

# 390 BOAT TEST REPORT

Mainship®  
Corporation  
T R A W L E R S  
AN EMPLOYEE OWNERSHIP COMPANY

390 TRAWLER

## uncommon sense

by Capt. Ken Kreisler

### POWER & MOTORYACHT

I know that boats are built from the bottom up, but my enjoyment of the Mainship 390 started at the top. Her large flying bridge offered all the necessary amenities, including seating for six, a table with two fold-down leaves, stowage well, venturi windshield, and radar mast.

Her centerline helm afforded me excellent visibility while underway, backing down, or just swinging on the hook at a beautiful sunset anchorage. It's well thought out, with all gauges, switches, controls, and electronics strategically placed so that I only needed to glance to either side of the wheel to get all the engine and navigation information I needed. The console is hinged and releases easily for complete access to all wiring and electronic instruments. Best of all, I felt secure up here due to the aluminum safety rails that surround the flying bridge. I even felt safe climbing up here, thanks to the molded-in stairway that replaced the usual bridge ladder. In addition, recessed lighting in the stairway allows for safer evening transiting.

The well-thought-out design of the Mainship 390 continues on the main deck. There are stowage compartments in the cockpit sole, lazarette, and transom. Access forward is via port and starboard walkways with high bulwarks for added security. I appreciated this when I made my way to the rope and chain locker during a sudden and unexpected thunderstorm. With one hand on the sturdy bowrail and my feet planted on the nonskid in the deep well of the bow area, I felt safe enough to clear the anchor line feed as it came in. There's also an optional anchor washdown located here, which I found came in handy when the anchor showed up loaded with mud.

Inside, the 390 makes just as much sense. Comfortable accommodations include a forward master stateroom that boasts a center island berth, cedar-

lined lockers, and plenty of stowage areas, including a large drawer located centrally under the berth. Just aft and to port there's a second stateroom with two single berths, hanging locker, and drawer and cabinet stowage. The easy-to-clean, molded-fiberglass head is opposite the guest quarters and has a built-in vanity, electric toilet and shower with stall. All these rooms have an average of 6'6" of headroom, plus hatches, carpeting, ports, and recessed overhead halogen lighting.

The efficient port-side galley is part of the saloon and forward of the entertainment center, with television, stereo, and VCR. It features a full-size refrigerator/freezer, Corian® counters, sink, range, oven, microwave, under-counter and overhead cabinets, and a Black & Decker coffee maker.

Forward of the sofa is the fully instrumented lower station, where you can find a sliding side door to access the starboard walkway. This station also affords good visibility thanks to large windows ahead and to starboard. There was even a sufficiently clear line of sight through the cockpit's sliding glass door aft to allow me to back the 390 into her slip.

Three carpeted hatches in the sole lift up to reveal the engine compartment. I found plenty of room all around our single Caterpillar to do maintenance and estimated that even with twin engines, access to critical components like belts, oil and transmission dipsticks, and wiring should be good.

I was very comfortable during my four days aboard the Mainship 390 Trawler. She offers a special combination of spacious accommodations, large flying bridge, safe and accessible deck areas, and thrifty, dependable power. If that sounds like your kind of boating, the 390 will make a lot of sense to you also.

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### Mainship's new 390 Trawler offers cruising comfort and surprising performance.



# 21st Century by John Clemans trawler

## MOTORBOATING & SAILING

It's May on the ICW, and the snowbirds are heading north from marker to marker in the middle of the mile-wide Indian River Lagoon off Melbourne, FL. Chip Shea, corporate marketing director for the Luhrs Marine Group, Mainship's parent company, and his wife Stacey are heading south, against the grain. They left Titusville three hours ago and so far they've seen over 30 trawlers, which brings a smile to Chip's face. He and Stacey are also aboard a trawler – a brand new Mainship 390. They wave to the people aboard the other trawlers, some of which are also Mainships, but none of which are new.

Mainship built over 1,200 trawlers from 34 to 40 feet between 1978 and 1988. The late '70's and early '80s were boom times for trawler builders – trawlers offered economical access to life on the water. By the mid-'80s, however, the run on trawlers was on the wane. Conspicuous consumption was in, and fuel price flare-ups were forgotten. Trawler sales slowed to the point that several builders, including Mainship, ceased production by the end of the decade.

So why is Chip Shea looking so smug as he witnesses the parade of trawlers on the Waterway? The reason is that "Trawlers are back!" Owners of aging trawlers are shopping for new boats, and people who have never considered a trawler are suddenly in the market. As a result of the 390's presence at the Miami Boat Show almost 50 have been ordered. The appeal is obvious. Although the 390 retains the lines of a traditional trawler, it's a thoroughly modern boat. It's built with today's high-tech components, it requires virtually no maintenance, and push of the throttle(s) will put you over the hump and into the 15-knot range.

