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5 TIPS FOR A DRIER RIDE

BOATING®

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100 MPH PONTOON

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MONTEREY 385SE

C

CERTIFIED BOAT TESTS

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**BOATING
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**P.60 SCOUT
380 LXF**

An offshore vessel packed to the hilt with amenities and innovations.

**P.64 MONTEREY
385SE**

An outboard-powered dual console with a spacious layout that's redefining the day-boat concept.

**P.68 JEANNEAU
LEADER 9.0**

A sport coupe with a stylish and contemporary design and an excellent ride.

**P.72 NAUTIQUE
SUPER AIR GS22**

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FLYING HIGH

The flying-bridge boat is alive and well, thanks to devotees who appreciate its advantages.
BY RANDY VANCE

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SPEED METAL

A 100 mph pontoon boat? It's more than possible. More common are production 'toons that can hang with traditional fiberglass boats in speed and handling.
BY JOHN TIGER

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MAKING WAVES

P.15



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I LEARNED ABOUT BOATING FROM THIS ... P.26

+ Sometimes you learn the hard way about watching weather



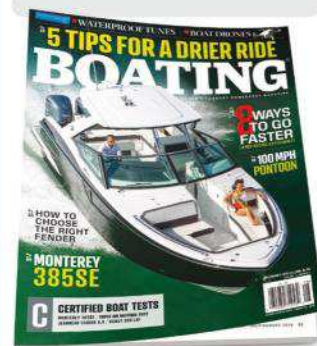
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+ Raymarine's UAV Integration
+ Ken talks about stealth mode

COLUMNS

P.12 EDITORIAL
All together now

P.98 OFF MY DOCK
A great idea from a guy named Goofy



ON THE COVER

The Monterey 385SE is all about wide-open spaces, both in the interior layout and the boat's ability to take you offshore, away from the crowd. Photo by Forest Johnson

PHOTOS: (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT) COURTESY MANITOU PONTOON BOATS; COURTESY RAYMARINE; COURTESY MERCURY MARINE; COURTESY AOMAIS; ILLUSTRATION: TIM BARKER



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BOATING

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AND VIDEOS



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SUNDRY BOATS A PLENTY

So many boats, so little time. (Life is short.)



SOFT TOUCH

You'd be hard-pressed to find a more ubiquitous marine accessory than the fender. Check out some buying tips on page 46.

In the beginning, boating and boats were much more homogenous than they are today. Boats came in small sizes and had outboards, and they came in larger sizes and had inboards. A yacht possessed twin engines, likely of the diesel persuasion. Kayaks were known but uncommon. Later on, the sterndrive came along and vied with the outboard for the affections of owners of smaller boats.

Boats tended to all look the same in the past. At the least, they looked related. The teak step pad on the gunwale of the runabout mirrored the teak cockpit sole of the cruiser. The vent hole cut into the ski boat's glove compartment door was the same anchor-shape cutout one would find in the hanging locker door in the master stateroom of the sport-fish boat. Whether one skippered a 40-foot "gold plater" or a small vessel considered part of the "mosquito fleet" (these "buzzed" around), rough edges of fiberglass were often as not finished with a strip of riveted aluminum. Two-tone color schemes, streamlining, and other automotive affectations — including tail fins — were ubiquitous.

Boaters too were almost all cut from the same cloth, tending to be versed in various watery activities. The couple with the sedan didn't ski anymore but started out boating at the end of a towrope. The avid tuna angler with the convertible learned to tie knots and sharpen hooks while chasing flounder from a skiff. The trawler owner raced outboards as a kid. Engines being what they then were, all were familiar with the smell of ether. Boaters boated differently, but because they all tended to come from the same place, and because other boats had more similarities than differences, they understood each other. They respected each other.

Today, it's different. A 40-footer is as likely to sport outboards as diesel power — and the term "twin screw" no longer carries as much panache. Boats sport refined details, and even the smallest models are so much more capable, versatile and easier to maintain than their predecessors. Engines are reliable and require no experience to start or to keep running. Many boaters jump directly to the "big boat" instead of stepping up from a runabout to an overnighter, and then to a cruiser. Advanced design allows boats to serve with less compromise than in the past.

The world has changed. For many, the time to come up as a boater versed in a variety of watery activities just isn't there, even if the desire is. So, we have better boats but a worse understanding of each other. And there are more of us. That makes it imperative that we go out of our way to try and understand our fellow boater. After all, we boaters don't just share a love for the water. We share the water.

Kevin Falvey, Editor-in-Chief
editor@boatingmag.com

Today, it's different.
A 40-footer is as likely to sport outboards as diesel power — and the term "twin screw" no longer carries as much panache.



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meets maneuverability,
it's a beautiful thing.



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ON BOARD WITH ...

CAPTAIN'S TEST

FOR COMPARISON'S SAKE

ONLINE THIS MONTH

NEWS / FIRST IMPRESSION

5 THINGS

ON BOARD WITH ...



Capt. Trey and Alyssa Hill

Sea Tow Alaska

It takes a certain kind of person to go boating in Alaska, and an even heartier soul to take care of Alaska's boaters. So when Trey and Alyssa Hill opened Alaska's first Sea Tow, we took notice. —*Pete McDonald*

What made you decide to open Alaska's first Sea Tow?

One day I was out boating with my wife. Our 26-foot Bayliner broke down 17 miles or so out of Homer Harbor in Bear Cove. There wasn't much we could do for help. We wound up calling a water taxi. Later, my mechanic said, "I can't believe there is not a Sea Tow in Homer or south-central Alaska." That was it.

Most people see Alaskan waters on *Deadliest Catch*. What's it like for recreational boaters?

Every summer, people come from all over the world to explore. Our waters are pristine, abundant in wildlife, and the views are amazing. We fish, camp, hike, hunt, surf, paddleboard, kayak, and come face-to-face with beautiful glaciers

... the list keeps going. It is truly the most beautiful place in the world.

How big of an area do you cover?

I currently have two boats servicing Kackemack Bay (Homer) and the Southern Cook Inlet. I am also setting up service providers in Seward, Whittier and Valdez. These are the harbors that give boaters access to the waters of south-central Alaska. Each of these ports are at least two hours or more from each other.

You're also a husband-wife team?

I'm the captain. She handles the marketing, advertising, trade shows, and many other things.

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MAKING WAVES /// CAPTAIN'S TEST



SPEED AND PERFORMANCE

In keeping with this month's speed theme, our Q&A deals with all things in performance boating, be it outboard, sterndrive or inboard. Let's get moving and test your knowledge of speed. —*John Tiger*

(Answers on page 18)

1. What is the least expensive (and likely best enhancement) performance modification you can make to your boat?

- A. A new, better propeller
- B. Engine modifications
- C. A jack plate
- D. Blueprinting the hull

2. Can today's four-stroke and direct-injection two-stroke outboards be modified for more horsepower and performance?

A. Not legally; EPA regulations prohibit changing anything on these engines because it will affect emissions.

B. Yes, as long as you clear it with your state's environmental board.

C. No. The engine's electronic control unit (ECU) prohibits this.

D. None of the above

3. Will a nose cone addition to the gear case help gain speed?

A. Yes, it's a wise investment for those looking to go faster.

B. Not always; in many

cases, the added drag of the cone can actually cause a loss of speed.

C. Only in twin-engine applications.

D. None of the above

4. Outboarders: Solid engine mounts can help improve rough-water handling. Do they cause any issues with engine vibration and premature wear?

A. No, they improve handling with no detrimental effects.

B. Vibration does increase slightly, noticed mostly at idle speeds with the engine trimmed all the way in to the trim stops.

C. Offshore racers have long known to check the steering yoke, exhaust housing and swivel bracket for cracking and breaking.

D. None of the above

E. B and C

5. Do trim tabs add speed to an already fast boat?

A. No, they add drag and actually slow the boat down.

B. Yes, they allow the boat to be trimmed higher so it rides on the tabs, reducing wetted surface.

C. Yes, in that they can give the driver better control at speed and in rough water, so the net result is oftentimes a speed increase due to the improved handling.

D. None of the above

E. B and C

6. Your boat is already running at or near its design speed with your current setup. Will changing to a cleaver-style propeller increase your boat's speed?

A. Maybe. Testing is the only way to find out for sure.

B. If the boat needs stern lift (is riding bow-high at speed), a cleaver will help increase speed.

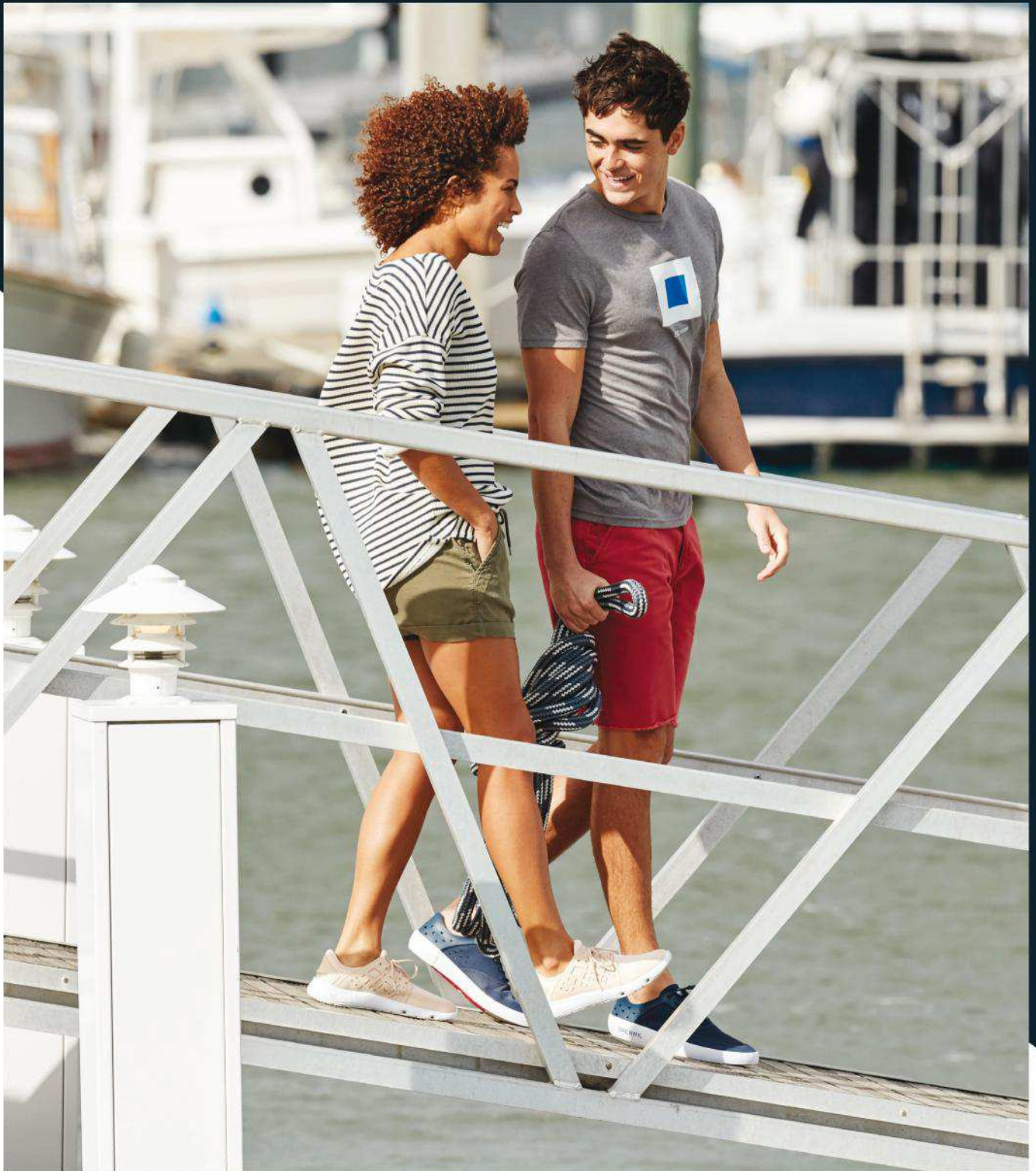
C. Probably not. A cleaver is designed to lift the stern of the boat at speed, so it will cause the bow to plow with more wetted surface.

D. None of the above

E. All of the above

103.36

Best miles per gallon achieved in a powerboat, a Guinness World Record set by our own David Seidman in 2004. He set the record by propelling a specially designed boat with a 2 hp Honda outboard.



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Even if your boat has a kickin' stereo, bringing a portable Bluetooth speaker on board is great for beaching or rafting up. Here are three to choose from, ranging from most to least expensive. —Pete McDonald

SPORT II
The smallest, most portable one



AOMAIS SPORT II

THE BOOM: The smallest of the three, it can fit in the pocket of your cargo shorts. It's rated IPX7, making it submersible, and it comes with an inflatable pad to help it float.

THE BUST: It has decent sound, but it lacks the volume of the others and can pair with only one other Aomais speaker.

PRICE: \$30.99; aomais.com

EXTREME
The one with the biggest sound



JBL EXTREME

THE BOOM: The priciest unit is also the loudest, with the best sound quality of the three. The lithium-ion battery lasts for up to 15 hours. It can be connected with other JBL speakers to amplify the sound.

THE BUST: Splash-proof but not submersible. At 4.7 pounds, it's the heaviest of the three.

PRICE: \$299.95; jbl.com

BOOM 2
The one with 360-degree sound



ULTIMATE EARS BOOM 2

THE BOOM: This middle-priced portable unit provides quality 360-degree sound and can be paired with up to eight devices at the same time and with up to 50 total UE speakers. It is submersible to IPX7 standards.

THE BUST: Any IPX7 submersible speaker is going to lose a bit in sound quality.

PRICE: \$179.99; ultimateears.com

CAPTAIN'S TEST

(Answers from page 16)

1. D. Hull blueprinting, while time-consuming and not fun, typically is the best bang-for-the-buck performance improvement available for most recreational pleasure hulls.

2. A. Technically, the EPA prohibits any and all engine modifications for outboards built after 1996. Realistically, however, there are no "emissions testing stations" set up in any state to measure outboard engine emissions or power output. So, it can be done, but if you're ever caught ...

3. B. A nose cone will generally only add speed in certain cases. For boats traveling at speeds below 75 mph, it's debatable. Often the added drag of the cone itself will reduce speed.

4. E. There is a noticeable vibration increase at lower speeds, and certainly the solid mounting (as opposed to factory rubber isolation mounts) can and does cause premature wear and cracking.

5. E. The boat can actually ride on the tabs and the last few inches of the bottom, increasing speed, along with better handling and rough-water response. The net result is often more speed, more consistently.

6. D. All of the above, depending on the application and current performance, can be true statements. The best advice? Try it — testing is always the clear indicator.

CAPTAIN'S TESTS ONLINE

Test your knowledge of boating with more Captain's Tests at boatingmag.com/captains-test.

July/August is our annual Speed on the Water issue, so now is the time to catch up on all our performance-boat coverage.



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Scan this tag or visit boatingmag.com/boats/high-performance.



40 NEW WAYS

TO UPGRADE YOUR BACKYARD DECOR



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THE BIG FIN

Have you ever wanted to design a fishing lure? As a child, I often carved small plugs, fished with homemade Creepy Crawlers, and even fashioned artificials out of bubble-gum shapes and allowed them to harden around a hook.

Still, I ached to one day have a lure sold as part of a professional lineup. Fifty some years later, I finally got the chance when Panther Martin President Cecil Hoge told me, "Let's see what you've got."

My first idea was a

new take on spinner-baits, but Hoge wasn't overly impressed. My second pitch, however, was a hit. I suggested elongating the thin body of an old Panther Martin soft-plastic minnow called the Vivif to look more like a sand eel than a bunker. Next, I added a large dorsal fin, hoping the lure would still retain some appeal around full-bodied baitfish. The fin was positioned far enough back to cover the barb of the hook, making the lure weedless. Highlighting the fin to act as a strike target was the final touch. It proved to be a really



good idea because it helped predator species smack the lure at dead center. With this arrangement, most fish get hooked in the top or corner of the mouth. Since we use a strong, single hook, releasing fish is easy.

We tested the lure from spring through late fall last year, and it

worked well for striped bass, false albacore, snook, redfish and seatrout. Released this spring in 1- and 2-ounce sizes, in both paddle-tail and eel-tail versions, the new lures are called Panther Martin Big Fin 3 in 1 Weedless Swimbaits.

Each lure pack comes with one body/jig head

outfitted for fishing, plus two replacement tails with built-in hook channels for easy rigging, and costs between \$8.99 and \$10.99 at panthermartin.com. While there, check out another new lure designed by "Outdoor Tom" Schlichter — the Fluke Train.

—Tom Schlichter

PHOTOS: COURTESY PANTHER MARTIN



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FI

FIRST IMPRESSION

By Kevin Falvey

JEANNEAU NC 1095

Debuting in North America just around the time you read this, the new Jeanneau NC 1095 capitalizes on the advantages of outboard engines. This midsize cruiser promises the comfortable and convenient combination of performance, efficiency, quiet, and ease of use and maintenance. The NC 1095 will be the flagship of Jeanneau's NC line, with a hull specifically designed to excel while utilizing up to twin 300 hp outboard propulsion.

Beyond outboards, key features include an innovative layout that gives the owners a choice of having either two or three staterooms. Imagine privacy



for an extended family or three couples. The enclosed head includes a separate shower, a freshwater toilet, and an opening port along with the stylish fixtures, fittings and cabinetry.

The galley is "up" in the deckhouse abaft the helm, and equipped with a ceramic cooktop, microwave and abundant stowage. The refrigerator

keeps food fresh, and the dinette seating serves your crew at mealtime or for a merry game of cards. The cockpit is spacious, provides ample seating, and offers safe and generous access to the water.

• LOA: 34'5" • BEAM: 10'11" • DRAFT: 2'2" • DISPLACEMENT (approx., no engines): 10,225 lb. • FUEL CAPACITY: 2 x 106 gal.

