

BOATING®

WORLD'S LARGEST POWERBOAT MAGAZINE

INSIDE:
**OUR
BOAT OF
THE YEAR
FINALISTS**



CERTIFIED BOAT TESTS

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CENTER CONSOLE
- BOSTON WHALER
330 VANTAGE
- COBIA 265 CC OPEN
- NORTHCOAST 415HT

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SCAN ME

To view a Sailfish 232 Center Console photo gallery online, scan this tag or visit boatingmag.com/3425.



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**BOATING
CERTIFIED
TEST**

SAILFISH 232 CENTER CONSOLE

Sailfish's smallest model for 2025 comes up big in all-around utility, ride and comfort, making this well-built boat equally attractive to anglers and non-anglers alike.



S

Sailfish Boats was one of the first fishing-boat companies to embrace the mantra of fishing-focused, family-friendly boats in the early 2000s. According to internal research at Sailfish, those buying center-consoles 27 feet and shorter didn't list fishing as its primary purpose, unlike owners of its 30-plus-footers, who overwhelmingly had fishing as their No. 1 activity. Accordingly, Sailfish designers applied that owner input when designing the new 232 Center Console.

The fixed seating at the stern is the love-it-or-hate-it feature on the 232 Center Console that will polarize some buyers. While fold-down seats preserve fishing space, they often prove uncomfortable. The 232 CC fixes that issue with a gunwale-to-gunwale settee. This features

PHOTO: COURTESY SAILFISH BOATS

two small, removable sectionals so that those boarding from the oversize swim platformettes on either side of the outboard need not trod on the upholstery. The downside is that the fixed center section of this seat compresses the cockpit sole space between its base and the cooler beneath the leaning post (more on that later) to 21 inches.

As we shoved off from Point South Marina in Port St. Joe in the Florida Panhandle and idled into St. Joseph Bay, we were greeted by a corrugated surface created by 15 mph winds.

PHOTOS: COURTESY SAILFISH BOATS

Fortunately, the new 232 CC employs Sailfish's three-hulls-in-one Variable Degree Stepped Hull that uses a sharp 24-degree keel section to help slice through the chop; the next section outward moderates to 23 degrees that, when combined with its downward-turned strakes, creates lift when accelerating or running. The outer section of the hull is a flatter 22 degrees, giving it greater stability at rest. The other factor that makes Sailfish boats ride well in rough water is their relative beefiness, thanks to a stout layup with quad-axial fiberglass matt, reinforced by

Kevlar at high-stress points, contributing to its 5,065-pound rigged weight. The 232 CC easily ate up the 2-foot chop while running at its best cruise speed of around 25 mph, which netted an impressive 3.5 mpg.

Prospecting for redfish and seatrout, I fired a plastic lure with a gold spinner in all directions at the designated fishing spot, where the depth ranged from 2 to 6 feet deep. I had no problem moving around the boat's perimeter thanks to the minimum 16 inches of walk-around space aside the center console. A generous 27-inch minimum gunwale height at the stern grew to 30 inches amidships, and with standard bolsters all around, I felt contained and comfortable. I left the bow and stern cushions in place, and we didn't have the filler board to insert between the bow rider benches up front, which would have created a roomy casting platform. I saw only one fish that day and identified it as a 40-pound black drum lazing on the surface. But, to paraphrase the scariest line in *The Shining*, it was only a floating "dead drum" clearly past its expiration date.

The slide-out Engel cooler also provides a convenient step up to reach rods in the hardtop rocket launchers.

When trying to figure out a boat's intended purpose, a good guideline is if there are more places to store a rod than park a beverage, it's primarily a fishing boat. Our test boat has 22 standard rod holders and eight cup holders. Vertical racks for two rods each are set inside recesses on either side of the center console, keeping them tucked out of the way but ready for action. Other holders are set into the gunwales and on the hardtop. The 232 CC boasts twin 10-gallon livewells beneath the rear bench seat for those days when only live bait will entice fish to bite.

The 232 CC comes well-equipped with standard features for which many companies charge extra, such as the well-braced hardtop, premium Fusion stereo with Rockford Fosgate lighted speakers, 58-quart slide-out Engel cooler, raw-water washdown, and trim tabs with autoretract, to name a few. To up its fishing game, add a 75-inch Garmin Kraken trolling motor with a 36-volt lithium battery (\$10,700) and a 12-inch Simrad NSX 3012 GPS/fish finder (\$4,509) or Garmin GPSMap 1243xsv (\$7,700). One of the most innovative features is the optional, reversible leaning post (\$1,467), which lifts and can be securely reinserted into



rocket-launcher-like receivers to face aft—not only to increase fishing area in the cockpit, but also to provide a rear-facing throne while fishing or watching the kids swim.

