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The Bluewater Issue



Kadey-Krogen 50' Open

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OPEN SEASON

KADEY-KROGEN YACHTS SPLASHES A NEW OPEN CONCEPT 50.

STORY BY JONATHAN COOPER

Brian K. Lind

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When Kadey-Krogen Yachts launched the first hull of their new-for-the-new-millennium Krogen 58', *PassageMaker* founder Bill Parlatore wrote this: "It can be a leap for a boat builder to introduce a new flagship, a vessel markedly different or larger than its existing models. This is especially difficult when the builder decides to raise the standard of quality and equipment at the same time. Kadey-Krogen has apparently done just that."

Those same words could be written today, some 18 years later, to mark the launch of their newest design, the 50' Open. I'm not sure whether the word "flagship" necessarily applies to this release, however. On one hand, the 50 is not the longest ship in the fleet, and she may not have the same appeal to trawler devotees who prefer the aesthetic lines of low-sweeping freeboard. But in other ways she is the definition of a flagship. The 50 is a meaningful step—not a departure—for a company that holds boatbuilding acumen, seakeeping design, and economical performance standards in the highest regard. And this model

offers open floorplan living by forging a cohesive, communal space out of the saloon, galley, and helm. All other models before her have held fast to the enclosed raised pilothouse.

PRINCIPLED DESIGN

Kadey-Krogen prides itself on many design principles, starting with the foundation: the hull. Committed to never stretching a hull to make a new model length, the company develops each new hull individually to meet a specific beam-to-length ratio that optimizes running efficiency and seaworthiness. Not all manufacturers do this, of course, as it is significantly more expensive to develop all-new tooling and build up from scratch than it is to stretch an existing hull. From a construction standpoint, the 50' Open is no different from her fleetmates—solid fiberglass layup below the waterline, foam-cored and vacuum-bagged for weight savings above the waterline. From the standpoint of aesthetics, though there are minor variations

Billy Black

across the fleet, the 50 will still be immediately recognized as an integral part of the family. Despite the similar DNA, the 50 has a weightier-looking superstructure, starting with a high bow and a long, sweeping sheer that ends with the slight rise at the transom gate that is common to all Kadey-Krogen designs. The single-level sheer and high freeboard provide an unreal amount of space inside. The tradeoff is that the boat presents more surface area to the wind. But the windage is mitigated by proportional thrust control at both ends, a wide and safe starboard side deck with bulwarks so tall a child could barely peep over the caprail, and the addition of standard wing control stations flanking both sides of the pilothouse. Heavy stainless steel railings and formidable deck features (large chocks, useful two-way cleats, bulwark boarding doors, and a well-built anchor platform) combine to underline Kadey-Krogen's rigid commitment to strength of construction and ease of use at all levels of detail.

INSIDE

Onboard the 50 is where all that freeboard and superstructure engineering really pays off. If you're a liveaboard cruiser or plan to spend multiple weeks, if not months, at sea, the interior of the 50 will be quite appealing. Tall windows and expansive views greet you when you step into the saloon. Natural light pours in, creating a bright and open breeziness all the way to

the helm, which is just a single step up from the saloon level. This open space and well-planned window configuration also facilitate better communication while maneuvering. This layout allows the vessel to be easily managed by a couple with a plan and some experience, and sightlines from both helm stations make docking and monitoring vessel traffic a cinch.

Throughout the 50 you can see how Kadey-Krogen might be in the early stages of a shift toward a more contemporary aesthetic. This sentiment was verified by company co-owner and vice president Larry Polster, who said, "All throughout the boat, there are subtle stylistic changes and surprises—tray lighting, square drawer pulls, more contemporary lines—that create an all-together new Kadey-Krogen experience."

