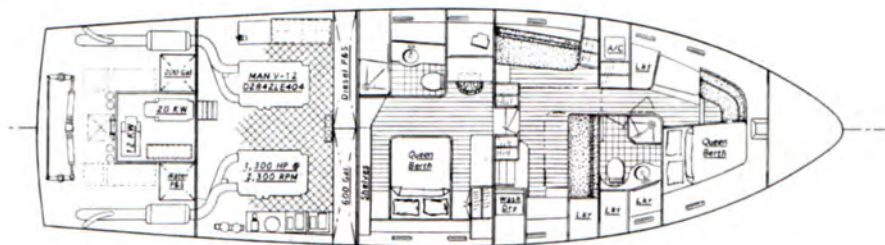
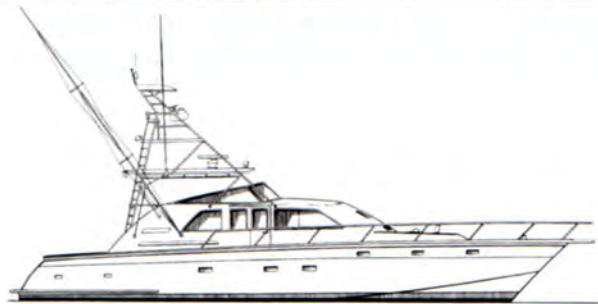


## DESIGN

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## KINGFISHER 66

If you don't mind, I'm going to eat dessert before writing this review. Bottoms up.

I say this because the Gerr-Vee bottom on the Kingfisher 66 is a design junkie's fix if I ever saw one. Simply described, it's an inverted bell flanked by tunnel chines, and it gives the softest ride I've experienced at speeds up to about 30 knots. Beyond that speed, I have only hearsay to reinforce my opinion, but I trust the sources.

Actually, "soft" is a lame description of the ride quality. It's more complicated than that. I have to call it magical. It does everything so well, short of making the boat go faster than it would atop other bottom shapes. Gerr is the first to say the design elements in the bottom aren't new, but the way he used each one and combined them is. He starts with bell-shape sections, quite narrow, steep and deeper than normal in the bows, broadening amidships then flattening on the run. At the transom, the narrow part of the bell is squashed flat, providing an effective planing surface. This surface reminds me of the delta-shape flat on early Fountain deep-Vs. Deadrise at the transom is 24 degrees, 26 degrees amidships.

Instead of finishing the bottom at the chines with a conventional flat (often angled toward the water from the inside out), Gerr has drawn a tunnel on each side. It's about the same width as a chine flat but is more effective at directing water aft instead of out (increases lift) and of cushioning the impact between the hull and the water. Flat surfaces pound; curved ones don't. In addition to the comfortable ride, the Gerr-Vee remains flat in the corners, even at high speeds. Although the characteristic is disconcerting at first, it soon becomes one of the hull's most endearing qualities.

This design works well above the waterline, too, and I applaud Dave Gerr for giving us something other than the S.O.S. The Kingfisher has a thoroughly modern profile combined with touches of practicality missing from the

design "statements" of many new boats. Gerr wisely kept the reverse sheerline low, which hints at high performance potential because a similar sheer appears on many scorchingly fast sportboats. A reverse sheer also increases the headroom belowdecks where it's needed most—the saloon.

I love the way he raked the bow and stern at identical angles, or nearly so, and softened the stern with a curve at each side and an arc top to bottom. The swim platform wraps around the topsides to form a rub rail, and the line visually reduces the freeboard at the cockpit area. Bulkheads and furniture below dictated placement of the portlights, but I'm not crazy about their influence on the boat's looks.

Gerr's treatment of the house reflects current thinking in automotive design: moderately raked fascia and fastback flying buttresses aft. If you need an automotive reference, think Audi A6 in profile. The windscreen on the flying bridge is a five-side affair with mullions separating the panels. Its presence on the house reduces that structure's obvious flatness. Angles formed by the tower help draw visual mass aft, which contributes to the boat's sleekness. The practical compromise in her profile occurs in the size and shape of the windows and door of the saloon, but they work well with the rest of the boat.

A centerline helm station on the bridge gives the helmsman a clear view of the boat's three most vulnerable extremities—and everything else surrounding her. I find three elements especially noteworthy in the general arrangements. A covered compartment, starboard side right abaft the bridge, houses the tender. The saloon, forward of the master stateroom, converts from a lounge area to four over/under berths to accommodate the owner's large family. Drawing a curtain over each turns them into private staterooms.

Roomy, fast, comfortable and seaworthy. Kingfisher is going to captivate her owner. I know she'd hook me. □

Contact: Gerr Marine, (212) 864-7030; fax (212) 932-0872.

LOA	65'6"	POWER	2x 1,300 hp MAN V12s
LWL	57'3"	FUEL	1,480 gal.
BEAM	19'0"	RANGE	500 nm at 20 knots,
DRAFT	5'2"		10 percent reserve
DISPL.	37 tons	DESIGNER	Dave Gerr