

This was not our first dance with Hallett's 240, by all accounts one of performance-boating's most luxurious and responsive performance cruisers. It was, however, our first opportunity for an industry bow-to-bowrider comparison of the award-winning 240 under the power of MerCruiser's hard-hitting 470-horse 500 HP package.

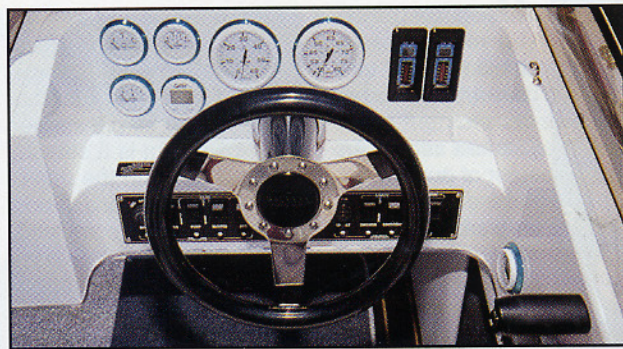
So what happens when one of boating's most meticulously built and softest riding hulls is rigged with what is arguably hot-boating's best production power train? Aside from the creation of one of sport boating's most expensive 24s (\$65,400, as tested), the resulting dream machine inspired more than one of our our test riders to proclaim it the ultimate bowrider.

Once more proving company patriarch Nick Barron's

assertion that steps and pads are not the only route to superior performance, the stoutly built 240 was the quickest of all 15 boats tested from every measured ten-mph increment through 0-to-50 mph, on its way to a 70.9-mph top end. It was fully one-second quicker than anything else to 30 mph. This, from a 3,800-pound wide-body with a 102-inch beam, whose layup seems solid as anything afloat. Only one boat was quicker to 60 and 70 mph: a 21-foot tunnel that was half a ton lighter.

The 240 also showed off an obedient handling nature that surfaced from the moment it sprang off the line. Its maneuverability drew top marks to full throttle, and its solid construction was appreciated during rough-water cruising. It was also an instantly easy boat to drive. The 240's quality, handling and ride make it a great choice, regardless of your experience.

The Hallett was equally impressive at rest. Its interior was nothing short of spectac-



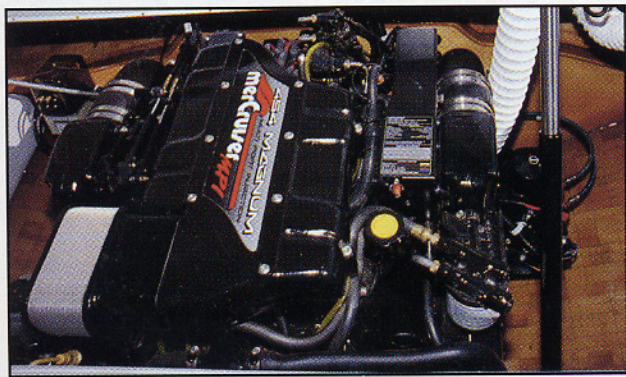
ular, in dimension as well as execution. Four passengers can ride comfortably in the Hallett's bow seating section, which also shows off some of custom boating's most elegant stitch work. Front, offshore-styled buckets were similarly comfortable, and a swivel-type observer's seat (many of Hallett's customers are pro-level speed skiers) is standard. We found the comfy rear bench to be perfectly angled, providing great lumbar support. Stainless grabrails is easily accessible to all aboard, though seldom needed.

Hallett's trademark teak-and-holly flooring was masterfully finished, and dressed with snap-out carpet gauges and switches that were neatly stacked and visible; digital, individual tab indicators (standard, along with the hydraulic Bennetts) were mounted on the passenger side. The base boat includes an electric engine hatch, floor-mounted ski storage and fiberglass swim step with stainless rails. (The mounting of the step and rails was high, making it a bit hard

Centerline length: 24'  
 Beam: 102"  
 Bottom: 21-degree vee  
 Power: MerCruiser 500HP (470 hp)  
 Base/as-tested price: \$45,900/\$65,400  
 Standard features: Custom seating to specs, cabinet w/built-in stereo, fiberglass swim step, hydraulic tabs w/indicators, electric engine hatch lift, ski locker, teak/holly flooring.  
 Options: boat cover (\$700), bimini top (\$750), Mega Alpine stereo (\$4,200), depth finder (\$325), drive shower (\$125), dual batteries (\$245), pop-up cleats (\$240)  
 Performance  
 Top speed, radar: 70.9 mph  
 0-30: 4.66 seconds  
 0-50: 9.25 seconds  
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 5820 Marin  
 Irwindale, CA 92706  
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to board from deep water.)

