



Buck and Ann Fisheries photos

A new skipper and new launch head for the Aleutian pot cod fishery

By Paul Molyneaux

Bernie Burkholder is a fourth-generation fisherman in Alaska. His company, Buck and Ann Fisheries, is named for his parents, who fished for years out of Kodiak. Generation five, Burkholder's son Blake, is already in the game, and generation six — two grandchildren, ages 6 and 4 — represents the future.

Expanding his business from one boat, the 78-foot longliner Northern Endurance, Burkholder bought a 58' x 27' steel hull shell with an 11-foot draft from Delta Marine in Seattle, and towed it to Warrenton, Ore., in March 2020.

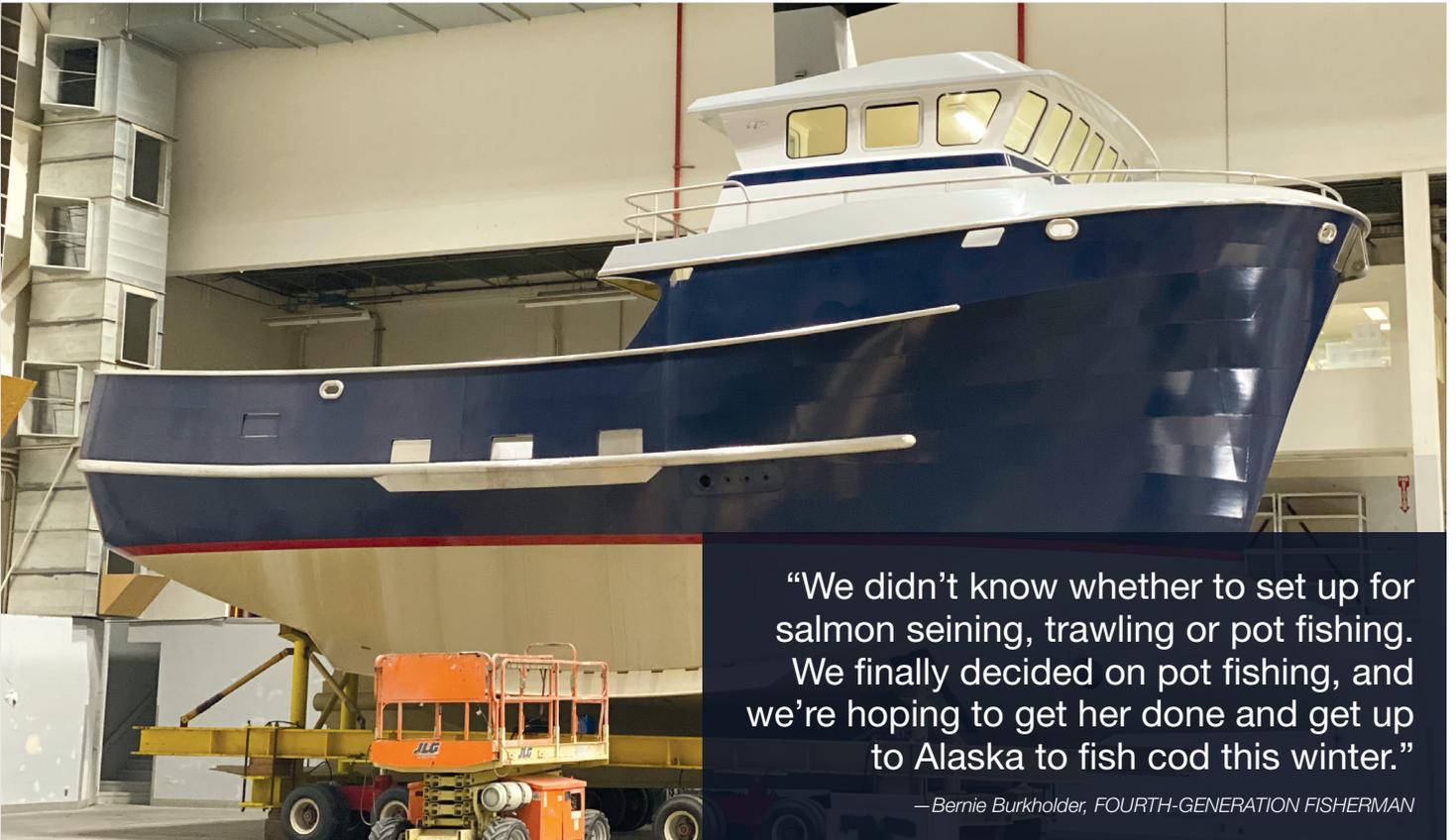
"The Aleutian Endurance," Burkholder announces her by name. "Delta built it and then had it in a warehouse for about five years. A few people looked at it. Hockema Whalen Meyers were the designers. They did the Northern Endurance, and we've had a lot of good experience

