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High-tech*



RAPID REFIT: *Gutted to
Glamorous in 9 Months*

SEPTEMBER 2003



\$4.99 US/\$5.99 CAN

Exclusives: *Crescent's Crescent Lady* (above)
and Tiara 3600, plus Mays-Craft 42 and Sea Ray 420

MAGICIANS OF MAHOGANY

By Capt. Bill Pike / Photos by Ken Hannas

Mayea Boat Works puts a modern-day spin on gorgeous, old-fashioned, plank-on-frame masterpieces.

It's an unpretentious place, Mayea Boat Works: little more than a bunch of corrugated-steel sheds, barns, and boathouses hunkered by the waters of Michigan's Lake St. Clair. If you were in a hurry and intent on getting to better-known lakeside vacation spots like Algonac or St. Clair Shores, you'd probably just drive on through the town of Fairhaven and never notice the sign by the side of the road that proclaims



For the Mayeas, boatbuilding is a family affair. Left to right: Larry, Herb, Norm Plettl, and Donnie. That's Chad kneeling.

"Mayea Marine Store." Such an oversight would be truly unfortunate, though, because inside the store, in addition to the shiny new cans of varnish and the shelves full of WEST SYSTEM® epoxy paraphernalia, you'd likely come across a lady named Flo. And Flo's the gal who, when she's not answering the phone for Mayea Boat Works, keeping the company's books, ordering parts, and paying the bills, can tell folks where they can find Larry Mayea.

yon. Or maybe—and this is what I personally believe—Mayea's just like the other four principals of Mayea Boat Works: his 83-year-old father Herb (who continues to walk three miles a day for exercise, although he just cut back to a 45-hour workweek), his younger brother Donny, his brother-in-law Norm, and his son Chad. They're all so synched into plank-on-frame mahogany boatbuilding that trying to keep up with just one of them for two days 'bout

Mayea's a fascinating guy, but hard to keep tabs on, for any number of reasons. Maybe it's because he's got the kind of metabolism that inhales a 60-hour workweek and keeps right on truckin'. Or maybe it's because, having got his start by sweeping floors in the woodworking shop when he was just ten, he's simply accustomed to hard work and staying abreast of all things great and small, both hither and



A new Mays-Craft takes shape in the woodworking shop. The same boat (inset) at an earlier stage, looking forward from the transom. Frames, gussets, and floor timbers are all mahogany.

company does, whether it's of a 47-foot Chris-Craft Commander or one of Gar Wood's old Harmsworth Trophy winners (see "How Many Miles per Hour?" right).

"Not to do this kinda thing would be like saying I prefer manual steering because that's the way they used to do things in the old days," Larry laughs. "It's just not sensible."

So a brand-new boat from the Mayeas may look, feel, and even smell like a plank-on-frame mahogany antique, but at the heart of this charming illusion dwells sophisticated WEST SYSTEM® epoxy products, okoume and sapele plywood, Awlgrip paint, modern, computer-modeled lines and running surfaces, and the supersize powerplants the Mayeas sometimes favor (like big Hemi V-8s and fire-breathing 12-cylinder Italian BPMs). All these things will keep a Mays-Craft looking foxy-fine forever. And, more than likely, sounding that way, too. ⚙️

HOW MANY MILES PER HOUR?



Besides building new boats, Mayea Boat Works restores old ones, like Gar Wood's *Miss America X* (left), a fabled fire-breather that the Mayeas just started work on. Affectionately called "Eight Tons of Dynamite," the boat set a world water-speed record of 124.86 mph in 1932, thanks to four 1,900-hp Packard engines that burned a lively mixture of gasoline, benzol,

and alcohol. Today's race officials would have been horrified by conditions in the cockpit underway, however. Gases from the straight-pipe exhausts blasted past with a vengeance. And boat-tester that I am, I'm convinced the sound levels Wood and throttlemaster Orlin Johnson endured would have blown *PMY's* sound meter to smithereens.

I brazenly asked Larry Mayea if I could test drive *Miss America X* once she's fully restored. "You're the first guy I'll call," he replied—quite seriously, I thought. —B.P.