It's easy to enhance the 232 CC's nonfishing game by adding the Entertainment Package (\$3,296), which includes a retractable ski pylon, removable bow table, Fusion transom stereo remote control, and Hella underwater lighting.

Shopping? Sea Hunt's Ultra 234 (\$100,524 nicely equipped with a 250 hp Yamaha) also offers a fixed stern-seating arrangement. It's less expensive, but unlike the Sailfish, features such as the \$7,500 hardtop cost extra. The Ultra 234 has more livewell capacity and more fuel capacity, and add the optional leaning post with an integrated bait tank. Its max horsepower is 250 compared with the Sailfish's 300. Sea Hunt is a Yamaha-only boatbuilder. Sailfish allows buyers to choose from Merc, Yamaha and Suzuki.

Our test boat's Yamaha F250 delivered excellent performance—planing in 3.6 seconds and reaching 30 mph in 7.4 seconds. The top speed was 48 mph (a Yamaha test driver got 49 mph in calmer water just before our test). Owners can also choose a 200 hp engine, which might be overmatched for watersports or a capacity crew.

Available 300 hp engines can push it past the 50 mph mark, plenty fast whether you're out to catch fish or just on a fun cruise. —Alan Jones

High Points

- ▶ Its console interior opens from the front for easy access, and it sports 5 feet of headroom plus a standard portable marine head
- ▶ It features many high-end standards.
- ▶ There is enough quality seating for 12 people.
- ▶ The large dash offers space to flush-mount a 12-inch MFD.

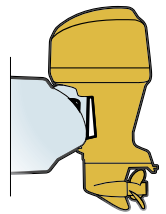
Low Point

- ▶ Stern seating is more comfortable than a folding bench, but it comes at the expense of cockpit space.

• LOA: 23'6" • BEAM: 8'6" • DRAFT (HULL ONLY): 2'4"
 • DISPLACEMENT (APPROX.): 5,065 lb. (rigged) • TRANSDOM
 DEADRISE: 24/23/22 degrees • BRIDGE CLEARANCE: 8'4"
 • FUEL CAPACITY: 108 gal. • MAX HORSEPOWER: 300
 • AVAILABLE POWER: Mercury, Yamaha and Suzuki

Price: \$122,171
(with Yamaha F250)

AVAILABLE POWER:
OUTBOARD



HOW WE TESTED

ENGINE: Single Yamaha F250 DRIVE/PROP: Outboard/
 Yamaha Saltwater Series II 15.5" x 17" 3-blade stainless
 steel GEAR RATIO: 1.75:1 FUEL LOAD: 55 gal. WATER
 ON BOARD: 0 gal. CREW WEIGHT: 400 lb.

SAILFISH BOATS
 Cairo, Georgia; sailfishboats.com



**BOATING
 CERTIFIED
 TEST
 RESULTS**

SPEED				EFFICIENCY				OPERATION		
rpm	knots	mph	gph	naut. mpg	stat. mpg	n. mi. range	s. mi. range	angle	sound level	
1000	4.6	5.3	1.4	3.3	3.8	316.7	364.5	1	60	
1500	6.1	7.1	2.2	2.8	3.2	269.4	310.1	2	63	
2000	7.3	8.4	3.6	2.0	2.3	195.4	224.8	4	64	
2500	9.3	10.7	5.4	1.7	2.0	167.4	192.6	4	66	
3000	14.2	16.4	6.9	2.1	2.4	200.1	230.3	7	75	
3500	25.1	28.9	8.2	3.1	3.5	297.7	342.6	8	82	
4000	28.8	33.2	11.9	2.4	2.8	235.3	270.8	6	85	
4500	32.8	37.8	13.8	2.4	2.7	231.1	265.9	5	88	
5000	36.3	41.8	18.0	2.0	2.3	196.1	225.7	4	91	
5500	40.7	46.8	23.3	1.7	2.0	169.7	195.2	4	93	
5600	41.7	48.0	24.2	1.7	2.0	167.6	192.9	4	93	

MOST ECONOMICAL CRUISING SPEED