

**PERFORMANCE
TESTED**

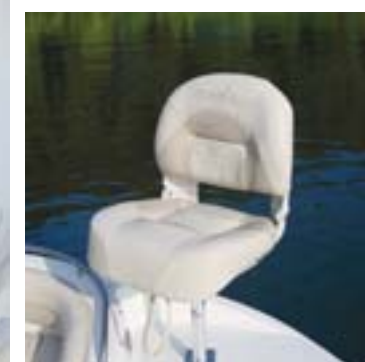
EFFICIENT ENGINEERING

**NAUTICSTAR PACKS A
LOT INTO ITS 206
I/O SPORT DECK**



ABOUT THE BOAT:

» NAUTICSTAR 206 SPORT DECK



▶ The two features that stand out the most on this boat are the transformable passenger seat in the cockpit and the ski locker that doubles as a changing room – talk about efficient use of space. When it's time to get out of the sun, the cockpit area can be shaded with the standard Sunbrella Bimini top.

The boat provides the typical amenities we would like to see on a deckboat, such as a galley that provides a nice stainless steel sink and faucet, plenty of storage at the bow and stern, and enough

seating for up to 10 people. Under the console is extra storage, which offers plenty of room for the 25-quart Igloo cooler, and this is also the location of the trash can.

The helm has a nice feel, accented with Faria gauges and steering with its wood-grain hub. Options for the instrumentation include Sirius Satellite radio, a Lowrance in-dash fish finder and a hard-wired radio remote control. The captain can also upgrade to tilt steering.

For the wakeboarders or anglers in the group, don't fret that the 206 I/O doesn't have a ton of standard features for you. For the boarders, there are still optional upgrades for a wakeboard tower that can be equipped with speakers and board racks. Anglers will want the fishing package, which comes with two fish seats, an aerated livewell and a trolling harness.

SPECIFICATIONS

| | |
|-----------------------------|---------------|
| Length | 20 ft., 2 in. |
| Beam | 8 ft., 6 in. |
| Capacity | 10 people |
| Dry Weight | 3,600 lbs. |
| Fuel Capacity | 51 gals. |
| Maximum Power | 225 hp |
| Deadrise (@ transom) | 15 degrees |

▶ **By Go Boating Test Team**
Though NauticStar is only celebrating its fifth anniversary, it's the three generations of boat building experience the company draws from that has helped propel NauticStar to compete with established boat builders in such a short time. Its new 206 I/O is a fine example of the company's drive to produce great boats.

The 206 I/O is a new deckboat for NauticStar, which the company touts as offering sound construction and a well-designed top deck. NauticStar uses com-

posite construction on the 206 I/O with pieces such as the fiberglass stringers and composite transom, which is a little more costly to use than wood but provides better long-term durability for the boat. NauticStar backs its construction with a limited lifetime hull warranty.

The 206 I/O is 20 feet in length, and extends another 2 feet with the optional swim platform. Though the 206 is not a large deckboat, NauticStar really managed to fit a lot of user-friendly features on the top deck.

Starting at the bow, there's an open

platform that's a great place for fishing, sunbathing or simply accessing the boat. There's also a retractable stainless steel reboarding ladder with designated storage and an anchor locker in the deck. Once you're inside the boat, the wide beam is carried up through the bow in typical deckboat fashion to provide an open and spacious area with seating on each side. A filler cushion covers the step to access the bow, which lifts to reveal an insulated, draining cooler to keep food and drinks at hand for bow passengers. The bow area is accented with large stain-

less steel grabrails, cupholders and stereo speakers.

One of the unique features on the NauticStar 206 I/O is the ski locker toward the bow, which opens to reveal more than just storage for skis and boards. Upon opening the compartment, the underside of the lid houses a pull-out changing room – it's a unique space-saving technique we've never seen done quite this way.