The 390 that Shea is driving is powered by \*twin 200-hp TAMD41 Volvo diesels. Displacement cruising speed is 8.3 knots at 2000 rpm, at only five gph. Standard power is a single 300-hp Caterpillar 3116 diesel. (A total of four different engine options are available.) Top speed with the twin Volvos is 18 knots; with the single Cat it's projected to be 15 to 16 knots. The single-engine version should be no problem to handle around a dock because bow thrusters are an option.

Trawler buyers want a boat for extended cruising. Practicality and need tend to dictate their tastes – a fact of which Mainship is well aware. The 390 offers two private staterooms, a truly workable galley, an extended bridge deck and a lower helm station. On a boat this size you'd expect to find a V-berth forward. But the 390 boasts a full double island berth in the forward stateroom, which has two cedar-lined hanging lockers, drawer storage, a pop-up mirrored vanity, reading lights, side cabinets and pullout storage bins



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Trawlers – especially Mainship's high-tech, low-maintenance 39-footer – are finding new fans.

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under the bed.

The 390's second stateroom (to port) provides two single berths, teak hanging lockers, a storage cabinet and an UltraLeather bench with storage beneath. The berth is tucked under the galley – which is how Mainship is able to offer two staterooms. Both staterooms have screened opening ports and overhead hatches with sun covers.

The air-conditioned head opposite the guest stateroom is accessible from both the companionway and the master stateroom. Teak touches – overhead, as well as around the clear, bi-fold safety glass shower doors – retain the "classic" feel of the entire interior. High-tech, low-maintenance components are the rule here, however. The stall shower has a bench and a storage cabinet. One-piece modular construction eliminates seams and makes cleaning an easy chore.

## CHART TABLE OR DESK

While the exterior of the 390 is devoid of teak, the interior makes lavish use of it. Sidewalls, bulkheads, cabinets, helm station, galley – even the fridge and microwave – are encased in teak paneling. An UltraLeather sofa runs along the starboard side of the salon. It can be either a queen convertible or a model with built-in storage capability. A high-gloss teak table has a swing-out leaf that converts it to a dining table. Comfortable director's chairs serve as salon chairs, dining chairs and deck chairs.

In addition to a shore-power connection aft, there's also one on the bow, and a switch to choose between them is positioned right below the eye-level electric panel. To port, forward of the entertainment center (TV/VCR) and a bank of teak storage cabinets, is the fridge and microwave. The freezer is below the fridge instead of above it, and the galley boasts a three-burner Princess range as well as an oven, a

Corian countertop and a stainless steel sink with a Corian folding cover.

Opposite the galley to starboard is the lower helm station. The switches and gauges are set in a raised teak dash. A switch on the 12-volt panel activates the lower station, the upper station, or both. From the lower station a sliding pocket door opens to the starboard side deck for quick access fore or aft.

## EXTENDED BRIDGE DECK

Mainship has done away with ladders. Eight curving steps with an aluminum handrail lead from the cockpit to the bridge. A centerline transom door opens to the swim platform, which is glassed to the hull and is part of the boat's running surface. Handy transom storage bins keep lines and fenders within easy reach. The bridge deck extends well aft, shadowing the cockpit and providing space to carry a small dinghy (a davit can be mounted) and to sunbathe behind the optional Bimini top. A canvas package provides a full enclosure.

The bridge helm station hinges up for quick and easy wiring access. To each side of the adjustable helm seat are

benches with storage beneath them, and between them a clever storage bin converts to a table.

At Ft. Pierce, Chip Shea heads out the inlet to demonstrate how the Mainship 390 can handle the real-world turmoil of four-to five-footers. In the quartering sea he maintains 13 knots at a bit over 3000 rpm, and the boat shows admirable stability. The flat aft section and the keel keep it from excessive rolling. The rounded bilges keep it from pounding. The 390's hand-laid fiberglass hull with its encapsulated marine ply stringers is built to the same standards as Luhrs sport-fishermen to withstand heavy seas.

The Mainship 390 awaits anyone who enjoys life on the water, whether he or she is a trawler owner whose boat is due for a replacement, or an express, convertible or motoryacht owner for whom the prospect of extended, economical cruising is an appealing one. The 390 is a boat that's easy to afford, easy to handle, easy to care for and easy to enjoy. It offers an entire lifestyle that Mainships have provided in the past and are now providing again.

