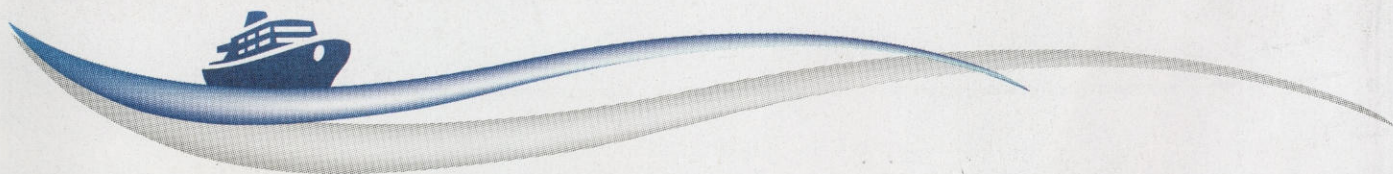


# AT THE DOCK



## Bracewell 41 An Impressive Home-Grown Cruiser

*Editor's note: The exceptional photographs featured here were provided courtesy of Waterline Boats in Seattle. They are the work of professional photographer Neil Rabinowitz.*

**B**oating opportunities in the Pacific Northwest are uniquely abundant. Perhaps it's our year-round mild climate, which never gets truly scorching hot, yet enables us to continue boating during months when other waters at similar latitudes are literally frozen solid. Perhaps it's our uniquely configured inland ocean, where vast areas of relatively protected waters are occasionally interrupted by straits and passes requiring serious seamanship. Perhaps it's the fact that so many of our most desirable recreational areas are best accessible — or even only accessible — by boat, with interesting parks and marinas sprinkled liberally throughout the region.

But whatever the factors are that create our unique abundance of boating opportunities, they also seem to favor a particular kind of boat: a majority of the



The upright cabin windows and overhanging brow of the flybridge cowling give the Bracewell 41 the purposeful profile of a serious sea boat.

most popular boats in the Pacific Northwest are vessels built by local manufacturers. Boat builders located in sunnier climates, where hot weather prevails 50 weeks a year, typically don't have any first-hand appreciation of the unique

qualities associated with a well-considered Pacific Northwest cruiser. Here, we are lucky to have 50 days a year over 70 degrees, and even in mid-summer we may get cool spells and all-day rain. Regional boat builders know this as only a local can, and as a result turn out boats that allow the boating enjoyment to continue even when cool summer rains arrive.

Recently, an established regional company with deep roots in the custom yacht industry stepped into the local production market with a proven Pacific Northwest favorite. Bracewell Boatworks, of Richmond, BC, is now producing the former Camano 41 as the Brace-

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well 41. The new boat includes all of the important elements that assure an enthusiastic following among knowledgeable Pacific Northwest boaters.

Waterline Boats, located on Westlake Ave in Seattle, is the US West Coast retail outlet for the Bracewell 41. We met Waterline owners Scott and Lisa Helker at the recent Trawlerfest in Anacortes, along with Lance Bracewell of Bracewell Boatworks. They were showing off the very well-received 2011 Bracewell 41, and with justifiable pride. Bracewell obviously "gets it," and gets it right.

## Design and Construction

The Bracewell 41 utilizes the well-proven "Keelform hull" concept, which has displacement sections forward and planing sections aft. This is a fairly common semi-displacement architecture, but what makes the Keelform hull unique is that it has a much more pronounced transition to the planing aft portion than one will find in most semi-displacement vessels. Indeed, much of the Bracewell 41's displacement is located in the generously proportioned keel — a design that successfully minimizes fluid resistance while avoiding the normally associated compromise of reduced stability. The keel is broad enough to contain much of the standard Volvo Penta D6-435 HP diesel engine, effectively lowering the center of gravity and additionally promoting a stable ride.

A large rudder and skeg protect the prop, and a standard hydraulic bow thruster will permit the single-engine Bracewell 41 to maneuver as adroitly as many twin-screw vessels. The prop itself

is an Osborne 4-blader turned by a two-inch stainless steel shaft through a Tides Marine dripless shaft seal. AC power is produced by a 5 kW Onan generator, with sound shield.

