



DAWN OF AN ERA

It was not an easy ten days by anyone's standards. Even before Hurricane Hugo turned Charleston into kindling and many inland mid-Atlantic towns into waterfront communities, there was fear and loathing in New Bern, North Carolina, over whether its pride and joy — the new Hatteras 92 — would be finished in time for the all-important dealer meeting scheduled two weeks later at Ocean Reef, Florida. ►

BY JIM GILBERT • PHOTOS BY DEBRA LEX

Hatteras' new 92-footer is the company's first move into the custom megayacht building market.

A lot is riding on this 92-footer, named *Hatteras Lady*. She is, by far and away, the single biggest product investment Hatteras has made in the boating industry. She represents, says Irwin Jacobs, chairman of the board of Genmar Industries, Hatteras' parent corporation, not just a statement about a particular product line, "but a statement about the future of Hatteras."

Until Hugo, everything had gone as smoothly as could be expected for a brand-new megayacht. She was, typically, a bit behind schedule—but only by a month or so. And in some ways, *Hatteras Lady* exceeded expectations. In her sea trials, for example, she exceeded her projected speeds by two knots. But sea trials aside, *Hatteras Lady* needed to strut her stuff at Ocean Reef in front of the dealers, many of whom have been waiting anxiously for two years to see for themselves the first product from Hatteras' new division for megayachts from 92 to 120 feet.

Hugo, however, was doing his best to steal *Hatteras Lady's* thunder. Having spared New Bern a direct hit, Hugo nevertheless managed to time his arrival almost to the hour of her ladyship's planned departure for Ft. Lauderdale, where her final fitting-out was to take place. With Hugo bullying the East Coast, *Hatteras Lady* had to sit tight. After pummeling South Carolina, the storm left in its wake monstrous seas, closed intracoastal bridges, and an ocean brimming with debris. *Hatteras Lady* was delayed a full week. Even then she found herself in the grip of a 25-knot easterly that kept her and her crew in steep, 12-foot beam seas from North Carolina all the way to South Florida. The crew even reported seeing a half-submerged house that was being towed back to land by an enterprising long-liner.

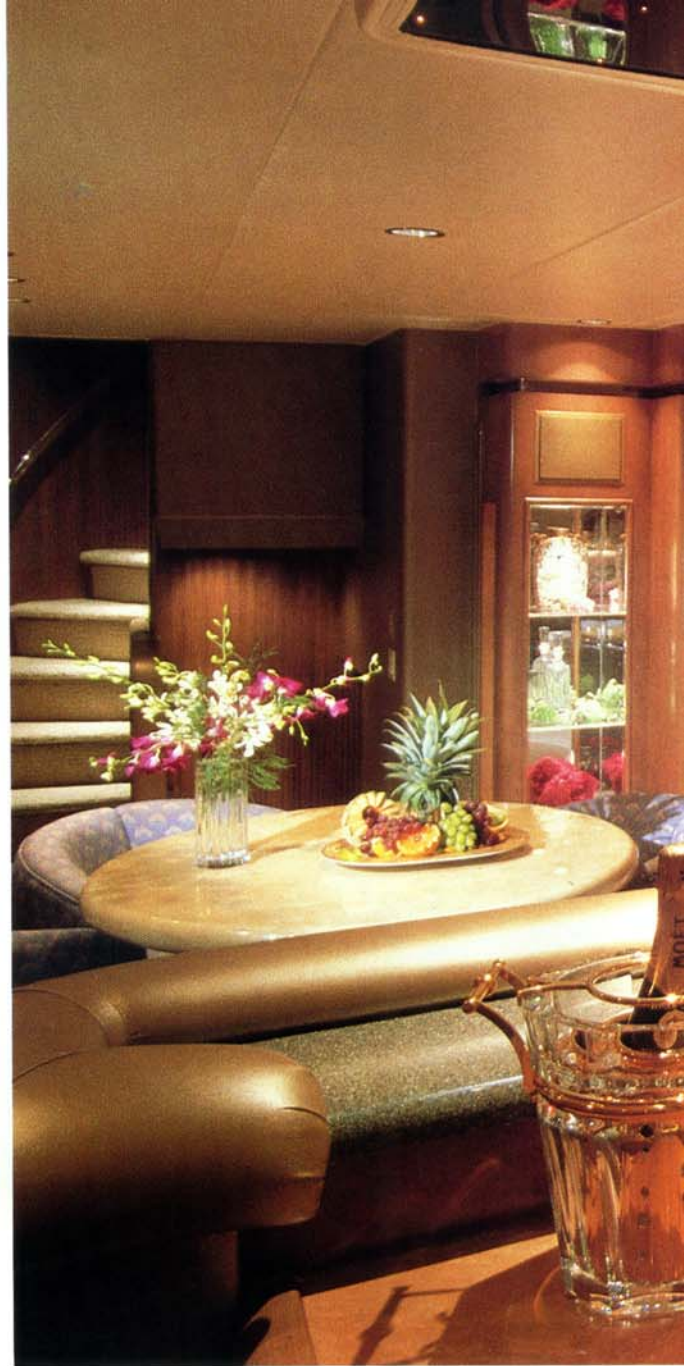
Meanwhile, dealer meeting planners, interior finishing specialists, photographers, video crews—even magazine editors—bit their fingernails, burned the telephone lines and made dozens of contingency plans based on the latest news of *Hatteras Lady's* downcast progress.