*\*Since this test, engines have been replaced with Twin 230 Yanmar Diesel.*



## MAINSHIP 390 TRAWLER



LOA (w/pulpit and standard platform)	. . . . .39'9"
Beam	. . . . .14'2"
Draft	. . . . .3'8"
Weight	. . . . .22,000 lbs
Water	. . . . .130 gals.
Fuel	. . . . .300 gals.
Power	. . . . .200 Hp Volvo Diesel*
Cruise (full disp.)	. . .8.3 knots/2000 rpm
Max	. . . . .18 knots/3800 rpm

\*Since this test, engines have been replaced with Twin 230 Yanmar Diesel

**MAINSHIP CORP.,**  
255 DIESEL ROAD,  
ST. AUGUSTINE, FL 32086.  
(904) 829-0500  
1-800-829-5847



# the mirror has 2 faces

by Bill Pike

## BOATING®

During my oilfield career, I logged more than a few late-night plea-bargaining sessions with the Universe, most aimed at ensuring the continued existence of me and my crew, most backgrounded by the comforting roar of a thruster.

But all thrusters don't roar, of course. The Halter Marine AHTS (Anchor Handling Tug Supply) boats I ran in the Gulf were outfitted with huge, industrial-strength hydraulic thrusters, each powered by a strapping Detroit diesel. The thrusters I encounter today on pleasureboats are puny and quiet by comparison. And most are designed not for hours of daily use, with periodic stints of life-or-death service, but for simply making docking easier.

My enthusiasm for thrusters continues unabated. In fact, it's probably more intense now than ever, due to a nagging feeling I have that the virtues of single-engine, bowthruster-equipped pleasureboats are miserably underappreciated these days and go almost totally unreported.

### SETUP SUPREMO

Enthusiasm attracts opportunity. A couple of months ago, a synchronistic production situation materialized at the Mainship plant in St. Augustine, Florida. When I first heard about it, my ears perked up like a coonhound's in a cane-brake.

Mainship was selling its new 390 Trawler, a modernized version of a popular model brought out in 1979, in two configurations: One with a single diesel inboard engine and a bowthruster, the other with twin diesel inboards and no thruster. Because of scheduling vagaries, two identical 390's were going to be on hand at the same time, an unusual circumstance. But even more unusual was the fact that each boat would be outfitted with one of the two different power configurations.

What a setup! A bowthruster-equipped single-engine cruiser vs. an identical, bowthruster-less twin-engine once. Finally, I was going to have a chance to prove to recreational boaters just how useful bowthrusters are for dockside maneuvering. And into the bargain, I was going to be able to show them, hopefully, just how economical a bowthruster-equipped single-engine boat is when stacked up next to a twin.

### LONG-DISTANCE RUNNER

When our two 390 Trawlers were ready, Associate Technical Editor Lenny Rudow and I headed south to St. Augustine, lucking into a sunny, breezy, halcyon interlude between hurricanes. We were ecstatic. Good weather makes for good, scientific testing.

After a peaceful night's snooze at the cushy, waterfront Inn at Camachee, we commenced operations early so we could do everything on the same day, with the same weather prevailing. We also used the same stretch of water to run both boats, a section of the Intracoastal Waterway behind the Mainship factory. Moreover, the same number of people were onboard each boat at all times – myself, Rudow and a Mainship representative. And each boat had the same fuel and water levels prior to leaving the dock.

Ahhhhhhh. The findings that emerged most dramatically from our numerous performance runs that morning warmed the cockles of my conservationist heart. Maximum running efficiency for the single-engine boat made the twin seem like it was addicted to diesel oil, or else lugging around a superfluous cargo of anvils. In fact the difference in maximum efficiency between the two boats was so great that we ran the numbers a second time to check our accuracy.

Here's the buzz. Look at the charts accompanying this story and you'll see that our single, with its 291-hp Caterpillar 3116TA turning 900 rpm, came very close to doing hullspeed - 8 mph in the 390's case - while consuming just .4 gph. Not only is this impressive from a theoretical standpoint, since approximating hullspeed with a modest fuel burn is indicative of good naval architecture, it's also pretty impressive on the practical front.

Dig this. Range on the single 390 at 900 rpm is six times more than the range on the twin. Six times! Thus, with a single Caterpillar pushing the 390 along at 8 mph, average efficiency is 20 mpg for a maximum range of 5,400 miles, figuring a 10 percent reserve in its 300-gallon fuel tanks. With \*twin 192-hp Volvo Penta TAMD41s cranking the same rpm, the average is a mere 3.3 mpg for a maximum range of 900 miles. And the speed is 6 mph...2 mph less. Mind-blowing?

There's more. Certainly, one of the big arguments in favor of twin engines in any sort of far-ranging vessel is that you can go fast if the need or desire arises.

But during testing, the 390 with the single Cat not only demonstrated sock-knocking slo-

mo efficiency, it also turned in some pretty amazing high-end performance numbers. Okay, wide-open-throttle speed on the twin was 4.3 mph higher (22.2 mph vs. 17.9 mph), a fact partially accounted for by an extra 84 reported horsepower. But really, how many people run a cruising boat at WOT anyway?

