

Our Engines. Your Story.

Cats in the Hatt by Blaine Thorpe

My wife Pam and I bought the boat in May 2003 in Ft. Pierce, FL after looking at several other 36' Hatteras convertibles in Texas, Georgia and Maryland. We wanted a good hull and it had to have Cat® engines. No questions asked. At first glance, the boat looked pretty rough.

I would like to think we rescued our boat. The marina where it was stored was essentially destroyed by Hurricane Frances and the boat needed several significant maintenance repairs, but the hull looked good and we couldn't pass up Cat engines. We bought the boat and the first thing we did was change the name to *Cats in the Hatt*.

I decided on a 36 Hatteras Convertible after meeting and working with Curly Cook of Hatteras in the mid -1990s. He pointed out that he thought the 36' convertible was one of better fishing boats available. Although fishing with outriggers and downriggers isn't really done on the Illinois River, we thought this would be our retirement boat and move it south later on. Although this boat had been poorly maintained, it met the requirements with a pair of 260 hp 3208T. The boat was built in 1975 with 210 HP 3208 naturally aspirated engines, but was repowered in 1988-1989 with the 260 HP engines.

To get the boat seaworthy we did all of the maintenance within the first month we owned it. We changed all of the belts, hoses and filters on the engines, generator and other systems, flushed and cleaned the cooling systems, and cleaned and painted the engine room. After that, it was getting the interior the way we like it and cleaning the hull and topsides.

Since then it has been eight years of cleaning, repairing and replacing various things on the boat. The 3208s however have been the one area that we haven't had to do much with. The best thing about Cat engines is that they always start and they always run.

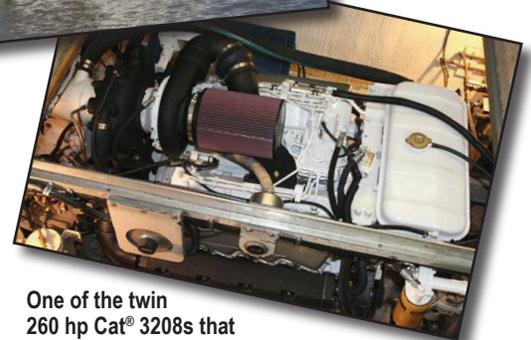
We regularly take the *Cats in the Hatt* on 40 to 70 mile trips with the Wharf Harbor Yacht Club to Havana, Henry, or Starved Rock all along the Illinois River. My favorite trip on the boat was our last trip on the 170 Illinois Waterway trip to Lake Michigan. We stopped in Chicago to spending a couple of day with my daughter and crossed to the Michigan side for a two week fishing and sight-seeing vacation. The boat can always handle more than people;

the Cat engines easily handled 5 and 6 foot seas crossing Lake Michigan. We finally did get to use the outriggers and down riggers.

For us, the boat is a wonderful place to relax and leave any concern behind us. Over the past eight years, our boat has provided us with more memories than I ever imagined. As I think about all of the fun trips my wife and I have had onboard the *Cats in the Hatt*, I'm more than grateful for the dependable Cat engines powering those memories.



Cats in the Hatt at anchor.



One of the twin 260 hp Cat® 3208s that power *Cats in the Hatt*.