

Pacific Nor'West

Boating

Adventuring Afloat in the Pacific Northwest



NEW BOAT REVIEW

AMERICAN TUG 485

Novel Design and Customized Features Make This Trawler Both Striking and Comfortable

DESTINATION

WILD PATOS ISLAND

If You Need a True Escape, This Is It.

FEATURES

- Fish On!: Think Big!
- The Raising of a Totem Pole
- Green Cleaning

FIFTY FEET 0

Last winter a customer approached me about joining our Waggoner Cruise to Alaska in May. He had a new 485 American Tug under construction and said he expected delivery three weeks before departure. Naturally I was skeptical. Could the builder really deliver the boat by the time we departed? Could all the new boat bugs really be worked out before embarking on an ambitious trip?

Later I learned that not only was this a new boat, but an entirely new model. My skepticism increased.

Thankfully American Tug has a reputation for well-built boats with few problems. And their recently expanded staff of fiberglass laminators, woodworkers, and other skilled marine tradespeople was well up to the task of delivering the boat with time to spare.

As this article goes to press, hull #1 of the American Tug 485 is well on her way to Alaska with nothing but glowing reviews from her owners.

BY SAM LANDSMAN

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N TUG 485



THE WELL LAID OUT PILOTHOUSE ON THE AMERICAN TUG 485.

CONSTRUCTION AND DESIGN

The American Tug 485 is based on the proven 435 model. The 485 shares the same hard-chine hull that has made the 435 a top performer and top seller. To create the 485, American Tugs lengthened the 435's salon and hull by five and a half feet. The 435's cockpit, pilothouse, and two-stateroom, two-head layout below decks remain essentially unchanged.

Approaching hull #1 at the dock, though, I was immediately struck by her size. The 435 is an imposing boat, and the 485 takes it to the next level. Her bow towers over the water and her forward-raked pilothouse windows add a workboat aura. Moving aft, the extra length in the salon is immediately noticeable, thanks to an extra window that's been added.

A single Cummins QSC8.3, generating 550 hp, is standard on the 485. She can cruise comfortably at 8 knots for a range of 1440 nautical miles, or faster at 14 knots with a reduced range of 400 nautical miles. The 485 makes light work of small chop, and we suspect she'll tackle larger seas with ease.

Notably, her length overall of 49' 9" means she'll fit in a 50-foot slip with no overhang. This will lower operating costs and allow the 485 access to many older marinas that have limited space for larger boats.

Like all American Tugs, the 485 is built with solid fiberglass below the waterline. Above the waterline, the hull is vacuum bagged and foam cored to add strength and insulation.

American Tug goes to great lengths to minimize engine noise and vibration. Several inches of high-quality sound deadening material line the engine room, ensuring that machinery noises stay in the engine room.

INTERIOR AND LAYOUT

The 485 has a wide swim step, complete with "staple" style handholds for extra security. Entering the salon through a wide Diamond-Seaglaize door, my first impressions were "This is bigger than I expected," and "This is the most highly customized American Tug I've ever been on."

The East-coast buyers of hull #1 worked closely with the team at American Tugs to craft a liveaboard cruiser worthy of calling home. Their immediate cruising plans call for a summer shakedown cruise to Southeast Alaska, followed by shipping the boat to the East Coast and beginning an open ended tour of the Great Loop.

The interior styling of hull #1 is a departure from most American Tugs. Rich, wide, plank-style wood floors cover the sole throughout and lend a contemporary air to the cabin. Dark granite countertops, black leather surfaces, horizontal-themed tile backsplashes, and colorful accents complete the contemporary theme.

Inside the salon, the large settee to port and two loose chairs to starboard create a delightful lounging area. Just forward of the settee is the U-shaped galley complete with three burner gas cooktop, Isotherm refrigerator with two freezer drawers, and Sharp microwave/convection oven. A double basin sink and copious storage space round out the galley.

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BOARDING IS EASY THANKS TO A WIDE SWIM STEP AND STAPLE STYLE RAILS.

SPECIFICATIONS AND DIMENSIONS

LOA: 49' 9"
Beam: 15' 10"
Displacement (dry): 34,000 pounds
Fuel capacity: 640 gallons
Water capacity: 210 gallons
Power: Cummins 8.3 QSC 550 hp



THE ENGINE ROOM IS SPACIOUS AND EXPERTLY DESIGNED.



THE 485 SALON IS MORE THAN 5 FEET LONGER THAN THE SALON IN THE 435. IT FEELS HUGE.

American Tug includes a second settee, ideal for four person dining, opposite the galley as standard, but the owners of hull #1 opted instead for a bar setup. The tasteful black granite countertop from the galley continues around the smaller, U-shaped bar. A stainless steel U-line icemaker and separate wine cooler are on the forward edge of the bar, and drawers and cubbies wrap around the rest of the area.

The pilothouse is a few steps up from the salon and galley. It's equipped with a settee and separate, dedicated helm chair (very comfortable, I might add). The helm station itself has ample room for the latest electronics. Hull #1 is equipped with a full Garmin system with two 15-inch displays, and they're nicely integrated into the cabinetry. Diamond-Seaglaze doors, both port and starboard, provide easy access to wide side decks. Large windows surround the pilothouse, offering excellent visibility.

Staterooms and heads are accessed from a staircase in the pilothouse. The master stateroom with en suite head is amidships, taking advantage of the full beam



THE L-SHAPED SETTEE IS COMFORTABLE. WOOD FLOORS GIVE THE BOAT A CONTEMPORARY FEEL.



THE MASTER STATEROOM HAS A WALK AROUND QUEEN BED.

of the boat. A walkaround queen bed, with nightstands on each side, lies athwart ship. Several hanging lockers and drawers provide copious storage space. The head is to starboard and features an electric toilet, huge stall shower, and plenty of space to store toiletries and towels.

The guest stateroom, also with en suite head, is forward. It has a large sideberth, hanging locker, and several large cubbies and drawers. The head, to starboard, has an electric toilet and separate stall shower.

SYSTEMS

American Tugs is committed to systems excellence. The 485 is equipped with premium equipment throughout, all installed expertly by craftsmen in La Conner, Washington.

The engine room in the 485 is large, but without standing headroom. Nevertheless, systems access is generally excellent.

Standard 485's come with nearly 1000 amp hours of



THE GUEST ROOM HAS A LARGE LOWER BUNK AND A SMALLER UPPER BUNK.

485



THE OWNERS OF HULL #1 OPTED TO ENCLOSE THE COCKPIT, EXPANDING THE ALREADY SPACIOUS LIVING AREA.

battery capacity, ideal for spending silent time on the hook. The standard Northern Lights 9kW generator will keep the batteries topped off when away from civilization, and a 2000 watt Magnum inverter will run many AC loads without the need to turn on the generator.

Either a hydronic diesel furnace or an air conditioning/reverse cycle heat system is standard, depending on where the boat is destined to cruise.

Sidepower's new, highly regarded SEP series of variable speed DC bow and stern thrusters are standard, providing precise control of the 485 around the dock.

CONCLUSIONS

American Tugs new 485 is an ideal couples cruiser—easy enough for two (or even one) person to handle around the docks, yet it has sufficient interior space for a couple to liveaboard for extended periods. And that's just what the owners of hull #1 are doing, first to Alaska, then around the eastern coast of the U.S.

American Tugs are sold factory direct in the Pacific Northwest. For more information, visit the American Tugs at www.americantugs.com. Or contact Steve Scruggs at steve@americantugs.com or (360) 466-2961.