





BIGGER NEWS

B&H Performance Boats retooled its Water Rod 300 to create more interior space, and the result speaks volumes.

B &H PERFORMANCE BOATS ALREADY HAD A SUBSTANTIAL and competitive 30-footer in its Water Rod 300 model. But that wasn't good enough for the team at the San Bernardino, Calif., company, that always seems to be looking for ways to give its customers a little more.

In the case of the Water Rod 300, the team wanted more space, particularly headroom, in the midcabin. To pull it off, the builder retooled the hull so the cabin could sit a little deeper and combined it with a taller deck. The result, according to a company spokesperson, was almost 5 inches more headroom in the cabin.

Base price for the Water Rod 300 with a 375-hp Volvo Penta engine was a seriously low \$88,900. Our test model was dressed to impress, and that outfit included an 800-hp, supercharged electronically fuel-injected engine and other features that added about \$100,000 to the base price. Clearly, the B&H folks were out to impress us—and they did.

PERFORMANCE

The Water Rod 300's variable-deadrise hull had three evenly spaced steps. A continuous, mild delta pad was included on each running surface. Outer



From left: Well-padded gunwales and marine-grade carpet covered the cockpit, which consisted of two manual dropout bolsters and a deep, four-person rear bench. The Water Rod 300's cabin included a bunch of amenities, from a 15-inch, flip-down screen and DVD/CD/MP3 player to a GE microwave oven and recessed cooler. An 800-hp, supercharged, electronically fuel-injected engine from Teague Custom Marine got the V-bottom up to a top speed of 85.8 mph at 5,500 rpm.

strakes ran full length, though the inner set terminated after the first step.

Matched to the 800-hp engine from Teague Custom Marine was a TCM Platinum drive with a 1.5:1 gear reduction. To put the power to the water, the builder opted for a 28"-pitch stainless-steel propeller from Hydromotive.

The propulsion package was a great match for the hull, as performance was strong in all categories. The 5,500-pound boat reached 85.8 mph with the engine turning 5,500 rpm.

Strong out of the hole, the Water Rod 300 came on plane in 3.2 seconds with its Dana Marine HP 1000 trim tabs down and reached 81 mph in 20 seconds. Midrange bite was just as healthy, as the boat ran from 30 to 50 mph in 3.9 seconds, 40 to 60 mph in 4.4 seconds and 40 to 70 mph in 7.9 seconds.

With its relatively tall profile, the Water Rod 300 was slightly susceptible to push from crosswinds, but otherwise tracked per-

fectly. The boat cornered crisply in slaloms and full circles, and displayed none of the "pendulum effect" commonly found in high-sided offerings.

WORKMANSHIP

Built with vinylester resin, 1708 and 1808 fiberglass, 20-, 40- and 60-ounce woven cloth, and Coremat, the Water Rod 300 had a solid feeling. Mold work was smooth, but the highlight of the boat's construction was its paint work. The builder used a combination of pearl and flake in the vibrant color scheme. Even the model and company names were handled in paint with flecks of pearl.