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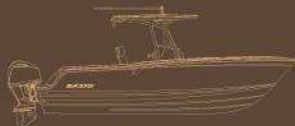
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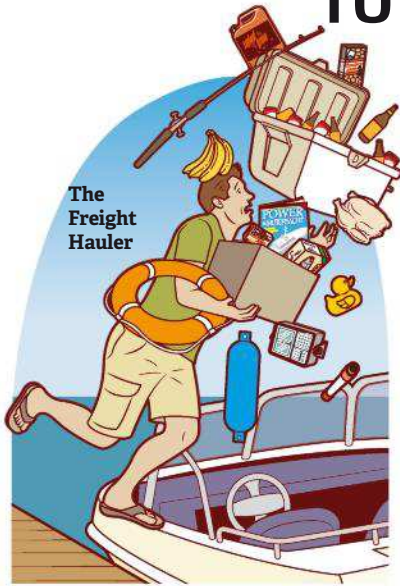


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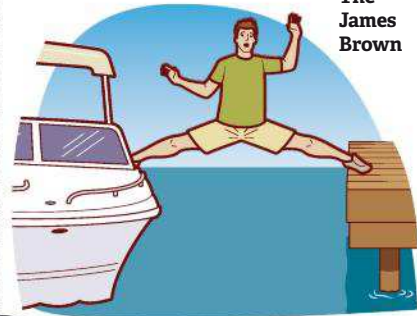
FIVE DOCKSIDE GUYS YOU DON'T WANT TO BE



The Freight Hauler



The Toe Stubber

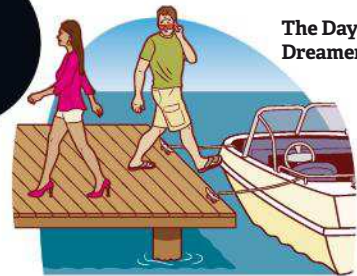


The James Brown

5
THINGS



The Long Jumper



The Day Dreamer

MORE THAN 5
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ILLUSTRATIONS: COLIN HAYES



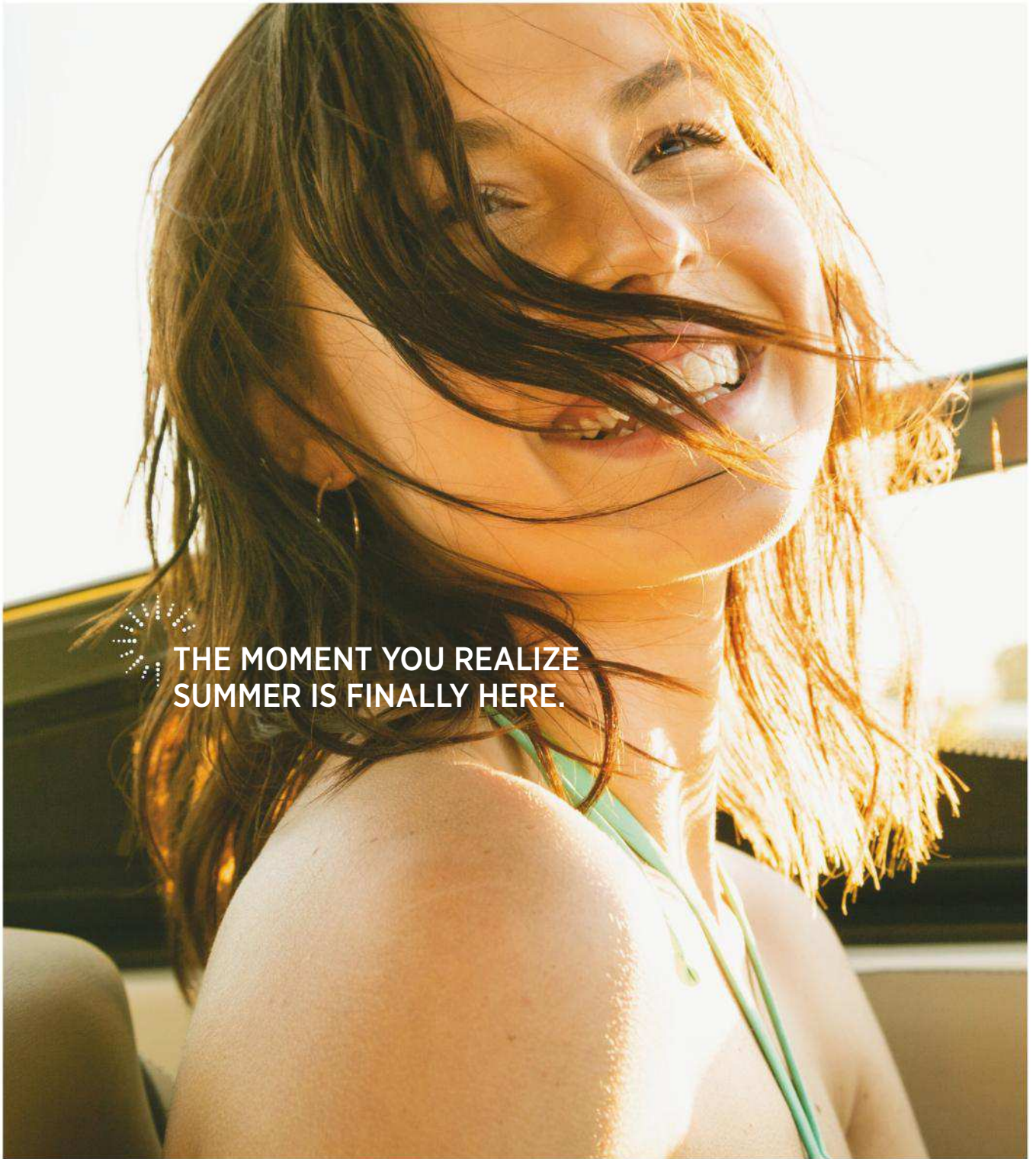
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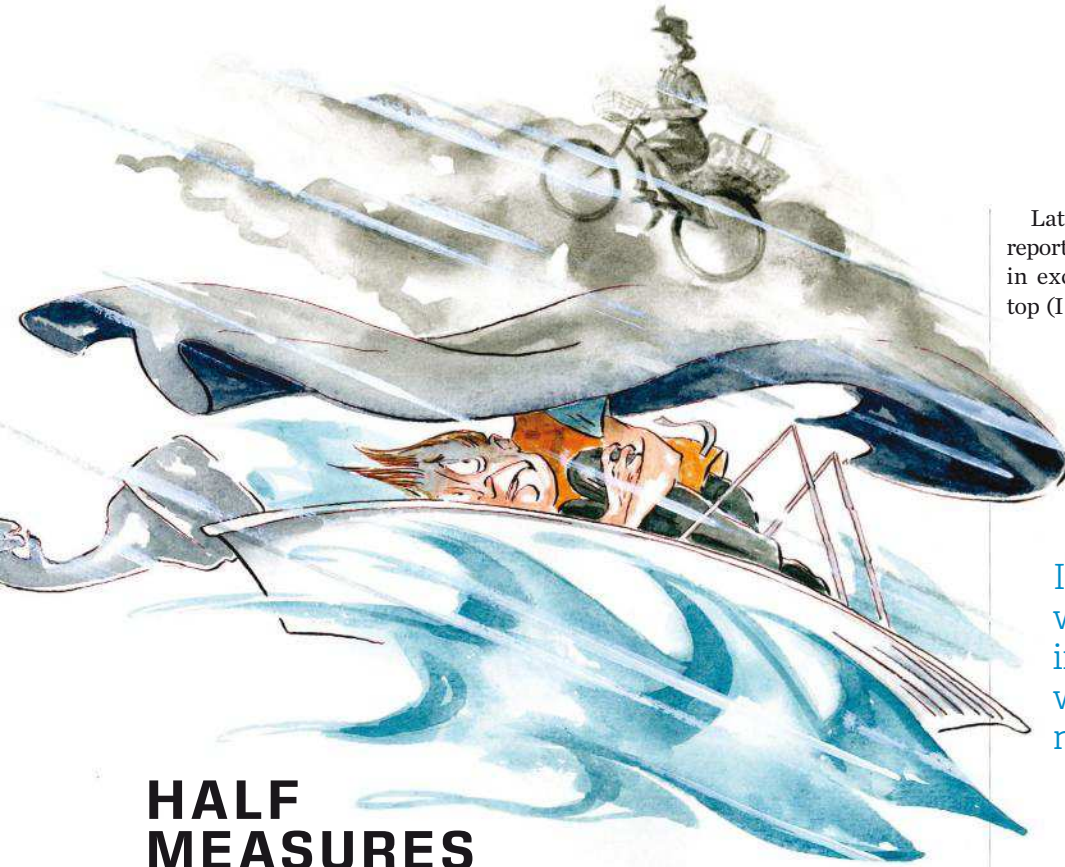
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HALF MEASURES

Instituting some safety practices but neglecting others created a wild night for this boater.

The Saint Lawrence River will always be a challenge for any size boat. Strong currents are the rule. Big ships ply these waters.

One night in 1995, I launched my 1972 Boston Whaler in Chippewa Bay, New York. The primitive channel had no markers or lights, just winding shoals and rocks. A safe return on a calm night might only be possible with radar, night vision and GPS. All I had were a road map and a compass. I secured the kill-switch safety lanyard, and the new 75 hp motor and depth finder came to life. A 6 hp “get home” motor was in place (it helped catch more fish too), and I had a spotlight. I was on a timetable, just off work.

The VHF radio reported a chance of storms, and at 11 p.m. it was 85 degrees F with 90 percent humidity and calm. That was abnormal for this latitude and a big tip-off to stay home. I decided to anchor until morning.

At 3 a.m., without warning, my protected anchorage became a cauldron of hell. The flare gun was loaded; the air horn was in reach. I stayed low and kept my cool. This was the first time I ever wore a life jacket, a Type I fitted with a strobe, reflective patches, whistle, and a length of line I could use to tie myself to an overturned boat.

I heard the bilge pump kick in.

Later, the weather service would report documented microburst winds in excess of 100 mph. My Bimini top (I should have doused it) looked like a prop from the tornado scene in *The Wizard of Oz*. All three fluke anchors deployed off the bow pulled out of the grassy bottom. Power onshore was out for a week in the area.

I should have heeded the weather forecast and my instinct about the odd weather conditions for my boating area.

I should have heeded the weather forecast and my instinct about the odd weather conditions for my boating area. I should have used an anchor better-suited to tall grass, or consulted a nautical chart, which would have told me the composition of the bottom at different locations, unlike my road map. Marine electronics are cheap, relative to the benefit they provide, and would have helped me greatly. I should not have left my Bimini top up; it got ruined and undoubtedly added windage that aided in the anchors pulling out. I should not have put my schedule in front of safety factors.

I now live in Utah, and I hope to apply my lessons as I consider using that same old Boston Whaler on Lake Powell.

Donald Bolton
Beryl, Utah

WANTED: YOUR STORIES Share your boating mistakes and mishaps so your fellow boaters might learn from your experience. Send us your first-person accounts, including what went wrong, what you'd do differently, your name and your city, to editor@boatingmag.com and use “ILAB” in the subject line. If your experience is selected, we'll send you a \$100 West Marine gift card.



ILLUSTRATION: TIM BOWER



***ON THE ROAD OR THE WATER,
YOU'RE HEADED NOWHERE FAST***

**WHILE
IMPAIRED.**



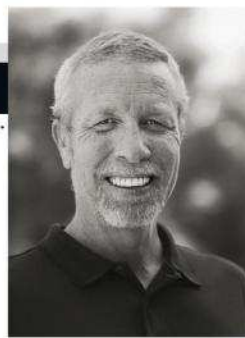
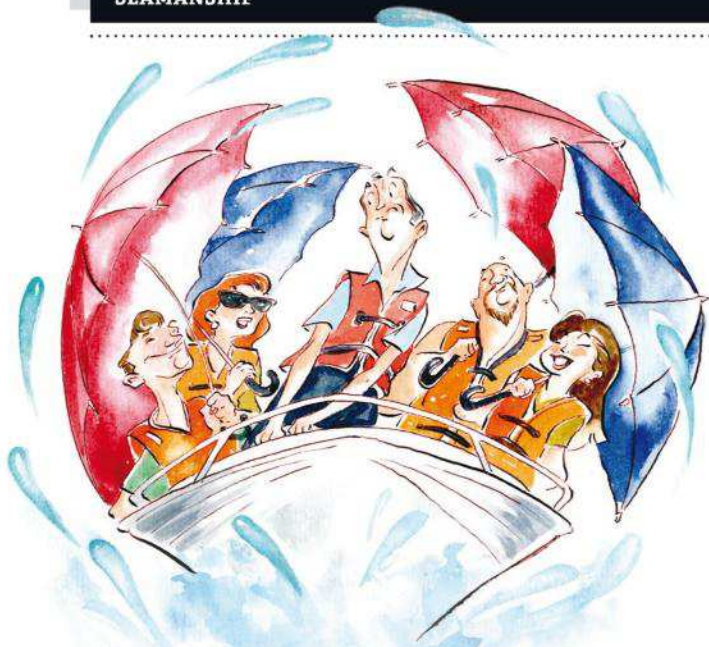
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Produced under a grant from the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund, administered by the U.S. Coast Guard.

JUNE 29– JULY 1, 2018

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ACHIEVING A DRY RIDE

Finding the groove of the moment.

As I swung the wheel and changed course, my buddy John switched positions. He'd been standing on the port side of the console, his right hand on the T-top's pipework and a Snapple in his left. Now, wordlessly, and with no prompting from me, he'd moved to the starboard-side, where he now held on with his left hand and sipped iced tea from his right. A true switch-hitter.

He'd barely completed the move before a shot of spray came aboard, dappling the port side of the console. John knew that as the boat swung beam-to the wind, the boat would ship spray every few waves, given the boisterous chop in which we were running.

"John" is Capt. John Raguso,

who has more sea miles under his boats than most, including yours truly. Keeping your crew safe is the first measure of good seamanship, but keeping your crew comfortable is important too. Even though I am a firm believer in the principle that states those who don't want to get wet

occasionally should choose a different sport than boating, running your boat so as to provide as dry a ride as possible is one mark of good seamanship.

First of all, be aware of where people choose to be aboard your boat. Keeping them dry might be as simple as asking them to move. Most people aboard for the day don't come with Capt. John's level of self-sufficiency. It's your job to move them as your heading changes, the wind or tide shifts, or sea conditions change.

Of course, often you have to take action to stay drier. Slowing down can help keep you dry in a head wind, provided the waves and current are such that you can run slow enough to maintain headway and control. On the other hand, going slow means "breaking" water farther forward on the hull, and can increase the chances of water that's being thrown up getting blown aboard. So, other times it pays to go faster or trim out the drives a bit to raise the bow higher. Doing either causes water to break farther aft along hull, decreasing the chances of water blowing aboard. However, too much trim or too much speed might result in porpoising. On many occasions, the choice is not between tuning the boat for a comfortable ride or an uncomfortable one, but rather balancing the levels of several causes of discomfort against the experience of the crew you

have aboard, the abilities of the boat, and the amount of time for which you need to endure the discomfort.

In short, it might prove most beneficial to run so you have achieved, if not a truly dry ride, at least a drier ride, and one that doesn't come at the expense of too much slapping or too much Sea World behavior from your boat.

Keeping the boat level across the beam ensures it will throw equal amounts of water to each side. The converse of

He'd barely completed the move before a shot of spray came aboard, dappling the port side of the console.

this is that a boat will throw more spray on the side that is most immersed. Use this to your advantage by trimming the boat — either with trim tabs, engine/drive trim or by shifting weight and crew — so it is higher on the windward side. Doing so helps keep more spray out, though it will require more concentration and effort to hold your heading. It's a great technique, especially when running on one of the wettest headings of all: wind and sea striking your boat on the transom corner.

All of this advice is to be taken in measure against the myriad variables you, as skipper, face on any given day on the water. Implement them incrementally until you find the groove of the moment.

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BOAT DOCTOR

BOATINGMAG.COM
JULY/AUGUST 2018

Q&A

By
Michael "Mick"
Hannock

EYE, EYE, CAP'N
Install Mercury Vessel-View Mobile to see what ails your engines.



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PHOTOS: COURTESY MERCURY MARINE

Q: BOGGING DOWN

Boat Doctor, I have a 2004 Chaparral 254 Sunesta with a 350 mag MPI engine with a Bravo Three drive. I purchased it in September 2017.

I was out on my boat fishing this week, and the boat ran well to Sanibel Island, but on the way back about halfway home, after I went through a manatee zone, I went to open it up and it felt like the engine was flooding out at full power. When I eased back on the throttle, it ran fine at about 25 to 30 mph. What do you think is the problem? Do you think the engine is not getting enough or too much fuel? Do you think it is the gas filter and the fuel separator? I am baffled.

I thank you in advance for your assistance and cooperation, as it is deeply appreciated.

Phil Bruno
Cape Coral, Florida

A:

Mr. Bruno, I reached out to our contacts at Mercury Marine, initially to find out if there were any recalls or special service memos for your engine. They were pleased to address your question. The Mercury contacts asked that you first check to make sure all of the spark-plug wires are properly seated. Additionally, they suggested you replace the fuel filter and check for fuel-line vacuum leaks. Beyond this, they indicated that they would really need a G3 full report to check for faults. They also asked that you consider installing VesselView Mobile. This consists of a plug-in transmitter that enables you to view fault history on your mobile device, plus much more. You can read *Boating's* online review of VesselView Mobile at boatingmag.com/new-mercury-vesselview-mobile-app.



MIDSUMMER INSPECTION If you dock or moor your boat, midsummer is a great time to don a mask and fins and inspect your boat's underwater surfaces and fixtures. Clear growth from intakes and scrub, or remove barnacles from trim tabs, engines and running gear. Inspect zincs for loss. Don't scrub the waterline too hard, lest you remove the anti-fouling paint. Use a sponge or soft brush.



BLURRED VISION

Q: Hello Boat Doctor. The plastic lenses of the gauges on my 2006 Sea Ray 270 Amberjack are suffering from cracking. All the gauges are showing various degrees of cracks, but the worst is the 3-inch-diameter SmartCraft tachometer, where pieces of the lens are

starting to break off. Is there any way to replace just the lenses without replacing the entire gauge? The gauges function fine. They are SmartCraft gauges, so a whole gauge replacement is rather expensive.

Thanks for any advice you can offer.

Brad Arrington
Mount Sinai, New York

[Mr. Arrington provided complete part numbers for each individual gauge afflicted. —Ed.]

A: Hi Mr. Arrington. If you do not want replacement gauges, consider taking the old, cracked and crazed lenses to a glass shop. A good glass tech may be able to cut flexible plastic to replace your lenses so that even the domed appearance is retained.

NAUTICAL NO-NO

STEERING HORRORS

One of the areas that often gets overlooked aboard outboard- and stern-drive-powered boats is the steering system and the hardware that holds it together. It's important to keep in mind that the steering system used on these types of boats is one of the few areas where what is known in engineering terms as a "single point of failure" can cause a total loss of steering. This can happen



rather suddenly too. The no-no here is a total loss of control of your boat.

So, as part of your maintenance routine, be sure to check all of the hardware and fasteners holding this vital system together and replace hardware that looks like the nylock hex nut shown here. —Ed Sherman

PHOTOS: (FROM LEFT) COURTESY BRAD ARRINGTON, ED SHERMAN

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FUELED AGAIN

Q: I have a 2000 Four Winns 180 Horizon powered by a 130 hp Johnson outboard. About three years ago, I noticed that when I would purchase fuel, the fuel bulb would be collapsed. It would do this shortly after getting underway and remain so. If I stopped to purchase fuel, it would not inflate but remain collapsed. This in no way affected performance. After docking for the day, it takes about an hour for the fuel bulb to recover. My mechanic has replaced the bulb; he has replaced the fuel line; he has replaced the anti-siphon part; he has replaced the vent ... or checked it anyway. It does have a fuel/water

separator installed. Finally, I asked him what he thought, and he is unsure. I told him that I would write to you. He thought that was great! Thank you.

