

## Grady-White Freedom 235

**T**HERE ARE THREE HOT TRENDS IN runabout boating, and Grady-White capitalized on all of them with its new Freedom 235.

The first is outboard power in family-fun boats. Thanks to changes in Detroit-made engine blocks, sterndrive propulsion costs increasingly more per horsepower, narrowing the horsepower-to-dollar ratio it had once enjoyed over outboards. Grady-White has been building fishing outboards with Yamaha for decades and is no stranger to the advantages of Yamaha's engineering advantages. Swift acceleration, smooth, quiet power, low emissions and a long, reliable running life are properties Grady captured in mating outboards to its transoms. The relationship has kept Grady-White boats rolling in all kinds of customer-satisfaction awards for years.

Second, in coastal waters boaters also enjoy the advantage of fully tilting the motor from the water when mooring and the ability outboards have to self-drain, eliminating the danger from too-sudden frosts and enabling boaters to make a midwinter cruise without having to revisit the dealer for winter layup. Outboard maintenance is streamlined.

Boaters looking for 360-degree boating want a boat that not only fishes but also cruises and pulls watersports enthusiasts on tubes and boards. Enter the Freedom series of dual-console boats, which sets the bar in this category plenty high. In it, Grady-White has blended all these trends into one satisfying boating investment that is bound to invade coastal waters on all sides of the continent.

**■ NOTEWORTHY**

**The passageway to the forward seating** has a wind dam to close off the cockpit from wind and spray during inclement weather.

For anglers, we noted that the livewell on the transom, with Grady's signature plenum circulation system, eliminates pesky standpipes and improves circulation. Its interior has rounded corners to further prevent dead spots that kill bait, and it is painted a soothing blue, found to keep bait calmer and healthier. There is also a large fish locker in the transom for keeping your catch fresh — or to keep your drinks cold. Gunwale rod holders provide plenty of tackle options for trolling or bottomfishing too. And a trademark

The forward seating area can be equipped with a cocktail table. The helm station has plenty of space for electronics. A ladder adds safety and convenience.



PHOTOS: (FROM TOP) TOM KING, COURTESY GRADY-WHITE (3)



## ➔ Grady-White Freedom 235



of Grady-White boats is the undergunwale toe rail that adds both a stylish touch and a convenient toe hold for leaning out to gaff big fish. If you need to guide a big bruiser around the outboard, there is a wide, beefy transom door (with yachty polished hinges and latch) giving access to the port-to-starboard platform. The walkway is clear, with concealed lockers for stern lines and anchors.

That platform and its ladder will be especially appreciated when you pop up the center tow pylon for pulling tubes and wakeboards. Tuck it away to clear the transom for fishing.

The 235's deep-V hull can turn up some remarkable wakes. Its solid construction can manage rough waters with aplomb and, in our tests, shrugged off doubled-up wakes. It simply slashed on through them, leaving our water-filled Yeti Rambler secure in its cup holder and its contents unspilled and ready to enjoy.

Grady-White builds its reputation on a patented SeaV2 hull design that sports a sharp entry at the stem, and a steep forward deadrise that gradually decreases toward the stern. The result is a smooth ride in rough water and excellent stability, both underway and at rest. Its broad-shouldered design can accommodate the excitement of an enthusiastic crew rushing abeam for a first glimpse at a fish or to assist the mate in gaffing the catch. That stability will also be appreciated when helping a downed watersports rider.

I was equally impressed by how quickly the cockpit converts to comfortable cruising with the fold-down transom seat — open it in a second, stow it just as quickly. It seats two or, when stowed, serves as a padded knee brace when fishing. The seat bottom of the portside back-to-back lounge moves fore and aft at the touch of an electric button. That converts the aft-facing port seat to a long lounge. The effect, when deployed, is wraparound seating that provides an ideal conversation area during cruising and touring adventures. The helm seat is a custom bucket with armrests, and the helm itself is designed with a coastal mariner in mind, leaving tons of space for electronics. Did we mention the generous head? Its all-fiberglass interior is easy to care for and a great convenience for long days on the water with big crews.

