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Rendering of the new yacht

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Hinckley Introduces New Motor Yacht

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TRENTON — Maybe the economy isn't as bad as news reports suggest.

Earlier this month, luxury boatbuilder The Hinckley Co. announced the introduction of a new model that serves as a reminder that times aren't hard for everyone. The new boat is the Talaria 48, an elegant addition to the line of power yachts that now define the company's image.

According to Phil Bennett, Hinckley's director of sales, the T48 has been well received. The company already has orders for two of the boats.

Tooling for the new boat is nearing completion, and the first hull will be molded in January. The first T48 is scheduled for delivery early in the winter of 2012.

Offered in two versions — motor yacht and fly bridge — the new boat features a handsome V-hull with a sweeping sheer and substantial tumblehome reminiscent of Downeast work boats from an earlier time.

Built using a high-tech Kevlar and carbon E-glass composite, the T48 has an overall length of 51 feet 6 inches, 44 feet 8 inches on the waterline, a beam of 15 feet 3 inches, and draws just 31 inches. Power comes from a pair of 715-horsepower electronically con-

trolled Cummins diesels driving Hamilton waterjets.

With a design displacement of 38,250 pounds in cruising trim (39,900 pounds for the flybridge version) the motor yacht is expected to cruise at 30 knots and have a top speed of 35. The flybridge version is slightly slower.

Hinckley is showing the boat with a two stateroom layout. The master stateroom is forward and has a centerline double berth. The guest stateroom is midships, opposite the galley, and is offered in several configurations. Each stateroom has its own head compartment with shower.

Despite the down economy, Bennett said that Hinckley is enjoying a strong start to its fourth quarter. Two 55-foot T55 motor yachts are currently under construction at Hinckley's Trenton plant, as are "a couple" of smaller T44s and "a string" of the company's success Mark III Picnic Boats.

All of those boats, and some more besides, "will be built right here in Maine," Bennett said. "We build everything right here in Trenton."

Although the past couple of years have not been good for the boatbuilding industry, Bennett said that there has been a resurgence of interest in high-quality boats like those built by Hinckley.

"We're finding that people are tired of feeling miserable," Bennett said. "They want to do something good for themselves and they feel confident in investing in the gold standard."

That confidence is good news for Hinckley. Bennett said the company currently has 110 employees working at its once moribund Trenton plant and "we will always be looking to add the right people in every discipline from composites to woodworking."

Although Hinckley is now building mostly power boats — one of its 29-foot runabouts is being finished off for shipment to China for "a gentlemen who could have anything he wants," and another is being finished up as a tender to be carried on the deck of a 300-foot yacht — the company still has people interested in the elegant sailboats on which the company built its reputation for elegance and quality.

"I just met with someone who's interested in building one of our Southwester 70s," Bennett said. He also has potential customers for a Sou'wester 52 cruising yacht and a 42-foot DS 42 "daysailer."

"There are people around with the economic resources to invest," Bennett said. "We say they're coming off the hold button."

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