

The man who is arguably the most beloved race car driver in history retires this fall after a career spanning more than 35 years—during which he became the first person ever to win both the Indianapolis 500 and the Daytona 500; both the Formula One and Indy Car Championships. Now, Mario Andretti, 54, climbs out of the cockpit of his Lola Ford-Cosworth—and into the cockpit of his new Apache 40.

The boat, *Heart Racer*, is a joint project between Andretti and longtime buddy Dr. Larry Stephenson, a prominent Detroit heart surgeon. “If it wasn’t for Doc, it would probably still have been on the list of things to do. He grabbed the bull by the horns,” Andretti says. Spurred on by Stephenson’s enthusiasm and the promise of more leisure time once he retired from the all-consuming

Indy Car racing circuit, Andretti agreed to ask Mark McManus to build a 40-foot Apache.

“My small niche is high-profile clients with impossible criteria. I’m the toy-maker who makes those impossible dreams happen,” says McManus, who custom-builds high performance boats in the 40-to-50-foot range at Apache Powerboats in Hollywood, Fla. (Apache Performance Boats, on the other hand, is a separate entity built and marketed by Century of Panama City, Fla.)

The criteria for the boat were surprising: Rather than a fire-breathing monster with a neck-snapping top end, the Apache 40 had to be a safe, comfortable and reliable family performance boat. Unlike Andretti’s race cars and the tunnel boat he drives at over 95 mph—solo—on his private 100-acre lake in

Pennsylvania, he wanted this boat to stay “inside the envelope.”

The 40 also had to be able to stand up to rough offshore conditions. To that end, McManus built the hull—which is based on the Apache 42 mold—out of lightweight-but-tough Kevlar and carbon fiber. “There’s no fiberglass on the boat,” he says. Lift is improved by the foot-long step in the hull, and 12-inch Quicksilver K-Planes trim tabs. The helm is set as far back in the cockpit as possible, moving the center of gravity aft for better performance.

Power guru Fred Kiekhaefer, president of Mercury Hi-Performance Group, happens to run his own McManus-built rocket in Stephenson’s home waters—the Detroit River and Lake St. Clair. He was enlisted to put together a fun but reliable propulsion package for the 40.



DASHING: The Apache 40's race-style control panel and wheel.