with them." Confident in the basic design, Burkholder bought the boat.

"We didn't know whether to set up for salmon seining, trawling or pot fishing," he says. "We finally decided on pot fishing, and we're hoping to get her done and get up to Alaska to fish cod this winter."

Having gotten the shafting done, and adding zincs and transducers at Delta, Burkholder and his team have continued their work with the boat afloat.

"We had a barge alongside it with workshops, and that greatly enhanced our efficiency," says Burkholder, pointing out that the boat might have been finished sooner if he had taken it to a yard. But he wanted more control over how things were done. "We hired a crew of not more than a dozen hand-picked craftsmen. I don't think we saved any money. Maybe a little, but we have a high-quality boat that is exactly what we want."



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—Bernie Burkholder, *FOURTH-GENERATION FISHERMAN*

Delta Marine built the 58-foot Hockema Whalen Myers design on spec and warehoused the vessel for five years until Bernie Burkholder bought her.

Burkholder notes that the Aleutian Endurance is not super wide. “But we’re going to have better fuel efficiency and maneuverability, and she’s going to do everything we want,” he says.

Curry Marine of Toledo, Ore., supplied Burkholder with a Cummins power package. That includes a 650-hp QSK19 main engine with a Twin Disc MG5170 5:1 gear that turns a 5-inch Duplex 2205 shaft with a 5.5-inch tail shaft. The 68" x 57" four-blade stainless propeller comes from Krueger and Son. And although there is no nozzle, there is a beavertail.

Two 210-kW QSB7 auxiliaries to run the hydraulics, hotel and other systems. According to Blake Burkholder, the engine dedicated to the hydraulics powers two Kawasaki Precision Machinery K3VL80 pumps that can deliver 40 gallons per minute at 2,000 psi.

“We will be fishing pot longline for

blackcod,” says Blake Burkholder. “There can be 30 to 50 pots on a line, and the groundline is over an inch in diameter.”

“With all of the engines being high-pressure common rail — sensitive to water in the fuel — we outfitted her with an Alfa Laval MIB303 centrifuge supplied by Separator Spares and Equipment,” adds Blake Burkholder, who was the point man on the project. “Phil Rohr,

owner of North Coast Marine, took over on the metal fabrication and installation of mechanical systems. All of the larger systems, such as the RSW, are electric and run on 480V three-phase power.”

Bernie Burkholder notes that many in the blackcod fisheries are converting from hooks to pot longlines in order to reduce the impacts of whale predation. Sperm whales have learned how to pick



Two of these Cummins 210-kW QSB7 auxiliaries will power systems on the Aleutian Endurance.



Hockema Whalen Myers designed the 58-footer with a beavertail to improve the thrust of the 68" x 57" four-blade propeller.



Delta also installed housings for the WASSP and Simrad transducers, which provide crucial information for effective fishing.



The deck equipment is ready for chopping bait and hauling pots. The fish holds of the Aleutian Endurance will hold up to 200,000 pounds in a 60-ton RSW system.



The wheelhouse of the Aleutian Endurance is well equipped with electronics, notably Olex and Nobeltec bottom building systems.

fish off longlines, and it is costing the industry.

"There's a lot of debate over the impact," says Burkholder. "The official number is 10 to 15 percent. But what I see of the money being spent on boats converting, I think it's closer to 50 or 75 percent."

