

*"I wouldn't be concerned in the least about fishing it in all but the absolute worst conditions."*

# PROFILE Boat



## Regulator 23

BY JOHN BROWNLEE

**R**egulator Marine's new 23, an evolutionary improvement of the company's original 23, represents good news for the boat-buying public. A deliberate, thoughtful company, Regulator doesn't do anything without good reason. That's why you don't see introductions that often. But when you do, you know it's going to be good. Based on the proven Lou Codega hull design of the original 23, the boat features an improved interior layout that makes fishing easier and more efficient.

### Performance

A 300-hp HPDI Yamaha two-stroke powered our trial boat, and getting on plane with so much power is pretty much instantaneous. This Regulator hull weighs approximately 3,800 pounds, heavy compared with most 23-footers, and that's reflected in the performance. The boat cruises at 32 mph at 4,000 rpm burning 13.4 gph, and tops out at 46.9 mph at 5,700 rpm using 29.2 gph — certainly respectable if not blistering speeds. Yamaha usually lists 5,500 rpm as the upper end of the recommended range for the Z300, so I believe the boat needed a little more pitch in the prop. Other power options include single F225 or F250 Yamaha four-strokes, as well as twin F150 or twin 200-hp HPDI Yamahas.

The boat's weight pays big dividends in comfort, making the 23 ride like a much larger vessel.



In fact, a local charter captain had fished this boat the day before in sloppy, 6-foot seas and couldn't believe the solid, dry ride. I drove the boat in only slightly lesser conditions, and came away convinced I wanted to be in this 23-footer when the going gets rough. I experienced no slamming, no rattling, no unsettling behavior of any kind. And the 24-degree-deadrise hull tracked straight and true at all angles to the seas. With such exceptional performance, I wouldn't be concerned in the least about fishing it in all but the absolute worst conditions.

## Fishing

Regulator kept the 35-gallon livewell beneath the cockpit sole, but moved it forward on the new model to make room for the new lazarette hatch. The well provides plenty of bait storage capacity, but it could use a slightly larger hatch to make dropping wiggly live baits into it easier. A mammoth fish box forward on the centerline holds 174 gallons, drains through a macerator pump, and also contains rod racks for lockable subdeck storage. Our trial boat featured forward seating, a new option on the 23 for 2005. The storage

boxes in the forward seats come insulated for additional fish box or cooler capacity. In the standard version of the new 23, Regulator provides two fish boxes beneath the deck on either side of the large centerline box. Both models have a step-up from the stern cockpit area to the bow.

The standard leaning post comes with an optional four-rod rocket launcher (backrest), and you can get another five rod holders along the aft edge of the optional T-top. The handsome fiberglass T-top can have the underside finished in the same custom gel-coat color as the hull. You'll find a 64-quart insulated drink cooler beneath the forward console seat and four standard-issue Lee stainless-steel rod holders in the covering boards. The pop-up cleats and bow light ensure snag-free fishing.

## Design and Construction

Notable design changes include a new stringer system for additional strength, a new liner and a new cap. The boat still comes with a notched transom, but in the new version the cap incorporates the fiberglass engine well. On the old 23, the well was part of the liner and the cap fit over it, leaving a seam that needed sealing. This new method eliminates the unsightly seam and will be stronger as well.

The bait boxes in the transom corners remain, but since Regulator no longer puts the batteries beneath them, they've been enlarged. Batteries now reside under the console: a better place when you consider maintenance, center of gravity and safety. On the old boat, you reached the bilge pumps through a couple of pie plates on the engine platform, but now a large lazarette hatch forward of the transom door greatly improves access.

The new 23 has two fuel fills, one on either side, so you never have to drag a dirty gas hose across the boat while fueling. Regulator builds all hatches using a two-part resin-transfer molding process for a product that's finished inside and out, and most of the hatches open on sturdy gas rams. The anchor locker at the bow is larger than before, and the console contains a new fiberglass panel for flush-mounting electronics.

That's what Regulators are all about: rugged construction, no-nonsense, sensible design and practical fishing features. Regulator designs and builds these boats to work day in and day out in the Outer Banks of North Carolina, some of the toughest water found anywhere. When inclement weather catches you miles from shore, it's reassuring to know the boat beneath your feet carries such a lineage, even if it's only 23 feet long. ▲

## SPECIFICATIONS

LOA	23 ft. 4 in.
BEAM	8 ft. 4 in.
DEADRISE	24 deg.
DRAFT	2 ft.
WEIGHT	3,800 lb.
FUEL	184 gal.
MAX HP	(2) 200-hp OB
MSRP	\$62,500
	(w/300-hp Yamaha OB)

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## YAMAHA Z300 HPDI

TYPE	76-degree V6
DISPL.	204.0 cid
MAX. RPM	5,500
HP/LB RATIO	.55
FUEL SYSTEM	High Pressure Direct Injection
GEAR RATIO	1.75:1
WEIGHT	543 pounds
ALT. OUTPUT	50 amps

## NOTABLE STANDARD FEATURES

- Hydraulic steering
- Stainless-steel thru-hull fitting
- Cockpit lighting
- Fiberglass splashwell door
- Dual battery system with switch

## IMPRESSIONS

This is one solid fishing machine, with a comfortable, dry ride that's not often found in a boat this size. It can compete in less-than-ideal conditions with much larger boats.