And consider this. Our data shows the single does an eminently respectable cruise of 15.8 mph for an efficiency of 1.3 mpg. According to my algebra, the same speed on the twin produces about 1.2 mpg, only a bit less. What all this means to me, from a practical standpoint, is that the single performs waaaaayyy better than the twin throughout most of its powercurve and almost as good at top end. Ask yourself: Does 22.2 mph get you home that much faster?

Finally, a second argument in favor of twin engines is safety – if one engine kicks the bucket, there's a spare. But isn't this reasoning a little shaky, too? Most experienced boaters will tell you that the majority of onboard engine glitches are either fuel or electricity related. In either case, both engines are usually affected by the problem. So why is a twin any safer?

### HELL OF A HULL

Don't get me wrong. I'm pushing a blanket endorsement of all bowthruster-equipped single-engine boats. There are several features exclusive to the 390 that help produce its single-engine edge.

To begin with, most singles, if they're designed right, contend with less drag than a twin, with its extra rudder, prop and shaft. Let's go back to 900 rpm, where our single does 8 mph, and the twin does only 6 mph. Certainly, a difference in props, with the single carrying an extra inch of diameter as well as an extra inch of pitch, helps explain this difference. But so does a substantial reduction in drag and, for that matter, a reduction in displacement. According to Mainship, our twin 390 outweighed the single by about 1,000 pounds.

Also, the 390's hullshape is unique contributor to impressive, single-engine performance. More specifically, the swim platform is low-slung and integrated into the underbody of the boat. This boosts running efficiency three ways. First, it shifts the boat's center of buoyancy aft which compensates for the extra weight inherent in a twin-engine setup. Second, it acts as a giant trim tab to help get the boat efficiently out of the hole. And third, it actually extends the hull by almost 3', which on the single version increases hullspeed and bottom-end efficiency considerably.

### DOCKSIDE HANDLE

After wringing out our twin 390s on the intracoastal, we brought them back to Mainship's backyard for a handling workout. I was a bit wor-

ried about how our bowthruster-equipped single was going to fare. All the performance advantages in the world don't amount to a hill of mermaid fenders if you can't get tied up dockside quickly and safely.

Conditions were test-worthy. A brisk breeze was blowing ashore and a tidal current was running along Mainship's dog-leggy facedock, doing two to three knots... enough to carry off my new, green swordfish cap as if I'd dropped the thing in a trout stream.

On top of some unstructured play-around time that figured prominently in our afternoon-long throttle-busting extravaganza, Rudow and I both worked through the same, fixed boathandling regimen. Each of us docked each boat starboard-side-to, 360-ed and then docked port-side-to, using a berth that was fairly tight, with a brand new Mainship parked on either end to add dramatic tension.

"You hit it," said our Mainship representative at the onset, "you bought it."

For me, one portion of the experience characterized the whole – the part where I docked both boats, one after the other, port-side-to, with the current dead on the nose.

On the twin, I started the maneuver by pulling up to our berth, about 30' off. Then, in time-honored fashion, I angled in toward the dock using a little rudder and my inboard engine alone, with the intention of eventually backing down on the outboard engine to swing the stern to port once I was alongside.

The scenario worked okay, but as it played out, I found that to keep from getting dangerously broadside to the current I had to periodically tweak my diagonal orientation to the dock by jockeying the engines, right/left, forward/reverse. With the Mainship rep's half-joking admonition still jangling in the air, this extra complexity was a pain in the butt.

On the other hand, handling the bowthruster-equipped single 390 was surer, if a little slower, and entailed no nerve-wracking complexity at all. Not once did I have to jockey the throttle, or clutch astern, to tweak my orientation to the dock. Instead, I simply hit the dashboard switch for the 4-hp electric thruster a couple of times. Bzzzp... the bow went slightly to port. Bzzzp... the bow went even more slightly to starboard. It was child's play, except that I was warned not to exceed five-second usage bursts on the thruster. The rep was worried I might fry the thing, a concern that prompts me to wonder if Mainship shouldn't offer a bigger thruster on the 390. **\*NOTE - 7hp thruster now standard on single engine boats.**

At any rate, in addition to hitting the thruster a total of three times, all I had to do was throttle a couple of shots of forward thrust on the single Cat to hold station so the current itself could move the boat sideways into the berth. As our fenders came up against, I felt pleased with the thruster-equipped 390. Sure, the boat didn't have the leverage and oomph of a twin-screw, but essentially there was more control. And less worry.

After he'd taken his turn at the helms of our two test boats, Rudow was of the same mind. "You can maneuver as well with the single-engine-thruster setup," he said, "although you have to finesse or plan things a little more. And the performance advantages are awesome."

## THE FINAL ADVANTAGE

Toward the end of the day, we finished up our testing by examining our two 390's dockside for other significant, powerplant-related differences. As we catalogued them, the bowthruster-equipped 390 continued to lead the twin by a nautical mile.