The Volvo Penta's electronically-controlled, high-pressure common rail fuel delivery system permits the Bracewell 41 to perform impressively and economically. At trawler speeds, the Bracewell 41 will

sip fuel at a miserly rate normally associated with boats restricted to 7 or 8-knot cruising speeds. Throttled up to achievable speeds in the 12 to 14-knot range, the Keelform hull will run more efficiently than typical "fast trawlers" at the same pace. Bow rise is a problem often associated with trawler hulls traveling

well above displacement speeds, but the Keelform hull of the Bracewell 41 effectively addresses that concern.

The hull and cabin profile are reminiscent of traditional Pacific Northwest commercial fish boats. A high bow, almost blunt stem, ample freeboard and a high transom appear prepared to fend off seas from every conceivable quarter. The perfectly upright cabin windows and the overhanging brow of the fly-bridge cowling create a stylish yet purposeful profile. The general effect suggests that the Bracewell 41 is all business, and that business is going to sea. That said, an examination of the interior layout and amenities will reveal that this coastal cruising workboat has a comforting and accommodating heart.

All this goodness is built to last, too: The Bracewell 41 utilizes bi-axis and tri-axis uni-direction stitched glass mat. The layup is solid below the waterline, and reinforced with Corecell above. Bracewell uses a vacuum bagging system to assure better infusion of resin into the laminates.



**A double Stidd helm chair and a handy pilot door are important features at the lower helm.**



**The salon is obviously the work of craftspeople who love the look and feel of wood.**





Cooks will enjoy the light, location and layout of the galley.

### On Deck

Those who prefer low-maintenance topsides will be pleased to note that the Bracewell 41 uses no exterior wood. Powder coated aluminum door and window frames will be durable and easily maintained. Non-skid fiberglass decks are wide enough for sure-footed passage between the cockpit and the foredeck, and are additionally secured by stout, continuous, handrails welded from stainless steel. A substantial deck hatch provides access to lazarette stowage in a massive compartment that extends into the molded swim platform. At the bow there is a stainless steel anchor roller, a hydraulic windlass and a self-draining rode locker. The beefy steel cleats are through-bolted to aluminum backing plates.

The boat deck overhangs the cockpit, providing welcome protection from regional rainstorms or shade from our

less frequent summer sun breaks. Access to the flybridge is via a ladder on the aft

***"It is easy to detect the Pacific Northwest influence in the Bracewell 41 interior styling."***

bulkhead of the main cabin, and through a watertight hatch. The Bracewell 41 is offered in a "cruise-ready" package, a concept that goes so far as including a 10-foot RIB inflatable with a 15-horsepower outboard. A hydraulic davit crane, with 800-pound capacity, is included as standard equipment. Helm and watch

seats, as well as additional bench seating for guests, are found on the well-equipped flybridge.

### Interior Walkthrough

One step through the aft bulkhead door and into the salon will convince anyone that the Bracewell 41 is distinctively and attractively styled. The cherry planking on the cabin sole and the choice of dark cherry interior hardwoods create a memorable mood that is simultaneously classy, comfortable, and casual. If Bill Gates has a beach cabin somewhere, it might appear somewhat like the interior of the Bracewell 41. Vertical battens on the aft galley return suggest that the Bracewell 41 is created by craftspeople who love the look and feel of wood. It is easy to detect the Pacific Northwest influence in the Bracewell 41 interior styling.

The salon includes a "wet locker," perfect for rain gear, to port and immedi-

ately inside the entry door. There are additional stowage lockers immediately forward of the hanging locker, but short enough to permit the tops to serve as

### SPECIFICATIONS AND DIMENSIONS:

LOA: 41'0"  
Beam: 14'0"  
Draft: 3'9"  
Displacement (half load): 28,000 pounds  
Fuel: 400 gallons  
Water: 175 gallons  
Waste: 42 gallons  
Power: Volvo Penta D6 diesel, rated 435-horsepower

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bar or table tops. A high quality Ultra-leather easy chair completes the furnishings on the port side of the salon. L-shaped Ultraleather seating for perhaps six guests is found on the starboard side of the salon, with stowage compartments below.

Audio and visual entertainment options are included in every compartment, featuring three factory installed flat screen TVs and a built-in CD/DVD stereo theater system.

The U-shaped galley is in the port forequarter of the main cabin, with the vertical cherry batten motif applied to the dual-door refrigerator/freezer. A three-burner propane stove and oven, double stainless steel sink, a microwave and an icemaker complete the inventory of appliances. The ship's cook will appreciate the plentiful workspace and numerous stowage options in the galley.

