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HUNT 52 AND VICEM 54 IPS

# POWER & M YACHT

» Hinckley 37

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TESTED ::: HINCKLEY 37

# A STAR IS REBORN

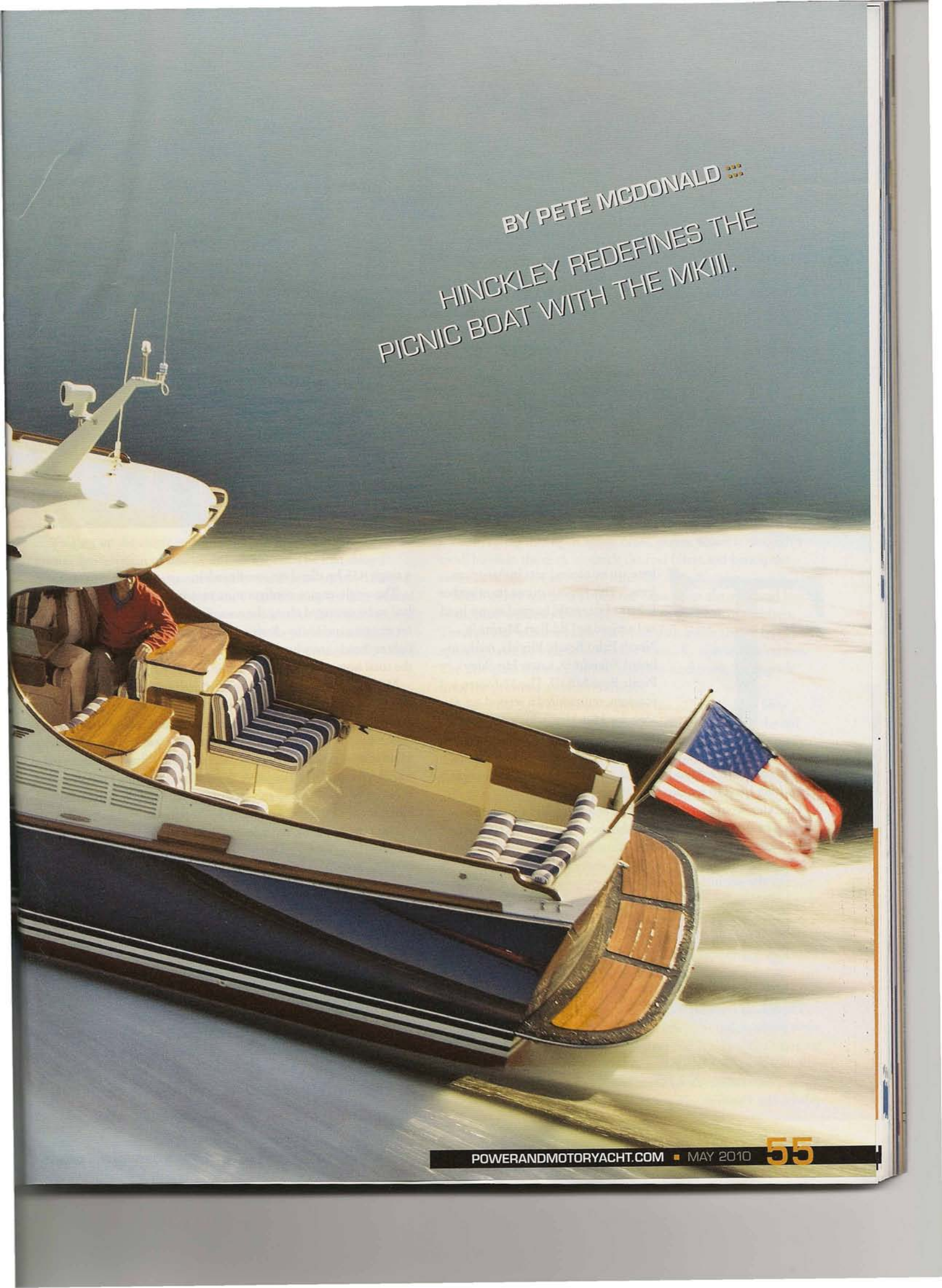


## NEED TO KNOW

<b>LOA x Beam:</b>	36'11" x 11'3"	
<b>Weight (dry):</b>	17,000 lbs.	<b>Draft:</b> 2'1"
<b>Tankage (gal):</b>	Fuel: 220	Water: 40
<b>Std. Power:</b>	2/300-mhp Volvo D4s	
<b>Cabins:</b>	1 double berth	
<b>Base Price:</b>	\$783,500	