Its engine room, for instance, was loaded with space, with superb access for maintenance and repairs. Changing filters on a single Caterpillar in a cavernous ER is about as encumbering as milking a patient cow. You just sit down and do it... either side.

Same story with the single's engine-room layout. Obviously, Mainship had a lot more freedom to install auxiliary equipment here. Batteries, tankage and firefighting equipment on the single were more logically, simply and discretely layed out.

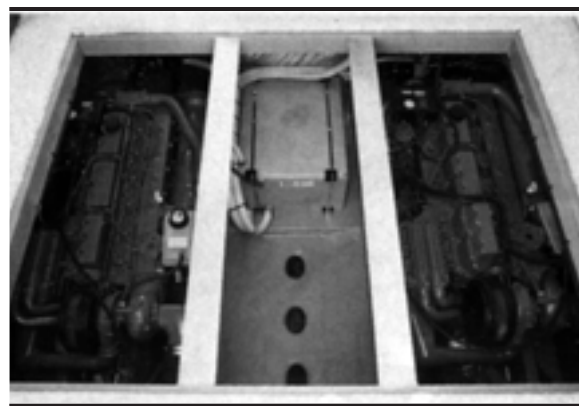
And then there's money. The lower base price of the single save you \$22,000 over the twin right out of the gate. How much the single saves you afterward, in fuel and maintenance, depends on how much you run it.

Other advantages? Not many. Noise levels at the upper helm on both boats were almost the same. And while the single's running angles were generally a bit lower, it's no big deal in my book.

Which is not to say, of course, that I, as a big-time bowthruster booster, did not feel totally, 100-percent validated by our findings in St. Augustine. As we drove off into the sunset, in our purple rental car, Rudow and I were in complete agreement:

Performance and other advantages of the bowthruster-equipped single-engine Mainship 390 Trawler vastly outweigh the extra maneuvering oomph and top-end speed of the twin-screw version. In this instance, a bowthruster-equipped single blows a twin out of the water.

**\*Since this test, engines have been replaced with Twin 230 Yanmar Diesel.**



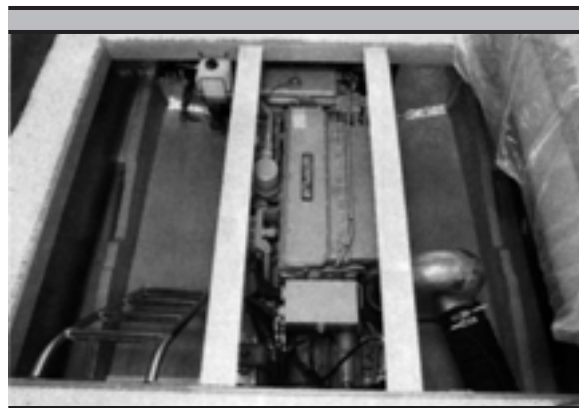
## Certified Test RESULTS

Mainship 390 (without bowthruster)

SPEED			EFFICIENCY				OPERATION	
rpm	knots	mph	gph	naut. mpg	stat. mpg	n. mi. range	s. mi. range	run angle
900	5.2	6.0	1.8	2.9	3.3	782	900	0
1200	6.3	7.3	2.4	2.6	3.0	714	821	0
1500	7.7	8.9	2.8	2.8	3.2	746	858	1
1800	9.2	10.6	4.2	2.2	2.5	592	681	1
2100	9.9	11.4	5.8	1.7	2.0	461	531	1
2400	10.4	12.0	7.8	1.3	1.5	361	415	2
2700	11.6	13.4	9.4	1.2	1.4	334	385	4
3000	12.8	14.7	12.2	1.0	1.2	283	325	5
3300	14.5	16.7	14.4	1.0	1.2	272	313	6
3600	16.6	19.1	17.4	1.0	1.1	258	286	5
3900	19.3	22.2	24.8	0.8	0.9	210	242	4

Advertised fuel capacity 300 gallons. Range based on 90 percent of that figure. Performance measured with three persons aboard, 1/2 fuel, 1/2 water. Sound levels measured at helm, in dB-A.

**Standard power:** Twin 192-hp Volvo Penta TAMD41P diesel inboards with 219 cid., 3.62" bore x 3.54" stroke, turning 21" x 21" four-bladed bronze props through a 2.6:1 reduction.



## Certified Test RESULTS

Mainship 390 (with bowthruster)

SPEED			EFFICIENCY				OPERATION	
rpm	knots	mph	gph	naut. mpg	stat. mpg	n. mi. range	s. mi. range	run angle
900	7.0	8.0	0.4	17.4	20.0	4693	5400	0
1200	8.5	9.8	0.8	10.6	12.3	2874	3308	0
1500	9.1	10.5	2.5	3.6	4.2	985	1134	1
1800	9.8	11.3	4.1	2.4	2.8	647	744	1
2100	10.5	12.1	6.5	1.6	1.9	437	503	2
2400	11.5	13.2	9.3	1.2	1.4	333	383	3
2700	13.7	15.8	12.3	1.1	1.3	301	347	5
2900	15.6	17.9	14.5	1.1	1.2	290	333	5

Advertised fuel capacity 300 gallons. Range based on 90 percent of that figure. Performance measured with three persons aboard, 1/2 fuel, 1/2 water. Sound levels measured at helm, in dB-A.

