

Gone Fishing!



We put the new Regulator 29FS to the test searching for Striped Bass BY KARL ANDERSON

There really is something to the old adage about first impressions. I remember the first time I happened upon a Regulator boat at the Annapolis Boat Show in 1988 or '89. It just happened to be one of the first shows where a Regulator was shown. Few new boats released today have an immediate and lasting impression on me. However, the 26 Regulator center console had excellent gel and glasswork, it had the look, build and fishing layout that caught my eye and my attention that day.

I spent 15 minutes with an incredibly enthusiastic person who knew more about her product and why they did things the

way they did than most of the office bound engineers responsible for developing the products that mega-companies churn out today. I knew this was a company that would have an impact on the fisherman and the industry. Little did I know that the tuned-in gal on the boat was company co-founder Joan Maxwell, who along with husband Owen have built one of the most reputable boat companies in the business with nothing less than reliable, honest, rugged boats.

The fact that the 26 is still in production today is a testament to great styling, solid build practices, safe and sound ride charac-

Top: On this day, the author reveals one of the perks of being a marine journalist.



Regulator 29FS	
Top speed:	36.5 knots
LOA.....	29'
Beam.....	9'6"
Fuel.....	.285 gal.
Deadrise.....	24-degrees
Max HP:	500
Base Price w/twin Yamaha	
F250:	\$140,625





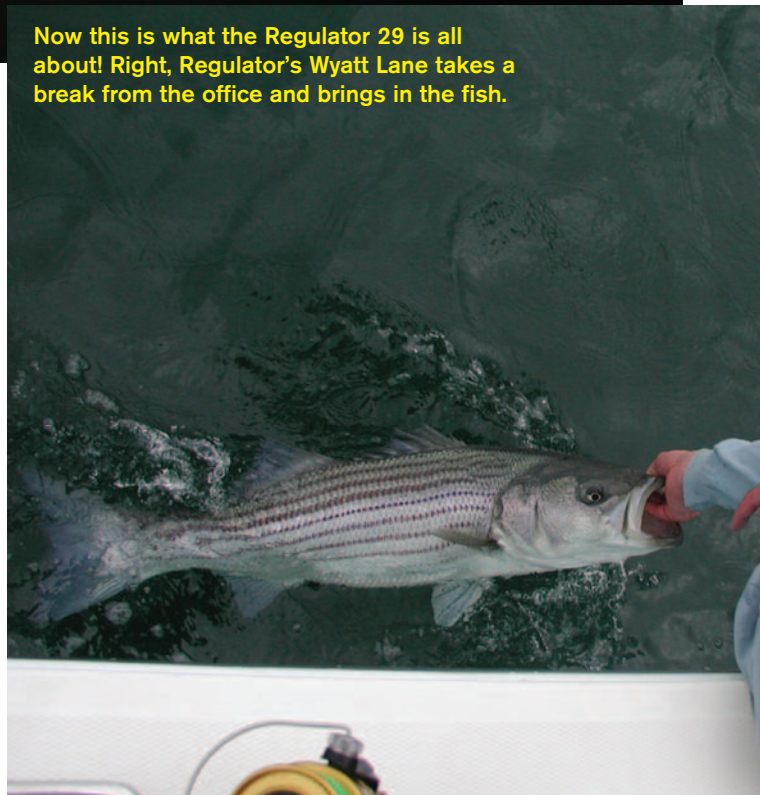
teristics and a focus on customer satisfaction that is practiced by too few today. The folks at Regulator have built a family of boats easily recognizable on the water, including a 23, 24, the 26 and their flagship 32-footer. Each model is available in two layouts; Classic and Forward Seating. The latest model the 29, is a well-defined and practical addition to the fleet.

In January, I met up with long time Regulator national sales manager, Wyatt Lane and his friend Brendan Strum at Pirates Cove in Manteo, North Carolina. Our plan was to sample the fantastic winter striped bass fishing and then spend time on the new 29FS. Leaving the dock in a blanket of thick fog slowed our arrival to the grounds, but gave us the time to get rigged and gave me a chance to look the 29 over as we eased down the sound from marker to marker.

