

# Rampage 45 Convertible

An offshore battleship well suited for the Greats.

BY HEATHER FRECKMANN

A few months ago, I met Tom Mack, president of South Shore Marine, at the dealership's headquarters in Huron, Ohio, where he introduced me to the Rampage 45 Convertible. "The product reflects the people," Mack said. "Most boatbuilders say, 'Here it is, hope you like it.' In Rampage's case, they listen to their current owners, they listen to women. They spent a lot of time thinking about the 45."

It looked like rain, so as soon as South Shore's Steve Carlson joined us as captain, we motored into Lake Erie's blue-gray expanse. As we roared onto plane, Carlson commented that the 715-hp C12 Caterpillar diesels were "nothing to yawn at."

We brought the Rampage to a 32-mph cruising speed, burning 0.67 mpg. Fishermen can expect approximately 30 mph with a full fuel load. We even nudged the top end—officially 37 mph, but Carlson revealed that it had hit 38.6 mph in the lakes and 40 mph in saltwater.

Standard trolling valves and ZF electronic controls provide exceptional maneuverability. The idle is slow enough for trolling—7 mph, down to 1 mph in gear—a big deal for diesels. "These are walleye speeds," Carlson observed. "A lot of boats don't even have this as an option, and it can be the difference between fishing and catching."

The South Shore team found the 45 to be tough as well, given the 4- to 5-foot sea conditions when it underwent sea trials. "We only have 20- to 40-foot depths here," Carlson said. "With the short chop, it can get snotty. But this is a blue-water yacht, and that means even when it gets nasty, you don't stay on shore. A lot of our customers don't fish, but they appreciate the great ride. It's a forgiving hull—in no way tender or top-heavy. It's very stable."

That great ride is thanks to the 45 Convertible's distinctive offshore hull design. Once we were back at the dock, I was able to get a better look at this battle wagon's big flare forward and the dramatic sportfish look on the sheerline.

In the 130-square-foot cockpit, the 45 has a bonanza of fish features. It incorporates 11 standard rod holders, a full-size tackle station with 40-gallon freezer box, a transom lid-within-lid livewell, and removable, double-hinged, 66-inch twin fishboxes. The cockpit sole is reinforced with a half-inch aluminum plate to accommodate a

fighting chair or rocket launcher.

The 45 had one particular feature you don't often see on Great Lakes boats: sea strainers. The intakes will pump both bilge water and sea or lake water. The drains feed into one box and out of one drain, so you won't see an unappealing line. In another fine example of form meets function, the generator exhaust goes into the starboard engine's main exhaust tube.

Up top, the large helm dash has plenty of room for flush-mounted electronics, and the flybridge features secure forward and port-side seat lockers that can store up to 16 outfits on 7-foot rods. The view from here is unobstructed.

Next, we moved into the nicely integrated living space. The salon features an L-shaped sofa/sleeper, which incorporates hidden storage for six rods and a flat-screen LCD TV with CD/DVD player. The galley boasts cherrywood cabinetry and teak and holly flooring. It also provides a Sub-Zero refrigerator and freezer, a two-burner ceramic cooktop, a microwave/convection oven, a coffeemaker and Corian countertops.

The master stateroom incorporates an island berth with shock-assisted hatch for storage access, while the guest stateroom has twin berths that convert to a full-sized bed with filler cushions. Both master and day heads feature Techma marine sanitation systems, solid-surface countertops and ceramic sinks with cherry vanities.

For the serious fisherman, the 45 Convertible provides ocean-caliber offshore performance, rugged fishability and comfortable accommodations for cruising with the whole family. This is a nimble performer with accommodating features for beautiful weather, and no-nonsense ones for everything else nature can throw at you. ↓

## Specs

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| LOA.....              | 48'8"               |
| Beam.....             | 16'                 |
| Draft.....            | 4'                  |
| Weight .....          | 36,000 lbs.         |
| Fuel capacity.....    | 700 gals.           |
| Base power.....       | T/Cat C12s (715 hp) |
| Base price.....       | \$824,897           |
| Price as tested ..... | \$906,046           |

rampageyachts.com

