

When it comes to family-oriented recreation boats that will be used primarily for fishing northern waters, big, deep and wide are appealing attributes. So it shouldn't have been any surprise to us how easily a new entry into the walleye fishing boat market handled the wind-swept waters when we went for a romp across Lake Lanier, located northeast of Atlanta.

Lanier is a pussycat lake compared to many of the lakes in the Great Lakes region where walleye anglers ply their trade. But it still provided us with enough insight into the finer points of the Kodiak V198 TC, the newest and largest walleye boat from Polar Kraft, to know it's a serious player.

Our first impressions were further enhanced by the performance of the "bear" when powered by the equally new Yamaha F150 four-stroke. The moment we turned the key, we knew this family-oriented fishing platform moved the comparison bar up a notch.

#### RUGGED, CLEAN DESIGN

Boarding the Kodiak instantly brings an immediate sense of security. The tall freeboard and its deep-V aluminum hull, painted in two-tone urethane and designed

■ The new inline four Yamaha four-stroke is considerably narrower than its 150-horse V-6 counterparts and almost seems lost on the Kodiak's 25-inch transom.

Polar Kraft's  
Kodiak V198  
delivers a family-friendly  
platform for big-water  
walleye anglers

Story and Photos by Bruce W. Smith

# King-Sized Kodiak



with a 19-degree deadrise, assures occupants this boat will be fine when water conditions get rough. The boat feels very stable underfoot, and the 25-inch transom and the oversized splashwell remove any concerns about backtrolling in the wind.

The hull is made from .100-gauge aluminum formed around

a sturdy I-beam ladder-like stringer system. Foam fills all the voids, adding to the solidness and quietness of the Kodiak's demeanor. The design is part of what Polar Kraft calls its Torque Control Design (TCD), which distributes the stresses of everyday use and abuse evenly throughout the hull to provide a better ride and long boat life.

From a performance aspect, reverse chines and four extruded lifting strakes help give the hull lift and a solid bite in turns. They work, too, as we found out during the couple of hours we

sliced and diced in and around Lanier's miles of islands and coves.

#### SPACE CONSIDERATIONS

The interior also lends a sense of security and spaciousness. The walk-through design of the V198 TC, coupled with the vinyl-covered floor and tall, thick sidewalls, provide anglers and passengers with a very open and comfortable fishing environment. There's plenty of space to play a big fish — and plenty of space for when the family comes to play.

Polar Kraft has taken advantage of every inch of the new boat's 98-inch beam and 19-foot, 8-inch length to accommodate both fishing and family recreation. For example, in addition to the traditional four seating positions in the cockpit area, the V198 TC incorporates a pair of fold-down jump seats attached to the splashwell wall. The seats, which are large and well-cushioned, are held upright with sturdy flip-down legs. Raising the seats reveals aft storage compartments molded into the splashwell wall with mesh to keep items secure.

More storage is available along the side-walls. The rod storage inside the port and starboard combing tunnels is a nice touch, too. The wide gunwales, by the way, are reinforced to handle downriggers and rod holders.

Under the rear-facing starboard seat, located behind the driver's position, is a roto-molded cooler for beverages and food. Under the matching port-side seat cushion is a 9.3-gallon Flow-Rite-maintained baitwell.

Another cooler is located under the passenger-side console. It's a convenient location to

