

POWERSOURCE

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Go **THE Distance**

A globetrotting FPB 64 takes an unprecedented trans-ocean voyage with its John Deere engine

Imagine traveling more than halfway around the world on a 23,350-kilometer (12,600 nautical-mile) journey aboard a single-engine, 19.5-meter (64-foot) motoryacht.

Peter Watson didn't hesitate. In fact, it was a dream-turned-reality aboard his Functional Power Boat (FPB) 64, *Grey Wolf*. After picking up the new vessel in Auckland, New Zealand, last spring, Watson and a small crew of apprentices began an epic 3.5-month voyage across the Pacific, Panama Canal, and Atlantic — enduring tropical storms, tradewind head seas, and utter isolation — before returning to the Watson's home berth of Guernsey in the United Kingdom.

"Having gone halfway around world with a John Deere engine, I can say that I'm an absolute fan," says Watson. "It was



Wave-piercing FPBs confidently roam to any corner of the blue planet.

incredible. We only cleaned the air filter and changed the oil and oil filter — nothing else. It never gave us an issue. I am so impressed. It exceeded all of my expectations."

A John Deere engine in the hull of a boat like the FPB 64 unleashes the spirit of adventure — a chance to explore places that only a vessel like *Grey Wolf* would dare roam.

"We were at sea for long periods of time. On one leg across the Pacific we spent three weeks at sea where we had nothing around us," recalls Watson. "We saw three boats in 21 days and 4,100 nautical miles (7,598 kilometers). We had a huge amount of spare parts on the boat, but we didn't use any of them outside of the air and oil filters. We also went with John Deere Plus 50 II oil, supplied by local John Deere dealer Cervus Equipment, in Whangarei, New Zealand."

Blue-water cruising is made to order for the FPB yachts. Designed by naval architect Steve Dashew, FPBs represent the pinnacle of marine design and technology. Comfortable in heavy weather, the sleek, canoe-shaped hulls punch through high seas like a navy ship. Designed for worst-case scenarios, it even self-rights from capsizing — a trademark of FPB vessels but completely unheard of in the trawler industry.



An interior view of the forward end shows ample seating and marine electronics on the bridge desk.

FPBs are serious long-range vessels. Dashew and his wife, Linda, personally traveled 63,000 kilometers (250,000 nautical miles) on their own designs to prove it. Powered by a fuel-miserly PowerTech 6068SFM50 engine supplied by Cascade Engine Center in Seattle, Washington, the *Grey Wolf* consumes 21 liters (5.5 gallons) per hour, which gives a smooth water range of over 9,266 kilometers (5,000 nautical miles) running 9.7 knots. "At that range, you could cross the Atlantic twice before running out of fuel," affirms Dashew.

Even with a single John Deere engine, *Grey Wolf* moves out with an 11-knot top speed at full load, which is "not bad from a 236-horsepower (176-kW) engine," writes Dashew on Setsail.com. More than anything, though, he insists on a reliable engine with a flat torque curve. "When you're operating in the open ocean, the conditions are usually benign. But there's a small percentage of time when you're fighting weather, and this engine has a wonderful torque curve to push through high winds and seas."

Peter Watson took the *Grey Wolf* on a maiden 23,350-kilometer (12,600-nautical-mile) voyage from Auckland, New Zealand, to Guernsey.



Peter Watson chose John Deere Plus 50 II oil for his long-distance voyage.

More of a good thing.

Many owners of these exceptional yachts are repeat customers, and Watson is no exception. After months of successful trans-ocean trekking aboard the *Grey Wolf*, Watson is laying sights on the newest member of Dashew's squadron — the FPB 78, known as the Dream Machine. Watson says a larger vessel with twin engines will offer safe, comfortable, economic long-range cruising to places like the Arctic.

When Watson takes possession of hull No. 2 in April 2016, it will be the first FPB to sport Tier 3 marine engines. Dashew designed the 24-meter (78-foot) vessel with twin PowerTech 6068AFM85 engines rated at 246 kW (330 hp). The engines are expected to consume 30 liters (8 gallons) per hour and run at an 11-knot cruise at a very smooth and quiet 1600 rpm. And while Dashew doesn't want to divulge its projected top-end speed yet, he expects "a few eyebrows to be raised" during sea trials.




Powered by a PowerTech 6.8L engine, the *Grey Wolf* averaged 19.6 liters (5.2 gallons) per hour at an average speed of 9.4 knots.

"It's a bigger, faster, more powerful boat," says Dashew. "It will have a longer range at higher speeds."

While his FPB 78 is being built, Watson says he will continue travel aboard *Grey Wolf*. This summer he will go to Norway and may extend his travels to the Arctic, since FPBs are ice-class vessels built to travel the extremes. He also plans to travel to the Antarctic, Greenland, Northwest Passage, Strait of Magellan, and British Columbia.

"I bought this boat because I like to go places where other boats can't go," says Watson. "That's exactly what I intend to do."

 Engine distributor: Cascade Engine Center in Seattle, Washington, www.cascadeengine.com

