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MAG BAY 33

A FLASHY SPORTFISHER FROM INDUSTRY VETERANS

We were skipping across the top of the Pacific Ocean's small peaks at 55 mph with two Yamaha F300 V6 Offshore outboards growing on the transom, 600 combined horsepower that could have us to Catalina Island in a little more than 30 minutes — and lunchtime was approaching. Alas, we had work to do, and despite the silhouette beckoning in the distance, work won out this day. But work ain't had when one gets to test a new boat, in this case the Mag Bay 33, a California-built center console from the folks who brought you Cabo sportfishing boats.

I was on the sea trial with Barrett Howarth, vice president of Mag Bay and a second-generation boat builder who started learning the business before he learned to tie his shoes — his playpen had a spot on the Cabo factory floor (and judging by his footwear on the sea trial, the whole shoe-tying thing may still be on hold). His father, Mike, was a

founder of Cabo, and much of that Cabo DNA has made its way into Mag Bay, with fishing, performance, durability and quality driving the process. The Howarths — with a design from Michael Peters Yacht Design — are building Mag Bay boats back in their old stomping grounds of Adelanto, though they aren't in the old Cabo factory space, yet.

HEAD-TURNER

White is the standard hull color, but our test boat is sea foam green, and it's the first thing you observe about the boat. Out on the water I noticed, as the outboards churned up the water, that the forward part of the wake was nearly the same color as the hull. (The sea foam was green. Aha.) I could be wrong about the color being the first thing people notice, though, because the shape of the hull is sure to capture one's attention. It starts with a Carolina flare at the bow and sweeps gently downward to a tumblehome stem. Combine those features with a T-top whose underside matches the hull and a powder-coated aluminum support structure, and the visual side of things is pleasant, memorable and different. Heck, even the outboards were painted white and given a sea foam green Yamaha logo.

But it's not only during the day that the 33 stands out. Its lighting — cle-



The Mag Bay 33 has more features than you might expect on a 33-foot center console and helm seat — changes color to create a party atmosphere on the water.

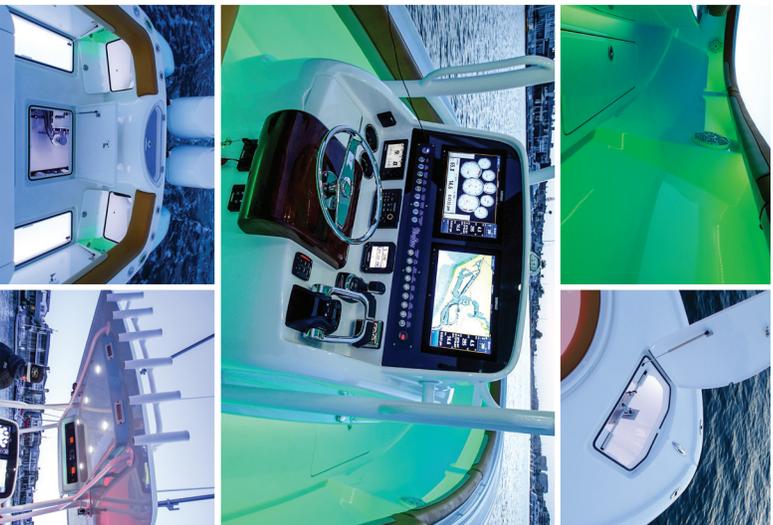
erly hidden under the gunwale, center console and helm seat — changes color to create a party atmosphere on the water.

SOLIDLY BUILT

Mag Bay's principals went into the design process knowing — hoping — fishermen would run the boat hard in all seas, so they went for solidity. The hull is all glass, and it felt solid during our admittedly calm-sea run. The stringer grid is molded, which creates more room and strength, and the transom and splashwell are part of deck, not a separate mold. That's partly to accommodate the tumblehome design, but it also gives the boat a unibody deck and a cleaner look, as the hull-to-deck joint is glassed in and invisible.

CLEVER USE OF SPACE

Something nearly every boat owner



The Mag Bay 33 has more features than you might expect on a 33-foot center console, that desire can be intensified. Mag Bay designers delivered more space, but it's almost as if they had the "less is more" mantra in mind — except there is actually more.

wants is more space, and on a 33-foot center console, that desire can be intensified. Mag Bay designers delivered more space, but it's almost as if they had the "less is more" mantra in mind — except there is actually more.

it's just hidden. Two fishboxes are built into the deck, one fore (the primary one) and one aft, each with its own macerator and lighting. The forward hold fit five pre-tents in it during a boat show demonstration (it was catch-and-release). Twin rectangular storage compartments, which drain to the bilge, flank both of those fishboxes, with room for rods, diving equipment or, alternatively, wakeboards and deflated water toys, because you can only listen to "haven't you caught enough fish yet" so many times before you cave. There's a baitwell on the transom and a two- or three-percent sump deck console in the bow that

lifts to expose a large storage locker, which can be turned into a giant cooler thanks to a drain. A feature the less hardcore crowd will find indispensable is the head

Unexpected Finds

- The bilge is finished.
- The cup and rod holders are plumbed.
- All the fish holds have a macerator.
- Wires are PVC routed.
- The toe kicks built into the deck, not attached.
- The hatches have gaskets, to cut down on rattle.
- There is an integrated outboard flush, so the garden hose does both engines at once.

compartment. Found under the helm console and down a couple of steps, the head is fully standup for about 90 percent of the population, though the



door is smaller.

