridge version of the 70 is also under construction, with a teak-lined sky lounge and pilothouse instead of the open flybridge. This allows the usual pilothouse to be turned into a huge country galley with a wraparound dining table under the forward windows.



From overhead, the immense size of the boat deck is obvious, with space for a 20-foot tender plus water toys.

ENGINE ROOM PERFECTION

I've saved the engine room for dessert, because this is where cruising skippers are going to do their "oohs" and "aahs." It is, quite simply, superb. First, there is ample space between the twin Cat C-9s to walk on the nonskid decking, and more of the stainless steel rails protect you against hot or moving parts. Every possible maintenance point is readily accessible, and it's clear that (unlike most automobiles) this engine room was laid out by someone who has actually worked on engines. The twin Northern Lights 20kW gensets (standard are 16kW and 8kW) are tucked aft in sound boxes, but these are also readily accessed without problems. This is an engine room where your service technicians may try to kiss you, so be prepared.

Several items particularly impressed me for their thoughtfulness. First, the dual fuel filters for the main and the genset filter were grouped together for easy access, and each used identical filters, so the number of required spares is reduced. The fuel manifold system was a masterpiece of both careful labeling and intuitive layout, so there should be no wondering which valve to open or close. This particular 70 had an additional 650-gallon belly tank under the master stateroom for a total of 2,350 gallons (in 6061

aluminum tanks), including the two saddle tanks, and a combination fuel polisher and transfer pump allows the tanks to be balanced. Normally, I would expect the engines and gensets to draw from the saddle tank on each side, leaving the belly tank as a reserve that would also lower the center of gravity.

A long list of standard equipment includes quality systems from TRAC stabilizers to Kahlenberg horns, and Glendinning Cablemasters to the Maxwell windlass with CQR anchor.

The Cat C-9s of 503hp are the standard engine, and I can't imagine why you would want to opt for a pair of C-12s of 705hp because you'd just be pushing more water, burning more fuel, and in the end, you'd only move the hammers-down-flat-out top speed from 13.8 knots to 14 knots as shown on Outer Reef's own performance curves. Every owner needs to find his own "sweet spot" that balances how fast he wants to get somewhere with what he's willing to spend, but an Outer Reef 70 like *Good Times* (with the added tank) will take you nearly 4,300nm at a bit under 6 knots, or about 2,600nm at nearly 8 knots. Your call.

Solidly built, comfortably arranged, and thoughtfully outfitted, the Outer Reef 70 should clearly be on your short list even if you're looking for a smaller offshore cruising yacht because, after all, size matters. 