

New Hardtop and Yamaha V6s

Make A Good Boat Even Better

EXACTLY A YEAR AGO, we reviewed the Grady-White 330 Express equipped with a pair of the new Yamaha F350, 350 hp V8 four-stroke outboards. It was a great boat with stellar performance, but the windshield and hardtop arrangement was not as weather-tight as an enclosed hardtop would be.

One of Grady-White's dealers is Capstan Marine in Richmond, BC and owner Robert Brown had a customer who was an experienced west coast yachtsman, a Grady-White fan and also a keen saltwater fisherman. He wanted the improved visibility and all-weather "fishability" that an enclosed hardtop could deliver...but Grady-White didn't have an enclosed hardtop version of the 330.

A lot of time, effort, creativity and cooperation went back and forth and boom – meet the Grady-White 330 with enclosed hardtop!

To be clear, Grady-White is not a

By Andy Adams

PERFORMANCE

TEST BOAT ENGINES

Twin Yamaha F300A, 300 horsepower 4.2 L / 254.4 ci, four-stroke V6 outboards with dual overhead cams, 24 valves and variable camshaft timing, sequential multi-port electronic fuel injection and with stainless steel propellers.prop sets.

ENGINE (RPM)	SPEED (MPH)
1500	7.7
2000	9.0
2500	9.6
3000	10.3
3500	16.4
4200	29.9*
4500	32.9
5000	37.1
5500	41.0
6000	44.6

*Cruising speed

Performance Data Supplied by
Grady White Boats

build-to-order boat company, but a significant dealer, with a keen customer and a logical and rational request, got the designers at Grady-White going. They have Canadian dealers whose customers go out in the cold, fog and rain. Plus, we all wish the season was longer! Adding an enclosed hardtop was a natural for BC and it's just as well suited to extending comfortable cruising in Georgian Bay, the St. Lawrence and the Maritimes.

The Grady-White 330 Hardtop is a great choice for families and couples keen on long trips because of the speed and fuel economy. It also represents a great choice for a downtown condo-boater who wants to get places fast, a couple who want to do the Great Loop, or even a cottage family with a big group to transport.

Our test boat this year had the twin Yamaha F300A, 300 hp V6 four-stroke outboards. Last year's test boat had the

SPECIFICATIONS

Length	33'6"/10.21 m
Length Overall	35'10"/10.92 m
Beam	11'7"/3.53 m
Weight	14,577 lb./6612 kg
Fuel Capacity	350 gal./1325 L
Water Capacity	44 gal./ 166 L
Waste Capacity	10 gal./ 37.91 L
Base Price	\$380,000

Test boat provided by Grady-White Boats
www.gradywhite.com

Price quoted by Capstan Marine
www.capstanmarine.com

Yamaha 350 V8s. Those were simply fabulous: smooth, quiet and powerful yet economical too. They are still a great choice, but the twin Yamaha 300 hp V6s hit 44.6 mph, cruised at a brisk yet economical 29.9 mph revving 4200 while getting 1.25 US mpg according to Grady-White. The standard 350 US gal (1325 liter) fuel tank offers plenty of offshore range at cruising speeds.

Remember this is a relatively large cruiser with a very social bridge area, a spacious cockpit, and a cozy but accommodating cabin with standup head, well-equipped galley and even a mid-cabin to expand the sleeping accommodations. The rig weighs in around 14,500 lbs. with fuel, gear and passengers.

Last year, we were impressed by the lusty performance the twin Yamaha F350s delivered but the new V6s felt almost as quick in the hardtop version. The F300A V6s are a totally new design from Yamaha with big 4.2 liter displacement and Yamaha's next-generation engine block featuring plasma-fused sleeveless cylinder walls for the lightest weight in their class.

As we noted last year, compared to inboard or sterndrive power, the Yamaha F300A, 300 hp outboards offer worthwhile benefits. Instead of the complexity of inboard mounted engines, the outboards are much lighter, fully self-con-



Grady-White put the emphasis on the cockpit and exterior areas for family fishing action but the full fiberglass inner liner and well-proportioned spaces make this an effective and comfortable cabin. The teak and holly flooring adds a nautical feel.



This transom fish box is huge and features a gasketed lid and gas struts to keep it open as you slam in a trophy-sized game fish. That's what the Grady-White people had in mind when they designed this fast express cruiser but the boat is very adaptable to many other uses, especially with the new enclosed hardtop.

tained units that can be tilted to minimize corrosion and fouling problems.

All the mechanical complexity is outside of the boat leaving much more interior space. When running, engine vibration, exhaust and noise are left behind although the hardtop does reflect a little more noise than the original Express version did.

The new F300A Yamaha V6s have fully electronic controls with a single key for the two engines and a "Start All" button. Press that and both engines instantly spring to life. They idle silently, the gear change is quiet but positive and dockside handling is fairly easy with the

twin engines plus our test boat had an optional bow thruster to make things even easier.

Out on the open water, the Grady White hull design delivers remarkable turning ability and its seaworthiness in big water is well-proven. We ran through a little ocean chop around Biscayne Bay in Miami and we barely noticed it.