John Burns
Cape May Courthouse,
New Jersey

A: A collapsed primer bulb is indicative of not enough venting and/or a fuel-line restriction. It could also be a bad bulb, but you replaced that. Check the screen on the bottom of the fuel-tank pick-up. It may be clogged. There is likely a deck plate in your cockpit sole that provides access to the top of the tank and that fitting. Also check these items:

1. Open the fuel-fill cap and run the boat. If the bulb doesn't collapse, you have narrowed it down to your vent. Be careful not to do this on a rough or windy day where spray will get into the tank.
2. You can also connect the engine to a portable fuel tank and run it. If the bulb collapses on the portable tank's fuel line, you know it's a problem with the engine (maybe a lift pump). If all is well on the portable, you know the problem is somewhere in your boat's fuel system.
3. Likely, the problem is related to ethanol, which degrades hoses. Fuel hoses are laminated, and the

ethanol can cause the liner to collapse under suction. This makes it hard to troubleshoot. Change the vent hose and then the supply hose, if changing the vent hose does not work.

HATCH SCRATCH

Q: Dear Doc, I own an old Caravelle Seahawk 230 cuddy that has a cabinet for the electronics at the helm. The door for this is black — or gray — plastic. It is badly scratched, and I cannot source anything from Caravelle. What can I do?

Peter McMahon
Westbury, New York

A: Please see the answer for Mr. Arrington on page 32.

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Find a good glass shop in your area and they will cut you a piece of acrylic to fit. Take in the old hatch, including the hardware.

And here is a tip for making clear plastic look like transparent black/gray plastic: spray-paint the back side of the plastic black, brown or gray.

ASK THE DOCTOR

Send questions to Mick with your name and address to: boatdr@boatimgmag.com or The Boat Doctor, *Boating*, 460 N. Orlando Ave., Suite 200, Winter Park, FL 32789.



WOW BIG BUBBA

This tube will have your crew coming and going with cool, waterborne delight. Pulled from its forward tow point, the Big Bubba's high back wraps around both sides, where my 4-year-old twin daughters find tight corners to nestle into alongside Mom. (The Big Bubba comes in two-

three- or four-rider models.) The first time I pushed the throttle forward, I half expected frightened faces screaming, "Stop!" Instead, only laughter from beaming smiles overcame the engine's noise.

Changing to the rear towing point, where the seat back becomes the front, the Big Bubba converts into a bucking chariot for squealing riders. With the throttle down and my outboard's horses unleashed, older kids could kneel or stand while holding the Big Bubba's handles at chest or waist height, and the wraparound sides provided

WE TEST STUFF

corners to lean into for security.

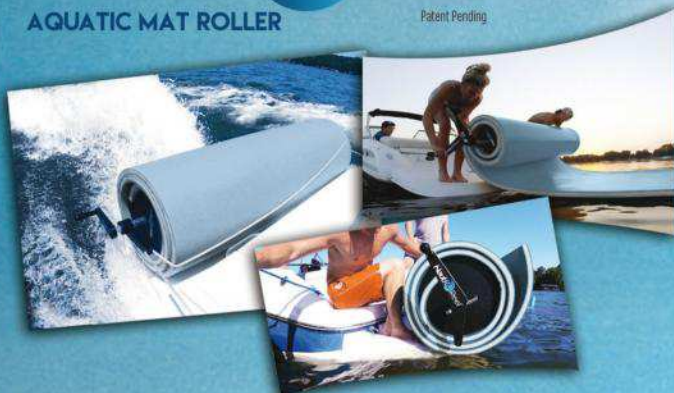
Reconnect to the front and crew can now lie facedown, heads toward the boat, with bent-knee legs resting on the backrest. That makes three ways to play with this tube — four if you count using it as a floating lounge while tied off to the anchored boat.

Teenagers may find the Big Bubba a bit tame, but my family finds their full measure of fun from forward motion, waves, and this hyper-colorful bag full of excitement. \$279.99 (two-person version); wowwatersports.com — *Capt. Vincent Daniello*

PHOTO: COURTESY WOW WORLD OF WATERSPORTS

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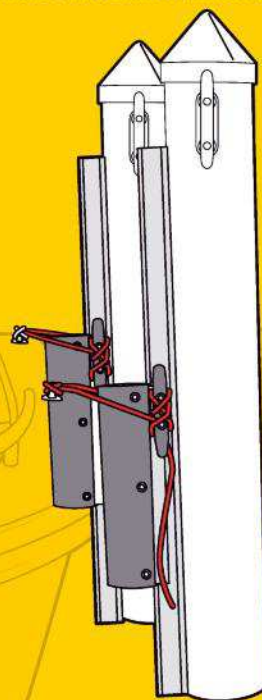
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FINISH TIME

Approx. 3 hours

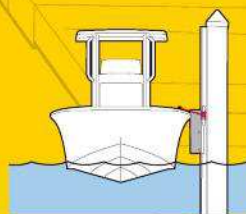
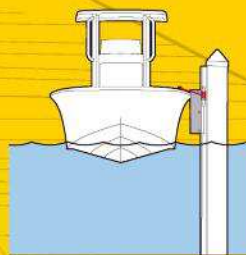
TOOLS AND SUPPLIES

- SlideMoor Plus (starting at \$959 per piling, slidemoor.com)
- Marker, such as a grease pencil or Sharpie
- Level
- Tape measure
- Drill motor and 1/4-inch bit
- Pneumatic impact wrench, air compressor and air line
- Impact socket-wrench set
- 1/2-by-6-inch stainless-steel lag bolts (10 per 8-foot track)
- 3/16-by-3-inch stainless-steel lag bolts (two per parking cleat)
- Low-stretch dock lines (two per piling)
- Slotted screwdriver
- Socket-wrench set



TIP

It helps to have at least two people and your boat handy for this project. Much of the work will need to take place from the boat.



INSTALLING A SLIDEMOOR PLUS SYSTEM ON YOUR DOCK

Keep your boat secure and free of damage with sliding dock fenders and cleats.

Side-tying your boat to pilings at a stationary dock poses a problem in waters subject to tides: How do you keep the boat securely moored, prevent dock rash and avoid sinking your vessel while also accommodating daily fluctuations in water levels?

Boaters often employ out-pilings and crossed-tied bow and stern lines, as well as spring lines, which allow the boat to float with the tide. It's a hassle and also complicates the docking and boarding processes.

Florida-based SlideMoor Docking Systems LLC offers another solution. It uses tracks on

pilings that allow sliding fenders and cleats to move up and down on the track as the boat rises and falls. Vessels less than 60 feet require only two SlideMoor Plus units (one at the stern cleat and one at the spring cleat). With a wide choice of fender sizes, tracks are available in lengths ranging from 8 to 20 feet for various tidal ranges. This makes docking and boarding much safer and easier.

SlideMoor recommends professional installation, but a competent DIYer can handle the job with the right tools and helping hands. —*Jim Hendricks*

MAINTENANCE

Each time the SlideMoor is untied from your boat, allow it to drop to the bottom stop bolt (while holding onto the line) to remove any marine growth from the track. If it does not slide all the way, repeat until it cleans the track enough to hit the bottom stop bolt. If this has not been done for a while, it might be necessary to clean the track with a scraper.

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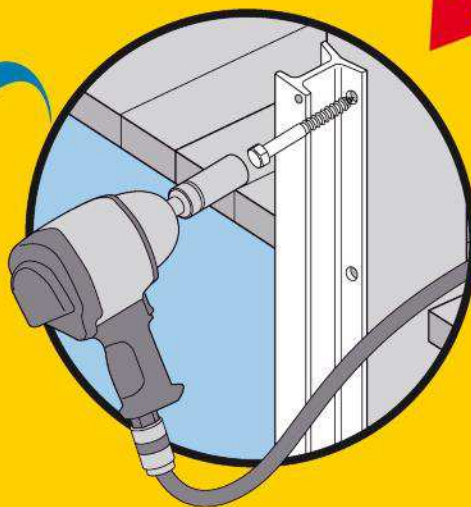
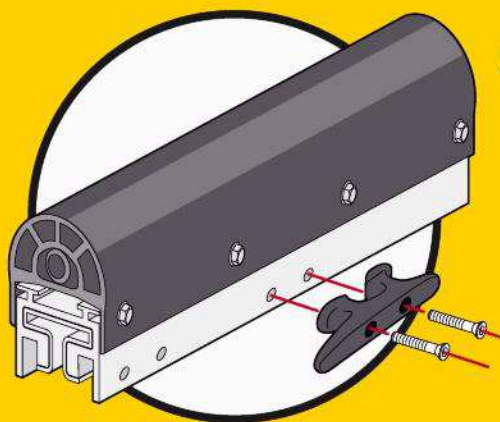
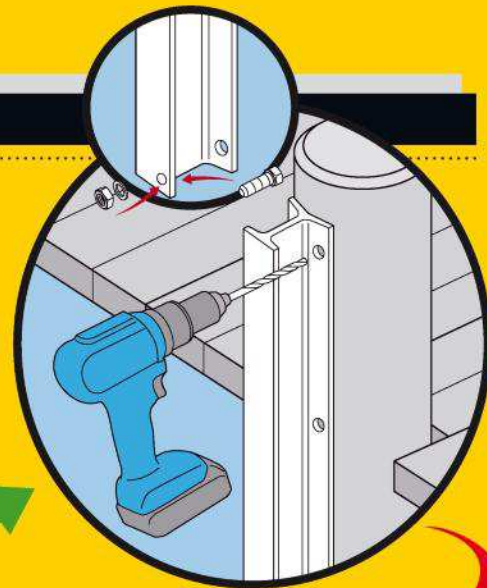
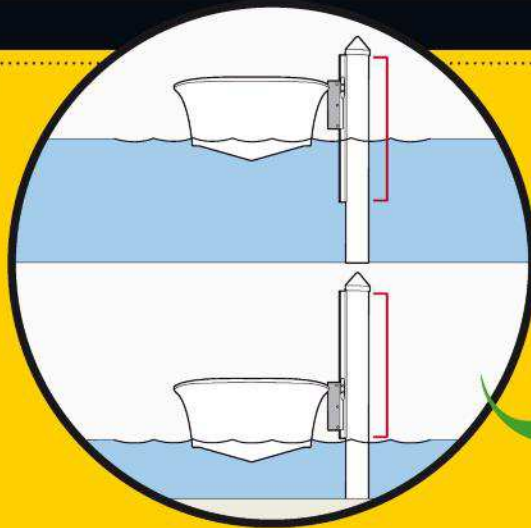


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+ PILING PROXY

If either the stern or spring cleat does not line up with the SlideMoor, you might need to install a cleat on your boat that lines up with the piling (visit boatingmag.com/how-to/installing-retractable-cleats). Another option is to use a SlideMoor Piling Proxy (\$1,858, slidemoor.com), which is a robust extruded aluminum support bracket designed to serve as a proxy piling that can be aligned with a cleat and relocated as necessary to accommodate various vessels.



MARK THE PILING.

The length of the tracks should accommodate the greatest possible tidal swing, plus 18 inches. Determine which two pilings to use, ensuring that each will line up directly with the stern and spring cleats. (If not, see "Piling Proxy.") Mark where your boat's rub rail touches each at the stern and spring cleats at dead low tide, then measure 18 inches below that point and mark it to indicate where the bottom of the track will install. The height of the rub rail in the stern might be lower than the height at the spring cleat, so the marks on each piling might vary.

DRILL THE MOUNTING HOLES.

Tie a safety rope through the top hole of the track in case the track falls into the water. Install the supplied $\frac{1}{2}$ -by-1-inch stop bolt, lock washer and nut in the lower track hole. Position the track within the proper operating range. Don't remove the corrosion-resistant backing tape. Mark the top hole, remove the track, and drill a $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch hole into the piling. Using the top hole only, bolt the track snugly in place. Ensure the track is plumb and centered; mark all the holes and remove the track. Drill $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch holes for each of the marks.

INSTALL THE TRACK.

Secure the track using $\frac{1}{2}$ -by-6-inch stainless-steel lag bolts (not supplied). A pneumatic impact wrench can ease the task of driving the lag bolts into the dense timber, especially for hard-to-reach bolts below the dock. Recheck and tighten the lag bolts after one week of use. Using stainless-steel hardware (not supplied), mount the "parking" cleat on the piling where it can be reached from the boat, just above the top of the track and to the side in order to hold the slide in position when your boat is away from the dock.

ASSEMBLE THE SLIDE.

Insert the supplied $\frac{5}{16}$ -inch stainless-steel bolts into the cleats and mount on both sides of the pre-assembled slide. Determine if the cleats need to be installed in the middle or top of the slide (based on the vertical distance of the rub rail to the top of the coaming). Secure with the supplied locknut. Attach a dock line to one of the cleats. Lift the slide assembly to the top of the track and slide it on. Tie the line to the parking cleat to hold the slide in place. Install the supplied $\frac{1}{2}$ -by-1-inch stop bolt in the top track hole and secure it with the lock washer and nut.

TIP

When tying off, position your boat with each cleat directly in line with the SlideMoor and pull the line tight before tying off. Return the line from the deck cleat to the remaining cleat on the other side of the SlideMoor. Once again, tie off tightly. Also, always use low-stretch dock lines to ensure optimum performance of the system.



FISH & CRUISE



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FISH & CRUISE While the 236CC was designed for use as a coastal fishing boat, it's really a multi-purpose boat that can be used for lots of activities — pulling kids on a tube, cruising to dinner, or just a leisurely ride along the waterways.

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236CC Deck Boat 23' 8" | 101" beam | 3648 lbs (w/ popular engine) | 68 gal fuel capacity | 12 ppl, 3250 lbs

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SETTING THE STANDARD FOR OFFSHORE PERFORMANCE



HOW TO TRIM THROUGH TURNS

Three tips for optimizing trim, performance and handling while cornering.

If emails to the editor and anecdotal information from boatbuilders and boat dealers is any indication, a substantial number of boaters express confusion about how to trim their boats' engines or drives. Certainly this applies to getting on plane, adjusting for load, trimming for ride comfort or to suit sea conditions, and more. Let's review the basic principles of how to trim an outboard or sterndrive boat through turns. —Kevin Falvey

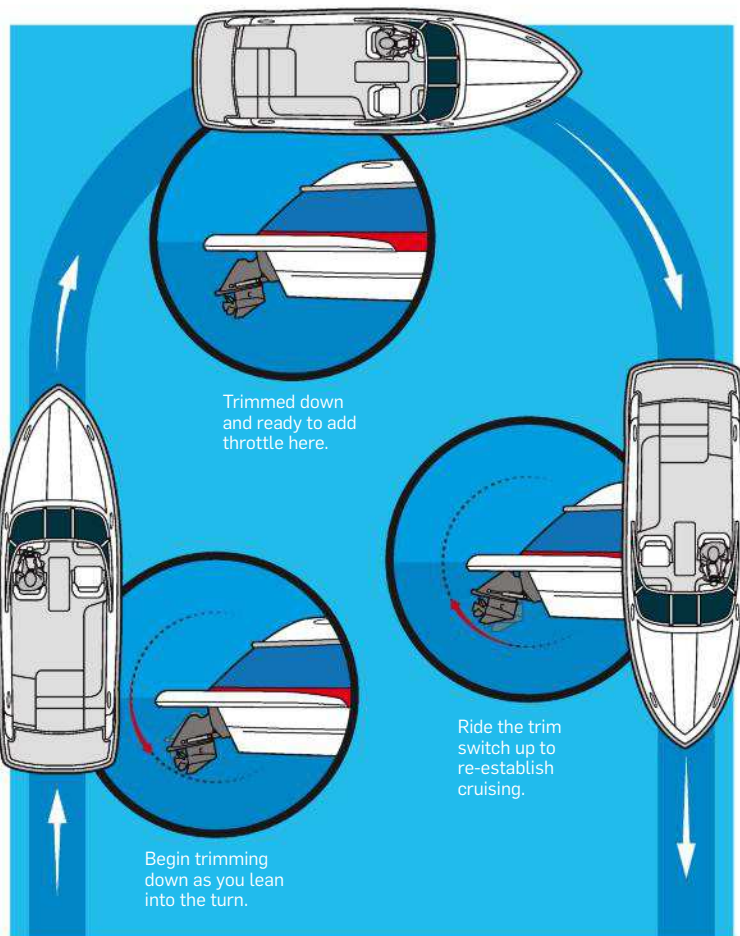
1. INTO THE TURN

While cruising along, you'll approach the turn with your drive trimmed out (up). This allows you to maintain some speed and ensures the boat begins tracking through the turn on its after sections. You do not want to approach a sharp turn with the trim all the way in (down) because that might cause the bow to dig in, and the boat theoretically could spin out or even swap ends. Instead, begin the turn at cruising trim, and then "ride"

the trim switch down as you approach the apex of the turn.

2. ROUND THE CURVE

As the boat reaches the apex of the turn, you feel it begin to slow down because you now have a larger portion of the hull length in the water. With the drive trimmed down, the stern is less likely to break out and you can accelerate safely, adding the rpm necessary to regain — or even maintain — speed. The timing of this depends upon the boat (boats



QUICK TIP

Remember: If the drive is trimmed up, the bow will come up. If the drive is trimmed down, the bow will come down.

with more buoyancy in the bow might require less trim) and sea conditions (you'll be going slower with more negative trim in choppier water).

3. OUT OF THE TURN

As you leave the apex of the turn

and accelerate onto your new course heading, you'll do the opposite of what you did in Step No. 1. Ride the trim switch, trimming the drives out (up) while accelerating until you find your cruising speed and trim. Of course, now

that you are headed in a different direction, you'll be hitting waves and running with respect to the wind differently than you were before the turn. Adjust as required; there is no "perfect" amount of trim for a given boat speed.



MERCURY MARINE ACTIVE TRIM

This system is tough to beat — we've tried and basically couldn't trim the test boats any better than Active Trim. It can be turned off for manual control and is compatible with 40 to 400 hp Mercury outboards, and all gas and diesel MerCruiser sterndrive engines with SmartCraft.