**Standard power:** Single 291-hp Caterpillar 3116TA diesel inboard with 402 cid., 4.13" bore x 5.0" stroke, turning 21" x 21" four-bladed bronze props through a 2.6:1 reduction.

# MAINSHIP 390

updated version of a traditional trawler

a reprint from

**POWERBOAT** REPORTS

August 1997...

## TRAWLERS

The Mainship 390 Trawler represents one of those rare types of boat to which the word “compromise” has only a limited application. It is, uncompromisingly, a boat designed to permit a couple to cruise for extended periods with a minimum of fuss and maintenance and a maximum of comfort. As such, it joins a select group of trawlers which are designed to make the trip itself the important thing, rather than merely reaching the destination.

The classic trawler – the word “trawler” is, we’re told, a corruption of “troller” – is a boat type developed in the Pacific Northwest, where it was used for extended long-line fishing voyages. It’s characterized by a displacement hull powered by a relatively small diesel inboard, a full keel and a deep forefoot. Most trawlers feature a flybridge where the helm is located, and a secondary helm situated in a roomy center cabin. Accommodations are luxurious in nature, and limited as to number; trawlers are typically aimed at the cruising couple market, who are seeking a cruising liveaboard.

Trawlers may be inexpensive to operate, but they’re not cheap to buy. This is, in part, because trawlers are big boats, especially when you consider their intended crew/passenger size. And since trawlers promise luxury, the joinery, accessories, and features tend to be first-class and complete (read expensive).

## DESIGN/CONSTRUCTION

The Mainship 390 Trawler, in general layout, is first and foremost a trawler. It measures 39 feet, 9 inches overall – 5 feet of that consists of the bow pulpit and swim platform – and has an unusually generous 14-foot, 2-inch beam. The boat we tested was powered by a pair of \*192hp Volvo Penta TAMD41P diesels: it’s also available with a single 291hp 3116TA Caterpillar diesel, which comes standard with a bow thruster. The Mainship 390 displaces 22,000 pounds (18,000 with the single engine option).

Forward, three steps down from salon level, there’s a comfortable stateroom; with a smaller – but still comfortable – “guest room”. Step aft and up, and you’re in the deck cabin at the lower helm. Further aft, the cockpit opens on to a swim platform that doubles as a location for dinghy storage. The cockpit is shaded by an extended flybridge, which is accessed by a stairway – the only ladder aboard provides access to the engine room.

The Mainship 390’s lines are what a traditionalist on



It’s still no speedster, but the new Mainship trawler has softer lines, great accommodations, and is (relatively) affordable

our staff describes as “Modern, but not obnoxiously so.” The exterior is designed for low maintenance, with white fiberglass replacing the more traditional brightwork throughout; brightwork has been reserved for the saloon and staterooms. There’s no mast for a steadying sail, but a radar mast helps maintain a link to the traditional look.

The Mainship 390’s construction is solid and conventional, a combination that doesn’t make for a lightweight boat, but then again that’s not what a trawler is all about. From the keel on up the waterline chine, the hull is made of solid fiberglass, using multiple layers of biaxial and woven glass reinforcement. The sides of the hull above the waterline as well as the deck are cored with end-grain balsa. The hull/deck joint is a flange arrangement, fastened with 3M 5200 adhesive and screws on three-inch centers.

## SALON

Salon access is either through a sliding door from the cockpit (it can be locked closed for security or locked open for ventilation) or through a starboard side door adjacent to the secondary helm station. The salon is large (11-1/2 feet by 10-feet), and makes lavish use of all that teak that doesn’t appear on the boat’s exterior. A good part of the feeling of spaciousness in the Mainship 390 is due to the fact that it is spacious. Its 14-foot 2-inch beam – a full 1-1/2 feet more than a Grand Banks 36 – means that the generous walkaround space out in the sidedecks doesn’t cramp the cabin interior. On the starboard side of the salon, forward, is the lower helm station.

Visibility is good through large windows equipped with washers and wipers; access to control wiring is also



very good, with the control console's top swinging open for easy servicing. The center windshield section opens, for ventilation and access. The forward door is located next to the lower helm, which makes for good visibility when docking as well as extra ventilation.

## TOPSIDES

The Mainship 390's decks are finished with easy-to-clean molded non-skid, reflecting the boat's low-maintenance design concept. There's a molded-in 3-foot by 11-1/2-foot swim platform with a four-step ladder mounted underneath. A freshwater shower at the swim platform is standard equipment.

