



# Spencer 70 IPS

BY DEAN TRAVIS CLARKE

**P**aul Spencer qualifies as about the most progressive custom boatbuilder in America. He pushes the limits — even in the midst of naysayers. So it goes with several of his new boats powered by Volvo Penta's Inboard Propulsion System (IPS). Skeptics abound, but so far, everyone who actually drives one develops the passion of a convert. It certainly doesn't hurt that Spencer's boats exhibit all of the speed, beauty and fishing success no matter what power option he decides to put in them.

Volvo commissioned Spencer — based on his previous success in creating beautiful IPS-powered custom fishing boats

— to build its new corporate flagship, *Penta Gone*, to showcase the abilities and efficiencies of IPS power.

### PERFORMANCE

*Penta Gone* is a 70-footer that sports three engines with a *total* of 2,700 hp between them. Most 70-footers come with a pair of 2,400 hp or 2,600 hp diesels — almost twice the horsepower of *Penta Gone*. Consequently, the boat's weight, and how to distribute it, became the most critical design challenge. Going back through many previous tests of comparable boats, my sea trial showed that this Spencer 70 IPS burned about 40 percent less fuel at

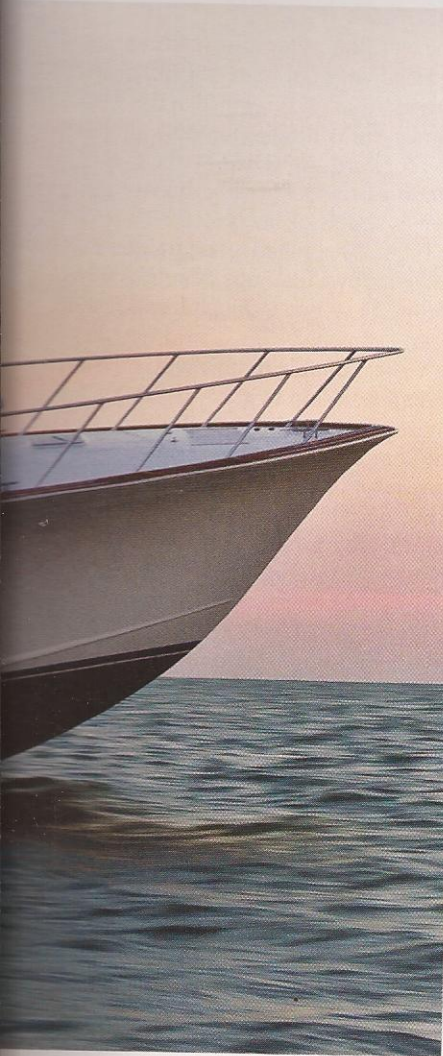
the same speeds as some of the higher-powered sport-fishers I've run.

The balance of this boat is so exacting that it exhibits a barely measurable bow rise, and the running attitude virtually never changes.

Running out of tiny Rudee Inlet in Virginia Beach, Virginia, conditions proved downright sporty with 6-foot seas at the mouth and a gauntlet of 100 tiny johnboats trying to fill their bilges with speckled trout lining the waterway. A nerve-racking transit on so many levels!

Cruising straight into the offshore seas at 20 knots proved a non-event — at least until we suddenly came upon a

