

# Kadey-Krogen 55 Expedition Cruiser

LIVEBOARD COMFORT WITH UNSURPASSED CAPABILITY  
BY ROGER McAFEE

**SINCE THE FIRST KADEY-KROGEN SPLASHED DOWN** in 1977, the company has become known for its full-displacement, single-engine, live-aboard cruisers capable of crossing oceans. The original 42-footer is still considered, by many, to be one of the best cruising boats afloat even though production ceased with hull number 206 in 1998.

Kadey-Krogen's new 55 Expedition Cruiser continues the tradition except it has twin engines, drivelines, rudders and three skegs. Despite the subtle modern touches, this vessel continues with the husky, broad-shouldered tough look of its predecessors. It continues to convey a sense of confidence and purpose. It's still a boat that can be operated comfortably by a pair of knowledgeable cruisers who

want to explore the world.

The profile of the new vessel has changed slightly in that the bulk of the upper works has been moved somewhat aft. This creates a longer foredeck, more in keeping with the Expedition Cruiser genre.

However, the most unusual feature of this vessel is that there are no side-decks. The new 55 is a true wide-body with the designers opting to create

maximum interior space at the expense of traditional side-decks. The styling—window shape and placement, air intake grill and trim, etc.—is so effective that most boaters, at first glance beam on, wouldn't notice it's a wide-body.

The foredeck is well protected by a high coaming topped with stainless rails, and anyone working forward has a well-founded sense of security. The heavy-duty bow pulpit is set up for two anchors and is drained—a nice touch. The pulpit also houses a capstan, a useful feature, as many experienced cruisers know. Access to the chain locker in the forepeak is through a

watertight deck hatch.

The twin John Deeres put out 158 hp each on a continuous basis (M1 rating) at 2400 rpm. These 415 ci (6.8 L) six-cylinder engines weigh in at 1,609 pounds and have a virtually flat power curve from 1800 rpm up to 2400. Maximum torque is also at 1800 rpm. These figures indicate the powerplants as rated are well matched to the boat use. These are wet sleeve engines, fitted with replaceable steel cylinder liners, which can reduce engine rebuild costs should a rebuild become necessary.

The designers made a conscious decision to go with twins for a number of reasons. The obvious one, the perception of safety, was only one of the factors. Another reason was the reduction in draft by 12 to 15 inches. A single engine would have required a larger prop and, therefore, more draft. This reduction in draft opens up a much larger cruising area in the shallows of the Caribbean, the rock gardens of the Pacific Northwest and Alaska, or the coral barrier reefs off Belize and Australia.

Speed costs money and the new 55-footer is no exception. Kadey-Krogen makes this point by comparing speed to range. At 6 knots the range is 7,100 nautical miles, at 8 knots range drops to 2,800 miles and at 10 knots

to 1,200 miles. All of the ranges are calculated with a 10 percent reserve. Therefore, a 40 percent reduction in speed from 10 knots to 6 knots allows for almost six times the range.

On one engine, the boat will make 7 knots, and that's similar to other displacement-hull twins in the same size range when running on one engine.

On the new 55 the servicing machinery and equipment is unusually easy, by design. With all the accommodations, galley, dining area, heads, etc., on the main deck, all the space in the hull (almost 50 feet) is dedicated to machinery and equipment, and the various items are

## An Inside Look



**TESTER'S OPINION**  
"The 55 uses first-class hardware, fittings and equipment throughout. Its machinery spaces are brilliantly designed, and all the equipment can easily be serviced."



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strung out inside the full length of the hull fore and aft. The hull is divided into five compartments, separated by four structural bulkheads, each with its own watertight door. If all the doors are open, the boater can see from the lazarette all the way to

the bow thruster.

This arrangement allows for servicing of the components in one compartment without having to put up with the noise and heat of the engines running, except of course, while working on items in the engine space itself. The

## Kadey-Krogen 55 Expedition Cruiser

### SPECIFICATIONS

|                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| LOA (pulpit and swim step) | 60 ft., 2 in.   |
| Beam                       | 18 ft.  |
| Draft (half load)          | 4 ft., 10 in.   |
| Fuel                       | 1,880 gals.   |
| Water                      | 500 gals.   |
| Engines                    | Twin John Deere 6068 TFM M1,<br>Tier 2, 158 hp @ 2400 rpm |

### STANDARD EQUIPMENT

Twin John Deere 6068 TFM, M1 Tier 2 with Twin Disc 2.88:1 gears and 2-inch Aquamet 22, 2-inch diameter to twin bronze props; 16 kw Northern Lights generator, in sound shield, complete with hydraulic PTO for ABT hydraulic system; Racor fuel filters, with vacuum gauges for each engine and generator; fuel polishing system with transfer pump; bow thruster; stabilizers; Delta T engine room blowers and demisters; engine room fire suppression system; chilled-water air conditioning, five zones, 87,000 BTU; twin stainless steel rudders, with protective shoe; six bilge pumps; hydraulic steering; ZF Mathers MicroCommander electronic controls; Maxwell 3,500 hydraulic windlass with dual chain wheels and capstans, with anchor rode counter; Freeman watertight chain locker deck hatch; saltwater anchor washdown system; Nautical Structures Euro 1,200-lb. davit with auto rotation; ice-maker; refrigerator; convection microwave; trash compactor; stove/oven; wine cooler; battery charger; inverter; 2 cable master reels; automatic washer and dryer; holding tank status panel; freezer and much more.

