



## Catalina 445

WHEN IT CAME TIME TO PICK THE BEST Full-Size Cruiser, 40 to 50 Feet, the three boats in the running each brought unique features to the table. But in the end, the Catalina 445 was named the winner not for any individual feature but for the purposeful way it came together as a whole.

This may partly be due to the fact that one man—Catalina designer Gerry Douglas—is responsible for all of the various elements of the design. He's been Catalina's chief designer for years, and during our dockside inspection, he told us how he works to incorporate all of the lessons learned from previous designs with all of the owner feedback he's received.

The 445 has the looks that loyal Catalina owners will recognize but with updated, more contemporary lines. Douglas knows that inches matter (even on a 44-foot boat), and he said he played with a little less beam and a little less freeboard to modernize the boat's overall look—and it works. Other on-deck features that scored points with the judges include the comfortable, well-laid-out



cockpit; the wide, easy-to-navigate side decks; the excellent nonskid; and the powerful windlass. These features stand out not for the way they solve old problems in new ways but by showing how conventional solutions often work best when they're executed as well as they are on the 445.

The overall accommodations plan got the nod for comfort and construction quality, but the port aft cabin "flex space" was particularly well received. It can be configured as a guest cabin, a workshop,

**"With their new 445, the Catalina folks have built a lot of hidden value into the boat."**

— **TIM MURPHY** a big stowage area, or anything in between. The starboard aft cabin, with its copious storage and angled bunk with innerspring mattress, and the large saloon also received high marks.

The 445 was the first boat that the judges test-sailed in winds that had spiked up into the high teens. Our test model (equipped with a shoal-draft keel and in-mast furling main) performed well after we tucked in a reef, and the roller-furling sails made the act of shortening sail easy.

**B.S.**

### WINNING DETAILS

- ◆ Accommodations proportions are just right.
- ◆ The boat is built to last.
- ◆ The clever "flex-space" cabin works well.
- ◆ Systems installation is well executed.