In the cockpit, the passenger-side console features a small galley, which includes a stainless steel sink with faucet as well as some flat counter space and a few

PERFORMANCE & PRICING NAUTICSTAR 206 SD

PERFORMANCE

| | MPH | RPM | MPG | RANGE | DBA |
|-----------------------|------|------|------|-------|-----------|
| PEAK | 44.2 | 5000 | 2.83 | 130 | 97 |
| CRUISE | 31.6 | 3500 | 4.10 | 188 | 85 |
| TIME TO PLANE | | | | | 4 seconds |
| 0-30 MPH ACCELERATION | | | | | 9 seconds |

Fuel consumption measured with Mercury SmartCraft digital fuel-flow meter; range based on 90% of total fuel capacity

POWER

MOTOR 190 hp MerCruiser
4.3L Alpha

PROP 3-blade aluminum

WOT RPM RANGE 4400-4800

Craft available with 135 to 225 hp stern drive engines from MerCruiser and Volvo Penta

LOAD

| | PEOPLE | FUEL (GALS./LBS.) | MISC. |
|---------|--------|----------------------|----------|
| TEST | 2 | 15/94 | 15 lbs. |
| TYPICAL | 5-6 | 51/319 | 100 lbs. |

BASE PRICE

WITH TEST POWER \$36,290*

*Price can vary depending on options, location and freight — price does not include trailer

FINANCING

\$348/month for 15 years*

*Assuming a final price of \$42,000 with a 10% down payment and a fixed interest rate of 7.40% — does not include sales tax

FIVE NOTABLE OPTIONS

Tilt steering (\$186), Bow filler cushions (\$286), Porta Potti (\$186), Fishing Package (\$886), swim platform (\$854)

FIVE NOTABLE STANDARDS

Flip-up changing room, ski tow eye, convertible passenger seat, Sunbrella Bimini top, molded in-storage boxes

BUILDER

NauticStar Boats, P.O. Box 26, 500 Waterway Drive, Amory, MS 38821; (662) 256-5636; www.nauticstarboats.com

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cupholders. A small, lockable glove box rests just below the sink, and the console itself opens to reveal storage for the cockpit table, cooler and trash can.

For the captain, the helm features standard gold-bezel Faria gauges. Just to the right of the steering wheel is the Clarion CD player, with four speakers spread throughout the boat to distribute the tunes. The captain also is afforded a bucket seat with flip-up bolster. The port-side passenger seat offers a unique adjustable top cushion that can slide fore and aft to create a forward- or rear-facing seat. Since the adjustable seat is connected to the L-shaped bench seating, it can also lay flat to extend the wrap-around seating space.

Just above the engine compartment is a large sunpad. On the port side of the engine are large storage compartments with a pull-out tub for easy loading, but we weren't fond of the cushion opening toward the cockpit (as opposed to away), because this made it hard to access from the cockpit. Toward the starboard side is a walk-through transom to access the stern.

PERFORMANCE

For our performance run of the 206 Sport Deck, our test boat was powered by a 190 hp MerCruiser stern drive. While our

test power is close to the maximum available, the boat can also be equipped with stern drives ranging from 135 to 225 hp.

We were pleased with the quick-to-plane time of only 4 seconds, which shows the versatility this boat has for tow sports. The power did not drop off in the midrange either, as our 0-30 mph time was good at 9 seconds. But acceleration is not the only thing the 206 Sport Deck has going for it, as we also managed to post a 44.2 mph peak speed.

As for fuel efficiency, a cruising speed of 31.6 mph will allow the boat to cover about 188 miles on a full 51-gallon tank. If you want to keep it pinned, however, the boat will consume a little more fuel at peak speed, dropping the range to about 130 miles to a tank.

OVERALL

The NauticStar 206 I/O offers a spacious and comfortable interior, plenty of performance for tow sports, and it all comes at a fair price of \$36,290 with our test power. NauticStar incorporated some thoughtfully designed features to pack a lot of versatility into this 20-foot platform, which is exactly what the buyer of this boat is looking for. With its versatility, performance and comfort, the 206 I/O is a great compact deckboat. **60**