The lower helm is in the starboard forequarter of the main cabin. Helm seating is a double Stidd helm chair, and a sturdy and cleverly designed starboard pilot's door allows the helmsperson fast access to the deck. Consistent with the cruise-ready marketing concept, major electronics are factory installed: Skip-pers will enjoy the convenience of a Furuno Navnet 3D system, a Comnav autopilot, Furuno radar, Furuno fish finder, and Trac Vision satellite TV. The navigational electronics are also duplicated at the flybridge helm.

Forward accommodations include a master stateroom (most forward) with a queen-sized berth, two cedar-lined hanging lockers, built-in night tables, and two overhead hatches. The space below the berth has been put to efficient use with the inclusion of four stowage drawers. The second stateroom has a double berth with stowage below, and one lock-



Cherry hardwoods create a dramatic ambience in the master stateroom.

er contains a built-in washer/dryer unit.

We asked Lance Bracewell if it would be possible to order the Bracewell 41 with an office instead of the second stateroom, and he assured us the modification would be easily accomplished. That wasn't a surprising answer, coming from a man who has made his mark in the custom yacht industry. Bracewell is noted for his willingness and capability to modify designs to customer specification.

There is a single head, conveniently located near each stateroom door and only a few steps forward of the lower helm and salon. A VacuFlush head, with stainless sink and a shower enclosure with a glass door create a compartment that is functional, comfortable and finished to the same high standard as the rest of the Bracewell 41.

Precisely because Pacific Northwest

boating is a year-round pastime, Bracewell includes a standard Hurricane II hydronic heating system.

## Conclusions

Prospects looking for a new cruising vessel in the 40-foot range now have one more boat they need to see before reaching a decision. It can't be coincidental that so many of the well-conceived locally built boats are approximately 40 feet in length — it's a size that is easily handled by a cruising couple, even for those of retirement age or beyond provided they have boating experience. The offerings in and around that 40-foot range by local manufacturers seem like a natural fit for regional waters: Large and heavy enough for comfortable passage in any halfway reasonable weather but still capable of fitting into commonly

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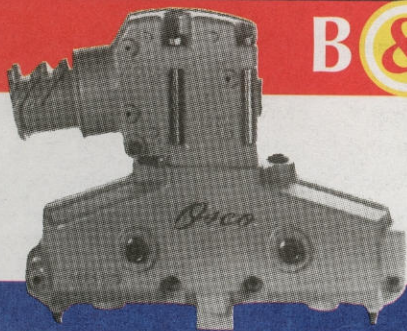
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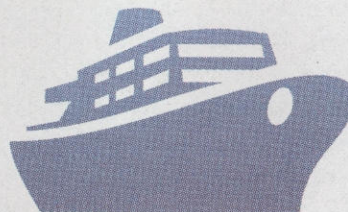
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available transient slips or finding just enough space in a popular anchorage.

Bracewell Boatworks expresses pricing in Canadian dollars, and the retail value of a cruise-ready boat including all standard items mentioned is \$672,500 CAD. At the present exchange rate, that's about \$650,000 US. Boaters who already have a dinghy (or might not want a satellite TV system or other extras) will find Bracewell willing to delete certain standard items and correspondingly reduce the price of the boat.

The Bracewell exudes more "Pacific Northwest" character than many of its closest competitors, and is built to a high standard. We can recommend it for inclusion in any serious shopper's short list.

For additional information, please call Waterline Boats in Seattle (206-282-0110) or visit the web site [www.waterlineboats.com](http://www.waterlineboats.com). Canadian inquiries should be directed to North 49 Yacht Sales at 604-899-4430 on the web at [www.north49yachtsales.com](http://www.north49yachtsales.com). 



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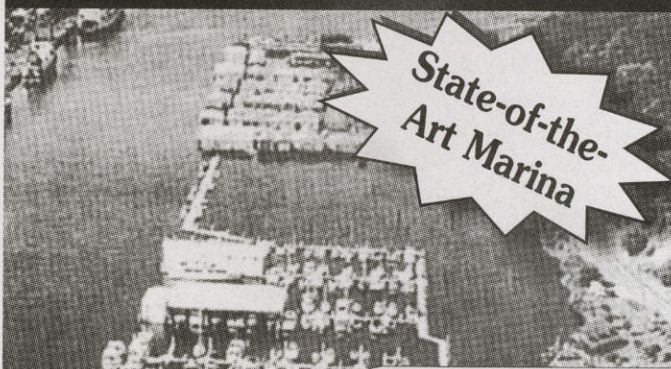
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