



Grady-White 456

“It’s been a badly kept secret that Grady-White has a big boat,” said David Neese, the builder’s vice president of engineering. Of course, big was an understatement. From where I was standing, the company’s 45-foot flagship, the Grady-White 456, looked positively massive. It’s more sportfishing yacht—if you want to call it that—than center console.

That makes sense, since the 456 is the largest boat Grady-White has ever built. Stepping into the cockpit through the port-side dive door (there’s one to starboard as well), I immediately got a sense of space. A 14-foot beam provides generous room in which to move about when multiple fish are on. Nothing biting? An aft-facing bench seat—with room enough for three fishing buddies or family members to take a load off—converts, in an instant, to a long leaning post when you’re ready to go to work.

On this 80-degree Florida day, you were in an enviable position if you were exploring the tackle storage console underneath that bench seat: Three aft-facing air-conditioning nozzles kept the area cool, even by the stern.

It was hard to miss the innovative addition to the 456’s cockpit: a 24-inch Garmin monitor mounted against the transom, just

below the fishbox. At first, I admit, I was skeptical of the placement. The noontime sun was doing its best to make it difficult to read the screen, which displays data from the GPS, fishfinder and underwater camera—everything the captain can see at the helm. If you can see it, that is. “In certain situations you won’t be able to see it; the sun is the sun,” admitted Neese when I asked him about it. “But for the most part it’s going to help a lot of fishermen.” Should all hell break loose once a fish is on, the monitor is thoughtfully protected by a hinged acrylic cover that can shield it from the odd hook, gaff, knee or rod.

Making use of the wide beam, Grady-White incorporates four electrically adjusted seats at the helm, each with its own fold-down footrest. At the stern, 35-gallon livewells are in each corner, with a 115-gal-

lon transom fishbox between them, complete with integrated freezer coils so you don’t have to throw out your back hauling ice. Another benefactor of the wide beam: four 350-horsepower Yamaha four-stroke outboards, which were gleaming in the sun, begging to be sea-trialed.

Earlier, Neese had said Grady-White wasn’t going to build the 456 if it didn’t hit 50 miles per hour. According to Grady-White, the boat runs a tick over 55 miles per hour, or 47.9 knots, at WOT. Said Neese, “There aren’t enough words to explain how fun it is to run.”

It took Grady-White two years to build the boat, from concept to completion. According to Neese, the company sourced inspiration for the flagship from industry experts, fishing gurus and even competitors. The result? Comfortable accommodations for two, including a convertible king-

size berth in the forward cabin; a galley with stove, cooktop refrigerator and a six-bottle wine cooler; and a retractable vertical rack under the port countertop for four rods.

In total, there are 50 rod holders arrayed around the boat, including two pairs of under-gunwale racks and 10 slots in the rocket launcher. It’s enough, certainly, to make an angler’s head spin—and his friends’ heads, too.

—Simon Murray



LOA: 45’0” **BEAM:** 14’0” **DRAFT:** 2’6” **DISPL.:** 24,500 lbs. **FUEL:** 616 gal.
WATER: 80 gal. **POWER:** 4/350-hp Yamaha four-stroke outboard **CRUISE**
SPEED: 32 knots **TOP SPEED:** 47.9 knots

Grady-White Boats, 252-752-2111; gradywhite.com