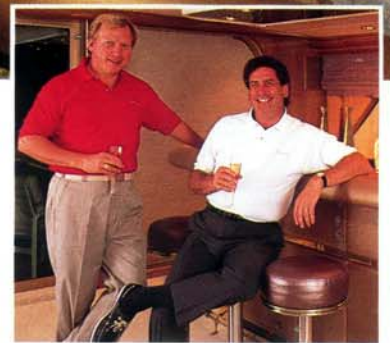
The tension did not let up, even when *Hatteras Lady* pulled into Ft. Lauderdale late in the afternoon on the first day of the dealer meeting. The Hatteras team and the crew from the design studio of Susan Puleo were given less than nine hours to clean the boat, load the furniture and accessories and steam the remaining 50-odd miles to Ocean Reef. It was a job, Puleo said, that originally had been scheduled for four full working days.

In a way, the frenetic finish-and-delivery pace is appropriate for *Hatteras Lady*. The yacht's debut underscores the enormity of Hatteras' undertaking in launching its megayacht program. It also drives home the reality that building large yachts is a different order of magnitude from popping yachts off a production line.

With this 92-footer, Hatteras for the first time crosses the line from production to custom-built yachts. The company has been *customizing* most of its larger boats for the past three years, it's true. But

Right,
main salon
with close-
up of bar
area below.
Inset photo,
Alton
Herndon,
left, presi-
dent of Hat-
teras Yachts,
with Irwin
Jacobs,
chairman of
parent firm
Genmar
Industries.





there is a big difference between modifying a hull and interior and building something truly unique from scratch. And for Hatteras, the new 92 is the first of what the company hopes will be a long line of 92-foot to 120-foot yachts with fully custom interiors and a wide variety of styling and design options on the hull and superstructure, including full walkaround decks. Currently Hatteras offers seven models in four lengths—92', 102', 112', and 120'.

How substantial of a departure is the 92 from the rest of the Hatteras line? Consider simply the basic interior construction. On the production line, all interiors are finished in modules. A computer-driven router can, in the space of minutes, cut out all the basic structural components for an entire sportfisherman. The parts are easily, quickly and very meticulously assembled outside the hull in modules by any one of the factory's woodworking team. It is sound production boatbuilding at its scientific and technological best.