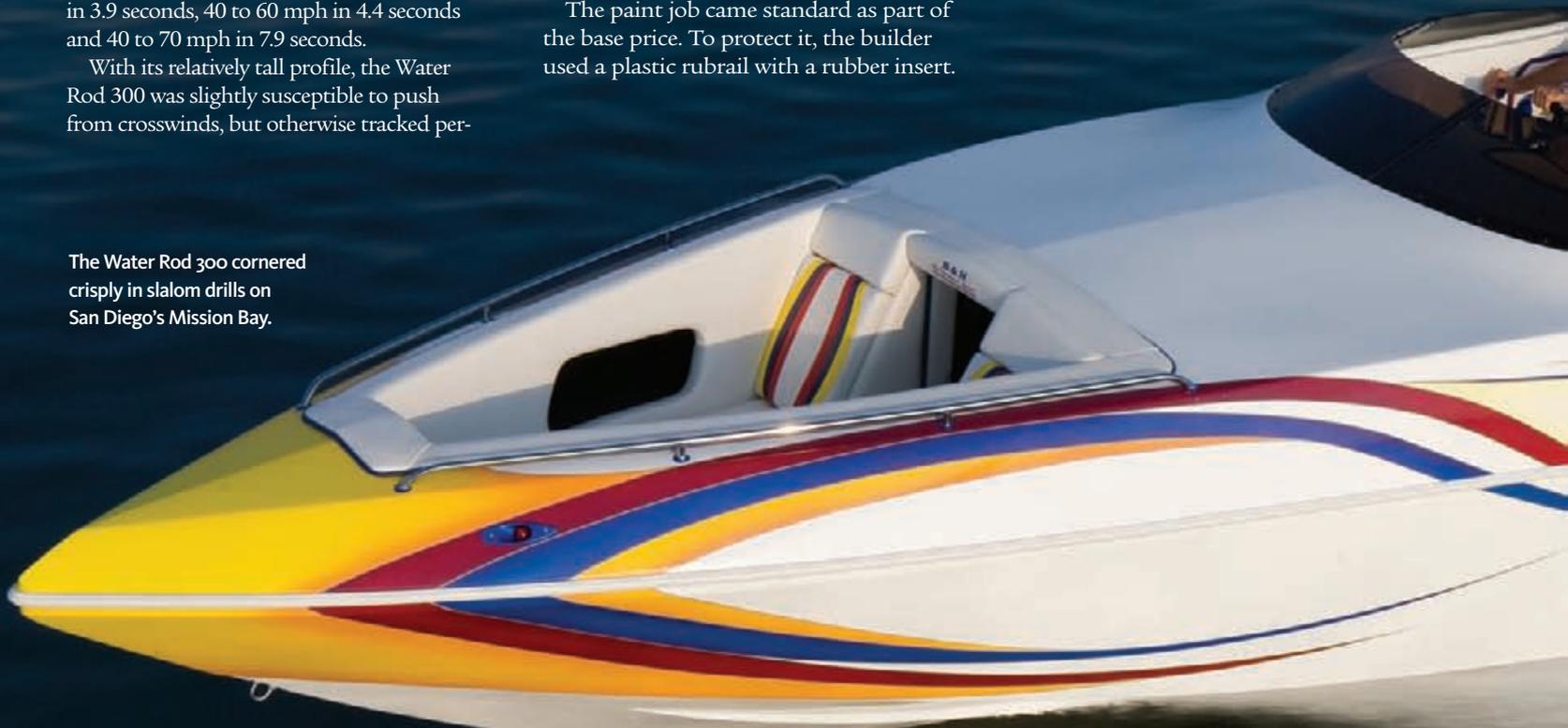
The paint job came standard as part of the base price. To protect it, the builder used a plastic rubrail with a rubber insert.

Hardware included a variety of billet pieces, lights for the swim platform, a power-telescoping rear navigation light and four Accon Pull-Up cleats in color-coordinated bezels.

Two Dana hydraulic hinges raised the engine hatch. Powder-painted aluminum L-angles through-bolted to the stringers secured the engine, which was outfitted with dual sea strainers. For engine flushing after use, the starboard-side strainer was supplied with a fitting for a standard garden hose.

Wiring was gathered in neat loom. Accomplished primarily with tie-wrap-style cushion clamps, the wiring was adequately supported, though there was room for improvement.

The Water Rod 300 cornered crisply in slalom drills on San Diego's Mission Bay.



Room inside the engine compartment was excellent, as was access to minor and— heaven forbid—major services. There was even substantial stowage space on each side of the power plant.

INTERIOR

Marine-grade carpet covered the cockpit sole of the Water Rod 300, and its gunwales were substantially padded. (Whack your elbow on an unpadded gunwale once or twice and you'll understand why padding matters.) Seating consisted of a deep four-person bench, with stowage lockers under both of its bottom cushions, and bolsters with manual dropout bottom cushions.