With prices depressed and quotas that limit catch, Burkholder is looking at landing the highest quality product possible. The two fish holds in the Aleutian Endurance can hold roughly 200,000 pounds in a 60-ton refrigerated seawater system from IMS. Doug Cannon, owner of Marine Refrigeration Solutions, and his son, Robert Cannon, installed the RSW, as well as an IMS bait freezer.

Quality is king in the blackcod fishery, and Burkholder strives to deliver a first-run product.

"We J-cut the blackcod," he says. "That is, you cut the head off behind the collar and leave the belly."

The crew bleeds all Pacific cod, and they go into the RSW.

While Hockema Whalen Meyers designed the hull, Burkholder and his team did the layout for the deck equipment, wheelhouse and crew quarters.

"We have a crane from Fred Wahl," says Burkholder. "Yaquina did our bait chopper, pot launcher and anchor winch. We got our power block from Island Hydraulics, and the scissor table from Highmark Marine in Kodiak."

Moving forward, the Aleutian Endurance has crew accommodations for 5 in a common stateroom, and a stateroom for the captain in the wheelhouse.

"We reduced crew comfort a little and used the space to create a workshop and a larger walk-in pantry," says Burkholder, noting that in the remote areas where they will be fishing, it's important to be able to fix things. "You can't just go ashore and get a part. You have to have it with you."

Radar Marine Electronics supplied the electronics, including a Furuno FAR1513 radar with a 6-foot array, a Simrad AP70 autopilot, and a Furuno SC70 GPS compass.



Loading pots in Astoria, Ore., in late December, the crew of the Aleutian Endurance prepares to head north for a winter of pot cod fishing in Alaska.

“Fathom Marine Electric did the install,” says Blake Burkholder, who helped put the package together and install it, along with Hung Dang from Fathom Marine.

“The most noteworthy electronics are

the F3LX 80kHz WASSP, which does bottom mapping and hardness and is tied exclusively into the Nobeltec Professional plotter,” says Blake Burkholder. “The other transducer is the Simrad 38kHz split beam, which has a 7-degree beam.

Traditionally, we have only run Simrad and Olex on our other boats. But the WASSP is promising in that it will build bottom much faster with 120 beams, and it will give us higher resolution data. The Simrad, on the other hand, works well for steep edges and fishing at depth. It also will work best for finding and sizing cod.” He notes that the Simrad transducer also does bottom mapping and is tied in exclusively to the Olex for depth and hardness data.

“We are also running 11 Axis Communications IP cameras with 32 TB of recording capacity. The communication systems are made up of three Icom VHF radios, an Msat for dispatch, Harold Whittlesy, and a KVH V7 HTS for internet and landline communication.”

Brandon Johnson, the vessel’s 29-year-old skipper, will be taking the Aleutian Endurance north to fish in the waters around Adak as the 2021 cod season

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Captain Brandon Johnson takes the Aleutian Endurance on sea trials in Oregon. On the way north to Alaska he calls her a “hot rod.”

begins. New Year’s Eve found him and his crew in the Gulf of Alaska bound for Kodiak.

“She’s running great,” says Johnson, who has worked for the Burkholders for eight years. “She’s faster than the

Northern Endurance on a course for Kodiak. We’re running at 9 knots all the way. We’re running dry, we have 35 longline anchors in the forward hold for ballast.”

Johnson was expecting to make a pit

stop in Kodiak to top up his 8,954-gallon fuel tanks, pick up groceries, and load the cod table, then head to Dutch Harbor to load more pots and about 9,000 pounds of frozen saury and herring for bait. From there he will run to the grounds around Adak, in the far western Aleutians.

“We’ll deliver to a tender and get food and fuel from them until March,” says Johnson. “We try to haul around 300 traps a day,” he says. When fishing’s hot, we get around 500 pounds a trap. When it’s off, we get about 100.” But fishing in long boreal nights pays off for Johnson, who earns about half his annual income in the pot cod fishery.

NF wishes him and his crew the best as he takes the helm of the Burkholders’ new vessel for her inaugural season. ●

Paul Molyneaux is the Boats & Gear editor for National Fisherman and author of “The Doryman’s Reflection.”



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