In the megayacht program, however, there will be no computerized cutting, no modular construction or assembly. According to Ward-Setzer, the young naval architect who manages the custom yacht division, each room aboard a megayacht will be assigned to a single carpenter to oversee from start to finish. "He builds his way out of the room," Setzer said. The change is necessary because every yacht will be different, said Ben Snead, Hatteras' sales manager in New Bern. The personal attention also provides benefits to the owner. "You can really see the difference," he said. "Each room becomes a showcase for the carpenter's craftsmanship."

Hatteras Lady's hull is the product of naval architect Jack Hargrave, who is responsible for the design of many of Hatteras' fine hulls and profiles. The



exterior styling is a collaboration between Hargrave and Hatteras designers. The molds were designed to produce hulls and decks for the entire Hatteras megayacht series, while at the same time retaining considerable flexibility to accommodate changes to transom, superstructure and profile. And if there is considerable flexibility in the exterior styling to the megayacht series line, there is a universe of possibilities to the layout and finish of the interior.

Ken Kranz, director of market planning and development for Hatteras, describes the custom yacht division as a "boat-building resource." He said, "people have to bring us their needs and their dreams. Within reason, if we're given enough time and if they're willing to pay for it, we can deliver."

Services include engineering and interior/exterior styling. Evidence of Hatteras' direction for its larger yachts adorn Setzer's conference room walls: everywhere one looks there are variations on the basic theme—yachts with oblong Bannenberg-style

windows, yachts with fancy open transoms, yachts with three-story atriums and elegant spiral staircases that wind their way from the flybridge down to the sleeping quarters.

Snead is quick to point out that Hatteras quietly has been customizing its larger yachts for a number of years. "It isn't anything we've advertised," Snead said, "but if we have the time, we do it." Setzer adds that every 77-foot motoryacht produced by Hatteras since 1986 has sported a custom interior and other unique features. In fact, it was the company's experience with the 77-foot series that convinced Hatteras that it could handle a custom yacht division.

The decision to start building large yachts was "a major step for Hatteras," Jacobs said. "It's not a decision we've taken lightly," he said, adding that the project has had his full support from the beginning.

Main impetus for the decision, Jacobs said, was the steady erosion of loyal Hatteras owners who left the company after they had outgrown Hatteras'

existing product line. The move, he adds, establishes Hatteras as the first company offering clients a full line of boats, from entry-level yachts to what cartoonist Berke Breathed once described as “exit-level” yachts. “We’re creating a presence in the marketplace,” Jacobs says with a chuckle, “that states, ‘we’re going to take you from the cradle to you-know-where.’ We’re not only creating brand loyalty, we’re creating lifetime loyalty.”

To underscore the custom nature of the boat, Hatteras brought in Susan Puleo to create the yacht’s interior finish. By the time she arrived on the scene a layout already had been fixed by Hatteras’ design team. Some American ash paneling had even been installed. Much of the veneer, however, ended up being covered over by Puleo, who wanted to create a “comfortable, spacious-feeling ambience with a touch of the exotic.” She set out to marry in a single, coherent design some of the best elements of contemporary European and American design. The result is a startlingly elegant mixture of surfaces: hard and soft, shiny and dull, light and dark. The taupe-veined Paradiso marble entryway gives way to a light-colored soft textured wool carpet. In the dining salon, classic chairs and fabrics, including upholstered silk walls contrast with a lacquered bronze-colored table. In the master stateroom, ash paneling is blended with ribbed silk walls and a pearlized leather headboard.

“Wood is nice in its place,” she said, “but if you put it everywhere it doesn’t look as if it’s been selected. I like to balance materials to create a unique personality.

While *Hatteras Lady* doesn’t look like any other Hatteras, she borrows much from her lineage. She is well-engineered, massively overbuilt (her molded 14-inch tophat deck stringers could

support a helicopter large enough to sink the yacht) and designed as a solid sea boat. The combination of her seven-and-a-half-foot draft and her 115-ton semi-planing hull with fine flared bow will keep *Hatteras Lady* stable and dry in most conditions, as she proved in her trying maiden voyage. Equipped with a massive pair of 2135 shp. Detroit Diesel 16V149 engines, she is capable of 23-knot speeds.

