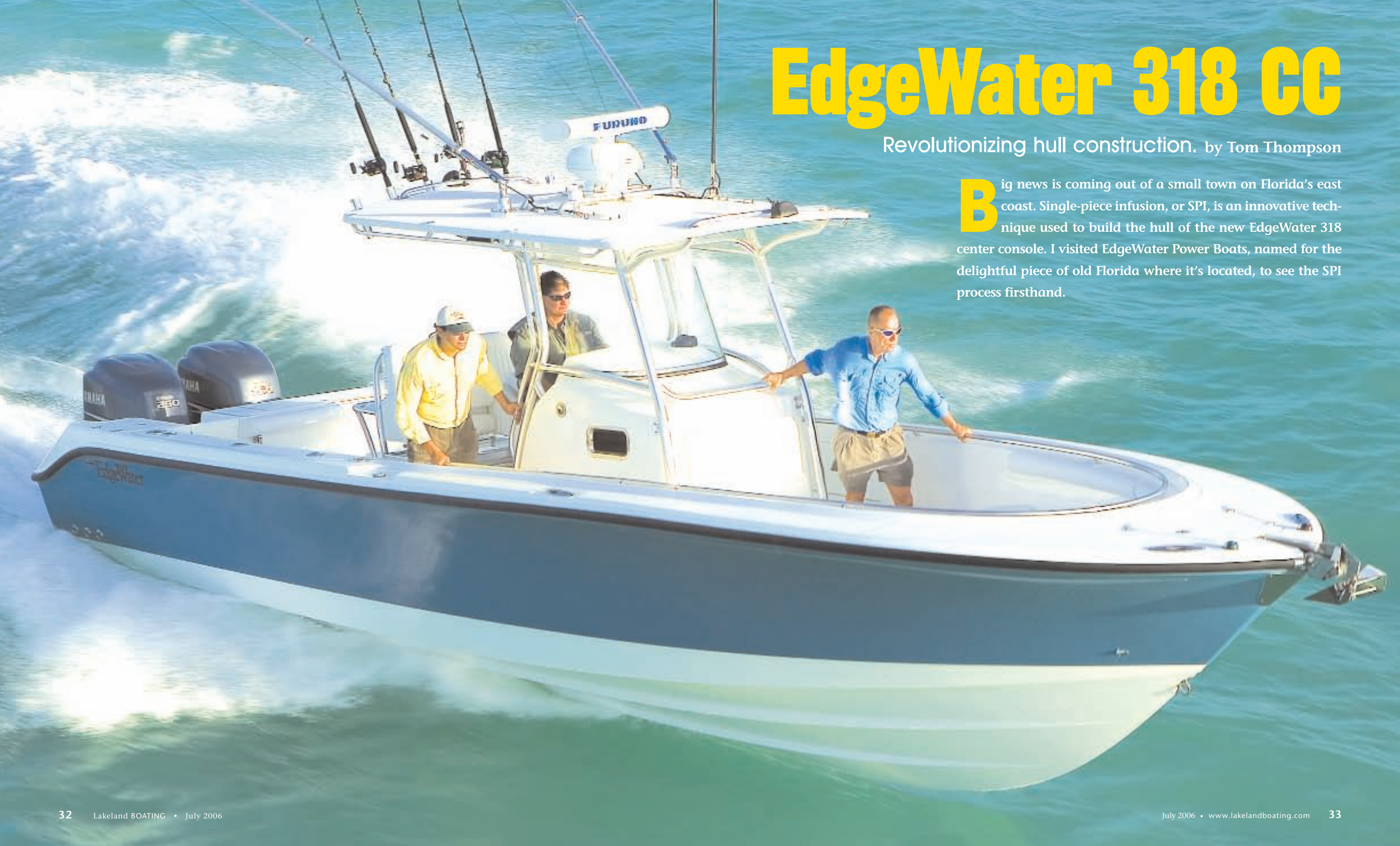


# EdgeWater 318 CC

Revolutionizing hull construction. by Tom Thompson

**B**ig news is coming out of a small town on Florida's east coast. Single-piece infusion, or SPI, is an innovative technique used to build the hull of the new EdgeWater 318 center console. I visited EdgeWater Power Boats, named for the delightful piece of old Florida where it's located, to see the SPI process firsthand.