The helm-seat console is a symmetrical unit, with the seat fore and a fishing station aft. The fishing station consists of cup and rod holders across the top of the “seatback,” a sink and cutting board under a hefty lid, which itself provides a nice, flat working surface, and a cooler that’s tucked underneath. The cooler is on a slide to provide easy access, and it’s cushioned, so it acts as another seat when deployed. In a bit of

competition against other fishermen or just out for a day of pelagic pugilism, getting from one spot to another is a “right now” proposition, and the Howarths are aware of that; hence, the deep-V hull with 600 hp of go-fast power.

Howarth and I sat at the three-wide helm seat — all three sections flip up independently to create leaning backrests — during the test and used the twin Simrad multifunction glass dash screens and the Yamaha engine displays to gather our intel. As I mentioned previously, our top speed was 55 mph at 5650 rpm, at which point the Yamahas were burning a combined 55 gph. With a 10 percent reserve, range is still close to 300 miles at top speed. Slow it down to a comfortable 40 mph cruising speed, and the fuel burn drops under 30 gph, yielding 1.3 to 1.4 mpg. Those four-strokes are efficient. At 30 mph, 4000 rpm, fuel burn was 20 gph.

Handling was nimble, as you would expect from a boat with the Optimus Electronic Power Steering system — the inward lean was pronounced but not 19-foot jetboat scary — and acceleration was quick. We reached 30 mph in 11.2 seconds, made it to 40 mph in 17.2 seconds and crossed 50 in 25.7 seconds. All the while the bow rise was minimal, coming up a little as the boat got out of the hole and settling back down once the hull was on plane.

An acrylic windscreen, fitted perfectly into the T-top supports, provided a barrier; we were

good thinking, designers created the sink spigot to do double duty, giving it 16 feet of hose, so it can serve as a washdown.

Built in under the helm seat is a tackle station, six trays to hold all the hooks, lures and line a fishing crew might need. The first-aid kit and an extinguisher are together in another hidden storage compartment in the port hullside.

PERFORMER

Anglers like to get where they’re going quickly. Whether they’re in

➔ SPEC BOX

LOA 33 ft., 6 in. **BEAM** 10 ft.

DRAFT 2 ft.

DISPLACEMENT (DRY) 10,400 lbs.

FUEL 338 gal. **WATER** 38 gal.

POWER Twin Yamaha F300 V6 Offshore outboards, 300 hp

PRICE (BASE) \$298,000

STANDARD EQUIPMENT

Yamaha F300 V6 Offshore outboards, Optimus EPS steering, T-top w/electronics box, 7 USB ports, insulated fishboxes, storage and livewells, and more.

OPTIONAL EQUIPMENT

Mercury and Evinrude outboards, Optimus joystick, transducers and more.

BUILDER

MAG BAY YACHTS, Adelanto, Calif.; (949) 395-0437; magbayyachts.com

WEST COAST DEALERS

STAN MILLER YACHTS, San Diego, (619) 224-1510; Newport Beach, Calif., (949) 675-3467; Long Beach, Calif., (562) 598-9433; Seattle, (206) 352-0118; stanmilleryachts.com
 PICANTE YACHT SALES, Cabo San Lucas, Mexico; picanteyachts.com

Testers’ Favorites

- ➔ There are seven USB ports at the helm.
- ➔ Padding runs all the way around the inside of the gunwale, to make fish-fighting duty more comfortable. It is higher — mid-thigh to waist — in the bow and knee level at the stern.
- ➔ The color-changing lighting is a great touch.
- ➔ The Simrad glass helm displays provide a high-end look.

tucked into a cocoon of quiet while the wind ripped by us on both sides and the outboards rumbled on the transom. And not a drop of spray got on that windscreen, or anywhere else for that matter, thanks to the bow flare.

As we made our way back to the harbor entrance, at a pedestrian 35 mph, our conversation made it clear the Mag Bay 33 — a fishing boat at heart, according to Howarth — isn’t a single-activity boat. Add a ski tow pylon or a TurboSwing, and watersports are in the picture, especially with all the storage on board, and the builder is targeting the yacht tender market, too, so the 33 has several applications. I don’t know what other colors buyers will select for their hull, but the sea foam green is a great choice for a boat that’s going to kick up plenty of green sea foam. 🐟