**SNAPSHOT::** A deeper V and twin engines move the MKIII past its legendary roots.



A photograph of a Hinckley MKIII picnic boat, a white cabin cruiser with a dark blue hull and wood trim. The boat is shown from a side-rear perspective, moving across the water. It features a large cockpit with blue and white striped cushions, wooden table tops, and a swim platform at the stern with an American flag. A person in a red shirt is visible in the cockpit. The background shows a calm sea and a distant shoreline under a clear sky.

BY PETE McDONALD

HINCKLEY REDEFINES THE  
PICNIC BOAT WITH THE MKIII.





[1]

“There are no second acts in American lives.” This famous quote from author F. Scott Fitzgerald buzzed in my head as I arrived at Old Port Marina in North Palm Beach, Florida, ready to board *Friendship*, a new Hinckley Picnic Boat MKIII. The 37-footer, a redesign, represented a second act of sorts for Hinckley, which defined the category when it launched its original 36-foot picnic boat in 1994. Making major changes to a classic is a bold move, and before laying eyes on *Friendship* I had to wonder, was Fitzgerald right?

Hinckley would respond no. The company says that despite making its debut in the midst of this recession, the MKIII is its most successful new model ever. Hinckley based its changes not on whim, but on feedback from its customers and sales staff to improve the original picnic boat concept, presenting a final design that looks, handles, and performs better than the old one.

Still, I had to find out for myself. As I approached *Friendship* from the dock with Eric Champlin, senior sales director at Hinckley Yachts, she already commanded my full attention, with her teak trim, mirror-like blue gelcoat, and classic tumblehome. Yeah, she'd be right at home in Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*.

The MKIII certainly looks like the original, and she serves the same purpose, but in layout and design she is an entirely different animal. Start with the fact that the first picnic boat carried a single 315-hp engine. The latest version employs two: twin 300-mhp Volvo Penta D4 diesels. Owners had been asking for more horsepower, and Hinckley obliged on the old version to a point, running

a single 435-hp diesel on some models.

The single-engine configuration meant the engine and waterjet had to be mounted along the centerline, and the boat needed a flatter running surface to climb onto and stay up on plane. Newer, lighter diesels are what allowed Hinckley to use twins and bring the total horsepower to 600.

My test boat's new hull design, by architect Michael Peters, deepened the V from 15 degrees of deadrise at the transom to 19 degrees. The new hull is dryer with better seakeeping abilities. “She's got the capabilities with the twin engines and more deadrise to be a more serious offshore boat,” explains Champlin. Peters also added four inches to the LOA and 1'3" to the beam (36'11" x 11'3"). The extra engine and jet drive, combined with the larger build, increase the dry weight by 5,500 pounds.

Hopping onboard, the side-entry drop steps immediately caught my attention. They fold down from their recessed points in the teak coaming boards and line up with the teak grabrails on the hardtop so you have a handhold as you board. *Friendship's* optional teak decking gave her the air of a classic, as it did on the old models.

The twin Hamilton waterjets reside under the cockpit; an in-hatch provides access. The buckets and nozzles, which control direction, hide under the standard swim platform. That means there is no running gear underneath the hull, giving this 37-footer a skinny draft of just 2'1" (seven inches deeper than her predecessor), easing some of the worry associated with close-quarters boating.

The powerplants sit directly under the pilothouse with 110-gallon fuel tanks mounted outboard on either side. The original tanks held 83 gallons each, but extra fuel was needed to compensate for the added weight and horsepower and to keep the cruising range more than 200 NM.