Judgment Day

RIVIERA 575 SUV

LOA: 57’7”
BEAM: 15’10”
DRAFT: 5’2”
DISPL: 53,400 lb.
FUEL: 925 gal.
WATER: 838 gal.
STANDARD/TEST POWER: 2/1,000-hp Cat 3.9
OPTIONAL POWER: Volvo Penta D12s
GENERATOR: 21.5-kW Onan
WARRANTY: 2 years workmanship, 7 years hull structure
BASE PRICE: $1,745,900

TEST CONDITIONS: Air temperature: 77ºF; humidity 60%; seas: 1’ or less; wind: 10-15 knots; load: 694 gal. fuel, 100 gal. water, 4 persons. Speeds are two-way averages measured w/ Raymarine GPS. RPM estimates taken via Caterpillar monitoring. Range is based on 90% of advertised fuel capacity. Sound levels measured at (lower) helm. 85dB(A) is the level of normal conversation.

RIVIERA 57 EB

LOA: 57’7”
BEAM: 15’10”
DRAFT: 5’1”
DISPL: 66,000 lb.
FUEL: 1,057 gal.
WATER: 336 gal.
STANDARD/TEST POWER: 2/900-hp Volvo Penta IPS 1200
OPTIONAL POWER: 1,000-hp Volvo Penta IPS D13s
GENERATOR: 21.5-kW Onan
WARRANTY: 2 years workmanship, 7 years hull structure, 5-year limited warranty of Volvos
BASE PRICE: $2,059,000

TEST CONDITIONS: Air temperature: 77ºF; humidity 60%; seas: 1’ or less; wind: 10-15 knots; load: 1,057 gal. fuel, 198 gal. water, 3 persons. Speeds and two-way averages measured w/ Raymarine GPS. RPM estimates taken via Volvo Penta monitoring system. Range is based on 90% of advertised fuel capacity. Sound levels measured at enclosed bridge helm. 65 dB (A) is the level of normal conversation.
"Hello... three... two... one... BREAK NOW!" crackled the command over the VHF. My fingers pressed into the leather helm seats just a bit as our Riviera 57 enclosed bridge banked hard to port at full throttle, peeling away from the Riviera 575 SUV that moments before was running abeam a mere half a boat length away. Herled over hard, I glimpsed out the port windows and saw nothing but deep, green ocean. These high-speed, expertly choreographed maneuvers were part of an exciting photo shoot resulting in the images presented on the previous page.

“That certainly was dramatic,” exclaimed Riviera’s in-house marketing guru, Stephen Milne, over the VHF. “Do you think you guys can get a little closer, safely?”

Capt. Mark Lawson lifted the mic to his face, took a breath, and in a deep Aussie accent proclaimed, “Oh yeah, we can get closer.” I couldn’t help but recall how Lawson had summarized his job description just a half hour earlier. “I’ve been seatrialing all the Rivs for 17 years. Every day’s a new boat, and I try to break them before they get to an owner.” During his tenure he had never been able to cause any serious harm to a Riv, I was hoping he wouldn’t break that streak on this day.

A half-dozen high-speed passes—and zero collisions—later, we had an action-packed photo shoot (and video for www.pymag.com) in the can. Now it was time for the real fun to begin.

The mission at hand was simple, yet ambitious. We aimed to put an end to the age-old, dockside debate over which was the superior setup: a flybridge boat or a single-level sport yacht, a boat with

Note the excellent forward sightlines from the 575’s helm (top). The forward VIP is bright, large, and inviting on both the 57 EB and 575 SUV (above).

Different wood options in the galley provide the feel you’re after (top and second from top). The flybridge of the 57 EB can fit eight guests (above).
The 575 SUV (top) shares the same accommodations as the 57 EB (bottom).

PMY encourages buyers to visit its 368-acre facility in Coomera, Australia, to see how its boats go from plywood mockups to world-class cruisers.

straight shafts or pod drives. Our platforms for resolving this debate were perfect—a Riviera 57 Enclosed Bridge and a Riviera 575 SUV. Both boats boasted a nearly identical hull shape and similar main deck accommodations.

The 57 EB featured a spacious flybridge and 1,100-horsepower Volvo Penta IPS 1200 drives, while the SUV was paired to straight-shaft 900-horsepower Caterpillar 12.9s. It was a debate (or shall I say, one of the many debates) that a colleague and myself had been having a few months back, during our many hours together at the Sanctuary Cove Boat Show and the Riviera Festival of Boating. "If you're on a long cruise, you can't beat the sightlines from a flybridge," I'd offer. "Yeah, but it's better to try and flybridge, " he'd counter, playing devil's advocate. "If you're on a long cruise, you can't beat the sightlines from the horizon. This stereotype is not unfounded: There are plenty of Express-style sports cruisers often suffer the stigma of reduced sightlines. This is not something most boaters will ever use, but it's nice to know it's there. The 575's straight shafts also turned in similar, like that isn't something most boaters will ever use, but it's nice to know it's there. The 575's straight shafts also turned in similar, albeit most of them narrowly—but the fact is you can get the 575 SUV with pods, or you could get the 57 EB with straight shafts.

While running the 57 EB, the captain and I were stationed at the helm, while the remaining members of the test crew lounged in the saloon, swiping at their phones as the world passed them by. And isn't that why we go boating in the first place? You take solace in knowing that only you face with choosing between the 575 SUV and the 57 EB, you can still can't definitively answer which boat was better. Sure, the 57 EB edged out the 575 by only a few seconds, but as they say, winning is winning.

The only thing I'm absolutely sure of is this: If you find yourself faced with choosing between the 575 SUV and the 57 EB, you can take solace in knowing that only you have the truly right answer. Both boats are winners. *