

CALIFORNIA SPORTFISHING GUIDE



THE WRAP-AROUND WINDSHIELD protects passengers from the elements, and snaps allow for the conversion to a fully-enclosed Isinglass cockpit.



PILOTING THE 2300 WA is easy with a clear, panoramic view and controls and gauges just below eye level.

The Polar 2300 Walkaround — Structural functionalism made simple

BY BRADLEY SCHWEIT
WON Staff Writer

NEWPORT BEACH — Anglers are inevitably faced with a slew of options when confronted with the prospect of purchasing a stable, seaworthy boat. Fishability, ride, safety, storage and myriad other aspects are taken into consideration. And while numerous boat manufacturers make valiant attempts to tend to each subtlety and nuance, few actually succeed in their endeavors to create a boat which embodies all of the key facets of a true sportfisher.

WON BOAT TEST

The Polar 2300 Walkaround represents one of the few such boats — incorporating a solid, stable ride with the bells and whistles needed for a successful, efficient and comfortable offshore adventure.

At 23 feet, 4 inches, the 2300 WA is ideally suited for either inshore or offshore angling applications. It's not so much boat that trailering to a local bay or harbor is rendered an ordeal, and not so diminutive that venturing offshore to tackle yellowtail and tuna is made impractical.

Captain Jason O'Dell of Newport Boats in Newport Beach, accompanied this writer on a recent trip aboard the 2300 WA and highlighted some of the boat's signature features.

Of the more notable design characteristics, the boat boasts a unique bustle transom. In essence, this bestows the 2300 WA with a stern not unlike that of the boat's hull, thereby nearly eliminating backwash when reversing. According to O'Dell, "It's one of the bigger features." To demonstrate, he backed the boat down nearly full throttle, and true to form, the design performed as expected, nary a drop of backwash coming over the transom. Initially, it may seem a rather ineffectual feature, however, as O'Dell was quick to point out, it may one day prove invaluable when backing down on a marlin. One need look no further than last season's late-summer billfish bonanza to realize that not only are these fish within the range of private boaters, but landing more than a handful on a given day is entirely within the realm of possibility.

Of course, such maneuvers are made easier by the 4-stroke Mercury Verado strapped to the transom. The 2300 WA can accommodate up to 300 hp in a single engine configuration. The 250 hp model pushing the test boat not only handled brilliantly, but ran so quietly and smooth that at idle, it is near impossible to discern whether or not the motor is running. Outside of the breakwater, O'Dell pushed the boat to 40 knots and the engine, in conjunction with the 2300 WA's wraparound windshield made it seem as though we had yet to pass the 20-knot mark. Were it not for the digital readout on the speedometer, I would have assumed as much.

The gauges incorporated into the cockpit area pro-

vide both digital and analog data, and the boat utilizes the Mercury Smartcraft system, which provides a digital display of all engine operations on the gauge itself. O'Dell also noted, "The system allows a tech to plug directly into the system to check the engine operation."

After slowing from a 40-knot clip, O'Dell showcased the turning ability of the 2300 WA by stopping on a wayward kelp paddy. We both shared an "if only it were that time of year" moment, before O'Dell turned circles around the sizeable kelp. The turning radius of the 2300 WA proved undeniably impressive, as the boat made tremendously snug curves with ease. Breaking tuna or breezing yellowtail would certainly be no match for the speed and agility of this boat. And insofar as paddies are concerned, well, the results speak for themselves. The 2300 WA makes trolling or baiting tight to the kelp an easy task.

For lengthy offshore adventures, the 2300 WA has a fully equipped, fiberglass-lined cabin with more than 6 feet of headroom, storage throughout, overhead lighting with entry switch, pillows, table, and a 20-inch cabin hatch with ventilation screen. The galley area comes complete with a butane stove, cabinet storage, sink with freshwater, and icebox or optional refrigerator. Other optional amenities include a Porta-Potti which can be neatly concealed inside the cabin/galley area.

The boat also houses two sizeable fish boxes with macerator pumps, ample overhead storage for radio equipment, sufficient space for flush-mounted dash



THE BAIT TANK is conveniently located beneath the stern seating area, allowing for quick conversion from fishing machine to comfortable cruiser.

units, a HUGE bait tank, and wash-down sink for keeping clean in the midst of a wide-open So-Cal tuna frenzy. And with the 2300 WA, such scenes are likely to play out again and again.

For more information about the Polar 2300 WA and the entire line of Polar Boats, contact Newport Boats, (949) 646-8888; www.newportboats.com; Polar Boats/Godfrey Marine, 4500 Middlebury Street, Elkhart, IN 46516.



TACKLE STORAGE is made simple with onboard compartments for hooks, lures and other necessities such as dikes and pliers.



THE CABIN OF the 2300 WA boasts more than 6 feet of headroom, ample storage, overhead lighting, table, and a 20-inch cabin hatch with ventilation screen.



FISH BOXES ARE located on both sides of the cockpit, allowing for easy storage of the day's catch.