





TEST RESULTS

Cruise Control

With 90-plus-mph top speed and a soft ride, B&H's Water Rod 300 is a versatile offering.

By East Coast offshore and Great Lakes standards, Colorado River conditions are—at their worst—fairly tame. That said, a windy day on Lake Mead or Lake Havasu can whip up disorganized 3-footers that are no fun in a low-freeboard, rough-riding boat. But those conditions are just fine in the B&H Performance Water Rod 300.

On the day we tested the stepped-V-bottom in Parker, Ariz., the winds were up, and that translated to 3-foot slop. To its considerable credit, the 30-footer, which had a closed deck but also is offered in a midcabin version with an open bow, produced a smooth ride. In fact, it was among the softest-riding models we tested during this roundup.

Heading up river, we did eventually find water conducive for opening up the Water Rod 300, which was powered by an 800-horsepower, fuel-injected engine from Teague Custom Marine with a 1.5:1 ratio TCM Platinum drive and a 29"-pitch five-blade Hydromotive propeller. With the engine turning 5,450 rpm, the boat reached 92.8 mph on radar and 94 mph on GPS.

Cruising at 4,000 rpm, the 6,200-pound boat maintained a steady 70 mph.

Far from overmatched by the 800-hp engine, the Water Rod 300 made great use of the juice as it reached 88 mph from a standing start in 20 seconds. Time to plane for the boat with its Dana Marine HP1000 trim tabs down was 4.3 seconds. Midrange acceleration punch was stout as the boat ran from 30 to 50 mph in 3.2 seconds and from 40 to 70 mph in 6.9 seconds.

Our only complaint concerned the boat's dark windshield, which was tough to see through. Also, at higher speeds the windshield offered little breeze protection for our driver and co-pilot.

In terms of agility, the Water Rod 300 was both nimble

and predictable. Both are essential qualities in a family oriented boat that can run more than 90 mph. Dual-ram hydraulic steering from IMCO provided positive response and feel at the helm, and the boat grooved its way through turn after turn. Tracking was polished and disciplined.

B&H did a solid job with the test boat's gelcoat graphics and tooling. Colors were bright and crisp, and the deck and hullsides were even. The boat was constructed with vinyl ester resin, 1708 and 1808 fiberglass, Coremat, 2-ounce and 4-ounce mat and 18- and 24-ounce woven roving.

Like the mold and color application, rigging was handled expertly. Through-bolted L-angles were used to mount the big-block engine to the stringers, and wiring was clean and secure.

Upholstery work in the carpeted cockpit and cabin was the best we've seen from B&H to date. Cockpit seating included a four-person bench and two bolsters, which were connected to the gunwales with stainless-steel rails that doubled as grab handles for the bench passengers. A mixture of Livorsi Marine and Gaffrig gauges was supplied at the station.

Angled footrests were provided for the driver and observer, making the ride more comfortable in the rough stuff. The co-pilot's station was outfitted with a glove box and a grab handle.

Though B&H often loads interiors with amenities, the builder kept things simple in the cabin of our test boat. In terms of daylong functionality and keeping cabin space open and usable, that's not a bad idea.

The boat's cabin was outfitted with a pair of facing lounges, a sizable V-berth and interior lights. Of course, the company will add amenities to suit a buyer's taste and budget.

Thanks to its color scheme and line, the B&H Water Rod 300 looked the part of a West Coast custom boat. Thanks to a well-designed hull and an 800-hp engine, it also played the part to the hilt. But in an unexpected role, that of a versatile family boat, this player also excelled.—MT 

Centerline
29'8"

Beam
8'6"

Hull weight
6,200 pounds

Price as tested
\$169,300

Engine
Teague Custom Marine 800 EFI

Cubic-inch displacement/hp
509/800

Propeller
Hydromotive P-5 15 1/2" x 29"

Zero to 20 seconds
88 mph

30 to 50 mph
3.2 seconds

Top speed at rpm
94 mph at 5,450

Time to plane
4.3 seconds

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From left: The 30-footer reached 94 mph on GPS behind the 800-hp engine. At the helm, B&H included a mixture of Gaffrig and Livorsi Marine gauges. For extra stowage, the back cushion of the twin bucket seats could be removed.