Setzer and Snead said that one of the goals in Hatteras’ custom yacht program is to provide a turn-key yacht. One of the issues the design and construction team wrestled with is choosing a standard level of gear. The decision appears to have been won across the board in the direction of quality. The yacht was designed with special sound-and-vibration dampeners, which has resulted in a very quiet and smooth ride. The Roger Penske Detroit Diesels are fitted with a special option, an Energy Efficiency Associates monitoring system that electronically eavesdrops on 142 different engine and systems functions, providing both current and historical data on engine performance. Engine controls are augmented by a new fully-articulating joystick from Robertson that electronically marries props, throttle, rudders, and bowthruster to make docking almost as easy as shooting down Nintendo space invaders.

Lewmar windlass and docking winches, VDO gauges, Trimble Navgraphics electronic chart system, Naiad stabilizers, Raytheon nine-foot-sweep radar, Brookes and Gatehouse performance instruments, all stand as testimony to Hatteras’ impressive investment in its flagship.

However pretty *Hatteras Lady* appears

Hatteras’ custom-yacht division, Irwin Jacobs says, can now take customers from ‘the cradle to you-know-where’. Below, Hatteras Lady on her maiden voyage. Inset photo below shows the pilothouse. Left, the formal dining salon.





Hatteras Lady's Susan Puleo interior underscores Hatteras' commitment to the custom market. Above, the master stateroom. Right, detail of the china cabinet.

at the dock, her birth entailed some heavy soul-searching on the part of Hatteras and its officers. Management debated whether to create a separate imprint for the custom yacht division or to run it squarely under the Hatteras banner. For his part, creating another name for the megayachts was never an issue, said Alton Herndon, president of Hatteras Yachts. "As far as I am concerned, the megayacht series is always going to carry the Hatteras name." The identification, he said, is good both for the custom yacht division and for the rest of the Hatteras line. Hatteras also debated creating a separate custom facility before deciding to keep construction on the existing New Bern line.

Even marketing the large yachts posed a bit of a dilemma: How do you sell megayachts through a dealer network largely unaccustomed to marketing very big yachts in an industry now dominated by yacht brokers. The answer? Continue to sell through Hatteras' network of dealers, who offer world-wide service. One of the side benefits of the megayacht series to Hatteras, Jacobs said, is that it has made existing dealerships all the more valuable.

In retrospect there is some sentiment at Hatteras that it should have come right out of the chute with a 100-foot-plus yacht. Jacobs, however, supports the initial decision—made by the staff of the new custom yacht division—saying the new division "needed to get the first one under its belt." At any rate, Snead said, it is very likely the next yacht will be closer to the top end of Hatteras' existing potential. He and Setzer said they are actively designing proj-

ects for serious buyers of both 112-foot and 120-foot hulls.