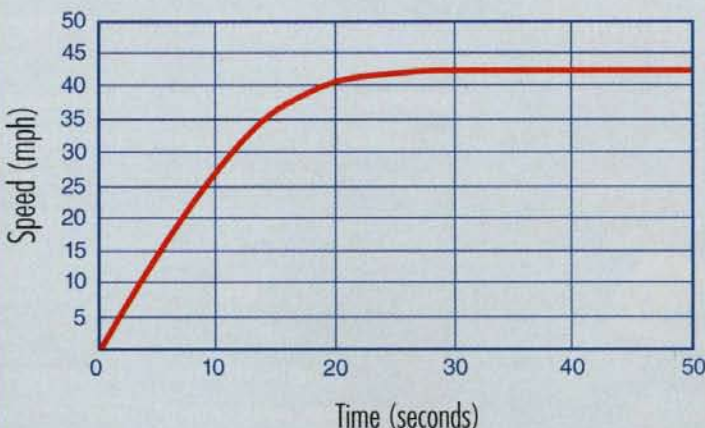
Mayea Boat Works ☎️ (586) 725-6111. www.mayea.com.

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pmy tested: Mays-Craft 42 Sport Cruiser

RPM	MPH (KNOTS)	GPH	MPG (NM/GP)	SM RANGE	NM RANGE	DECIBELS	TRIM (DEGREES)
1000	7.7 (6.7)	6.0	1.28 (1.12)	364	316	75	1.0
1500	10.7 (9.3)	13.6	0.79 (0.68)	223	194	80	3.0
2000	13.6 (11.8)	21.0	0.65 (0.56)	184	160	85	5.0
2500	22.0 (19.1)	34.4	0.64 (0.56)	181	158	89	5.0
3000	30.4 (26.4)	47.6	0.64 (0.56)	181	157	93	5.0
3500	35.9 (31.2)	63.4	0.57 (0.49)	161	140	97	4.0
4000	41.3 (35.9)	79.2	0.52 (0.45)	148	129	100	3.5
4600	43.7 (38.0)	112.0	0.39 (0.34)	111	96	100	3.5

Conditions: temperature: 81°; humidity: 58%; wind: variable; seas: 1' chop or less; load: 183 gal. fuel, 0 gal. water, 2 persons, 200 lbs. gear. Speeds are two-way averages measured w/Stalker radar gun. GPH provided by engine manufacturer. Range: 90% of advertised fuel capacity. Decibels measured on A scale. 65 dB is the level of normal conversation. All measurements taken with trim tabs fully retracted.



Acceleration based on average of 4 reciprocal runs using Stalker ATS radar gun and OceanPC laptop.

Base price: \$1,350,000 with 2/355-hp Cummins 370B diesel inboards

Optional power: 2/430-hp Cummins 450C diesel inboards or 2/750-hp BPM gasoline inboards

Standard equipment: sculpted-mahogany radar arch; SCM Tempesta opening ports; Danforth Constellation compass; Telcor Instruments; Force 10 cooktop; Sharp Carousel microwave oven; Norcold refrigerator; Black & Decker Spacemaker coffee maker; Newmar electrical panel; Promatic 50-3 Promainer battery charger; Florida Marine welded-aluminum fuel tanks; 4/1,200-gph Lovett bilge pumps w/built-in float switches; 7-kW Kohler genset (double-insulated, in soundshield); 10,000-Btu Westerbeke A/C; Bennett trim tabs

Specifications

Length overall: 42'0"

Waterline length: 39'3"

Beam: 14'5"

Draft: 3'0"

Weight (dry): 25,000 lbs.

Fuel capacity: 315 gal.

Water capacity: 80 gal.

Test engines: 2/750-hp BPM gasoline inboards

Optional equipment on test boat: Connaly leather upholstery; ZF/Mathers electronic engine controls; Furuno CRT radar; Sea156 VHF; Northstar 952X GPS platter; electric hatch and windshield-panel lifts; Robertson AP300 autopilot; 17,000-Btu Westerbeke A/C

Price as tested: \$1,650,000