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- Keeps System Clean
- Superior Corrosion Protection
- Improves Engine Performance
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- Increases Fuel Efficiency by 10%
- Extreme Friction Protection
- Reduces Internal Engine Temperature
- Safe for the Environment

4-Stroke Marine Oil

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- Keeps System Clean
- Superior Corrosion Protection
- Improves Engine Performance
- Removes Engine Deposits
- Increases Fuel Efficiency by 10%
- Extreme Friction Protection
- Reduces Internal Engine Temperature
- Safe for the Environment

Rust Ninja

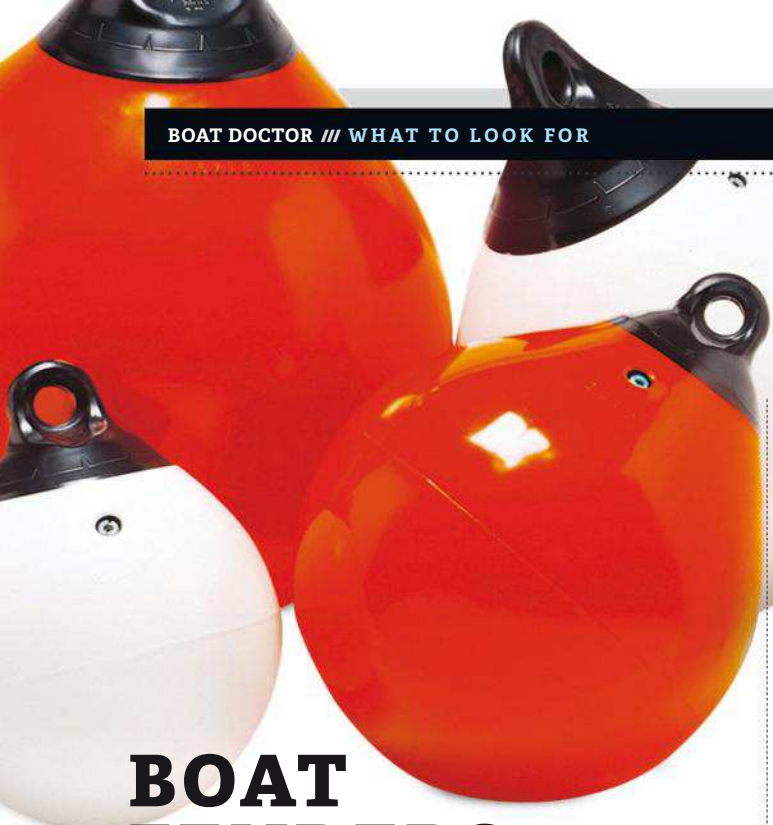
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SPECIAL PROMOTIONAL SECTION



BOAT FENDERS

While you shouldn't be that guy cruising down the lake or Intracoastal Waterway with your fenders flapping for all to see, you should invest in the fenders that are best suited to protect your boat. Here's what to look for in three different kinds of fenders and whether they are right for you. —Pete McDonald

BALL FENDERS Ball fenders are ideal for larger boats because, when properly inflated, they are harder to crush on impact. They are also better for boats with a lot of bow flare because they are wide enough to keep the lower hull sides from hitting the dock. The caveat? If left inflated, they take up more space, which makes them better for boats with large stowage capacities. What size should you get? For round fenders, West Marine recommends 2 inches of diameter for every 4 to 5 feet of boat length. So, a boat in the 30- to 35-foot range should use 21-inch-diameter ball fenders; a boat with a length overall of

50 feet or longer should use the larger 27-inch size.

MISSION SENTRY FENDERS These new-style fenders were designed specifically for tow-sports boats, but they can work for any small-boat application. These fenders are made from closed-cell foam, contoured to offer protection both above and below the rub rail. They feature a built-in adjustable strap that locks in place when set to the right length for hanging off boat cleats or the dock. The contoured shape lets them provide protection above and on the rub rail. Below the rail, they angle inward to provide fender protection down to

BALL STYLE

Great for large boats with lots of bow flare and stowage capacity

the waterline. Because they are slender and don't require additional lines, the Sentry fenders are easier to stow aboard smaller boats.

CYLINDER FENDERS

Traditional cylinder fenders are the most popular style available for boats of all shapes and sizes. What size should you get? West Marine recommends fenders with 1 inch of diameter per 4 to 5 feet of boat length. So, a 20- to 25-foot boat should use



SENTRY

A new fender that's great for tow-sports boats, no need for lines

QUICK TIPS

Cylinder fenders with a hole in the center will roll around a line inserted through them as the water level changes like a wheel on an axle, making them excellent for horizontal use in tidal water.

Make sure any deck hardware used to secure a fender is through-bolted into a backing plate to help distribute any pulling load.

at least 6-inch fenders; a 25- to 35-foot boat should use 8-inch fenders. Of course, the bigger the diameter, the more protection there will be between the hull and the dock, so get the biggest fenders you can stow.

Cylinder fenders can be hung two ways. Horizontal hanging is best when pulling up side-to-side at a dock or pier. Horizontal hangings work best for sections of the boat that will potentially rub up against exposed pilings.



CYLINDERS

The most used fender, good for both vertical and horizontal hanging



MANY COMPANIES, such as Taylor Made, make fender hangers for boats that lack midship cleats. These are especially useful for pontoon boats. Check out Taylor Made's Pontoon Rail Fender Adjusters. \$24.99; westmarine.com

PHOTOS: (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT) COURTESY TAYLOR MADE, COURTESY MISSION, COURTESY WEST MARINE, COURTESY TAYLOR MADE



Mia, nice meeting you last night. About our date...would you like to join me on my boat tomorrow?



✓ 12 sec ago

It has a Seakeeper, right?



✓ 4 sec ago



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EIGHT TIPS FOR GOING FASTER

How to improve your top speed.

Whether running a dedicated go-fast boat, a sport boat or a hard-charging center-console, many boaters would like to garner more performance from their craft but aren't sure where to start.

M

Maybe it won't plane quickly enough, the rough-water handling is unpredictable, or the propeller ventilates in hard turns. For many, top speed is the issue; who wouldn't want a few more miles per hour? Whatever your speed concern, it can probably be improved — though it may not be cheap or easy. Here are eight tips for improving speed and acceleration.

VIDEOS AND PHOTOS: DOCUMENT THE PROGRESS

What once was a pain (a friend with a camcorder) is now easy-peasy. Have your buddy use a phone to video your boat at speed so you can critique its performance. This is a great way to show setup experts and prop shops. Look to see

if all or most spray exits the boat at the transom (none or very little exiting the hull from the sides means more efficiency). If there's a rooster tail, it should be long and low — behind the boat 20 to 40 feet and no higher than the top of the outboard cowl — not high like a jet boat's nozzle spray. The boat's bow should be riding ("carrying") at an angle of approximately 3 to 5 degrees positive incline, maximum. If you see anything other than these visual clues, the boat-and-motor setup is not right. More performance is there for the taking, and pros can show you how.



PROPELLER SELECTION

Your propeller is the transmission that converts power into motion. Check that your prop's blades are in good condition — clean and sharp, with no dings or nicks. If not, it may be time for a tuneup at a prop shop.

What type of propeller do you have? Is it right for your performance application? A round-ear propeller is good for overall lift, delivers strong

performance under varying conditions, and excels at low-end and midrange acceleration performance. Cleaver-style propellers work well on light boats, or boats that have a lot of natural lift built in (e.g., tunnel hulls or catamarans). Cleavers typically do not accelerate well but provide optimum top speeds. Larger, thicker blades with more surface area are better for larger, heavier hulls with larger gear cases. Smaller blades with less diameter and surface area will not

provide enough thrust to carry larger hulls.

Discuss your boat's performance with experts at a prop shop and show them your props to determine what changes are needed and what results are realistic. Last, remember the old racer's adage: Never turn down the opportunity to try another propeller.

BLUEPRINTING THE BOAT BOTTOM

Tuning your boat's bottom is a time-consuming and back-breaking chore but can yield

SPIN IT
Changing props could help you gain an edge in performance.



PHOTOS: COURTESY MERCURY MARINE (PROPS), COURTESY FOUNTAIN POWERBOATS/ICONIC MARINE GROUP

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strong results. Gains of 3 to 5 mph would cost thousands in propeller and engine modifications but cost merely hundreds in time and materials. The goal is to achieve a straight, sharp and crisp bottom from the transom to at least 6 feet forward. The transom, chine and strake edges should be filled and sanded until they are sharp so water does not cling to the corners. A straightedge pressed against the hull will reveal humps and hollows to be filled or taken down.



ENGINE SETBACK/ JACK PLATE

Outboarders can benefit from the addition of

an engine setback/jack plate, either manually or electro-hydraulically adjustable. With remote electro-hydraulic adjustment, minute changes can be made on the fly to compensate for changing water and load conditions. A jack plate should be considered a must-have for most outboard performance buffs.

WEIGHT DISTRIBUTION

Most boaters carry too much stuff. Rid your craft of extra weight that robs speed. Years ago, we conducted tests on a fast bass boat. An old friend with the same boat as our tester approached me afterward and called our speed results baloney. After unloading well over 250 pounds of gear on the dock, he achieved speeds within 1 mph of ours. Lesson learned: Reduce weight, and for the gear you must carry, place it strategically to maximize bow lift and speed.

HIGH-PERFORMANCE STEERING SYSTEMS AND ENGINE CONTROLS

Another old racer's adage: You can't win the

race if you can't drive the boat. Boat control is key to a safe and fast ride. Be sure your steering system is up to the task and adjusted

regularly to remove all potential slack. Make sure your engine is mounted securely to the hull, with solid mounts if necessary. For the best driving control, strongly consider a foot-control throttle and remote-mounted power trim, jack plate and trim-tab controls (on the steering wheel, steering column or floor). Last, install and wear an engine emergency-cutoff switch.

GEAR-CASE MODIFICATIONS

If your boat's steering wheel tends to pull hard to one direction, that's engine torque. A torque tab, mounted to the gear-case skeg, will help ease that tension on the wheel and aid in driving. For those boats capable of speeds over 70 mph, other gear-case modifications — like extended nose cones with low-water intake pickups — will add speed and handling.

TRIM TABS

Boats that experience handling problems such as poor planing, listing, chine walking and difficult rough-water driving will benefit from the addition of dash-adjustable trim tabs. The tabs can be deployed downward for quicker planing and to smooth out an up-sea run, and can be adjusted upward to let the bow rise and reduce the wetted hull surface. —*John Tiger*



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TRADITIONAL SOLE

Siped soles squeegee away water but don't pick up grit.

DOONEY & BOURKE REGATTA

These were stiff out of the box, but the wetted shoe in our test proved more supple and comfortable than the untested one. That's a testament to the leather quality and the desired characteristic of boat shoes — standing up to water for years. From our experience with boat shoes, these will weather nicely hugging the foot. We agree with the manufacturer: Order a half-size over your normal shoe size.

Italian leather uppers are hand-sewn to a durable siped outsole. The foot bed is cork-lined beneath a fast-drying closed-cell foam insole. The eyelets are of Swiss stainless steel. Fresh from the box, the leather is stiff but finished in a way to mold to your feet as the shoes age. The rubber soles are sticky on smooth surfaces. They are available in black, dark brown, biscuit navy, paprika, white and midbrown.

DRAINAGE: These shoes didn't drain, but the oiled leather dried completely in less than an hour.

TRACTION DRY: 30 degrees

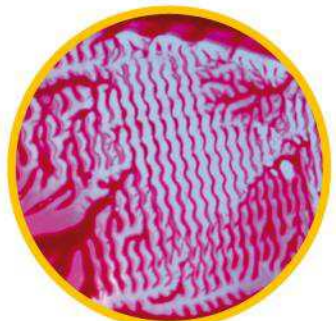
TRACTION WET: 30 degrees

DUNK AND DRY, 1 HOUR: 0%

DUNK AND DRY, 2 HOURS: 0%

SIZES: Half-sizes from 7 to 11 medium, plus size 12 medium

COST: \$135; dooney.com



BL

BOATINGLAB

By Randy Vance

DECK SHOES

Here are the right shoes to stay comfy and leave no tracks on deck.

They say your shoes tell the most about you on a first impression. Boat shoes tell even more. You could be a traditional guy in moccasins, a Friday office-casual guy in boat-shoe Oxfords, or a fishing fanatic in most of the performance shoes we tested.

There's a style that's right for you, but our testing revealed some interesting facts about their function.

Even razor-siped soles will occasionally pick up a small stone. Boat shoes should not pick up rocks or sand. They should not scuff or smudge the deck. They should dry quickly because they *will* get wet. And they should stick to a moving deck wet or dry, and usually dry. All sizes listed are men's.

TRACTION TEST

Most importantly, boat shoes should be able to grip hard, wet surfaces. We created a test ramp with textured plastic-covered particle board and, using a protractor, designed a gauge to reflect the angle of incline. Next, we put 10 pounds of lead shot in each shoe and raised the test ramp to see

when the shoe would begin skidding down the ramp. We conducted the test on dry and wet surfaces and noted the results.

DRIP AND DRY

Many boat shoes have drainage in them. It seems if you're taking water over the deck, the more drainage, the better. But shoes designed to drain the fastest have weep holes from the insole to the bottom of the outsole, and if you step in a shallow puddle of water, water can enter as well as drain. Whether you want those drains or not will depend on how often you're in the water with the shoes. The more water work you do, the more you'll like the drains. But we didn't like them when walking down a wet street.

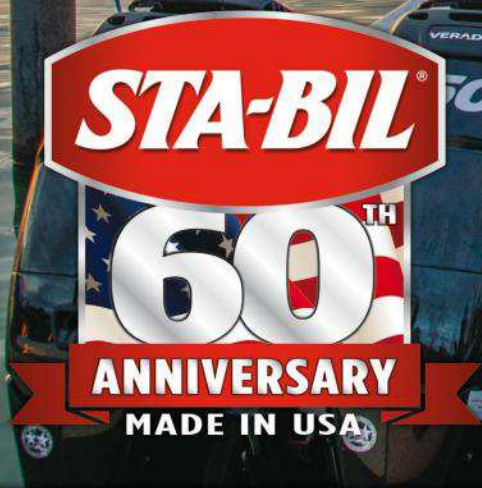
DRAINAGE TEST

We poured a cup of water into each shoe and let them drain for up to a minute. Many of our test subjects, even those with drain eyelets on the instep, didn't drain because they were occluded by the insole.

DRY TIME

After dumping standing water in the shoes, we let them dry for two hours before taking three moisture readings at the top of each hour. The results were surprising. Some shoes that did not drain dried more quickly than those that did drain well.

MAKE SURE YOUR BOAT IS READY WHEN YOU ARE.



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TRADITION MEETS INNOVATION™



TIMBERLAND
2-EYE BOAT SHOES

One of the first things we do with a boat shoe is walk in the water with it. Our demo revealed the wet shoe opened up a little more than the dry shoe. It cradled the foot in a foam pad perforated to let water drain to the bottom, but not out.

Nubuck and split leather are hand-stitched to join the upper and midsole leather, which is then bonded to the rubber sole. Inside, a super-soft three-quarter-length leather insole adds cushioning and breathability to the foam foot bed. Eyelets are antique brass. You can customize your shoe with leather color combinations for upper, trim and insole for \$120. Make them match your boat if you like.

DRAINAGE: These shoes didn't drain but dried almost completely in an hour because the oiled leather didn't absorb water.

TRACTION DRY: 40 degrees

TRACTION WET: 35 degrees

DUNK AND DRY, 1 HOUR: 2%

DUNK AND DRY, 2 HOURS: 0%

SIZES: Half-sizes from 6 to 10, wide through 15.

COST: \$95; timberland.com



HUK
BREWSTER

We took these out of the package and wore them to the Miami Boat Show, logging about 12,000 steps a day on my Garmin Quatix sports watch. We've washed them twice, and they faded a little but look better with jeans every time. The squashable heel adds sandal convenience on the boat and around the house, and the fabric seems to breathe, mitigating the effects of sweat.

They're made of a light but durable canvaslike material, and the upper is joined to the sole with adhesive. Simple in design, a muslin-covered foam insole is comfortable all day. They're available in five colors: denim blue, gray camo, khaki, brown camo (that looks more blue-green) and black.

DRAINAGE: It took 60 seconds for them to drain, but they were slow to dry.

TRACTION DRY: 33 degrees

TRACTION WET: 28 degrees

DUNK AND DRY, 1 HOUR: 40%

DUNK AND DRY, 2 HOURS: 34%

SIZES: 7 to 13

COST: \$54.99; hukgear.com



HUK
ATTACK

These have the feel of a cross-trainer shoe but the drainage system of a wading boot. They are good out of the box but will loosen up with wear and vie for the top shelf on your shoe rack. The laces are ribbed to stay tied, and they do. Extra support comes from the EVA sole with feel-good arch support and a molded exoskeleton for stability.

Three Kryptec camo colors from gray to blue to dark offer style options. The sole is dual-density EVA for shock absorption and protection from deck hazards. The GripX Traction sole engaged well in our traction test. They stick and won't scuff or pick up stones.

DRAINAGE: They drained in 53 seconds.

TRACTION DRY: 35 degrees

TRACTION WET: 32 degrees

DUNK AND DRY, 1 HOUR: 29%

DUNK AND DRY, 2 HOURS: 22%

SIZES: Half-sizes from 7 to 10.5, plus whole sizes 12 and 13

COST: \$84.99; hukgear.com



WORLD WIDE
SPORTSMAN
LAKEFRONT 2-EYE

These are track-shoe comfortable with a deeply padded interior. These are not waterproof and are best suited to casual-dress boating in dry conditions, but their soles are nonmarring, and the tread design won't pick up rocks. Bass Pro Shops calls them slip-ons, but it's easier to use the laces.

A memory-foam foot bed renders these ideal for boat shows, yachts, and the office on casual Friday. Ventilated sides let feet breathe, and oiled leather uppers are bonded to the flexible outsole. The eyelets are bronze-finished metal.

DRAINAGE: Not all boat shoes are advertised to be waterproof and these aren't. They didn't drain and dried slowly but were comfy out of the box.

TRACTION DRY: 37 degrees

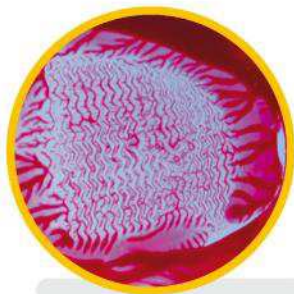
TRACTION WET: 35 degrees

DUNK AND DRY, 1 HOUR: 32%

DUNK AND DRY, 2 HOURS: 23%

SIZES: Half-sizes from 8 to 10, plus 11 to 13

COST: \$69.99; basspro.com



PHOTOS: (FROM TOP) JON WHITTLE (TIMBERLAND, HUK ATTACK, WORLD WIDE SPORTSMAN), COURTESY HUK GEAR (BREWSTER), RANDY VANCE (4, BOTTOM)



— A24 —

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**IRISH SETTER
LAKESIDE**

My last pair of Lakesides are 6 years old, still tough as nails, and look good enough for casual Fridays. They offer a stable stance for boats in motion and a protective sole that's tough but supple. They've been comfortable at trade shows, bass fishing all day, and dashing through the airport.