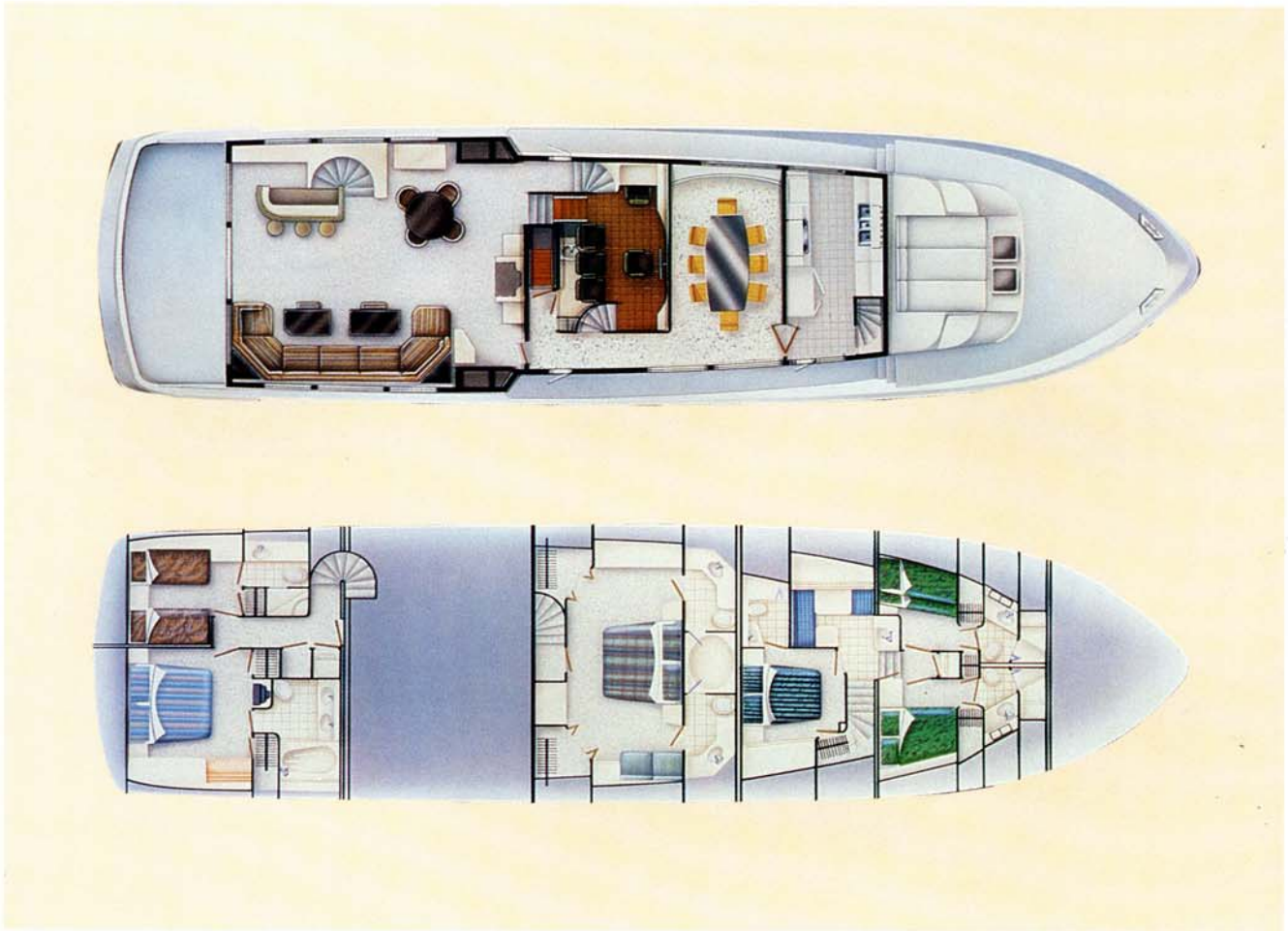
Jacobs is sensitive to the erosion of clients Hatteras has suffered at the high end of its line, but also to detractors who doubted the company's ability to produce a world class motor yacht. "We are

going to hurt some people who never thought we'd even come this far," Jacobs said. "There is no other company that has the people, technology and the vertical integration of Hatteras. We didn't become a great company by accident," Herndon said. Jacobs added, "And believe me when I say, that what you see today is only the beginning." Since Genmar bought Hatteras in 1985, the company has doubled. "I want to see Hatteras double in size. And double again."