Whether it was intentional or not, Larry's use of the phrase "all-together new" is key. Larry and his wife, Janet Baer, happen to own the first 50' Open. The vessel's name: *Together*. The couple are also avid chefs, so the galley configuration and hardware meet the demands of people who actually enjoy cooking at sea and want to replicate the feels-like-home culinary experience at as closely as possible. The U-shape galley features either a Viking or Wolf four-burner cooktop, a full-size Sub-Zero fridge/freezer, and gobs of drawer storage. In the usually tricky part where the "L" of the galley turns 90 degrees, engineers have designed an "appliance garage" that rises out of the countertop on an electric switch. This isn't a gimmick—the two-story unit



This Photo: The view from the aft bulkhead shows the open-space floorplan and superb sightlines. **Opposite (left):** Headsets make quick work of docking—and reduce the stress. **Opposite (right):** The clever hideaway "garage" stows all your awkwardly shaped appliances.



Jonathan Cooper





Above: The 50 at ease in calm seas, showing the Portuguese bridge, foredeck seating, and plentiful lights above and belowdecks. **Opposite:** The vessel features heavy stainless steel chocks and cleats and well-designed engine and thruster controls on both flanks of the pilothouse doors.

can store a number of hard-to-stow devices including toasters, coffee makers, and blenders.

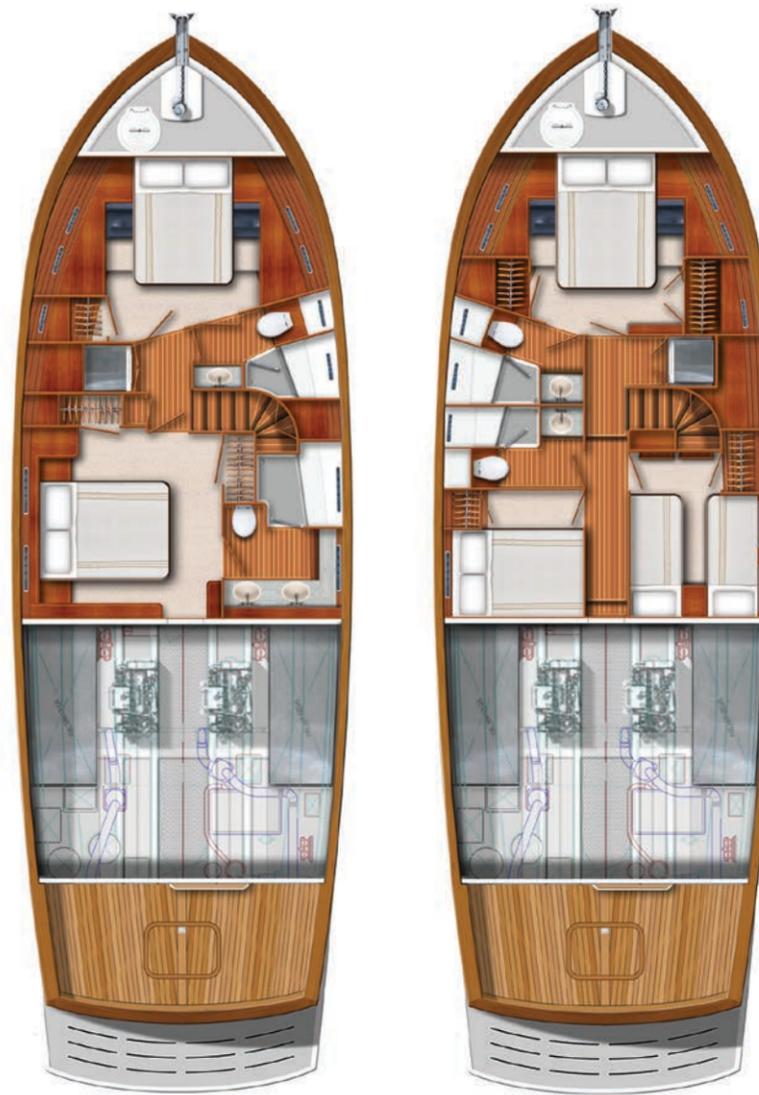
We had the chance to step aboard both of the first two hulls, which gave us a unique perspective on the different layout options. On *Together*, Janet and Larry opted for the standard-edition two-stateroom version with a large master cabin that sits just in front of the engine room bulkhead. A king-size berth sits athwartships, and the master head contains twin basins, large mirrors, a stunning off-white round mosaic tile backsplash, inset modern sink basins, and a full walk-in shower. These aesthetic qualities are purely subjective—and I find it odd to write this—but this was the most beautifully designed and well-executed head I've seen on any cruising boat.