Oiled leather uppers are breathable thanks to styled fabric sidewalls and moisture wicking inside. Soles with siped pods and dual textures add to the grip. Dual-density EVA insoles and a nonmetallic shank give plenty of arch support plus flexibility. Durable stitching and a rugged casual look help ensure the timeless look stays timeless.

DRAINAGE: They drained slowly but dried more quickly than fabric shoes.

- TRACTION DRY:** 35 degrees
- TRACTION WET:** 30 degrees
- DUNK AND DRY, 1 HOUR:** 18%
- DUNK AND DRY, 2 HOURS:** 11%
- SIZES:** Half-sizes from 8 to 11, medium and wide to 14
- COST:** \$114.99; irishsetterboots.com



**XTRATUF
CHUMRUNNER**

These retro canvas deck shoes reminded me of the Red Ball Jets basketball shoes I wore as a kid. The Chumrunners have the same canvas construction but are more comfortable thanks to the soft fabric and foam liner. And unlike the Red Ball Jets, they offer comfortable arch support.

The chevron-style traction worked well and was the ideal depth to increase traction without picking up rocks or shells in our test — but beware. And unlike the finer treaded shoes, these sloughed off wet sand easily with a kick or a slap. The insoles are removable. They are available in brown and cobblestone beige. A synthetic leather heel cap adds style and durability.

DRAINAGE: Weep holes in the insoles did not help drain water from the shoe.

- TRACTION DRY:** 40 degrees
- TRACTION WET:** 35 degrees
- DUNK AND DRY, 1 HOUR:** 35%
- DUNK AND DRY 2 HOURS:** 34%
- SIZES:** Half-sizes from 7 to 11, plus 12, 13 and 14
- COST:** \$69.99; xtratuf.com



**XTRATUF
FINATIC II**

The shoes molded to the feet instantly with no chafe points or hard spots to wear against the bone. Xtratuf's chevron sole is sticky — even on a wet tile floor. Inside, a closed-cell foam foot bed is lined with pigskin, adding even more softness to the glove-like fit.

The soft leather upper is vented at the instep and outside with a mesh-and-foam fabric. The mesh and foam lines the entire upper to softly cradle the foot. The outsole is bonded to the upper, and the nonmarring rubber turns up around the shoe for added protection. They're available in tan or chocolate tan.

DRAINAGE: The shoes lacked drainage, and the soft leather was porous and slow to dry.

- TRACTION DRY:** 32 degrees
- TRACTION WET:** 31 degrees
- DUNK AND DRY, 1 HOUR:** 100%
- DUNK AND DRY, 2 HOURS:** 50%
- SIZES:** Half-sizes from 7 to 11, plus 12, 13 and 14
- COST:** \$84.99; xtratuff.com



**XTRATUF
SPINDRIFT KRYPTEK PONTUS**

These slip on as easily as dive boots but drain like a sieve — unlike dive boots. They are comfortable on the street for light walking but most ideal for the boat or wade-fishing. Fine sand can come through the drainage system, but most of it goes out the same way.

The laces are elastic for quick donning and doffing, and a friction buckle makes snug adjustments easy. The insole pulls out to make rinsing and drying the shoe fast. The sole is grippy but sort of lugged, so check for small stones before stepping aboard and kick the sand off. The soft rubber won't scuff the boat.

DRAINAGE: They drained in 30 seconds and dried faster than most shoes in the performance class.

- TRACTION DRY:** 42 degrees
- TRACTION WET:** 34 degrees
- DUNK AND DRY, 1 HOUR:** 18%
- DUNK AND DRY, 2 HOURS:** 11%
- SIZES:** Half-sizes from 7 to 11, plus whole sizes 12 to 14
- COST:** \$100; xtratuf.com



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XTRATUF BLUEFIN

Available in medium widths, this shoe still felt comfortably wider when compared to other medium-width boat shoes. The upper's construction is forgiving in shape, and the fabric offers a protective feel to the shoe without binding the foot uncomfortably.

This shoe's regatta styling includes red, white and blue tones. The uppers are synthetic-leather-trimmed mesh fabric with round-the-ankle moccasin-style laces. Stainless-steel weep holes are mesh-covered to keep out debris. They feature Xtratuf's go-to chevron nonmarring soles. They have great traction but didn't pick up debris in our experience.

DRAINAGE: They wouldn't drain but were among the fastest to dry.

TRACTION DRY: 45 degrees

TRACTION WET: 35 degrees

DUNK AND DRY, 1 HOUR: 29%

DUNK AND DRY, 2 HOURS: 24%

SIZES: Half-sizes from 7 to 11, plus 12, 13 and 14

COST: \$64.99; xtratuff.com



OLUKAI PUHALU

Like the Brewsters in fine leather, with a dressier and more substantial feel on the foot, the Puhalu is comfortable out of the box, thanks to the buttery softness of the leather and the dual-density rubber insole with canvas surface. The insole is removable and washable, an important feature if you're a no-socks-in-the-boat-shoe type of guy.

The nonmarking rubber is molded with traction pods that worked well in our tests. The heel is designed to be mashable to offer a handy slide-in style for more casual wear around the house or beach. The shoes are available in dark wood brown and toffee brown.

DRAINAGE: They didn't drain, but the oiled leather didn't absorb water, so they dried quickly like a boat shoe should.

TRACTION DRY: 30 degrees

TRACTION WET: 30 degrees

DUNK AND DRY, 1 HOUR: 13%

DUNK AND DRY, 2 HOURS: 0%

SIZES: Half-sizes 8 through 11, plus 7, 12, 13 and 14

COST: \$125; olukai.com



OLUKAI HAMAKUA POKO

This rugged boat shoe seems more like a boating, hiking and driving SUV. The soft glove fit is thanks to supple oiled leather and foam-and-fabric lining. The shoe rolls nicely from heel to toe for a comfortable stride.

The natural and synthetic rubber sole won't leave marks. The tread "pads" like a bear's paw, giving it hiking appeal. Its driving style comes from the leather wrapped around the pods and sewn to the uppers. All in all, it's a good walker that won't get you kicked off the boat for picking up rocks in the treads. It comes in dark wood, ray (lighter brown) and storm gray.

DRAINAGE: Zero drainage doesn't deter purchase because the Oxford height makes water intrusion less likely, and the shoe dried quickly.

TRACTION DRY: 30 degrees

TRACTION WET: 28 degrees

DUNK AND DRY, 1 HOUR: 7%

DUNK AND DRY, 2 HOURS: 2%

SIZES: Half-sizes 8 through 11, plus 7, 12, 13 and 14

COST: \$130; olukai.com



COLUMBIA MAGAVENT II

They wear like a cross-trainer and are extremely comfortable. The elastic laces are a bit tricky to lace, but there's no pinch or bind as the elastic flexes around the tongue. You could run comfortably in this shoe if you didn't pack your runners.

The mesh breathes and lets water squish out as you walk. Drain holes in the outsole channel water from the drain holes inside. The foot is protected from sucking in debris by mesh screens over the drains in both the outsole and the insole. A polyurethane exoskeleton adds body and support to the sides, increasing arch support. They're available in only one color combination called splash/white.

DRAINAGE: It drained in under 30 seconds.

TRACTION DRY: 35 degrees

TRACTION WET: 32 degrees

DUNK AND DRY, 1 HOUR: 22%

DUNK AND DRY, 2 HOURS: 16%

SIZES: Half-sizes from 8 to 11, plus 7, 12, 13, 14 and 15

COST: \$110; columbia.com





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C
BOATING
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#3081

SCOUT 380 LXF

Cutting-edge technology paired with solid craftsmanship and serious offshore capability



If you're in the enviable position of trying to decide between 35 feet or 42 feet of a triple-outboard-powered Scout, you're in luck: Scout can meet you in the middle with its new 380 LXF. At 38 feet 6 inches long and a hair over 12 feet wide, the 380 LXF we tested used three Mercury Verado 350 outboards (Yamaha engines are also an option) to punch on plane in 9.4 seconds and from dead idle to 30 mph in 10 seconds flat. Top speed was 56.4 mph at 6,500 rpm, with the Verados turning 18-pitch Mercury Revolution 4 XP propellers.

The 380 is second in command to Scout's line-leading 420 LXF, but it gives up little ground to its larger sibling.

PHOTO: COURTESY SCOUT BOATS



SCAN ME

For a photo gallery of the Scout 380 LXF, scan this tag or visit boatingmag.com/3081.



PHOTOS: COURTESY SCOUT BOATS

We ran the 380 through some sloppy wind-driven chop and big-cruiser and workboat wakes in Charleston Harbor. As might be expected, the Scout had no problems carving on the river. It took the largest wakes at well over 40 mph with no slamming or jarring, and only at full tilt did we get a little air. Slicing turns at a hard-over angle proved an easy exercise as well. The pronounced Carolina sheer-line flare keeps riders dry, because spray is deflected effectively for those riding in the bow as well as amidships.

Though the Scout is as serious an offshore angling bucket as can be, it's so nicely appointed and beautifully crafted that nit-pickers like me would nearly go postal at the prospect of fish scales.

Hull design and construction is state-of-the-art, starting with the epoxy fiberglass layup that's hand-laid and infused for maximum weight savings and strength. The hull, stringers and deck are all infused fiberglass, with no wood core to rot over time. All fasteners are through-bolted, so there's no wood screws to

vibrate and pull out. Finish is, of course, high-gloss gelcoat in a variety of rich tones; a close inspection of the entire hull and deck found zero flaws, showcasing Scout's typical attention to detail.

The hull is double-stepped for better planing and speed, which helps release the wetted surface for higher efficiency, especially in calm water. The three outboards are securely mounted using Scout's massive offset transom bracket system. This system is integrated into the 380's transom and gives the triple engines leverage to lift the long hull. With a combined triple-outboard weight of well over a ton, the Scout bracket mounting grants security and strength. The setup also gives

The 380's digital-dash cool factor is upped to the nth degree by Scout's patented bow camera, which adds safety.

efficiency; while fuel mileage is probably not foremost on the minds of purchasers of triple-engine Scout packages, nevertheless, it's good to know that this rig can achieve best cruise speed at 4,500 rpm (just under 35 mph), burning 38 gph (0.9 mpg) with a range of 330 miles, with 10 percent of the fuel left in reserve.

The deck and interior layout are very much Scout, patterned after the line-leading 420 LXF. At the bow, just behind the standard concealed-anchor-windlass compartment, the feel is much like that of a large bowrider — a set of plush facing cushions flank a pop-up cocktail table that can be set higher for snacking and onboard dinners, or positioned lower and fitted with a center cushion to form a larger sunbathing area. Just behind, the center-console features a luxury lounge seating affair, boasting forward-facing chairs with foldable armrests. A recessed, stylized powder-coated security grab rail encircles the deck, within easy reach yet not obtrusive. Dry storage is seemingly everywhere; there's more than enough to stash gear out of sight.

Opening the portside access doors on the console reveals a well-appointed minicabin belowdecks. A twin queen berth is surprisingly roomy at 6 feet 5 inches. For quick overnights or even an extended stay,



it's perfect. Everything needed is there and well-executed: galley, head and shower, entertainment system and air conditioning. Cabin rod stowage is standard, but can be replaced by a cedar-lined locker and shoe rack. Topside, the console's command center is completely electronic and connected. Every functional control is accessed via the console's flat screen, with redundant backup controls (traditional buttons and switches) just in case. The triple Verados are controlled using Merc's excellent digital throttle and shift, so operation is smooth. The digital-dash cool factor is upped to the nth degree by Scout's patented bow camera, which allows the pilot to see under the bow as well as forward.

The pilot's station is fitted with a bolstered triple helm seat; behind is a module with built-in tackle drawers and/or a refrigerator and ice maker. Rod storage is abundant under the gunwales. At the transom, port and starboard in-deck fish boxes are 92 gallons large, with more dry storage abaft and a 100-gallon transom baitwell. The electronics and rigging access is excellent, and the wiring, hose and routing are well-thought-out and no-nonsense.

In the huge center-console market, Scout has some stiff competition. Boston Whaler's 380 Outrage comes to mind, because it's rigged with the same power and starts at \$527,570 for the base rig. EdgeWater's shorter 368 CC is rigged with triple Yamaha F300s and starts at just under \$400,000. —*John Tiger*

High Points

- ▶ Seakeeper gyro stabilizer keeps the hull stable in rolling seas.
- ▶ Contoured, recessed grab rail encircles the cockpit.
- ▶ Anchor washdown hose helps keep mud and salt off the anchor and rode.
- ▶ Gelcoated underdeck surfaces (including the bilge) make for easy, splinter-free cleanup, inspection and service.
- ▶ Bow camera proves a helpful safety feature, especially just before casting off.

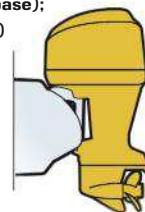
Low Point

- ▶ We're guessing the fold-up stern seat is meant for short stints.

• LOA: 38'6" • BEAM: 12'1" • DRAFT: 2'3"
 • DISPLACEMENT: 14,500 lb. (hull only); 16,504 lb. (with engines) • TRANSOM DEADRISE: 20 degrees • SEATING/WEIGHT CAPACITY: NA
 • FUEL CAPACITY: 404 gal. • AVAILABLE POWER: Triple or quad Yamaha or Mercury outboards to 1,200 hp total.

Price: \$647,780 (base); \$898,392 (as tested)

AVAILABLE POWER:
OUTBOARDS



HOW WE TESTED

ENGINE: TRIPLE MERCURY 350 HP VERADO
 FOUR-STROKE OUTBOARDS DRIVE/PROP:
 MERCURY REVOLUTION 4 14.625" X 19" GEAR
 RATIO: 1.75:1 FUEL LOAD: 226 GAL. CREW
 WEIGHT: 700 LB.

SCOUT BOATS
 Summerville, South Carolina; 843-821-0068;
 scoutboats.com



**BOATING
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 RESULTS**

rpm	SPEED			EFFICIENCY				OPERATION	
	knots	mph	gph	naut. mpg	stat. mpg	n. mi. range	s. mi. range	angle	sound level
1000	5.8	6.7	4.1	1.4	1.6	516.3	594.2	0	68
1500	8.0	9.2	6.3	1.3	1.5	461.4	531.0	0	72
2000	9.7	11.2	10.0	1.0	1.1	353.9	407.2	2	76
2500	10.3	11.8	16.8	0.6	0.7	221.9	255.4	3	78
3000	12.8	14.7	25.2	0.5	0.6	184.3	212.1	5	83
3500	16.6	19.1	31.3	0.5	0.6	192.8	221.9	6	85
4000	26.1	30.0	34.2	0.8	0.9	277.2	318.9	3	88
4500	30.1	34.6	38.1	0.8	0.9	286.9	330.2	3	89
5000	34.7	39.9	48.6	0.7	0.8	259.4	298.5	3	91
5500	40.4	46.5	55.7	0.7	0.8	263.8	303.5	3	92
6000	44.9	51.7	67.8	0.7	0.8	240.9	277.3	2	93
6500	49.0	56.4	86.7	0.6	0.7	205.5	236.5	2	93

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PHOTO: COURTESY SCOUT BOATS

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See a video highlighting key features of this boat by scanning this tag or visiting boatingmag.com/3082.



S

Sometimes I feel guilty about the way we test powerboats. We warm them up, firewall the throttles, spin the helm for some hard-over turns, and once we've made a few, we steer back over the doubled-up wakes to see if the boat can handle the rollers without rattling the screws and fasteners. It's not so much "rode hard and put away wet" as it is put away panting.

But the 385SE barely noticed our abusive handling, and when we finished, it was like a horse still too frisky to walk to the paddock.

It's cause to pause when a boat like this can jump up on plane (in about 4.5 seconds) and hit a top speed of over 57 mph, but that's what the three Yamaha F300 outboards did to this sleek day cruiser.

PHOTO: FOREST JOHNSON



C
**BOATING
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TEST**

#3082

MONTEREY 385SE

The outboard revolution continues as this new day cruiser enters the market with triple Yamahas.



PHOTOS: COURTESY MONTEREY BOATS

The connection to the water was sports-car crisp thanks to the Optimus 360 power steering and Yamaha electronic throttle and shift. As we accelerated, we thumbed the trim switch, raising the drives to lift the vessel higher, freer from the drag of the sea. At full throttle, the chines astern were nearly clear of the spray and the 385 felt like it was about to lift off. Yet it stayed hooked up, and even accepted some authoritative steering input and responded to it without complaint.

In port, the Optimus 360 Joystick steering gives confidence to

dock this boat like a runabout: Nudge the stick in the direction of travel and the boat crabs sideways, or twist it and the boat pivots steadily. I can't imagine owning a boat in this class without this popular electronic control system.

BMW is credited with the term "sport sedan," and it changed the way car builders market their wheels. The 385 makes its mark on the vessels called sport cruisers and will likely force competitive brands to step up their game.



The deck design gives this cruiser a sporty feel of luxury, and exciting seating for the largest of crews. After viewing its profile and noting the cabin windows below the rub rail, stepping to the dock reveals a surprise — an open-bow seating area. And it's enormous.

On the starboard-side, there is a double-wide sun lounge with a fold-down armrest. A filler cushion, included, covers the synthetic

The flush-mounted navigation displays give the helm station a modern look that analog gauges can't accomplish.

teak sole to complete a doublewide sun pad. There's a single-width lounge with folding armrest on the port side too. Without the center cushion, the entire area could seat six to eight without crowding, and the cup holders are tucked in back behind the cushions (under the bolster pads so they won't be jostled by boisterous passengers).

Seating in the cockpit is even more generous. First, for the first mate, there is a double seat. A folding step deploys below to rest feet, or leave it stowed with the bolster up and enjoy a stand-up view over the bow.

An L-shaped lounge begins behind that seat, and as it turns the corner to the transom, the seat bottom widens aft to a nearly 6-by-6-foot sun pad. In cruising mode, it is divided into forward- and aft-facing seating by a movable backrest. For sunbathing, slide the seat back forward and you've got a cool sun lounge with a view of the water behind.

On outboard cruisers, the transom area is usually so compromised that there is little use to it, but that wasn't the case in the 385. A clear path between port and starboard quarters ties the corners together. The boarding

ladder deploys from the side, keeping toes clear of the props upon reboarding.

Outboard offerings are expanding among cruiser and bowrider makers — and the 385SE has merits in both categories. Sea Ray also offers cruising bowriders but straddles this 37-foot class with a 35 and a 40 called the 400 SLX. The latter offers 2 feet more centerline length and an additional foot of beam. It uses the space well with spacious living quarters.

If the deck plan is made for fun and games, the cabin below is made for romantic interludes. Step through the passage at the helm console and you're greeted with a TV lounge for an easy escape from the sun. Air-condition the cabin — we would — and there's where a cozy night can be had in the doublewide aft berth. We didn't expect that much space below, nor did we expect it to be so practically laid out.

The head compartment is equally impressive on the port side. The usual appointments are there in a compartment that is roomy, well-illuminated and easy to access.

