



# Release 46 Express

Gladiator's Custom Looks and Comfort Are Fine Examples of the Express Genre

It's neat to see a young company flourish, and the folks at Release improve and evolve with every new offering that comes out of the shop. Since they start with a good riding hull design, it gives them a chance to do the things they are doing — tweaking, refining and upgrading processes and materials. Release's new 46-foot express, *Gladiator*, with 600 hp QSC Cummins Zeus pod drives, represents a fine example of Release's focus, and with a backlog of boats to build, there's sure to be some very happy owners in the near future.

I recently got to test the 46 express out of the famed Sailfish Marina on Singer Island, Florida, after the big Operation Sailfish Tournament held in December. The 46 express model is the first for Release, as they have been building their acclaimed walk-around version in 43- and 46-foot models. Company owner Jim Turner built the 46 express specifically for International Game Fish Association trustee Roy Cronacher, whose last boat was a 71-foot Jim Smith. The 46 express uses the same hull as the walk-around but offers a larger helm deck and more accommodations for owner and crew belowdecks.

### DOWN BELOW

A crew quarters with over and under bunks is aft of the head along the port hull side, and the galley lies opposite of that to starboard. The galley features over-counter cabinets with plenty of storage, a sink with counter workspace and storage under. A Sub-Zero drawer freezer and fridge is at the aft end of the galley counter.

The master stateroom is to port aft of the crew quarters and under the helm deck, offering a larger space and good-size bunk with storage cabinets along the outboard hull side. The stairs going up to the helm deck are offset to

the starboard side, so outboard to of the stairs to starboard is an awesome tackle and rod locker, all set up to hold multiple sets of various rod and reel combos vertically, with shelf stowage for a bunch of organizer bins of tackle. It's great to see a dedicated area to handle the equipment

without exposing it to the elements.

In the forepeak, you'll find a good-size anchor locker, and just aft of that is a big shower. The head with sink, vanity and storage cabinets is just aft of the shower. The head is nicely appointed with teak, plush wall coverings, and teak and holly floors, which continue throughout the entire below deck living space. The main electrical distribution panel is in a cabinet aft of the head to port and is at eye level, offering easy access to power management. Under the panel you'll see an 18-bottle wine cooler.

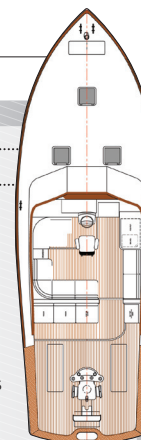
### HELM DECK

The nicely laid out helm deck offers excellent visibility — a rarity among express boats — and it was easy to see the entire cockpit, as well as the foredeck, out each side, even with full curtains. The helm itself is finely fit with a teak pod and a carbon-fiber panel on the dash that holds the Garmin touch-screen electronics, Cummins SmartCraft gauges, ACR searchlight control, Autopilot interface, stereo remote, VHF and Zeus Joystick. Release includes a vessel monitoring system interface at the helm that provides both audio and visual alarms for bilges, high water and fire. All the rocker switches that control vessel functions are to port within arm's reach.

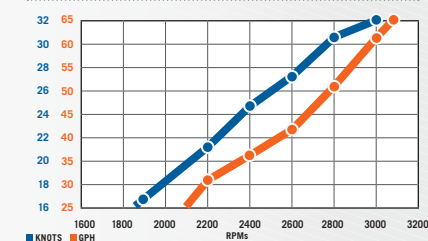
Release positions the helm chair on the centerline and includes a two-person companion bench to port with a reversing backrest and cushions, so you can face aft and watch the baits while fishing. A large L-shaped settee starts aft of the companion seat and wraps around from the port side along the aft bulkhead, terminating at the helm deck entrance from the cockpit. The settee comes with storage underneath, and there is a removable

### > SPECIFICATIONS

LOA:	45'11"
BEAM:	15'
DRAFT:	42"
DISPLACEMENT:	36,000 pounds
FUEL:	600 gallons
WATER:	120 gallons
POWER:	Twin Cummins QSC 600 hp Zeus pod drives



### > PERFORMANCE



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table and stanchion that stores in the starboard-side locker. A storage cabinet along the port side houses a TV, drink box and storage bins while providing additional seating on top.

As you pass through the helm deck and out onto the mezzanine, a large seating area lies to port with engine room entrance on centerline. Two freezers live under the seat on the port side, and a bait-prep and tackle-storage center are to starboard. The mezzanine deck features a drink box and ice dump for the 550-pound-per-day Eskimo icemaker. The vessel carries 120 gallons of water and is fed by a 700-gallon-per-day HRO watermaker.





### COCKPIT

The cockpit boasts an expansive teak deck and covering boards with a lot of room to move around. The transom comes equipped with a tuna door and a 48-gallon livewell/fish box. This boat was rigged with a livewell sump and deck fittings to fill and drain the additional on-deck livewells necessary for today's competitive live-bait sailfish circuit. Release also installed two large in-deck fish boxes on either side of the fighting chair/rocket launcher.

Topped off with a beautiful tower, hardtop, single bar buggy top and plenty of rod holders, this boat is set up for fishing. The tower package was designed and built by Palm Beach Towers, and it suits the boat's and owner's needs perfectly. It is easy to climb, and you can wedge yourself in tight up in the ring when it gets rough. The hardtop is a nicely molded, piece

of gear that sports Miya-Epoch electric teaser reels just overhead of the helm and within easy reach.

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The QSC 600 hp Cummins are under the helm deck and tucked in there tight, but you can still get to everything in the engine room, since there is room to reach over the top and access areas outboard of the engines. Water pumps, fuel filters,

cleanly. She can zip around, back up and spin with her pods faster than just about anyone can gain line, so she is a fish-fighting machine.

As we spun around and played with the boat, I was once again impressed with the maneuverability of the boat and how it reacts to commands. I prefer to drive on a fish with levers and wheel over the joystick, but the joystick is great around the dock and helps lesser experienced boat

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through-hulls and AC pumps are all within reach for service. The generator is aft of the engines on the centerline and can be accessed behind the removable engine room ladder. The entire helm deck can be lifted to do major engine work.

As we headed out of Lake Worth Inlet, the nasty swell of the previous several days had subsided, and we were able to get a good ride to find out what she could do. The boat never left the water and lands very softly, loping along nice and comfortable at 2,400 rpm and making 24.5 knots while burning 36.7 gph. Push her up to 2,800 rpm, and she clips along at 30 knots burning just 51.5 gph. She is very smooth and quiet and trolls along

drivers get better. Once they get comfortable with joystick, they can make the boat do things they could never do with clutches and throttles, and that's a good thing when docking.

I'm a huge walk-around fan because of the fishability; however, the Release 46 express is a great example of the genre and has the custom look and feel that many folks like. The extra room below and on the helm deck makes for a better traveling boat for some, but everything is a trade-off. If you're looking for some comfort and don't need to go 50 or 60 mph like an outboard, the Release 46 is a great-looking, super functional and well-built option.