Padding also was included at knee level on the co-pilot's dash that featured an angled footrest in a recess. Amenities there consisted of a locking glove box with a smoked acrylic lid and a cupholder.

For gauges at the helm, B&H went with Livorsi Marine units with electric-blue bezels and silver rims in two tiers above the tilt steering wheel. Also from Livorsi was the throttle-and-shifter unit mounted on the starboard gunwale. Like the co-pilot's dash, the driver's side had a recess with an angled footrest.

Headroom in the cabin was—as advertised—exceptional. Two facing lounges easily created enough seating for four people, and below or

behind each lounge cushion there was a stowage locker. Pleated back cushions and a padded headliner for the ceiling gave the cabin an elegant, finished appearance.

Cabin amenities include a GE microwave oven, a cooler in its own vinyl-finished recess and a DVD/CD/MP3 player from Concept with a flip-down screen mounted on the ceiling. For cabin lighting after dark, there were two fixtures. Smoked acrylic sliding doors at each end of the cabin provided privacy.

Clearly, the builder placed a priority on stowage space. To this end, there was an in-sole locker in the open bow, as well as lockers under each of the two facing lounges and an anchor locker under the forwardmost cushion. Gunwale trays were ringed with heavy vinyl padding, another big plus.

OVERALL

When you consider that \$70,000 worth of the Water Rod 300's \$188,000 price is tied up in the engine and drive, the 30-footer becomes an impressive value.

For that price, you get an 85-mph boat with great handling manners and kick-in-the-pants performance. You get a solidly built offering with custom paint and a slew of standard features. And thanks to a redesign for 2006, you get a comfortable and spacious midcabin. 🚀



TEST RESULTS

B&H WATER ROD 300

TEST CONDITIONS

Temperature	71 degrees
Humidity	52 percent
Wind speed	1 to 3 mph
Water conditions	1' chop
Elevation	Sea level

HULL INFORMATION

Deadrise at transom	Variable
Centerline	29'8"
Beam	8'6"
Hull weight	5,500 pounds

PRICING INFORMATION

Base retail with Volvo Penta 8.1 Gi engine	\$88,900
Price as tested	\$188,420

ENGINE & PROPELLER

Engine	Teague Custom Marine 800EFI
Cylinder type	V-8
Cubic-inch displacement/horsepower	509/800
Lower-unit gear ratio	1.5:1
Propeller	Hydromotive 15 1/2" x 28"

OPTIONS ON TEST BOAT

Upgrade to Teague Custom Marine 800EFI engine and XR platinum drive (\$70,000), electronics entertainment system (\$10,800), IMCO Marine dual ram steering (\$3,500), Dana HP 1000 trim tabs (\$2,500), Plexiglas cabin and bow doors (\$2,300), bimini top and custom cover (\$2,000), Dana hydraulic hinges (\$1,750), cockpit footrests and floor stowage (\$1,500), flush-mounted microwave (\$1,200), stainless five-blade propeller (\$800), TCM billet drive reservoir (\$564), TCM sea strainer with flushout (\$1,160), digital GPS with compass (\$516), tilt helm (\$452), Dino steering wheel (\$250) and electric stern light (\$228).

ACCELERATION

5 seconds	30 mph
10 seconds	56 mph
15 seconds	71 mph
20 seconds	81 mph

MIDRANGE ACCELERATION

30-50 mph	3.9 seconds
40-60 mph	4.4 seconds
40-70 mph	7.9 seconds

RPM VS. MPH

1000	9 mph
1500	10 mph
2000	23 mph
2500	36 mph
3000	45 mph
3500	57 mph
4000	67 mph
4500	73 mph
5000	81 mph

TOP SPEED AT RPM

Radar	85.8 mph at 5,500
GPS	85.5 mph

PLANING

Time to plane	3.2 seconds
Minimum planing speed	19 mph

FUEL ECONOMY

At 25 mph	.NA
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FUEL CAPACITY

90 gallons

TEST CONDUCTED AT

San Diego

MANUFACTURER

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