

BY CHRIS WOODWARD

GRADY CANYON 456

A Luxury Center-Console with Advanced Fishability



P

Piloting Grady-White's new flagship Canyon 456 is like driving a Platinum-package Ford F350 Power Stroke Diesel, like throttling the Orient Express, like flying a Learjet 85. At least that's how I imagine it: The 456 is powerful and capacious while remaining sophisticated and plush.

I arrived in Morehead City, North Carolina, in late August to fish-trial the new Grady with a crew of eight, including two other boating writers. We had decided to try for daytime swordfish, based

on a budding fishery that local captains have developed over the past two years.

We met pre-dawn at a nearby marina, where the 456 floated aglow, its LED cockpit and underwater lights bathing it in soothing blue. After stowing gear in the cavernous center-console cabin, we settled onto the aft-facing mezzanine bench (a misnomer since this flat expanse is well-cushioned) and into the four-across helm seats

— all electrically adjustable fore and aft, and equipped with armrests, bolsters and footrests.

OFFSHORE RUN

Our helmsman, Cameron Boltes, Grady's property manager, idled us away from the dock using the Helm Master system tied into the quad Yamaha 425 XTO outboards. A light breeze cut

The Canyon 456 incorporates proven Grady-White technology and all-new features such as a transom electronics setup.

COURTESY GRADY-WHITE (3)

PERFORMANCE

POWER	Quad Yamaha 425 XTOS
LOAD	N/A
TOP SPEED	58 mph @ 6,000 rpm
TIME TO 30 MPH	10.5 sec.
BEST MPG	0.7 mpg @ 23.8 mph (3,000 rpm)

■ All statistics except time to 30 mph were collected on fresh water with prototype engines. Time to 30 mph was collected during this Fish Trial with eight crew, 450 gallons of fuel, tackle, fresh water, ice and safety gear.

HULL

LOA	45 ft.
BEAM	14 ft.
DEADRISE	21 deg.
DRY WEIGHT	24,500 lb. (w/o engines)
DRAFT	2 ft. 6 in.
FUEL	616 gal.
MAX POWER	1,700 hp

GRADY-WHITE BOATS

Greenville, North Carolina
252-752-2111
gradywhite.com

the humidity as we cruised through Bogue Sound, meeting up with our photo boat for the 60-mile offshore run.

The 2- to 4-foot seas seemed like child's play for this lengthy platform as we loped along at a leisurely 30 mph, turning 4,000 rpm and burning 60 gph. Boltes turned on the AC at the helm, which also pipes to the back of the mezzanine bench — something we quickly coveted, especially as the sun rose. (The 456 comes with a 12 kW diesel generator.)

With the autopilot set, the boat ran on cruise control. At the helm, we swapped fishing stories and scanned the horizon for signs of life. Rainstorms with low ceilings jockeyed around us, but when the sky brightened, the 1,300-foot depths resonated a deep purple-blue.

As Boltes throttled back, he engaged the standard Seakeeper 6 gyro stabilizer. While the 456 settled into a gentle sway, we could see our photo boat still bobbing.

Capt. Patrick Shore, a local mate who has targeted these swordies, set up our one deep line, using a Shimano Tiagra 130 reel with a Hooker electric motor on a custom bent-butt rod to lower the strip bait and 10-pound sash weight. After studying the gauges, he calculated a 4½-knot current.

Shore says the first summer that captains found the swordies, the fish were small — 60 to 100 pounds. Last summer, they caught a few in the 200- to 400-pound range. Most times, he says, he gets four to five bites a trip.

Boltes oriented the 456 using the Helm Master joystick and the Lewmar bow thruster, which he says helps keep the proud bow of this big girl better aligned. Once Shore dropped the bait, we power-drifted between 1,300- and 1,800-foot depths before repeating the process. In the meantime, I studied this vessel stem to stern.

LONG LIST

Right up front, let me apologize for lacking enough space to fully describe this luxury vessel and its exhaustive list of standard features. Instead, I'll tell you what impressed me most.

The 456's deck remains level throughout the vessel, except at the helm, where there's a slight step up.