The Monterey 385SE with Yamaha power is as exciting at top speed as it is at rest, whether you are relaxing to a powerful factory-installed stereo or knifing into the water in a perfectly executed dive from the transom. —*Randy Vance*

High Points

- ▶ Electric cockpit shade (optional) offers sun protection to the whole cockpit if deployed.
- ▶ Cockpit galley is the ideal spot for prepping snacks, drinks and refreshments.
- ▶ Side-mounted boarding ladder keeps swimmers clear of the props.

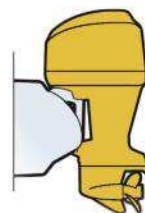
Low Points

- ▶ Outboard power does reduce swim-platform access but improves onboard space.
- ▶ Most owners will be satisfied with the fuel capacity for dayboat activities.

• LOA: 37'0" • BEAM: 11'0" • DRAFT (MAX): 3'1" • DISPLACEMENT (APPROX.): 16,000 lb.
 • TRANSOM DEADRISE: 21 degrees • BRIDGE CLEARANCE: 10'3" • FUEL CAPACITY: 250 gal.
 • MAX HORSEPOWER: 1,200 • AVAILABLE POWER: Yamaha and Mercury outboards

Price: \$441,631
(with test power)

AVAILABLE POWER:
OUTBOARD



HOW WE TESTED

ENGINE: Triple Yamaha F300s **DRIVE/PROP:** Saltwater Series II 19" **GEAR RATIO:** 1.75:1 **FUEL LOAD:** 125 gal. **WATER ON BOARD:** 7 gal. **CREW WEIGHT:** 350 lb.

MONTEREY BOATS
Williston, Florida; 352-528-2628; montereyboats.com



**BOATING
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RESULTS**

	SPEED			EFFICIENCY				OPERATION	
	rpm	knots	mph	gph	naut. mpg	stat. mpg	n. mi. range	s. mi. range	angle
1000	5.4	6.2	4.2	3.8	4.4	865.9	996.4	2	66
1500	7.2	8.3	10.2	2.1	2.4	477.3	549.3	3	71
2000	8.5	9.8	16.8	1.5	1.8	342.2	393.8	5	74
2500	11.4	13.2	25.8	1.3	1.5	299.0	344.0	7	80
3000	15.7	18.1	33.9	1.4	1.6	313.2	360.4	7	83
3500	27.9	32.2	37.8	2.2	2.6	498.9	574.1	4	85
4000	32.9	37.9	49.5	2.0	2.3	448.5	516.1	4	81
4500	36.9	42.5	54.6	2.0	2.3	456.6	525.4	3	87
5000	41.9	48.2	75.6	1.7	1.9	374.0	430.4	3	91
5500	45.3	52.2	77.4	1.8	2.0	395.2	454.8	3	93
6000	49.6	57.1	80.7	1.8	2.1	415.0	477.6	3	97

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BOATING
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#3083

JEANNEAU LEADER 9.0

This outboard-powered boat offers a unique layout that will prove excellent for a variety of boating styles.



M

My default attitude for many imported yachts, especially ones that have proved popular across the pond, is with measured cynicism. Do they really understand North American boaters? In the case of the Jeanneau Leader 9.0, it was simply an arched eyebrow, like the ones perfected by French-bistro waiters.

But the Leader 9.0 strikes all the right chords. It's perfect for fun, for sun, for weekending, or for just hanging out on the water. There might not be as much culture gap as I'd thought, or perhaps this Jeanneau just has the right stuff. As the Cap Camarat 9.0WA in Europe, it's proved very popular — for good reasons.

PHOTO: COURTESY JEANNEAU AMERICA



SCAN ME

To view a photo gallery of the Jeanneau Leader 9.0, scan this tag or visit boatingmag.com/3083.



PHOTOS: COURTESY JEANNEAU AMERICA

The starting point is a 16-degree deadrise hull designed by Michael Peters, which quickly underlined his skills with offshore boats during our runs in a lumpy Gulf Stream. The deck layout, based on the Leader 8.5, is a walkaround with cruiser accommodations and tons of seating space in the cockpit, plus sprawling space on sun pads forward.

But, you might ask, how do they get cruiser amenities in a cabin limited both by length and walkaround decks? Well, I didn't say

"in" the cabin, and the galley is a console opposite the helm, holding a sink with folding faucet and a single-burner stove, plus stowage. A stainless-steel Isotherm fridge is tucked under the helm console, and it's probably worth supplementing with an ice chest if you're planning a long weekend because the fridge would be challenged by a couple of six-packs.

The Leader 9.0 is outboard-powered, which results in a large and quite usable cockpit, abetted by the discovery by this huge

French builder of jump seats. There is a very nice teak (no varnishing!) high-low table facing a wide settee with a high back-rest aft, and then a jump seat flops down to starboard to make an L shape. To seat everyone, another jump seat pulls down from the helm console, making a full U-shaped dinette.

The skipper and a companion get very nice seats with neck rests and flip-up bolsters for either standing or sitting a bit higher. There's a well-placed molded footrest, and the dash itself is simplicity, with rows of lighted and labeled rocker switches and a panel for 12-inch Garmin

From the locking transom gate to the high coamings around the cockpit to the many handholds, this boat is clearly made for families with kids.

or Raytheon monitors. Our test boat was equipped with Lenco trim tabs and a Quik bow thruster. We particularly liked the padded "eyebrow" over the instruments to eliminate glare or reflections, and the stainless-steel-topped windshield does a good job of lifting the breeze overhead. To keep the crew from parboiling in the sun, our test boat also had a fiberglass hardtop with a sliding moonroof over the helm, all mounted on sturdy powder-coated legs.

Power for the Leader 9.0 is a pair of Yamaha four-strokes, and our boat had twin 250 hp V-6 4.2 liters for a top speed of 50.1 mph. You can also opt for twin 225s or a single 350, although I'd bet many dealers are going to outfit these with twin 200s for economy without much speed loss.

The cabin, without a galley, has a surprising amount of space for sleeping and tinkling. Looking forward, a pair of curved settees surround another teak dining table, which can drop down with filler cushions to form a V-berth probably best suited for the kiddos.

But aft, tucked away under the cockpit (not claustrophobic in the least) is a large double berth more than 6 feet in length and with stowage bins. Big windows make this surprisingly airy, although a privacy curtain might be a nice addition.

The head compartment is another



surprise for a 30-footer, with a Euro-styled vessel sink and stylish faucet on a vanity, plus a shower stall. The electric head shares the shower, but it has a drop-down lid to cover it and, if you're like me, you don't like "wet showers" that soak the entire head. To this end, Jeanneau has provided a full sliding Lucite door to make this a "real" shower stall so you don't splash everywhere.

Forward, there's a big sun pad, and our test boat had deck extensions outside the two outboards, adding to the boarding/swimming area and a good option.

Underway, the Leader 9.0 was impressive. It felt solid and remained dry in spite of some leftover seas in the Gulf Stream. The Michael Peters' hull threw the spray wide while tracking nicely in random conditions into, across and down seas. This boat is fun to throw around, and there's a sturdy ski pole aft, so you can tow everything from skiers to wakeboarders.

If you're shopping around, take a look at the Wellcraft 290 Coastal, with twin 300s and an inside galley but no cockpit dinette or forward sun pad (about \$194,000).

We were impressed by the Jeanneau Leader 9.0. It delivered on its promise of being perfect for family fun, is solidly built, and has a nice array of standard amenities.

—Chris Caswell

High Points

- ▶ Clearly designed for child safety with high coamings and rails.
- ▶ Great head with enclosed shower.
- ▶ Airy double berth tucked under cockpit floor.

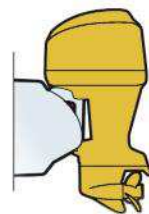
Low Points

- ▶ Some cooks might look dubiously at a single-burner stove.
- ▶ Cockpit galley adds cabin space but eliminates forward-facing seat.

• LOA: 29'11" • BEAM: 9'9" • DISPLACEMENT: 5,483 lb. • DRAFT (MAX): 2'1" • TRANSOM DEADRISE: 16 degrees • BRIDGE CLEARANCE: 7'3" • MAX CABIN HEADROOM: 6'3" • FUEL CAPACITY: 106 gal. • WATER CAPACITY: 26 gal. • MAX HORSEPOWER: 500 • AVAILABLE POWER: Yamaha four-stroke outboards to 500 hp

Price: \$130,000
(base with test power)

AVAILABLE POWER:
OUTBOARD



HOW WE TESTED

ENGINES: TWIN YAMAHA FOUR-STROKE 250
DRIVE/PROPS: SALTWATER SERIES II
15.75" X 15" 3-BLADE **GEAR RATIO:** 1.75:1
FUEL LOAD: 80 GAL. **WATER ON BOARD:** 10 GAL.
CREW WEIGHT: 750 LB.

JEANNEAU AMERICA
Annapolis, Maryland; 410-280-9400; jeanneauamerica.com



**BOATING
CERTIFIED
TEST
RESULTS**

rpm	SPEED			EFFICIENCY				OPERATION	
	knots	mph	gph	naut. mpg	stat. mpg	n. mi. range	s. mi. range	angle	sound level
1000	5.0	5.8	2.5	2.0	2.3	190.7	219.4	1	68
1500	6.8	7.8	4.3	1.6	1.8	150.4	173.1	1	68
2000	8.1	9.3	6.8	1.2	1.4	113.4	130.5	2	70
2500	9.7	11.2	11.2	0.9	1.0	82.9	95.4	3	72
3000	12.4	14.3	14.0	0.9	1.0	84.7	97.4	4	74
3500	24.2	27.8	17.8	1.4	1.6	129.5	149.0	5	76
4000	28.6	32.9	23.7	1.2	1.4	115.1	132.4	4	78
4500	32.8	37.8	31.4	1.0	1.2	99.8	114.8	3	80
5000	36.3	41.8	39.0	0.9	1.1	88.9	102.2	3	82
5500	41.4	47.6	47.0	0.9	1.0	84.0	96.6	3	84
6000	43.5	50.1	50.1	0.9	1.0	82.9	95.4	2	86

MOST ECONOMICAL CRUISING SPEED

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NAUTIQUE

Super Air Nautique GS22

While crossover tow boats are not new, in the past, makers presented either a ski-based boat that didn't wakeboard or surf very well, or a wakeboat that didn't ski very well. In response to that demand, several manufacturers have introduced true crossover boats capable

the NCRS has a ski setting, helping the boat sit at the optimal attitude for smaller wakes based on the skier's preferred speed.

For wakeboarding and wakesurfing, the GS22 is well-equipped with 2,250 pounds of subfloor ballast, along with the Nautique Surf System (NSS), which can be remotely controlled to shape up big waves and

of doing it all. The Super Air Nautique GS22 stands as a prime example.

Utilizing hull features from other, world-record-setting Nautique boats, the GS22 is surprisingly capable in its versatility, in large part because of the customization capabilities of the Nautique Configurable Running Surface (NCRS) tab at the transom. This tab, controlled via a touchscreen at the dash, can be adjusted to change the wake's shape characteristics based on a rider's preferences. For the GS22,

allow the rider to transfer from side to side with ease.

The GS22 possesses lines similar to its larger G-series fleet mates, but it sports lower, sleeker gunwales. At 22 feet, the GS22 easily holds 15 passengers in comfort, with plenty of room for stowage. Wraparound seating also features adjustable backrests to better allow for watching the action. There are also two lounge chairs at the swim platform — great for hanging out and swimming.

The Flight Control Tower integrates seamlessly with

the lines of the boat while providing room for speakers, board racks, and an oversize Bimini top that provides plenty of shade. Want eyes in the back of your head? Upgrade the tower with the small camera that links with the LINC Panoray display at the helm.

Equipped with the H6DI engine from PCM, this 6.2L puts out 465 foot-pounds of torque courtesy of 450 hp.

While the GS22 isn't going to make giant wakes like its big brother, the G23, or world-class slalom wakes like its ski cousin, it is going to offer watersports-loving families the ability to do all of those things well. —Garrett Cortese

High Points

- ▶ True crossover capabilities accommodate advanced water-skiers, wakeboarders and wakesurfers alike, all with the push of a few buttons.
- ▶ Nautique Surf System makes wakesurfing and transferring from one side to another a breeze.
- ▶ LINC Panoray dash combined with the Helm Command controls put everything at the driver's fingertips.

Low Point

- ▶ No convertible, rear-facing bench like its G-series cousins.

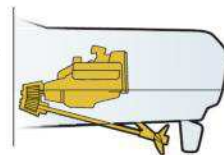
Toughest Competitor

- ▶ The Malibu 22 VLX (\$105,000, well-equipped) is a similarly sized and appointed crossover boat with a more traditional bow. See your local dealer for full details.

- LOA: 22'0" • BEAM: 8'4" • DRAFT: 2'3.5"
- DISPLACEMENT: 4,750 lb. • TRANSONIC DEADRISE: NA • BRIDGE CLEARANCE: NA
- FUEL CAPACITY: 51 gal. • MAX HORSEPOWER: 450
- AVAILABLE POWER: Gasoline inboard

Price: \$115,701 (base)

AVAILABLE POWER: V-DRIVE



HOW WE TESTED

ENGINE: 450 hp PCM H6DI DRIVE/PROPS: V-drive/14.5" x 14.25" 4-blade Acme GEAR RATIO: 1:48.1 FUEL LOAD: 47 gal. CREW WEIGHT: 365 lb.

NAUTIQUE BOAT COMPANY
Orlando, Florida; 800-346-2092; nautique.com

For a photo gallery of the Super Air Nautique GS22, visit boatingmag.com/3084.

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RESULTS

rpm	SPEED			EFFICIENCY				OPERATION	
	knots	mph	gph	naut. mpg	stat. mpg	n. mi. range	s. mi. range	angle	sound level
1000	4.69	5.40	0.90	5.21	6.00	239	275	0	73
1500	6.52	7.50	1.80	3.62	4.17	166	191	2	83
2000	8.43	9.70	2.70	3.12	3.59	143	165	3	85
2500	12.95	14.90	4.30	3.01	3.47	138	159	5	87
3000	19.90	22.90	5.40	3.69	4.24	169	195	5	90
3500	23.81	27.40	6.90	3.45	3.97	158	182	4	93
4000	27.20	31.30	8.90	3.06	3.52	140	161	3	96
4500	30.41	35.00	11.60	2.62	3.02	120	138	2	98
5000	32.41	37.30	14.10	2.30	2.65	106	121	2	99
5600	34.93	40.20	19.90	1.76	2.02	81	93	2	100

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F L Y

PHOTO: FOREST JOHNSON



I N G H I G H

**ALL THE REASONS TO LOVE A FLYBRIDGE
BY RANDY VANCE**

*It was just an old plywood boat.
A '75 Johnson with electric choke.
A young boy, two hands on the wheel.
I can't forget the way it made me feel.*

Those are my favorite words in Alan Jackson's ballad "Drive." It poignantly records the moment in boating that imprints the experience permanently in boaters' must-do-it brain sector. I remember my first boating experience exactly that way.

My first boat ride, in a 15-foot Starcraft, infected me with the boating bug at age 10. But 30 years ago, the infection went airborne the first time I rode on the flying bridge of an Islamorada sport-fisher. From the bridge, I could spot fish invisible to the crew in the cockpit. A sea turtle passed below, rounding a coral head in 30 feet of water. Everywhere I looked, the navigable water was topaz, and the passages between coral and sandbars were as evident as if a chart was laid across the sea.

No, I never bought a boat with a flying bridge, but I never lost the appetite to have one, and I've been fortunate enough to have a lot of experience aboard them over the years.

Their advantages are compelling, but they don't come without some liabilities either. Here, then, are all the reasons to love a flybridge boat.

I liked hanging around the docks long before I had a boat.

VISUAL ASSETS

I liked hanging around the docks long before I had a boat. I still enjoy it, though not quite as much as piloting my own vessel. Once while at the dock, I watched as a captain came into a narrow port and aimed his bow at the slip. Just short of the slip, he turned his back to the helm. Standing between the throttles, he took one in each hand, and pulled one up to forward at a pretty strong idle and pushed the other to reverse with equal authority. Completely confident, from both practice and the clear view of other boats and dock fingers, he pivoted his beauty 180 degrees, then nonchalantly reversed throttle positions, stopped the pivot and aimed the stern straight into the slip.

Just as the lacquered mahogany transom might have struck the dock, he applied forward thrust, and water boiled up between the stern and dock, stopping the vessel perfectly, just inches from the pier. Dock hands threw lines on the cleats, and the boat was made fast.

CLIMBING LIABILITIES

That skipper had a crew awaiting him on the dock. Had he not, at least six steps stood between him and his dock lines. As the boat idled there, technically still underway as the rules of navigation go, he could drift into other boats in the marina. The skipper in a flybridge had better be sure-footed or have a crew (or a remote control or a lower station to transfer to). With a crew,



the upper station becomes an asset again, because he can assign tasks and observe his crew as they secure the boat. Likewise, upper stations are not for the long-in-the-tooth commanders who may not have that youthful spring in their step.

AREA ASSETS

The only thing better than

enjoying the view from above is sharing it. That upper station supplies extra seating, and the social opportunities it provides are at least charming — if not romantic with the right passengers. Often, if the vessel is large enough to carry it, an upper station can have an electric refrigerator or at least an ice chest, and some boast a cocktail galley with a sink.



Just short of the slip, he turned his back to the helm. Standing between the throttles, he took one in each hand, and pulled one up to forward at a pretty strong idle and pushed the other to reverse with equal authority.

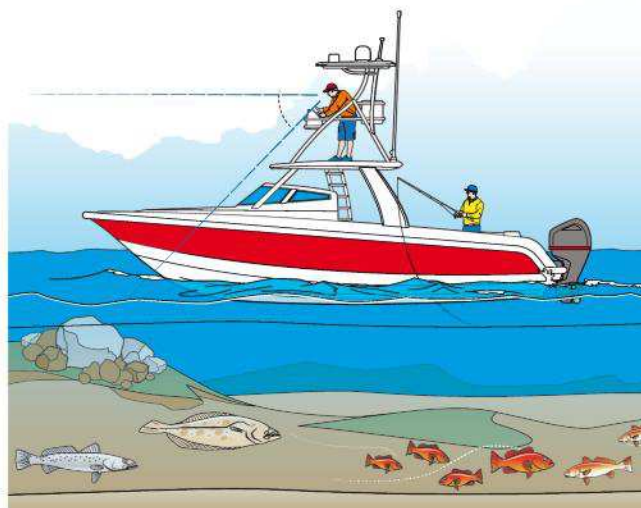
PHOTOS: (FROM TOP) COURTESY SEA RAY; FOREST JOHNSON





SEE DEEPER AND FARTHER

Seeing farther to the horizon and seeing your transom relative to the dock are two advantages of flybridge boats. But the added height also allows you to see deeper into the water. In fact, the taller your bridge and the higher you are, the deeper you'll be able to see into the sea. This comes in all kinds of handy for fishing and for navigating around shoals, sandbars, coral heads and boulders.