On first impression, the 29FS is a culmination of all the Regulator models, with features like the raised deck of the 24 and 26, and the forward seating, the transom livewell and bait-box of the 32. Naturally, she also shares the Regulator signature sweeping shearline, moderate Carolina flared bow and the crisp fit and finish of her siblings. A new console design is very roomy and was modified to allow for more headroom inside. This was accomplished by changing the angle of the electronics box and the gauge panel so they are less dramatically angled. While it works great for the electronics dash, it makes it a little difficult to see the Yamaha Command-Link digital gauges. Everything is a trade-off, and it really didn't bother me while running the boat, but it might bother others who are a bit more gauge dependant than I am.

Our fish boat was rigged with a pair of Yamaha F250 four-strokes that easily and quickly snapped the boat to plane and

Now this is what the Regulator 29 is all about! Right, Regulator's Wyatt Lane takes a break from the office and brings in the fish.



offered an economical cruise at 3500 rpm making 27 mph, burning 15.7 gph and traveling 1.72 miles to the gallon. That's a range of more than 450 miles! We're talking fishing offshore for tuna and marlin for maybe three days without refueling or traveling to the Abaco's from Florida on one tank. Naturally, if you go faster, the burn goes up and the mileage goes down, but even at wide open, the 29 is capable of making 53 mph burn-



each outboard side. These can be used as fishboxes, or for storage, or as both. They also offer a nice step to the bow foredeck for docking and throwing a castnet. A huge anchor locker is accessed through a gasketed deck hatch on the foredeck. In the floor between the seating is a huge 520-quart in-deck storage/fishbox with lockable rod storage. The foredeck is a raised platform that also has storage bins on either side of the console. There is no shortage of storage on the 29FS, something there just can't be too much of on a boat.

The walk-in head compartment is fully fiberglass lined, offers 6-foot, 3-inches of standing headroom and houses the head, sink, more storage and provides great access to the rear of the electronics panel and battery compartment. One of the best thought out features is having the battery switches mounted right inside the door on the aft bulkhead of the head, placing them within hands reach. In front of the console is a nice 64-quart drink cooler under the forward facing cushioned seat.



We spent the majority of our time in the business end of the 29 and it was very comfortable and functional. We proved this by occasionally catching triple-headers with all three of us hooked up to nice bass and moving about the cockpit with ease to land and release them. While jigging with bucktail jigs, the boat laid-to with little roll and fetch, and offered a very stable platform to work from. She also slow trolled our dredges and deep swimming plugs nicely while handling easily with her standard power assist steering.

The transom on the 29 houses a giant 30-gallon livewell on the centerline, an 84-quart baitbox to port and walkthrough transom gate and door to starboard. Her in-deck bilge access is excellent with a hatch big enough to get into the lazarette and actually work on bilge pumps and other gear. A factory fiberglass T-top is perfectly proportioned for the boat and has a built-in electronics box and rod holders along the back. All the hardware components are first class, and all hatches are built using a resin transfer process that offers a clean lightweight hatch that is finished on both sides and gasketed.

As you can see from some of these shots, the new Regulator 29 is an ideal boat for inland, coastal and offshore fishing and it doesn't need a dually to be towed. The boat was a great platform for chasing the rock of the Outer Banks and if a howling cold front hadn't moved-in with 40-knot winds, we might have slipped off to catch a tuna with no adjustments to the boat to accomplish the task. With the 29, Regulator continues to prove that by building a stout, quality product, styling it, and paying attention to the customer, success is assured. Best of all, the customer has a boat that can run with the best, has the classic looks and features admired by knowledgeable fishermen and is equipped with reliable, reputable power matched to the boat.

Regulator Marine, 187 Peanut Drive Edenton, NC (252) 482-3837 www.regulatormarine.com

ing 41.9 gph. Yet she still gets better than a mile to the gallon at 1.27 mpg, something I like, considering the price of fuel.

Her 24-degree transom deadrise offers a very predictable and soft ride. She sheds water from her strakes and chines throwing spray

down and away. As we loped up the beach towards the Duck, N.C. research pier she proved a comfortable and capable skiff. And once we cleared the bank of fog, she cut a path to the fleet in short order. It also helped to have the factory winter curtains deployed, keeping the cold winter air from chilling my warm Florida bones.

The 29's foredeck offers 200-quart forward seating benches on