

# Regulator 30 Express

A maxed-out cockpit and cabin for fishing or family fun.

BY HEATHER FRECKMANN

Since it introduced its first model in 1990, Regulator Marine has become known for its traditional 23- to 32-foot center-console sportfishing boats. This year, however, the builder is venturing out to broader territory. The company introduced its largest-ever express model at the Fort Lauderdale International Boat Show in October.

Wyatt Lane, who was Regulator's national sales manager, met me at the Miami International Boat Show in February. As I stepped aboard hull No. 1 of the Regulator 30 Express at the Sea Isle Marina, he commented that customers demanded this direction. "Within offshore sportfishing, people now are looking for something versatile and family-friendly," he said. "The other thing everyone's chasing is speed."

Like its sisters, the 30 Express is designed for serious offshore conditions along the seaboard. It also translates with ease to the Great Lakes, built to accommodate a family cruise as well as a hardcore fishing trip.

I first noticed the impressive cockpit, which is roomy due to Regulator's exclusive Fiberglass Grillage System. "Rather than using an integrated transom, we incorporate an Armstrong bracket," Lane explained. "We gain 40 inches of cockpit space, and that's a lot of room to work with."

Within the cockpit floor are access hatches to the bilge, the generator and storage, all finished fiberglass spaces, with the exception of the transducer pocket. Also in the cockpit is a 340-quart transom fishbox that drains overboard and an insulated 35-gallon livewell with live bait circulation. The bait-prep center and freshwater sink are located behind the helm. Lane pointed out that the covers are all molded fiberglass, making them easy to clean. Beneath the bait-prep area are drawers and trays for tackle storage. The 30 also comes equipped with four rod holders and additional rod storage in the cabin.

I had to wait a few minutes to enter the cabin for a young family from Birmingham, Alabama to finish examining the boat. Both parents commented on the aft-facing mezzanine seat and the large L-shaped lounge that wrapped around the center helm and captain's pedestal seat. And the cabin? A chorus of "We love it!"

With full standing headroom throughout, the 30's cabin is spacious for a boat this size. The dining area converts to a forward V-berth with an

adjustable teak table. I liked the sweeping curve of the backrest, which formed an elegant U rather than following the V of the bow, and the fact that both it and the berth itself concealed additional storage. An aft berth offers extra sleeping accommodations, best suited for either two children or one adult.

The galley contains a stainless steel sink with a pressurized hot-cold water system, AC/DC stainless steel drawer refrigerator, microwave and single-burner electric stove. The head, which offers full standing headroom, also has a stainless steel sink with pressurized hot and cold water, and features a shower.

After firing up the new four-stroke Yamaha F350 V8s, Lane observed that boaters' needs are shifting in these days of limited time and, more importantly, higher fuel costs. "They don't need what they used to have," he said. "Now they want easy maintenance, fuel economy."

Finally we hit what might be described as open water—if it weren't shredded with the wakes of every conceivable type of powerboat, all jockeying for space within the narrow channel. While the crowd was nerve-racking for a Great Lakes boater accustomed to breathing room, the chaos did create the choppy wave action frequently found in our part of the country. I took the helm. "Be ready," Lane cautioned. "She's so responsive, you'll be out of the hole before you know it."

He wasn't kidding. We leaped up and took off, the Florida sun gleaming on the channel's churning water. We found the ideal cruise at approximately 34 mph, while top speed was a blistering 56.9 mph.

It's not hard to envision this express on the Great Lakes. Although Regulators were originally designed for the saltwater market, the Regulator 30 should find success in any waters.

## Specs

LOA.....	38'
Beam.....	10'7"
Draft.....	3'3"
Weight.....	11,600 lbs.
Fuel capacity.....	300 gals.
Power as tested.....	T/Yamaha F350 V8s
Price as tested.....	\$269,000

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