Resin and fiberglass are applied directly to an open mold. This is more labor-intensive than traditional hull construction, and has been limited so far mainly to custom boatbuilders. With SPI, the stringer system and dry-knitted fiberglass fabric are placed inside the mold, bagged with plastic sheeting and sealed. Vacuum is then applied to remove all the air. Valves on small hoses, which have been placed strategically throughout the hull bagging, are then opened to allow a flow of vinyl ester resin to be drawn through the entire structure. The visual effect is quite dramatic. You can watch the color change as the dark resin moves through to encapsulate the white fabric. Once the hull is cured, it's injected with closed-cell foam flotation to make it virtually unsinkable. One more thing: No trees were harmed in the making of this boat—the 318 CC is wood-free.

There are two significant reasons for using SPI, says Jason Gibson, director of operations. First

and foremost, the process is environmentally friendly because it nearly eliminates harmful hydrocarbon emissions. Equally as important, SPI creates a hull that's consistently thick and predictably strong throughout. Gibson told me that in conventional production layout, hulls could vary in weight as much as 20 to 30 percent from one to the next. With SPI, this range is reduced to less than 8 percent.

Because the hull weight is more predictable, the boat can be built lighter and stronger, which means it will go faster. The 318 CC was designed for a pair of Yamaha 250-hp four-stroke outboards. After my plant tour, I took one of these center consoles for a ride. The performance was as impressive as the production.

The Yamahas give the 318 CC a smooth acceleration. It gets on plane in less than 8 seconds, and you hardly notice because there's almost no bow rise. Midrange acceleration is strong, and the

handling is superb. I would recommend getting the optional power-assisted steering. The boat I was on didn't have it but could have used it.

Even though the water was choppy during our test, all I felt were little bumps. The hull sliced through the chop like a hot knife through butter. Top speed was just under 53 mph. At a 4000-rpm cruise, the vessel ran at 33 mph and burned only 1.69 gph. This would yield nearly 160 miles, allowing for a 10-percent reserve, from the 296-gallon tank.

The EdgeWater 318 CC's deck layout is well designed for offshore fishing, with plenty of room for several anglers to work. And work they will to fill the enormous 620-quart insulated in-deck fishbox. Across the stern, there's a lighted 28-gallon baitwell, an insulated 66-gallon baitwell, a freshwater sink with pull-out shower, and a transom door. There's also a flip-down bench seat.

The console has a large expanse of panel space. Our test boat had a pair of 10-inch Furuno displays. An electronics box is available for the optional fiberglass T-top. The comfortable bucket seats at the helm have flip-up bolsters and are adjustable. There's another bench seat located in front of the console. Inside the console, a spacious compartment features a standard VacuFlush head with a pumpout and overboard discharge.

Something you don't find often on a center-console boat is an electrically operated table for the bench seating at the bow. At the push of a button, this optional feature lowers to create a casting platform. The U-shaped bench has three storage lockers in it.

The SPI process used to make the EdgeWater 318 CC puts the price on the high side for boats in this class, but it's not out of line. After a test ride, you'll probably feel like I did—that the amount you pay for the high-tech construction and outstanding performance just may be worthwhile. ↓

### Specs

LOA.....	31'10"
Beam.....	10'2"
Draft (hull only).....	1'10"
Weight.....	6,500 lbs.
Fuel capacity.....	296 gals.
Base power.....	T/Yamaha F250TXR four-stroke O/Bs
Base price.....	\$96,923
Price as tested.....	\$151,086

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