ACCESS LIABILITY

You have to climb to the bridge in a convertible or flybridge, and that requires stairs or a ladder that takes up space in the cockpit below. Sometimes that loss of space is substantial, crowding the gathering area. Even a ladder to the bridge creates inconveniences in that gathering space. And some skippers prefer having all the action

on the main deck rather than dividing the socializing crew between upper and lower decks.

LOFTY ASSETS

It's the best place to grab some rays and feel the breeze, whether stirred by nature or by throttle. You'll look very smart up there too, giving the boater's wave from that lofty perch. And as the skipper, your crew will

compete for your company, giving plenty of opportunity for more intimate conversation.

LOFTY LIABILITIES

That added height can cost you some waterway access and even storage fees — especially if you dry-stack your boat when it's not in use. Dry-stack marinas charge by length *and* by height. So, be sure of the

storage fees before you buy. Further, that added height means waiting for drawbridges or being unable to gain passage beneath fixed bridges to certain waters altogether. Will it be worth it? It's up to each individual boater.

CASH ASSETS

Expect that upper station to cost between \$25,000 and

ILLUSTRATION: TIM BARKER; PHOTOS: COURTESY RANGER TUGS (FAMILY), COURTESY BENEATEAU (BOTTOM RIGHT), FOREST JOHNSON (BOTTOM LEFT)



\$75,000 depending on the boat and the accommodations included above. On some boats, an upper station can make them resell faster and sometimes for a higher price than without one. That is particularly so if the boat's upper station isn't the sole station. That higher resale price, though, may be offset by the cost of maintaining helm hydraulics, throttle and shift controls, and navigation equipment in both stations.

STORMY LIABILITIES

On a beautiful day, nothing is better than skippering from above. On a stormy day, nothing is worse. An upper station is high above the vessel's center of gravity, and the only thing worse than lunging forward through rough seas is wobbling sideways through them with each wave attempting to slingshot you abeam. Trying to come through a sloppy inlet in stormy weather will make you kick yourself



for not investing in a second lower station.

You'll find lots of options in flybridge boats and designs for many tastes and wallets. The designs range from pocket

trawlers to luxury cruisers and sport-fishers. Here are some top examples, along with some assets and some — let's just call them trade-offs — in the bargain.

The Future of Flying: Five modern flybridge boats

VIKING 44CC

It's unclear who built the first flybridge, but it's easy to argue sport-fishing convertibles would be among the first. Nobody benefits from that lofty view like fishermen. In fact, Viking doesn't offer the 44C with a lower helm, which perfectly illustrates an angler's commitment to that view. Viking will protect the bridge with acrylic side curtains, and when air conditioning and heating are added, there's

no weather short of rough seas to keep you from having fun.

We've already discussed the docking advantages, and no offshore skipper is going to wink at a 20-minute wait for a bridge — he'll just get his crew up that much earlier. Because offshore anglers are long-range fishermen, the Viking 44CC doesn't pull punches on comfortable accommodations.



Two main staterooms offer queen beds, and the amidships berth includes

a private head. Add a single bunk forward and convertible settees, and

there is plenty of sleeping space on board for comfort.

SPECS

• LOA: 45'1" • BEAM: 16'4" • FUEL CAPACITY: 825 gal. • HORSEPOWER: Dual MAN 16 800 CRM diesels • UPPER STATION: Standard • LOWER STATION: Not available • BASE PRICE: \$1,474,000



BENETEAU SWIFT TRAWLER 30

Beneteau proves you don't have to go large to get the fun of a flybridge. Its Swift Trawler is a semidisplacement hull capable of exceeding 30 mph. Its fuel capacity gives a range beyond most owners' expectations. The easy-to-handle, compact trawler is a true voyager for a jaunt to Block Island, or even crossing from Miami to

tour the Bahamas.

The boatbuilder wisely makes standard both an upper and lower station, which means a short crew, or even a single-handed skipper at the lower helm, can dock and secure the vessel at port. Also standard is a Volvo Penta D6 370 hp engine, powerful, fuel efficient, and ready for reliable long-range cruising or just weekend

overnighting at a quiet anchorage.

Access to the bridge is via a ladder-way through an upper-deck hatch. The landing below does take cockpit space, but Beneteau compensates by opening the cockpit to the salon via a large sliding door. The effect is attractive and practical, and cruisers won't regret the trade-offs.

SPECS

• LOA: 32'9" • BEAM: 11'7" • FUEL CAPACITY: 185 gal. • HORSEPOWER: 370 • UPPER STATION: Standard • LOWER STATION: Standard • BASE PRICE: \$284,800

CUTWATER C-30 CB

The C-30 with command bridge integrates the boarding steps into the pilothouse design by leaning them over the port-side galley underneath, where headroom isn't an issue. The effect clears the deck below for open seating and eliminates the steps from the overall deck plan. The steps are enclosed on both sides, enhancing secure footing, plus the aesthetic

treatment is practical and good-looking, keeping the steps hidden from the Cutwater's profile view.

Once above, there is a dual helm seat and a companion settee behind it for up to four passengers plus the skipper. Cutwater is just as generous below, providing a bridge with a dual seat, but it lacks the access hatch advanced by the Beneteau.



Living accommodations are treated with

hardwood and fine veneer, giving a rich interior that's

durable with long-lasting good looks.

SPECS

• LOA: 30'0" • BEAM: 9'9" • FUEL CAPACITY: 180 gal. • HORSEPOWER: Volvo Penta 435 HP diesel • UPPER STATION: Standard • LOWER STATION: Standard • BASE PRICE: \$324,937



RANGER TUGS R-31 CB

The tug-style mini-trawler is semidisplacement and can actually cruise along at a good clip, making the top-deck view both exciting and useful for navigating tricky waters. Ranger Tugs has expertly turned this boat into a cozy over-nighter with a sleeping berth and galley dinette that converts to a berth. The lower station is standard on the starboard-side of the salon, and

even more important to journeymen, it offers a full doorway from the helm to the deck, making it easy to grab a line or offer one to the dock hand. In addition, a wide walkway around the pilothouse has a handy grab rail for safely moving about the deck to secure the boat in port and at anchor. The R-31 is responsive to low horsepower, has fuel-sipping diesel

propulsion options, and offers a diesel generator, eliminating both the high risk of carbon monoxide and the need to carry gasoline in addition to diesel fuel. Topside amenities include a dual helm seat and a dinette with facing lounges — picture lunch up top with your crew.

Ranger Tugs are built in the Northeast to handle any rugged waters.

SPECS

• LOA: 35'2" • BEAM: 10'0" • FUEL CAPACITY: 180 • HORSEPOWER: Volvo Penta D-4 300 • UPPER STATION: Standard • LOWER STATION: Standard • BASE PRICE: \$319,937

SEA RAY FLY 400

Dual stations in the Fly 400 give complete versatility to the skipper and allow his crew to enjoy boating in temperate weather on the roomy bridge above or in chilly weather in the sumptuous salon below. Steps to the bridge are carved from the aft cockpit but offer a less athletic climb to the upper deck, and the generous beam accommodates the

structure while still leaving enjoyable cockpit space with a built-in lounge and table. There's something to be said for a 40-footer.

Once above, the crew is treated to a large L-shaped lounge that wraps around from starboard to stern, and a dual lounge facing forward next to the helm seat adds more seating to total at



least eight covered spots.

Sea Ray is known for luxurious appointments,

hardwood and quality vinyl, and all those treatments are apparent in the

master stateroom and the astonishingly large amidships cabin.

SPECS

• LOA: 40'0" • BEAM: 13'6" • FUEL CAPACITY: 344 gal. • HORSEPOWER: Twin V-drive Cummins QSB 480 6.7-liter diesels • UPPER STATION: Standard • LOWER STATION: Standard • BASE PRICE: \$817,747

SPEED METAL



THE FUTURE OF PONTOONS IS FAST. **BY JOHN TIGER**



PHOTO: COURTESY PLAYCRAFT BOATS

O

On a sunny day in August 2013, a pontoon enthusiast named Brad Rowland fired up the triple 300 hp Mercury ProMax 300x engines on his 25-foot South Bay tritoon and hammered the throttles. He proceeded to rip down the speed run at the Lake

of the Ozarks (LOTO) Shootout at a staggering 114 mph, setting a Guinness World Record for the fastest pontoon boat ... ever. Wow.

To get that record, Rowland had to do a ton of setup and modifications to his boat, as well as tweak the engines

and propellers. But going fast in a pontoon boat is no longer as uncommon as you'd think. Several builders we interviewed, including Forest River, PlayCraft and Manitou, offer pontoons that can fly.

So, if you're tired of plodding around the

lake in your old-school pontoon with a 30-horse two-stroke, barely able to outrun that afternoon thunderstorm back to your dock, take heed. Today, you can buy an off-the-floor 'toon that will hit 55, 65, even 70 mph. Here's how they make 'em go fast.



METAL THUNDER

Watching a 27-plus-foot pontoon rise up on its sponsons and rocket down the lake at 60-plus mph is, well, surreal. It's like watching a Boeing 777 lift off. Your first thought is, "How does it fly?" In the case of the pontoon (and the 777, for that matter), it's a matter of meticulous engineering, testing and plain-old brute power. A big 'toon is long, wide and heavy, and blows through the air and over the water like a brick — so it needs big engines, and years of setup savvy, to get it flying.

Much of the initial groundwork accolades for fast pontoons must certainly go to one man: Jim Dorris, founder and owner of Playcraft Boats. Dorris has built, set up, won races and set records in just about every kind of vessel imaginable. He started Charger Bass Boats in 1974, and it followed, later in his life, that he began to apply

his high-performance boatbuilding knowledge and experience to the pontoon boats he built and sold out of his Missouri factory. This was a personal thing for Dorris; as he got older, he sought the comfort

and relaxation of pontooning but didn't want to give up running fast with the "big boys."

At the now-famous LOTO Shootout back in 1995, Dorris showed up with what he called a Hydro-Toon powered by a small-block 350 Chevy and MerCruiser

sterndrive. That was the beginning. Though the 46 mph recorded top speed he attained was unheard of then, it's positively staid now. Power, design and, of course, speeds accelerated on a steep curve; by 2001, Dorris' crew logged 81 mph speeds



SMALL-BLOCK 350 CHEVY

Jim Dorris of Playcraft started the fast 'toon revolution in 1995 when he paired a 350 Chevy engine with a MerCruiser sterndrive, installed it on a Hydro-Toon and hit a top speed of 46 mph. Since then, pontoons have gotten even faster, capable of hitting speeds over 100 mph.





at Mercury's Lake X with twin Merc 300x outboards. In 2010, PlayCraft was the first to break 100 mph with a pontoon boat.

Dorris and PlayCraft may have been the first to the pontoon speed party, but today the field has become packed with power players. Notables include South Bay and Manitou Pontoons; both companies routinely outfit their highly engineered craft with dual and triple outboards, capable of speeds well into the 60s, 70s and beyond.

'TOONING UP

While 100 mph sure is a sexy number, it's way beyond the capability of 99 percent of the rigs out there. It takes an extremely dedicated effort (not to mention piles of money) to break 100 mph, let alone hit the world-record 114. However, it's not uncommon to idle up to the sandbar today and see single-engine pontoons capable of 50-plus-mph speeds, and twin-engine rigs capable of 60-plus mph. So, what does it take to build a pontoon capable of achieving these speeds, all the while remaining a factory-warrantable boat that's easy to operate and doesn't fall apart after a year or two? To find out, we corralled Dorris, as well as

IT TAKES AN EXTREMELY DEDICATED EFFORT (NOT TO MENTION PILES OF MONEY) TO BREAK 100 MPH, LET ALONE HIT THE WORLD-RECORD 114.

South Bay (Forest River) marketing director John Sweeney and his chief applications engineer, Greg Barsoda. We also spent some time with Manitou's Greg Van Wagenen, who heads up its marketing and communications department.

South Bay was the first to offer triple-log pontoon configurations on every package, back in 2005. For 2018, the company's new thing is the V-Lite honeycomb-core decking, which combines light weight and torsional strength. South Bay boats all use 25-inch-diameter tubes with full-length radiused underdeck ("belly") skinning. This feature cleans up the air traveling under the decks, adding streamlining to an otherwise "dirty" surface. Extruded, radiused lifting strakes are applied to the center tube (on 2.5 series models) and also on the outer tubes, both on the inside (3.0 models) and outside as spray

rails (3.0+ models). The inner strakes work together to form a "pad" running surface, much like a performance pleasure V-hull. The strake placement and shape is patterned after racing-tunnel hull and offshore-catamaran designs, so the hulls lift clean from the water with less power, and turn sharply without bobbling or excessive banking. The strakes on the outside also keep spray out and away from the hull. South Bay's pontoons are pressurized at the factory at 3.5 psi, to keep them from "oil canning" and deforming under extreme loads.

Of course, performance rigging in the form of jack plates and high-performance propellers and gear cases is available on single- and twin-engine pontoons. High-performance assisted hydraulic steering is also a must to keep the larger engines' torque in check at high speeds.



Racing gear cases handle extra torque.



High-performance propellers add miles per hour.



Jack plates help adjust engines for peak speed.

PHOTOS: (FROM TOP) COURTESY MERCURY MARINE; (6) COURTESY WEST MARINE; (OPPOSITE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP) COURTESY PLATON BOATS; COURTESY SOUTH BAY PONTON; COURTESY GENERAL MOTORS



TUBULAR INNOVATION

Manitou's designs are easily recognized, due to the stylized fiberglass deck fencing and seating arrangements — not to mention the gorgeous paint jobs. But it's underneath where the design, setup and rigging

produce the speed and handling characteristics that make these 'toons favorites among the performance and show-off fanatics. Manitou VP of Operations Dave Curtis designed and patented Manitou's V-Toon hull

design, drawing on his extensive snowmobile/motocross racing and performance pleasure-boating background. Manitou employs a larger (27-inch-diameter) center tube between the two smaller 25-inch-

diameter outboard tubes. This arrangement effectively presents a V shape to the water, which delivers a ride akin to that of a V-hulled runabout. This design, coupled with strategic placement and shape of the lifting strakes and spray rails, produces flat cornering and strong acceleration, along with enhanced top speed handling. Manitou started

rigging twin-engine hulls in 2017 with up to 600 hp. Recent packages with twin Mercury Racing Verado 400R outboards have seen speeds of 73-plus mph with factory stock rigging.

PlayCraft pontoons, even the lower-cost Hampton series models, are all designed with performance in mind. With a single Mercury Racing 400R outboard, the 2685 Hampton hit 78 mph at LOTO in 2017, with Dorris' wife, Carolyn, handling the driving chores. PlayCraft's most popular rig is its 27-foot Xtreme with a single Mercury Racing Verado 350 or 400R outboard; speeds with the 350 are in the mid- to high 50s, while the 400R tops 60 mph. The latest popular package is the "10 Wide" (10-foot-wide) hull; at lengths between 30 and 36 feet and fitted with twin 350 Verados, speeds are in the low to mid-60s; with twin 400Rs, these boats run just under 70 mph. PlayCraft employs stepped running surfaces; much like performance offshore racers, the steps relieve water pressure under the sponsons and aerate the water, providing performance gains from 2 to nearly 5 mph (depending on the number, size and shape of the steps) over a conventional



PHOTOS: (FROM TOP) COURTESY HAMPTON PONTOONS, COURTESY MANITOU PONTOON BOATS



THIS DESIGN, COUPLED WITH STRATEGIC PLACEMENT AND SHAPE OF THE LIFTING STRAKES AND SPRAY RAILS, GIVES FLAT CORNERING AND STRONG ACCELERATION ALONG WITH TOP SPEED.

nonstepped 'toon. Play-Craft's pontoons are not round, like many others. They are U-shaped with added lifting strakes to boost speed and offer turning and handling similar to V-bottom hulls.

POWER AUTHORITY

All builders clearly recognize the recent recharging of the horsepower race. Manitou's Van Wagenen notes that "outboards continue to get larger and

more powerful, and at Manitou, we're working on stronger and better materials and designs to hold up to the increased weight, torque and power, as well as increased potential speeds."

PlayCraft's Dorris takes a conservative approach: He notes that while 400, 500 and larger-horsepower engines will become more commonplace in the near future, PlayCraft is testing all boats — and has been for a long time — with full decking, furniture, arches, etc., to

ensure that models will perform well in real-world conditions. "If a customer demands an extreme setup, such as triple engines, we will do that only on a much larger — 30-plus-foot-long minimum — hull package," he adds.

So, will 100 mph pontoons soon be commonplace at your local lake? "We have pretty much approached the wall as far as speed-enhancing performance designs are concerned," says South Bay's Greg Barsoda.

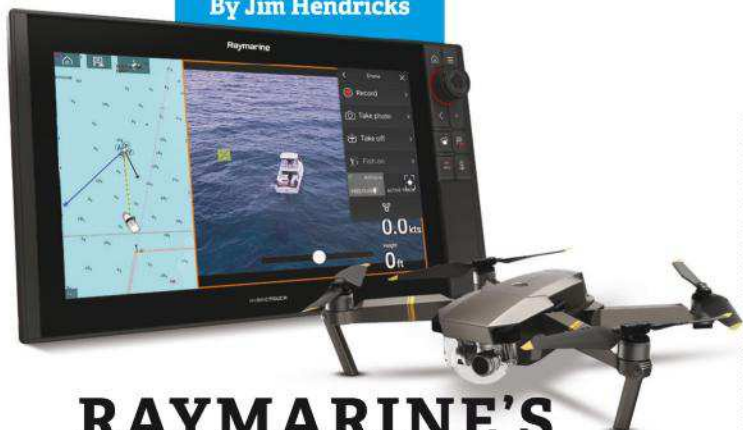
Despite rapidly increasing horsepower and torque from larger engines, boat manufacturers thankfully recognize the need for a safe and sane approach to design for speed, as opposed to chasing every last mile per hour with no respect for what can happen if the design, execution and setup aren't spot-on. So, get ready to enjoy some speed on the water, in a boat that's not designed in a "speed at all costs" manner. Finally, here's some heavy metal that's music to our ears.



MORE POWER

Pontoon builders have adapted construction to handle big, powerful outboards on the transom.

By Jim Hendricks



RAYMARINE'S UAV INTEGRATION

Launch and control your drone from the helm

With marine multifunction displays, you can look underwater with sonar, all around the boat with radar, and even peer through the dark with a thermal camera. Now you can also look down from above on your boat, thanks to the unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) control feature built into the Raymarine Axiom and Axiom Pro MFDs.

This marine-electronics first allows boaters to connect to a UAV, then control the drone and view images from its camera using the Axiom display. The patent-pending technology is currently compatible with DJI Spark and DJI Mavic series UAV video drones (see "Compatible UAV Models"). Features include single-button

launch/track/record functions, GPS link for various follow modes, and real-time video streaming to the MFD.