A cockpit door provides access to the swim platform; the rear of the cockpit houses a pair of large lazarettes that drain overboard. Storage hatches under the cockpit sole provide access to batteries and a genset (not supplied). The cockpit itself provides a 6-1/2 by 12-foot area that's shaded by the rear of the extended flybridge. Curtains and/or netting (not supplied) can make this area even more versatile.

Forward, at each side of the cockpit, there's a short stairway (lighted at night) that provides access to the forward deck via 13-inch wide walkaround passages. A molded-in coaming together with low-profile hand rails make the trip forward safe and comfortable. Railings are welded aluminum, screwed into aluminum plates that are molded into the glass.

On the foredeck, there's a bow pulpit, and a large hatch covering a divided double rode locker: It holds 300 feet of chain as well as 300 feet of rope, with overboard drainage. An anchor windlass is optional; a freshwater washdown at the anchor well is standard.

The entire deck is well scuppered, with all drainage directly overboard. The Mainship has a stainless steel bow, stern and spring cleats, and a high-density plastic rub rail. There are dockside connections for water, Cable TV, and telephone, in addition to the shore power connectors fore and aft. Non-skid throughout is effective, but not punishing to bare feet.

At the starboard side of the cockpit there's a molded fiberglass stairway to the bridge. It's also illuminated at night. As Chip Shea told us, "We wanted people to be able to go up with a sandwich in hand."

The bridge is spacious, measuring over 17 feet long by 10 feet wide. Aft, there are extensive railings surrounding the staircase - nobody's apt to fall down the stairs without trying. Another railing surrounds the edges of the flybridge, blending in with the 3-foot high bridge coaming further forward. The bridge houses the main helm station, which comes complete

with a full complement of instruments

There's a low reverse-rake windscreen which does a good job deflecting wind and spray without blocking sight lines for even short drivers. At the center of the bridge deck there's a drop-leaf table and a removable cooler; the bridge will comfortably seat 6 adults with no crowding whatsoever.

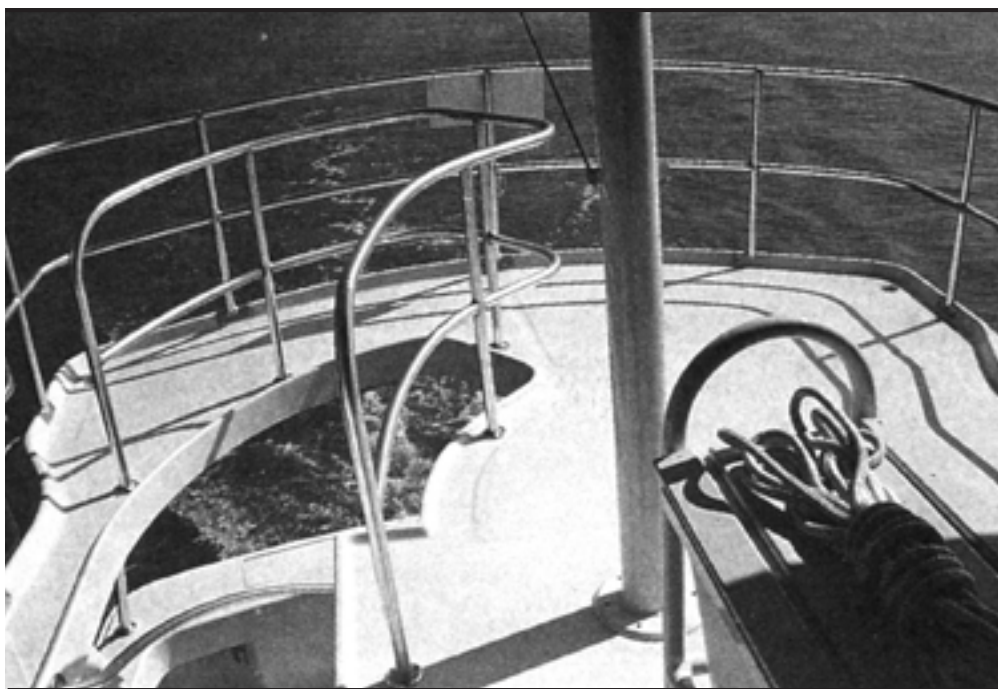
The flybridge, like the cockpit, is well scuppered. Unlike some flybridge drainage systems which seem to invite water drained from the bridge deck to spray down into the cockpit, the Mainship 390 makes the aft flybridge support columns do double duty: They're hollow tubes that direct drainage down below, where they can drain overboard.