That's not to take away from the rest. Both staterooms are sizable, including loads of stowage options—both hanging and

drawer. The immense compartment under the master berth fits a full-size human, though we don't recommend using it for this purpose. On *Together*, there is a small but tidy office just off the port side where the staircase drops down from the helm. On the second hull, the owners were looking to accommodate a growing family, so the boat eschews the large master aft for mirrored twin staterooms to port and starboard. The master cabin lives under the foredeck in this arrangement. The extra cabins are great and don't compromise space, but the second head could get a little too cozy for any person with a wide beam.

UNDERWAY

Larry and Janet worked well in tandem to push out of *Together's* slip. It was only about an hour up the Intracoastal to Stuart, Florida, where the boat would be one of eight Kadey-Krogen



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3-STATEROOM LAYOUT (OPT)

PROS

- + Running performance & efficiency
- + Stowage for cruising or living aboard
- + Professional galley
- + Owner-operator controls
- + Proven seaworthy design/construction

CONS

- Tight second head in three-stateroom layout
- Sound attenuation in hydraulic thrusters

Specifications

- LOA:** 52' 9"
- LWL:** 45' 0"
- BEAM:** 17' 5"
- DRAFT** (single engine): 5' 4"
- DRAFT** (twin engine): 4' 6"
- DISPLACEMENT:** 68,000 lb.
- FUEL:** 1,240 gal.
- WATER:** 400 gal.
- MIN. AIR DRAFT:** 19' 8"
- RANGE @ 8 knots:** 2,100 nm
- RANGE @ 6 knots:** 5,000 nm

Kadey-Krogen Yachts
www.kadeykrogen.com



Aerial: Brian K. Lind Details: Jonathan Cooper



Above: This rare “head shot” deserves inclusion as it shows the handsome yet straightforward design of the master head. **Right:** The athwartships berth makes the master stateroom easy to navigate.

yachts on display during TrawlerFest. The wind was gusting 10 to 15 knots across the beam as the couple released the lines and calmly negotiated the transition from slip to fairway to channel. The use of headsets simplifies communication and reduces the potential for errors, but they were clearly well-versed in the art of controlling the 50 in tight spaces. I have a personal affinity for boats that cater to cruising couples, and the 50' Open—armed with a pair of pilothouse doors, the aforementioned pair of wing station controls, a rear-facing camera, and proportional thrusters fore and aft—does just that, and does it well.

Due to our inability to stress-test during adverse conditions, there was little else to report on either of our two sea trials (hull #1 in Florida; hull #2 in the Pacific Northwest) as they were both tested in calm winds and seas. But these are hardly unproven boats. Kadey-Krogen has one of the best reputations on the water for seagoing performance, particularly in following seas where the transom design provides minimal surface area for waves to push against. If I had one quailm it was that the bow thruster hydraulics were awfully loud on the second sea trial, even from the flybridge.

ANOTHER STAR

There is very little to nitpick on this boat, and that is especially true in the engine room. Due to the high freeboard, the 50' Open has a stand-up engine room for anyone except the tallest of the tall. It measures 7 feet towards the forward bulkhead and 6.5 feet just aft of the engine. The room is well lit, and even in a twin-engine configuration, there is room to get around easily. Typical of Kadey-Krogen systems, layouts of plumbing, wiring, and



accessory installations are top-notch. Standard power is a quiet John Deere Tier 3 (rated at 230 bhp), but owners can opt instead for twin Deere 125-bhp powerplants. As with all Kadey-Krogens, the standard equipment list is fairly lengthy, and the company offers a vast array of customizations for each order as well.

CONCLUSION

Larry and Janet have had little time to do much of anything except get the boat from one show to the next and arrange media sea trials, including our run with them to TrawlerFest. Before the couple scooted off to the Bahamas in between shows and press events, we were fortunate to have time to sit down with them to find out how their lifestyle may be evolving to accommodate more time onboard. “While we’re in the Bahamas, I’ll still be able to work,” Larry said. “So we hope to show people that you can have the best of both worlds—to be able to work and cruise before you retire.” So far, so good. ■