It works like this: First you need to update your Axiom or Axiom Pro with the latest Raymarine Lighthouse software — version 3.5 — a free download directly to the MFD. Then pair a drone such as the DJI Mavic

Pro (shown left, \$1,299, store.dji.com) with the MFD. Press Take Off to launch the UAV and track it with a live-chart display on one side of the Axiom split-screen display, which will show the drone's location, along with the direction in which the camera is pointed, the direction the drone is headed, and the course back to the boat.

The other side of the split screen shows a live feed from the UAV's video camera with data overlays that include the drone's distance from the boat, as well as its speed and altitude.

A Fish-On button is designed to automatically capture fishing action. As soon as you hook up (for example, while trolling for tuna or drifting for tarpon), you press the Hook-Up button. The drone instantly launches, acquires and tracks the boat, and starts recording aerial footage of the action. You can also view the action live on the Axiom display to see, for instance, if any mahi are following the one you just hooked.

To check out our video of the system in action, visit boatingmag.com/raymarine-uav.



Ask KEN Q&A

HOW CAN I BE ELECTRONICALLY UNNOTICEABLE WHEN FISHING?

Communicate and navigate like a spy. For example, voice scramblers are optional with some models of VHF radios, including handheld portables. These can be installed and used when talking on the air with fishing buddies.

With practical ranges of 1 to 6 miles, FRS (Family Radio Service) and GMRS (General Mobile Radio Service) are inexpensive (less than \$50 to \$120). These can be used to communicate in semiprivacy, and some sets have voice-scrambling ability.

Garmin's InReach portable radios (\$400 to \$450 plus subscription) let you send and receive text messages in privacy with other InReach devices and mobile phones. Mobile phones can also prove useful when fishing within cell coverage.

Also, don't advertise your location. Did you know that you can turn off your AIS broadcasts that show your position yet at the same time still receive AIS data from other vessels? Ask your dealer or installer how to install a switch to silence your AIS's transmitter.

—Ken Engler

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COMPATIBLE UAV MODELS

The new UAV control function of Raymarine's Axiom and Axiom Pro MFDs is compatible with these video drones.



DJI SPARK

The affordably priced Spark mini-drone (not shown) includes ActiveTrack, which can automatically recognize and track objects. PalmControl mode allows you to control the Spark's movements and take pictures with hand gestures, with a stabilized two-axis gimbal for smooth video footage. You can choose from pano or shallow-focus modes to get the shots you want. Return-to-home mode ensures you won't lose your Spark when the battery runs low. With flight speeds up to 31 mph, it offers 16 minutes of maximum flying time on a single battery charge. \$399; store.dji.com

DJI MAVIC AIR

Among the Mavic series is the Mavic Air (shown left). Designed to fold for easy transport, it features top-of-the-line flight and video performance. The three-axis gimbal, three-directional environment sensing, and 4K camera offer the capability of 32-megapixel sphere panoramas and 100 Mbps video capture. Gimbal dampeners create steady shots. It includes a remote, but you can also use hand gestures to launch and control this drone in SmartCapture mode. With flight speeds up to 42.5 mph, it offers 21 minutes of maximum flying time on a single charge. \$799; store.dji.com



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- 11-1/8" L x 4-1/2" H



Customer Rating **★★★★★**

COMPARE TO SUPERWINCH \$189.99
MODEL: 1125220

Voted Best Winches

SAVE \$140
~~\$69.99~~

NOW \$49.99

ITEM 61297/63476/61840/61258 shows

10989621

LIMIT 3 - Coupon valid through 10/19/18*

CENTRAL PNEUMATIC **SUPER COUPON**

3 GALLON, 100 PSI OIL-FREE AIR COMPRESSORS

A. HOT DOG ITEM 69269/97080 shows

B. PANCAKE ITEM 60637/61615 95275 shows



Customer Rating **★★★★★**

• Air delivery:
0.6 CFM @ 90 PSI
1 CFM @ 40 PSI

COMPARE TO PORTER-CABLE \$98.62
MODEL: P0P0R0003

SAVE 59%
~~\$57.99~~

YOUR CHOICE
~~\$39.99~~

ITEM 60637/61615 95275 shows

10992454

LIMIT 4 - Coupon valid through 10/19/18*

Bauer **SUPER COUPON**

20 VOLT LITHIUM CORDLESS 1/2" COMPACT DRILL/DRIVER KIT

- 450 in. lbs. of torque
- 1.5 amp hour battery
- Weighs 3.4 lbs.



Customer Rating **★★★★★**

COMPARE TO RYOBI \$99
MODEL: P1811

SAVE \$39
~~\$69.99~~

NOW \$59.99

ITEM 63531

10995631

LIMIT 9 - Coupon valid through 10/19/18*

SUPER COUPON

HEAVY DUTY FOLDABLE ALUMINUM SPORTS CHAIR



Customer Rating **★★★★★**

COMPARE TO COLEMAN \$49.99
MODEL: 200022092

ITEM 63066/62314/66383 shows

10997497

LIMIT 5 - Coupon valid through 10/19/18*

SUPER COUPON

7 FT. 4" x 9 FT. 6" ALL PURPOSE/WEATHER RESISTANT TARP



Customer Rating **★★★★★**

COMPARE TO BLUE HAWK \$9.98
MODEL: 806210-Y

ITEM 69115/69121/69129/69137/69249/877 shows

11000310

LIMIT 3 - Coupon valid through 10/19/18*

PITTSBURGH **SUPER COUPON**

LIFETIME WARRANTY 130 PIECE TOOL KIT WITH CASE

SAE AND METRIC



Customer Rating **★★★★★**

COMPARE TO HDX \$66.99
MODEL: H127NDS

ITEM 63248/64080/64263/68998/63091 shows

11006237

LIMIT 4 - Coupon valid through 10/19/18*

PITTSBURGH **SUPER COUPON**

CLICK-TYPE TORQUE WRENCHES

LIFETIME WARRANTY

- Reversible



Customer Rating **★★★★★**

DRIVE	ITEM
1/4"	61277/63881/2696
3/8"	61276/63880/807
1/2"	62431/63882/239

Item 239 shown

COMPARE TO HUSKY \$84.97
MODEL: N207WA

SAVE 88%
~~\$119.99~~

YOUR CHOICE
~~\$9.99~~

ITEM 61277/63881/2696 shows

11011930

LIMIT 5 - Coupon valid through 10/19/18*

CHICAGO ELECTRIC **SUPER COUPON**

6" VARIABLE SPEED DUAL ACTION POLISHER



Customer Rating **★★★★★**

COMPARE TO PORTER CABLE \$119
MODEL: 7404XP

ITEM 62403/62862/69924 shows

11021054

LIMIT 5 - Coupon valid through 10/19/18*

YUKON **SUPER COUPON**

46" MOBILE WORKBENCH WITH SOLID WOOD TOP



Customer Rating **★★★★★**

- 15,704 cu. in. of storage
- 1200 lb. capacity

COMPARE TO KOBALT \$269.10
MODEL: 801097

ITEM 64023/64012 shows

11023328

LIMIT 3 - Coupon valid through 10/19/18*

FRANKLIN **SUPER COUPON**

17 FT. TYPE IA MULTI-TASK LADDER

OSHA/ANSI COMPLIANT



Customer Rating **★★★★★**

- Versatile - 24 configurations
- Safe + Strong + Secure
- Super Strong - Holds 300 lbs.
- Weighs 34 lbs.

COMPARE TO LITTLE GIANT \$298.99
MODEL: YE 017

ITEM 62514/62656/63418/63419/67646/63417 shows

11028556

LIMIT 4 - Coupon valid through 10/19/18*

HaulMaster **SUPER COUPON**

18" x 12" MOVER'S DOLLY

- 1000 lb. capacity



Customer Rating **★★★★★**

COMPARE TO BUFFALO TOOLS \$17.65
MODEL: M0010LY

ITEM 61899/63095/63096/63097/63098/63888 shows

11030885

LIMIT 5 - Coupon valid through 10/19/18*

HaulMaster **SUPER COUPON**

1000 LB. CAPACITY SWING-BACK TRAILER JACK



Customer Rating **★★★★★**

- Height range: 12-1/2" to 24"

COMPARE TO REESE \$45.99
MODEL: 74401

ITEM 69760/41005 shows

11033402

LIMIT 6 - Coupon valid through 10/19/18*

CENTECH **SUPER COUPON**

AUTOMATIC BATTERY FLOAT CHARGER



Customer Rating **★★★★★**

COMPARE TO IRWIN \$59.98
MODEL: 1580-APKSM

ITEM 69087/60379/91616 shows

11036834

LIMIT 6 - Coupon valid through 10/19/18*

CHICAGO ELECTRIC WELDING **SUPER COUPON**

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Customer Rating **★★★★★**

COMPARE TO IRONTON \$129.99
MODEL: 45423

ITEM 63583 63582 shows

11036593

LIMIT 3 - Coupon valid through 10/19/18*

WARRIOR **SUPER COUPON**

3 PIECE TITANIUM HIGH SPEED STEEL STEP BITS



Customer Rating **★★★★★**

- Drill 28 hole sizes from 1/8" to 3/4"

COMPARE TO IRWIN \$59.98
MODEL: 1580-APKSM

ITEM 69087/60379/91616 shows

11036834

LIMIT 6 - Coupon valid through 10/19/18*

PITTSBURGH **SUPER COUPON**

13 PIECE, 1/2" DRIVE DEEP IMPACT SOCKET SETS



Customer Rating **★★★★★**

COMPARE TO HUSKY \$55.51
MODEL: H03SAE1PGR

ITEM 60395/62325/62493/61523 shows

11100590

LIMIT 5 - Coupon valid through 10/19/18*

PORTLAND **SUPER COUPON**

3-IN-1 ELECTRIC BLOWER VACUUM MULCHER



Customer Rating **★★★★★**

COMPARE TO TORO \$89
MODEL: 81621

ITEM 62469/62337 shows

11056850

LIMIT 4 - Coupon valid through 10/19/18*

drill/master **SUPER COUPON**

1500 WATT DUAL TEMPERATURE HEAT GUN (572°/1112°)



Customer Rating **★★★★★**

COMPARE TO BLACK & DECKER \$28.06
MODEL: H01300

ITEM 62340/62546/63104/96289 shows

11094882

LIMIT 8 - Coupon valid through 10/19/18*

Diablo **SUPER COUPON**

3/8" x 50 FT. INDUSTRIAL GRADE RUBBER AIR HOSE



Customer Rating **★★★★★**

COMPARE TO GOODYEAR \$30.89
MODEL: 12965

ITEM 61939/62884 62890 shows

11097014

LIMIT 9 - Coupon valid through 10/19/18*

PITTSBURGH **SUPER COUPON**

ATV/LAWN MOWER LIPT

- 300 lb. capacity
- Weighs 72.5 lbs.



Customer Rating **★★★★★**

COMPARE TO MAX LOAD \$142.98
MODEL: 38028

ITEM 60395/62325/62493/61523 shows

11100590

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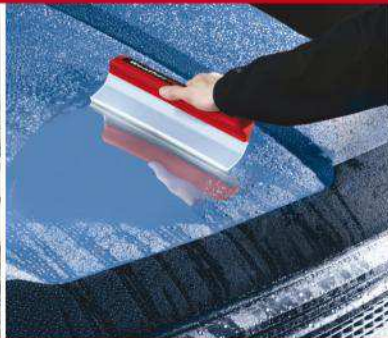
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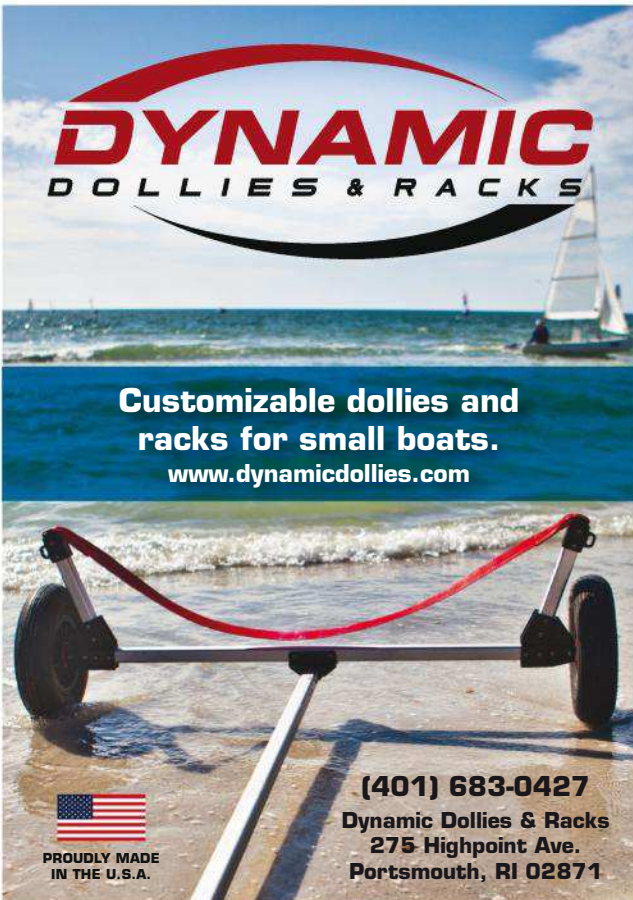
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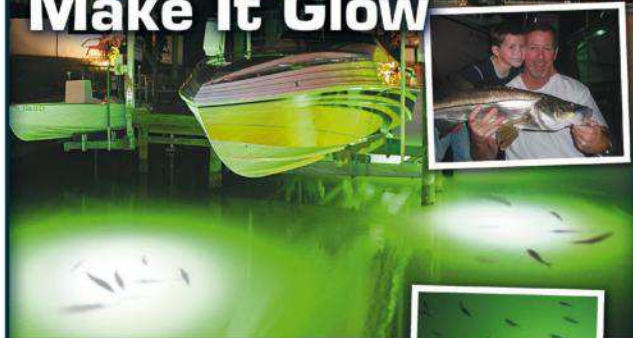
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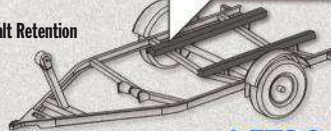
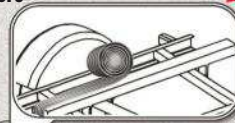
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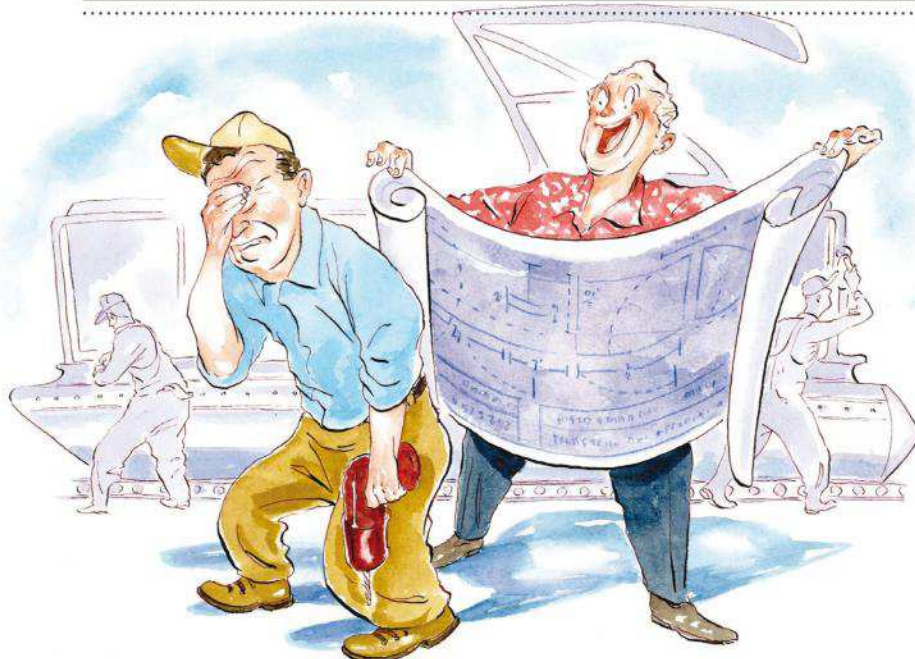
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WHO YOU CALLIN' GOOFY?

One man's great idea bumps into engineering ego

When he walked into the Lake View Inn, our old friend Malcolm Sohm was greeted with a resounding chorus of "Goof! Goof!" It was not a derisive chant. Only the IRS and the DMV know the man as Malcolm. To the world at large he's known as Goofy, a nickname he's owned since 1972.

How Malcolm became Goofy is a long story that involves green beer for lunch on St. Patrick's Day, a Santa suit and a minibike, and an ill-fated dare to lap the halls of Oshkosh High School. "What a goofy thing to do!" exclaimed Principal Rohm as Malcolm lay sprawled on the terrazzo. It was that easy.

A lot of the engineers didn't want to believe a guy named Goofy from Oshkosh had come up with a better-working system. They all have some sort of fin system, but TAP still works best.

Life for Goofy and his wife, Terry, took a turn for the worse in 1995 when their 21-year-old daughter was diagnosed with AIDS, pretty much a death sentence in those days. Goofy was running a one-man body shop south of Oshkosh, Wisconsin, at the time.

"I sat in my shop, and knowing I would lose my daughter, I needed to create something for the future. I looked at my pontoon boat, and the old lightbulb went off," Goofy told me in his funny, Yogi Bear voice. "I wanted to be able to run across Lake Winnebago on a rough day and have it ride like a Scarab and realized I needed to keep the front end up. I C-clamped two pieces of aluminum to the fins on the bow of my boat's tubes, and it made a big difference. I had Terry drive

while I watched the water pattern under the boat and figured it out."

Thus was born the TAP Fin System, for which Goofy received a patent in 1999. A chine welded to the length of the pontoon tubes, TAP has a lip that captures energy from water flowing off the tubes and lifts the boat to reduce drag and improve handling and the ride. Imagining the income from licensing his patent to pontoon builders, Goofy started making the rounds.

"I ran into a lot of not-invented-here attitude," he explained. "A lot of the engineers didn't want to believe a guy named Goofy from Oshkosh had come up with a better-working system. They all have some sort of fin system, but TAP still works best."

Goofy did license TAP for a few years, and he sells about 100 kits annually directly to boat owners. He and Terry recently moved to North Carolina.

Back for a visit this winter, Goofy took a Lake View bar stool next to mine and whispered over his soda: "I've got another trick up my sleeve. I've solved the problem of vortation on these big pontoons, all the turbulence that cavitates the prop. My attorney is writing the patent. I've got them again!"

I think "vortation" is a Goofism. Maybe this time boatbuilders won't let ego get in the way of a good idea. Even if that idea comes from a guy named Goofy.

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