

Some boats are head-turners. You've just got to give them a long enough look to allow the beauty to fill the eye. The Albury Brothers 23 is such a boat.

I saw my first Albury while strolling the waterfront on Man O' War Cay, Abaco, Bahamas under a tropical summer sun in 1973. I'll never forget the impression. The next Albury appeared before me in Key Largo, motoring across Ocean Reef Harbor about twenty years later. Same impression.

At the 2004 Annapolis Power Boat Show, gracefully perched on her trailer at the end of a dock, surrounded by impressive offshore style battle wagons sporting monikers like Viking, Hatteras and Cabo, appeared the boat that again turned my head. Same impression. The Albury Brothers 23 looked right at home nestled in her neighborhood of sleek 50-70 foot offshore fishing machines. Her class and good looks hold their own with the best of them.

The Albury Brothers 23 is a head-turner alright, exuding style and grace from carefully designed lines. But the boat's looks are only the beginning of the story. Willard Albury has been building proud boats on Man O' War Cay for over fifty years. Now joined by his sons and operating as Albury Brothers, Willard's tradition of highly crafted well-built boats carries on. Careful scrutiny to design details and craftsmanship make Alburys "the safest, smoothest ride in the islands." It is said the natives of the Abacos "worship that boat."

Having built by hand in a small shop on Man O' War Cay harbor for years, Albury Brothers recently opened a shop in south Florida making their splendid boats more accessible to the American market. Good news for those of us looking for a truly special boat of striking beauty, built



## The Albury Brothers 23

by  
Court Van Clief

Photos courtesy of Albury Brothers Boatbuilding Company

to handle the sea, and constructed to run the duration.

Craftsmen in the Florida shop are hand-selected by the Albury family, maintaining the meticulous eye for detail and painstakingly high quality construction that began in Man O' War. Keeping quality before quantity, the family-operated shop in Abaco turns out about one boat per month. The Florida shop is currently building about three per month. Craftsmen in the Albury shops take pride in the construction of these excellent boats, and the result of their work is impossible to miss.

Members of the Albury family regularly call on the stateside shop, inspecting the operation. A family member recently commented after a visit to the Florida shop, "You could not tell the difference between a boat made in Abaco or The States."

Knowledgeably designed by Willard Albury and his sons, the Albury Brothers 23 hull is a modified deep vee. Her attractive design allows her to take on a steep chop adeptly, the sharp and level

entry slicing through oncoming waves. Her moderate chine and aft rounded bilges lend well to a smooth stable ride and provide a soft re-entry when large ocean waves make up the running terrain. She is adept at handling all sea conditions appropriate for a boat in her size class, and is capable of venturing beyond.

An array of options are available for the Albury 23. She can be laid out as a hardcore fishing boat or a casual family runabout. Capable of handling up to 250 horsepower, she can run with the big dogs, topping out near 40 knots.

Thanks to the foresight of the principals at Diamond T Marine of Norfolk, the Albury 23 is now available in Virginia. I recently met Mike Dobson at their dock to run a sea trial on the Albury Brothers 23. Though we chugged out of the river on a glassy calm day, Norfolk harbor can serve up plenty of major wakes to put a boat through her paces. I steered the "23" through intimidating tugboat and ship wakes at all different angles. The results were always the same. She handled everything in her path with grace.



At one point we met a large wake, head on, at cruising speed. The Albury 23 lifted easily off the large sea, and re-entry was really impressive. The landing was not jarring as you might expect, but amazingly smooth. Willard Albury's uniquely designed running bottom and meticulous eye to balance give the 23 the capability of setting down on her round aft bilge section first; the bow sets down a second later creating an unusually smooth re-entry.

Taking the helm of this special boat felt so comfortable I was reluctant to return to the dock. When I did, I was amazed when backing into her slip. A 2½" by 1½" exterior keel gives the Albury 23 unmatched tracking ability, while backing, for an outboard. The keel also greatly reduces slippage created by windage and allows her to run true in a broadside sea.

The Albury 23 is a special boat. She is a true standout among her peers. And her peers are few.

In Virginia, if you are in the market for an exceptional center console boat, call Mike Dobson at Diamond T Marine, 757 342 7921. He'll be proud to show you an Albury 23, and set up a sea trial.

Visit Albury Brothers website, [www.alburybrothers.com](http://www.alburybrothers.com), and see what all the excitement is about.

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