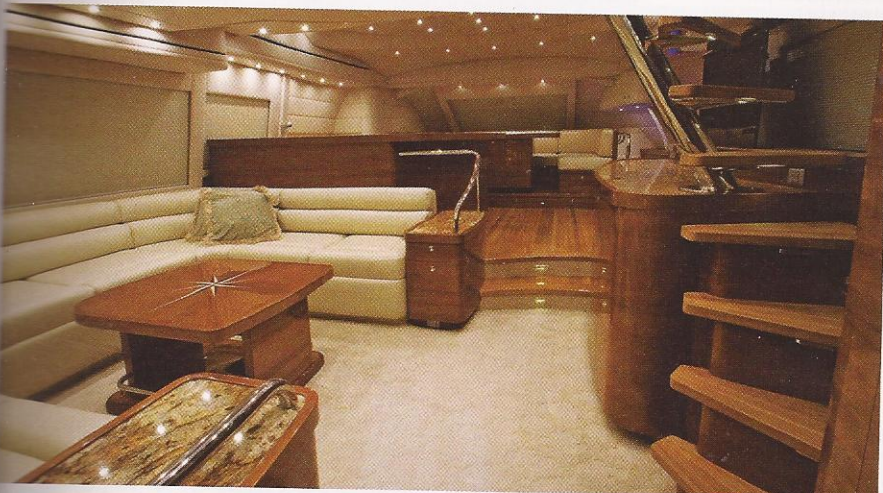




set of 8- to 10-footers, which caused us to back off. Once past the shallows, we could turn beam-to the seas and contin-

## EQUIPMENT

- Furuno RD-30 repeater • Livos air-induction system • ICOM CommandMic
- Furuno NavNet 3D control box • KVH satellite TV • Simrad AP28 autopilot



ued running smooth and dry at 30 knots while turning 2,040 rpm.

Volvo QL trim tabs actually stem from a design by Humphree Interceptor trim tabs. Spencer decided to opt for the Humphree tabs because Volvo doesn't make any blades big enough for a 70-footer. Through the miracle of software, not only do these tabs adjust fore, aft and lateral trim (shaving four to six seconds off time to plane in the process), they also work as stabilizers.

Most boats never undergo performance or speed runs with completely full tanks — it just doesn't show optimum performance. But *Penta Gone* needed to leave for the Fort Lauderdale Boat Show the morning following our test, so it was already fully loaded with fuel. Even under all that extra weight, she topped out at just over 38 knots while turning 2,362 rpm and burning 134 gph total. The triple 900 hp diesels burned about 77 gph at 25.5 knots while turning 1,800 rpm. And where most boats this size cruise today — at 30 knots — we used a total of 108 gph. I'm certain a half load of fuel would improve both speed and efficiency.

With the rotating pods rather than rudders steering the boat, this 70-footer turns beautifully at cruise — slowing down scribes an ever-tighter arc.

Sport Fish mode on this boat qualifies as truly remarkable. With Sport Fish engaged, you can back down straight as an arrow at 10 knots without taking a drop over the covering boards and spin the boat around like it's a 30-footer. It changes direction like a quarter horse.

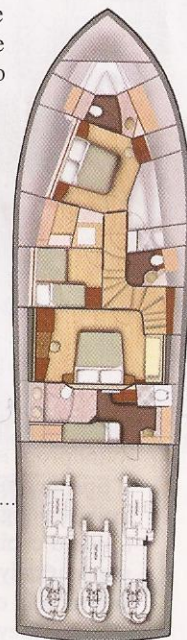
And the dynamic positioning system holds you within a few feet of any position while holding the same heading — remarkable.

## DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

The overall design was a cooperative in-house effort of Paul Spencer, Larry Belkov and the engineering team at Volvo Penta. They created the entire boat: systems, furniture, hull, super-structure — everything — on a computer prior to construction. Start to finish, the project took 18 months to complete, with three months spent on design work alone. Generally, a boat this size would hit the water 25 to 28 months after startup.

Everything in the boat is weight conscious. Belkov helped with the overall design as well as the interior. Much of the engine room was pre-built at Volvo as a full-scale mockup. The modular interior consists mostly of Tri-Cell coring and light ply. The composite hull (with solid glass at each thru-hull) uses a layer of Kevlar over a foam composite core.

Starting with Spencer's proven 70-foot hull, the IPS team made only minor design changes



## SPECIFICATIONS

LOA:	70'6"
BEAM:	20'4"
WEIGHT:	83,000 pounds
DRAFT:	5'1"
FUEL:	1,380 gallons
WATER:	220 gallons
POWER:	Triple Volvo IPS 900 hp
PRICE:	On request

## SPENCER CUSTOM YACHTS

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## PERFORMANCE