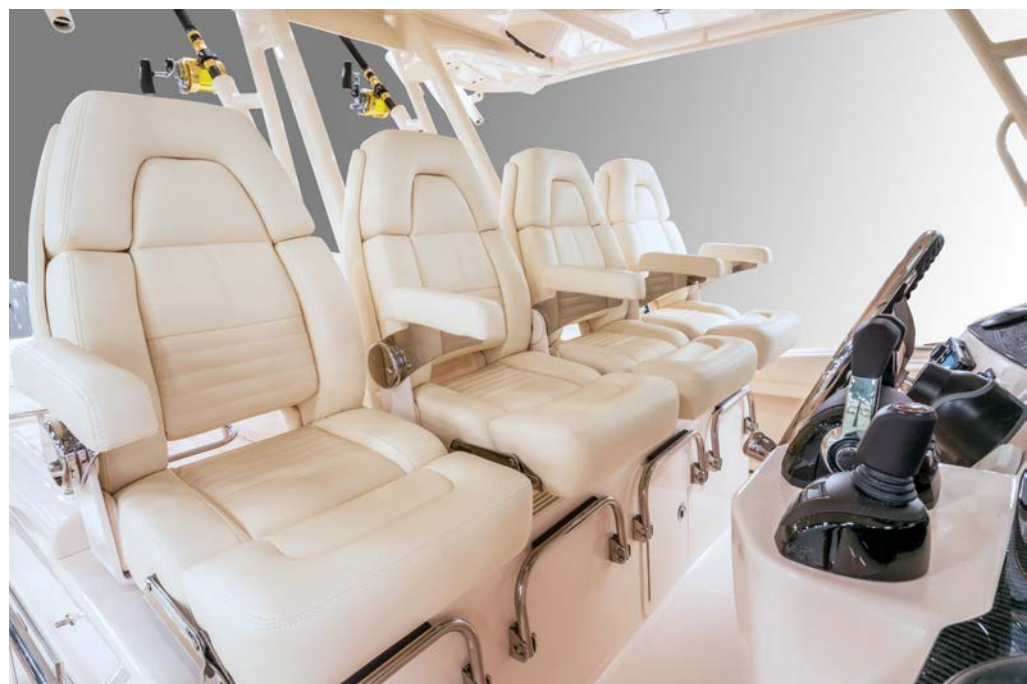
Top: The helm unit includes an aft-facing air-conditioned bench, tackle drawers, an electrically actuated footrest, grill, refrigerator drawer and more. Below: The four helm chairs each electrically adjust fore and aft, and come with bolsters and armrests.



This makes moving fore and aft with a fish or with an armload of gear so very easy. It also elevates the captain's line of sight, something short anglers like me appreciate, and it adds height to the interior cabin space (I measured it at 6 feet, 6 inches).

Crew can access the sliding cabin door from the helm deck. The door lies just to port of the helm face. Positioning the entry there frees the passageways yet takes nothing away from the helm layout; my tester featured three (optional) 17-inch Garmin displays, a C-Zone head unit, Yamaha Command Link Plus display, Fusion stereo, toggle switches, and a Zipwake Dynamic Boat Trim Control System.

Coaming pads rim the entire inside



perimeter of the vessel, which comes with port and starboard boarding doors. That leaves the transom section completely reserved for an oversize 115-gallon fish box (the largest of four insulated, overboard-draining fish boxes) and two 35-gallon livewells with full-column distribution and sea chests for the pumps.

Built into the transom bulkhead: an innovative electronics display mount (a frame with a plexiglass front) that can accommodate up to a 24-inch screen for monitoring depth and location while in the cockpit!

I found rails and handholds everywhere. I moved from the helm seat to the mezzanine while underway and always had a good grasp on something metal.

“ THIS VESSEL IS AS POWERFUL AND CAPABLE AS A SPORT-FISHER YET HANDLES LIKE A SPORTS CAR. ”

Grady strategically located numerous gunwale rod holders, including four in the bow, as well as open and locking horizontal rod storage and vertical rod storage above- and belowdecks. My test boat also came with an optional cockpit rocket launcher.

On deck, I found a grill, tackle drawers, a hidden drink cooler (beneath the starboard mezzanine cushion), a sink, refrigerator drawer, trash bin, and storage for lines and cleaning supplies.

We had one serious bite during the day, but no hookups. Had I been fishing stand-up, I would have loved the prominent toe rails along each side of the aft deck. Grady also impressed me with its high-volume scuppers, sure to quickly drain away any water from the nonskid.

EXCEPTIONAL ENCOUNTER

By midafternoon, we had to call it a day. I took the helm to get a feel for the 456, and found it highly responsive with easy throttles and smooth power steering. The automatic trim tabs keep the bow nearly level throughout acceleration.

Fully loaded, the 456 reached 30 mph in 10.5 seconds. The quads push the boat into the high 50s (Yamaha numbers show the boat tops out at 58 mph at 6,000 rpm).

In turns port and starboard, speed bleeds off slightly. As far as close-quarters maneuvering: The Helm Master joystick and the Lewmar bow thruster (both standard) make this as close to a self-driving boat as a captain can currently get.

All in all, this impressive, galloping center-console runs dry, and while the seas barely challenged the hull that day, whenever the 456 landed in a trough, it remained solid.

At the end of the day, I could officially call this Fish Trial an exceptional experience. This vessel is as powerful and capable as a sport-fisher yet handles like a sports car. Targeting swordfish, we put all our eggs in one basket, but I'd fish this boat for anything and deem the outcome a rousing success. 🎣

Left: North Carolina Capt. Patrick Shore prepares to drop a rigged bait to the depths, using an electric-reel setup, to target daytime swordfish. Top left: Rigged squid keep cool in the fish box. Top right: A sewn strip bait lies ready for action.