### OPTIONAL EQUIPMENT

See dealer for full list of options.

### CONSTRUCTION

Hull: Solid glass below the waterline; Knytex (in combination with mat and Airex) core above the waterline; blister-resistant vinylester resins on laminates; impact-resistant arimid. FRP-reinforced stem and stern bottom sections; superstructure includes Knytex and mat (in combination with end-grain balsa and/or Divinycell core) and surface mats for print-through reduction; polyurethane marine sealants at hull to deck joint and exterior fittings. Marine-grade plywood bulkheads with molded glass section stringers; arimid-reinforced solid collision bulkhead; four watertight structural bulkheads with Freeman watertight doors.

### BUILDER

KADEY-KROGEN YACHTS, INC., Stuart, FL;  
(772) 286-0171; www.kadeykrogen.com

### WEST COAST DEALER

Kadey-Krogen Yachts, Inc., Seattle, WA;  
(206) 453-5631; www.kadeykrogen.com

machinery spaces have a headroom of only 5 feet, 6 inches, but it's more than enough to be able to work in a comfortable, organized way. The machinery and equipment space design and implementation border on genius.

The interior of our test vessel is finished with light cherry, holly and teak. The furniture, carpet, curtains and bedding blend well with the rest of the interior giving it a warm and very elegant feeling. All the built-in, horizontal surfaces share the same granite as the galley countertops. This is a brilliant touch and not only adds to the overall elegance but even more important makes cleanup a breeze. It also means the dark rings left by drink glasses when they're placed on a wood surface, won't happen.

The galley is forward of the salon and contains all the items you would expect in a vessel of this caliber; a home-size stainless-finished refrigerator, a convection microwave, a trash compactor, a dishwasher, a four-burner propane stove with an oven, a deep, double stainless sink and a wine cooler. The galley is large enough to allow three cooks to work simultaneously.

The master stateroom, with its island queen berth, large en suite head complete with a granite-top vanity, a VacuFlush toilet and a separate shower stall, occupies the fo'c's'le. The guest stateroom/office is to starboard just aft of the master and contains a washer and dryer. Across the companionway from the guest stateroom is the day head, complete with a vanity, a separate shower stall and a VacuFlush toilet.

Access to the pilothouse from the main deck is via an elegant spiral staircase, complete with a well-finished wooden handrail. The steps themselves, both in tread and rise, are more like those found in a home than on a boat, which makes getting to the pilothouse quick, safe and easy. Visibility from the centerline helm station is a full 360 degrees, and split Dutch doors to port and starboard allow for easy access to either side of the Portuguese bridge. The large pilothouse is complete with an excellent L-shaped settee with an expandable table.

During our test we had two others on board, both experienced boaters whose respective families own boats

and were looking to possibly upgrade to a new Kadey-Krogen: Kim Struthers and David Silver. Silver handled the helm during our test, and Struthers had some great perspective as someone who lives aboard.

We fired up the twin John Deeres and pulled away from the dock at 700 rpm, the engine idle speed. We made 3.1 knots and burned a total of 1 gallon per hour. At 1100 rpm we burned 1.8 gallons per hour and made 5.5 knots. At 7.4 knots the engines were running at 1500 rpm, and we burned a total of 3.6 gallons per hour.

At 2000 rpm the engines were running at 50 percent load; we were making 9.3 knots and burning a total of 8 gallons per hour. At 2150 rpm, we were making 9.6 knots burning 9.6 gallons per hour, and the engines were loaded to 58 percent. At WOT we topped out at 10.0 knots and burned 16 gallons per hour. Our test speed-readings were GPS based, and the vessel's stabilizers were not actuated.

After we finished we spun the helm hard over to port, and Silver slowly brought the engines up to full speed, while keeping the helm cranked over. The vessel barely leaned to starboard, then flattened out and spun in almost its own length. There was no cavitation or chattering. This maneuver will quickly show any bad habits a hull design may have, and this ballasted hull (6,900 pounds of encapsulated lead) had none.

During the entire test our vessel responded very well to the helm regardless of what we asked it to do. I wandered through the vessel while we were under way, looking for loose fittings, rattles, clanks or bangs and as I expected, I didn't find any. In fact, the vessel was quiet and solid in all spaces at all speeds. There were plenty of handrails throughout the interior, and one could move anywhere on the vessel and still have one hand for the boat.

Kadey-Krogen has produced a vessel that will be at home in any ocean if handled by knowledgeable, competent boaters. It uses first-class hardware, fittings and equipment throughout. Its machinery spaces are brilliantly designed, and all the equipment can be serviced easily. ●