All the important interior features



The galley is compact but still accommodates three drawers, a locker with trash container below the reasonably-sized sink and with a Contoure convection microwave, Isotherm refrigerator, two-burner ceramic cook top and probably an owner-installed BBQ for the aft deck, you could make many excellent meals onboard.

the starboard side with an interior light; there is a great rigging station for setting up your bait that has a freshwater sink and pull-out faucet, and there are rod holders on the gunwales as well as in the cockpit sides. We especially liked the LED cockpit lighting mounted under the gunwales. There is also a brace of rod holders across the aft edge of the hardtop.

Grady White loads their boats with nice features – too many to detail individually but there are abundant storage lockers and cubbies, drawers for tackle and small items, a freshwater wash down as well as a transom shower and in our opinion, an excellent transom door.

That leads to a combination swim platform and outboard mounting area which is really an integral part of the 33'6" hull – not a bracket of any kind. This keeps the sea out of the boat and the big Yamaha's breathe through venting in the top of their cowling – taking a big wave astern is no issue.

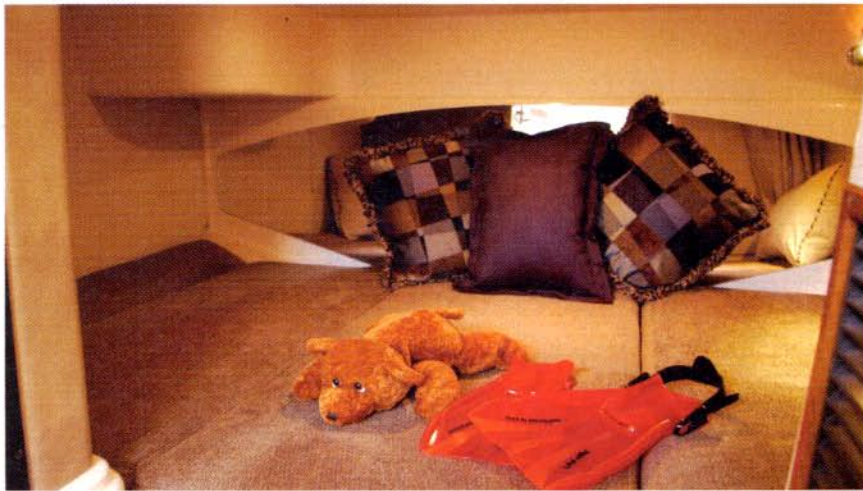
The bridge area features a centre-mounted Pompanette pedestal helm seat with locking arms that swivels and adjusts. The other bridge seating surrounds the helm making a nice social arrangement while giving the captain the best 360 degree view for driving, docking and when fishing. The new hardtop opens up the view by eliminating the obstructions the standard hardtop frame creates and replacing the framed windshield with glass integrated into the enclosure. Incidentally, when all the development was completed, the new enclosed helm saved a few pounds!

As in the standard hardtop version, you still get a saltwater-style overhead

remain in the 330 hardtop version. The cockpit is what this boat is all about because it was designed for saltwater fishing. Features include toe rails, padded cockpit coaming all the way around, rod holders spaced to handle big saltwater

reels and we really liked the handsome foldout transom seat; it's there when you want it, gone when you don't.

Across the transom top is a 240 L insulated fish box with drain and gasketed lid. A 173 L raw water live well is on



console for radios and other electronics. There is lots of space for electronics directly ahead of the driver too. Our test boat had the Yamaha Command Link digital instrumentation along with tilt wheel, footrest and big compass. The upholstery and fiberglass gel coat are all the same Grady-White French vanilla colour. That is a lot easier on the eyes than stark white. With the new hardtop,

the optional 12,000 BTU bridge air conditioning unit makes a lot more sense and a 12,000 BTU system is standard in the cabin.

The cabin is down four steps from the bridge and has stainless-steel handholds everywhere you would want them. It is a reasonable size and offers a double berth forward plus a second berth in the mid cabin to sleep four people in total.

The low entrance to the aft cabin which lies under the helm is probably more comfortable for children but once inside, you have a spacious sleeping surface and with the air conditioning running at night, I suspect many owners prefer to sleep there instead of in the forward vee which can be left set up as a dining area.



Especially in the head, the fiberglass liner will be easy to keep clean and will ward off odours. The Vacuflush MSD is a great feature too. Cabin air conditioning is standard but opening the hatches keeps things fresh.

Grady-White includes a 15" flat screen TV, Kenwood stereo and Toshiba DVD player for entertainment. A 4 kW diesel generator is included to keep you comfortable away from shore power.

The galley features a storage locker and three drawers under the Corian counter and a storage locker with built-in racking and mesh nets above. A Contoure microwave is included as is an Isotherm refrigerator and a two-burner ceramic cooking surface. We liked the large, round stainless-steel sink. Most parts are in plastic or composite material for strength and long life and the interior has a full fiberglass liner.

The head is a usable size and again has a Corian counter, handheld shower and a Vacuflush MSD.

While all the virtues of the 330 Express seem to still be there, Canadian buyers are sure to agree that the new Grady-White 330 Hardtop makes a great boat even better! 🐦