The model we tested was popularly configured without the optional hardtop. Many customers still seek the sun, and a stow-away Bimini top is to their liking. However, the optional hardtop shades the cockpit wonderfully, protects from rain and offers additional real estate for mounting rod holders — a

great accommodation for serious fishers.

In a dual console, it's easy to look at the luxury of the cockpit and the fishability features all the while overlooking one of the great features of this hull style: forward seating. Here, fishing boat meets luxury bowrider, and crew seated up front get a first-class view of the waterway as it glides past them. Under the seating is a ton of dry storage and grab rails for a secure ride; stereo speakers for great sound are effectively positioned. Add the ample anchor locker and an optional windlass for hanging out or bottomfishing, and the Freedom 235 is complete and ready for waterfront fun.

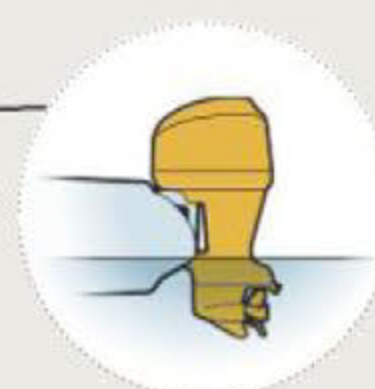
— *Randy Vance*



See a photo gallery of the Grady-White Freedom 235 by scanning this tag or visiting [boatingmag.com/2994](http://boatingmag.com/2994).



AVAILABLE POWER:  
OUTBOARD



### High Points

- ▶ Factory-installed Fusion stereo provides stirring sound quality.
- ▶ Wraparound glass windshield and wind dam close the cockpit for inclement weather.
- ▶ Grady-White makes seacocks easy to operate with lever extensions.
- ▶ Battery switch and breakers are readily accessible in the coaming cabinet.

### Low Points

- ▶ Battery access was tight and inconvenient.
- ▶ Bilge and livewell pump access proved equally difficult.

▶ LOA: 23'7" ▶ Beam: 8'6" ▶ Draft (max): 1'8" ▶ Displacement (approx.): 4,050 lb.  
▶ Transom Deadrise: 20 degrees ▶ Bridge Clearance: 5'7"; 7'9" with hardtop ▶ Fuel Capacity: 115 gal. ▶ Max Horsepower: 300 ▶ Available Power: Yamaha F250 and F300

### ▼ 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	4.5	5.2	1.2	3.8	4.3	389.7	448.5	2	65
1500	6.3	7.2	2.2	2.8	3.3	294.3	338.7	3	74
2000	6.8	7.8	3.3	2.1	2.4	212.6	244.6	6	76
2500	9.0	10.3	5.5	1.6	1.9	168.4	193.8	8	82
3000	12.7	14.6	6.7	1.9	2.2	196.0	225.5	6	84
3500	20.2	23.2	8.7	2.3	2.7	239.8	276.0	7	86
4000	26.3	30.3	11.9	2.2	2.5	229.0	263.5	5	88
4500	29.6	34.1	14.8	2.0	2.3	207.2	238.5	5	92
5000	34.1	39.2	20.6	1.7	1.9	171.1	197.0	4	92
5500	37.3	43.0	25.2	1.5	1.7	153.3	176.4	4	94
5800	38.4	44.2	26.0	1.5	1.7	152.9	176.0	4	95

MOST ECONOMICAL CRUISING SPEED

### HOW WE TESTED

ENGINE: Yamaha F300 DRIVE/PROP: Outboard/Yamaha Saltwater Series II SDS 15.5" x 17" 3-blade stainless steel GEAR RATIO: 1.75:1 FUEL LOAD: 80 gal. CREW WEIGHT: 400 lb.

Grady-White Greenville, North Carolina; 252-752-2111; [gradywhite.com](http://gradywhite.com)