Switch panels, vents, cleats, and other trick powdercoated hardware were neatly integrated into Hallett's beautiful, intricately detailed tooling. The exceptional fiberglass design work (inside and out) was brought to life with nine gelcoat color variations, taped in the understated, elegant Hallett tradition. Even in the face of a full-sized bowrider model glut, Hallett's distinctive 240 is a standout, if not the standard. ■



**A** suitable mold is the requisite starting point in any exceptional performance custom, and there's no arguing the pedigree of Shockwave's 25' bowrider. The flash point for Caliber One's 2450 Interceptor, HOT BOAT's 1990 Boat of the Year, the crawl-through Shockwave bowrider tooling fell into the proven hands of longtime gelcoat stud Danny Mancini and partner, named a few seasons ago, giving their new company a solid foundation.

An enjoyable team pass-around of the newest Shockwave convinced us that this design's new keeper is more than capable of fulfilling its considerable potential. Our test craft, rigged with a carbureted, 300-hp, 454/Bravo train (recently phased out as MerCruiser's base big block), proved to be a smoothly executed family lake machine that completed our every exercise exceptionally well.

The boat rang up huge style points for its neatly stitched Stratton Marine interior, distinctive gelcoat, and use of top-drawer, powder-coated Eddie Marine billet hardware—all standard and all indicative of the Shock-

wave's overall, high-end feel.

The Shockwave is deep, roomy and comfortable, and makes efficient use of its dimensions. Its bow area seats three adults comfortably, and a large, rear bench is similarly functional. The center console cabin serves its intended use as a sun hideaway. Our driver and passenger bolster buckets were fabricated for a specific oversized owner, and were neatly designed and richly executed.

A twin-step layout of Gaffrig dials proved easily monitored while underway, and a newly tooled dash showed off custom-made, matching powder-coated Eddie's switch and control panels, switches, bezels, grabhandles and other hardware. Tilt wheel, optimum placement of the throttle/shifter and optional dual Bennett tabs (which proved completely unnecessary), and positioning of the seats and wheel created a fatigue-free, smooth-driving environment.



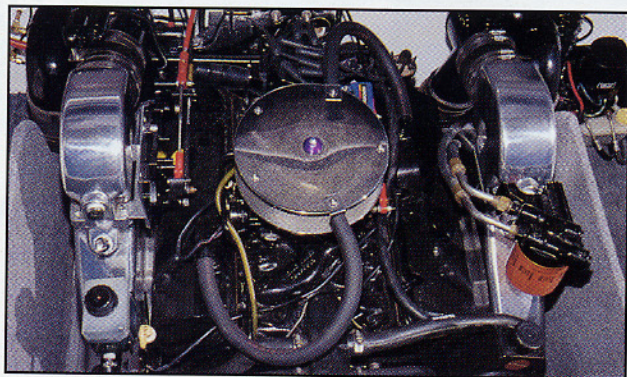
Standard interior features included a one-piece fiberglass swim step, built-in ice chest and 35-watt CD system.

It was this conventional vee, 21-degree hull's handling and feel that most impressed us in its Boat of the Year designation, and time has done nothing to erode its superior drivability. It follows driver commands without hesitation, planes instantly and easily, and delivers a fantastic ride at all speeds. It responded beautifully to trim, staying planted at ski speeds, loosening up nicely with throt-

tle and hunkering down in rough water.

High- and low-speed turning elicited similar, impressive responses. The 2500 stayed nice and dry at all speeds, in all conditions, and passed on a great ride in rough water. At WOT, it delivered more of the same predictable, smooth ride and handling on its way to a very comfortable 57.9-mph top end—plenty fast to suit the typical family. Likewise, its acceleration was plenty strong for tow duty and the like. Still, the enthusiast should consider adding power to the combination, which would cure the Shockwave's somewhat sluggish acceleration numbers.

The 2500 boasts clean, custom rigging and finish work, gorgeous gelcoat, and terrific all-around handling. The appeal of this former Boat of the Year is as alive as ever. ■



Length: 24'9"  
Beam: 100"  
Bottom: 21-degree vee  
Power: MerCruiser 7.4L/Bravo One (300 hp)  
Base/as-tested price: \$47,400/\$51,500  
Standard features: Dual batteries, tilt steering, Gaffrig controls/gauges, stainless prop, thru-transom exhaust, one-piece swim step, ice chest, 35-watt CD.  
Options: Drop-out buckets (\$2,500), dual Bennett tabs (\$650), bimini top (\$725), Eddie Marine exhaust (\$1,080), Silent Choice (\$705).  
Top Speed: 57.9 mph  
0-30: 7.68 seconds  
0-50: 19.51 seconds  
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