## CONCLUSIONS/ RECOMMENDATIONS

The Mainship 390 Trawler is, if we may be a bit repetitious, a boat designed for a couple who wish to do extended, liveaboard cruising in comfort with a minimum of fuss and work. It lives up to its design premises quite well. Like other trawlers, the 390 will cruise for long distances on not much fuel, it can exceed displacement hull speed, although it's probable that it won't spend much of its operating time on plane. And it can permit the cruising couple a fair degree of luxury living while underway.

But if you'll take low maintenance in exchange for lovely teak decks and exterior brightwork, and a pretty complete package in exchange for the joys of picking your own options from a long (and often expensive) list, the money you can save by choosing a Mainship 390 Trawler can help pay for a lot of cruising.

***\*Since this test, engines have been replaced with Twin 230 Yanmar Diesel.***



Back in the late 1970s, cruising was king, and the entire boating world shuffled about to satisfy growing demand. Many people opted for the simplicity of sailing, buying a sailboat to cruise the many paradise destinations of the world.

Despite the sailing craze, there was still significant interest for a competent power cruiser that offered comfort, safe reliable operation, and of course, fuel economy. Those were also the days of rising oil prices. Remember.

The boat was popular – it was affordable, had good fuel economy and range, offered comfortable accommodations for a couple, and the boat was low maintenance with a minimum of brightwork. The Nantucket came with a single 165 hp diesel, and a sturdy keel provided added protection for the large rudder and single propeller. All in all, an honest competent boat.

Another key point brought up in the focus groups was the desire for greater speed potential. Owners still embraced the eight knot cruising speed for most traveling, but for circumstances when it would be nice to go faster, they wanted a boat that could reach higher speed than the 10-12 knot maximum of the older boat.

Mainship's overall project goal was to take all of the owner input into consideration – and satisfy the majority of those needs at a given price, in a production boat that was faster to build, less expensive, yet better and stronger. Corporate involvement at work. Imagine that.

## THE PRODUCT OF DESIGN

The result of the project is the Mainship 390. The first hull was introduced a year ago in Miami, and 52 boats were built the first year.

The same owners who had a hand in this new boat got a chance to see how their collective ideas were incorporated in the new trawler. Interestingly, their subsequent feedback and Mainship's response show that the company is clearly not interested in a one-shot effort to build a new boat and then crank out hundreds of copies. Mainship's commitment to the project is evidenced by the fact that over two



hundred changes have been made in the Mainship 390 since the first hull was launched. A little more room here, move this over there, maybe extend that counter a few more inches. Altogether a worthy collaboration between the boating consumers and Mainship – a responsive company working hard to build the best boat they can to fit the needs of current and potential owners. The loyalty of Mainship owners has its roots in this company commitment and responsiveness. Tell us what you want in a boat, and we will build it for you. And this from one of the larger boat companies. Impressive.

## FOREDECK

Overall this is a clean, uncluttered foredeck area, and the raised cabin top of the forward stateroom has just the right amount of camber. The fiberglass cabin top surface also features three opening hatches, each ringed with drain channels to ensure no standing water will surprise anyone below who opens a hatch for a little fresh air.

## MASTER STATEROOM

In the bow of the Mainship 390 you'll find the master cabin – complete with island double berth. Flanking the berth are two sets of cedar-lined hanging lockers and clothes shelves. There is plenty of storage space for the seasonal use this boat will get.

The island berth has two large drawers underneath the mattress and the foot of the island berth swings up to reveal additional storage beyond the drawers. The boat even comes with two teak crates that fit in slots in this virtual cavern of storage.

An overhead 20" by 20" hatch is just the ticket for ventilation and light,

and there are also two opening screened ports.

The Mainship 390 looks clean and contemporary. The standard hull color is white with aluminum rails and hardware.

One super idea on the Mainship 390 is the built-in swim ladder that folds up and slides

inside the built-in swim platform. A recess in the centerline edge of the platform holds the attached ladder, and it is a simple matter to pull it out and unfold the ladder for use. This is fantastic, as you would know if you have ever had to carry, use, and then stow those nasty aftermarket boarding ladders that don't easily fit into any locker except the lazaretto, have stubby gelcoat-scratching standoff legs that fold up when you don't want them to, yet still are essential gear that should be on all boats. Mainship gets a gold star for this one.

It's best to store the dinghy on the substantial swim platform, using Weaver dinghy snaps or similar, pulling the dinghy up against the transom from a block attached to the boat deck.

## IT ALL COMES TOGETHER

The Mainship 390 is a lot of trawler in a package that isn't glitzy or overly fancy. The boat is well made, offers low maintenance, yet is every bit a trawler yacht. Keep the systems simple and it should be a trusty pocket cruiser to go most anywhere you want to go.

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Corporation  
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FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, CONTACT US AT:

**MAINSHIP CORP.**  
255 DIESEL ROAD  
ST. AUGUSTINE, FL 32086

WWW.MAINSHIP.COM  
E-MAIL: INFO@MAINSHIP.COM

(904) 829-0500  
FAX: (904) 827-2157