Hatteras Lady's story has a happy ending, of course. She missed by hours the fireworks display in her honor at Ocean Reef. But the wait only seemed to raise the level of anticipation. At dawn the next morning, having beat the hurricane, having beat the odds, she sailed into the mooring basin, a bright orange sun rising at her stern. A fitting start for a new day at Hatteras. □



HATTERAS LADY



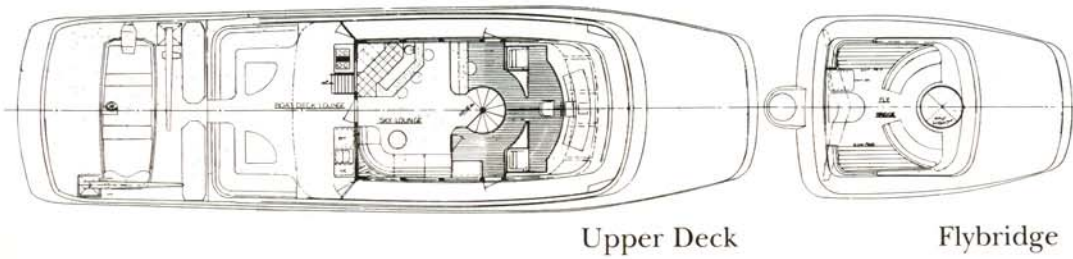
S P E C I F I C A T I O N S

Length Overall:	92'	Loran:	Trimble
Beam:	23'10	Electronic Chart:	Trimble
Draft:	7'8" *	GPS:	Trimble
Displacement:	116 tons	Autopilot:	Robertson
Fuel Capacity:	4,360	Gauges:	VDO
Water Capacity:	540 gals.	Instrumentation:	Brookes & Gatehouse
Cruising Speed:	20 knots	SSB:	Sailer
Maximum Speed:	23 knots	Windlass:	Lewmar
Range:	2300 n.m. @ 8.5 knots	Bowthruster:	Hydrapower
Power:	Detroit Diesel 16V-149TI	Spotlight:	ACR
	2135 shp @ 2100 rpm	Tender:	17' Larson Senza
Generators:	2 X Northern Lights	Naval Architect:	Jack Hargrave
Engine Monitor:	Engine Efficiency Associates	Interior Designer:	Susan Puleo
Stabilizers:	Naiad		
Radar:	Raytheon		

* Shallow draft options, including propeller pockets, will reduce draft approximately one foot.

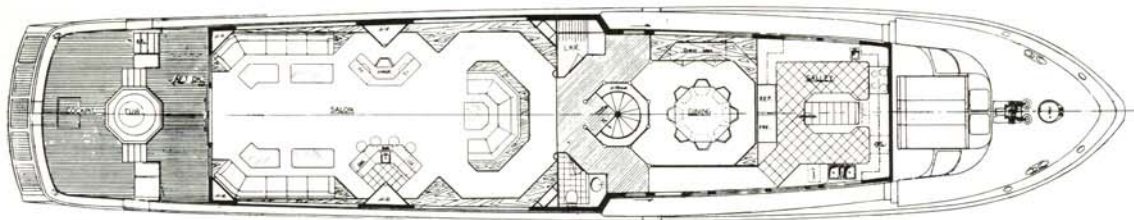


CUSTOM 120' TRI-DECK COCK-PIT YACHT

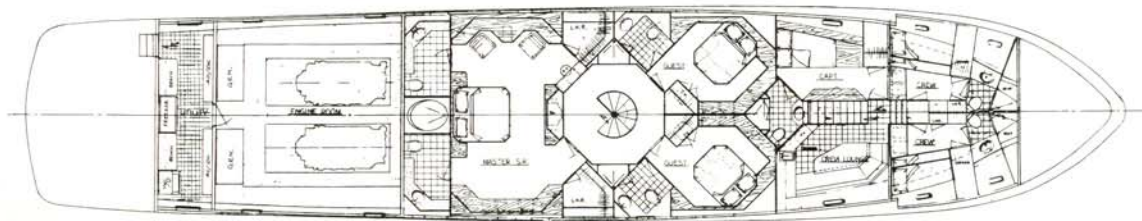


Upper Deck

Flybridge



Main Deck



Lower Deck

Hatteras custom designs include motor yachts and cockpit yachts in two and three deck arrangements from 92-feet to 120-feet.

Hatteras

HATTERAS YACHTS

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