

Grady-White Fisherman 216 (2018-)

Brief Summary

Grady-White's Fisherman 216 is a dual-purpose center console that combines her builder's famous fishability with extra crew comfort. She's designed for fishing, but also for swimming, waterskiing and simply day cruising. Her enclosed head compartment (a portable toilet is standard) will also be welcomed by the whole family.

She comes standard with enough fishing amenities to satisfy all but the most fanatic angler, and can also be customized from a list of options into a comfortable family dayboat, too. Port and starboard stern platforms facilitate boarding from dockside or from the water; a four-step swim ladder is standard.

Price

Base Price

Prices, features, designs, and equipment are subject to change. Please see your local dealer or visit the builder's website for the latest information available on this boat model.

Key Features

- Nonskid fiberglass liner
- Stainless steel through-hull fittings
- Automatic bilge pump (1,100 GPH) (4,164 LPH)
- Swim platforms - aft port and starboard extensions with starboard ladder
- Forward anchor locker with rode storage
- 80-gallon (303 L) fuel tank
- 316 grade stainless steel steering wheel with knob
- Scratch resistant acrylic windshield with handrail

Test Results

RPM	MPH	Knots	GPH	MPG	NMPG	STAT. MILE	NM	dBa
600	2.8	2.4	0.4	6.9	6	495	430.4	61

RPM	MPH	Knots	GPH	MPG	NMPG	STAT. MILE	NM	dBa
1000	4.2	3.7	0.8	5.3	4.6	378	328.7	61
1500	5.9	5.1	1.3	4.5	3.9	327	284.1	70
2000	7.5	6.5	2.1	3.5	3.1	255	222.1	72
2500	8.5	7.4	3.3	2.6	2.3	188	163.7	75
3000	10.6	9.2	4.7	2.3	2	162	141.2	80
3500	20.2	17.5	5.4	3.7	3.2	269	233.6	82
4000	26.4	23	7.4	3.6	3.1	259	224.9	85
4500	31.5	27.4	9.4	3.4	2.9	241	209.8	87
5000	36.1	31.4	13.2	2.7	2.4	197	171.2	92
5500	40.2	35	17.2	2.3	2	169	146.8	92
5800	42.5	36.9	19.5	2.2	1.9	157	136.6	93

[View the test results in metric units](#)
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Specifications

Length Overall	21' 3" / 6.48 m
BEAM	8' 6" 2.59 m
Dry Weight	3,125 lbs. 1,417 kg

Tested Weight	5,063 lbs. 2,296 kg
Draft	16" 40.6 cm
Draft Up	
Draft Down	
Air Draft	
Deadrise/Transom	19 deg.
Max Headroom	N/A
Bridge Clearance	7' 7" 2.31 m
Weight Capacity	N/A
Person Capacity	8
Fuel Capacity	80 gal. 303 L
Water Capacity	10 gal. 37.8 L
Length on Trailer	
Height on Trailer	
Trailer Weight	
Total Weight	5,063 lbs. 2,296 kg
Aft Deck	

Salon Inside Width	
Salon Fore & Aft	
Salon Height	
Salon Volume	
Galley Volume	
Master SR Width	
Master SR fore & Aft	
Master SR Overhead	
Master SR Volume	
Eng. Room Volume	

Acceleration Times & Conditions

Time to Plane	4.8 sec.
0 to 20	
Ratio	
Props	14 1/2 x 15 Reliance SDS
Load	2 persons, 1/2 of fuel, full water, 593 lbs. of gear
Climate	80 deg., 70 humid.; wind: 5-10 mph; seas: calm

Grady-White Fisherman 216 running

The new Grady-White Fisherman 216 has flung down the gauntlet for other boats in its class.

Grady-White Fisherman 216 running

The Grady-White Fisherman 216 measures 21'3" (6.48 m) overall, including the molded stern platforms with 8'6" (2.59 m) beam.

Mission

Grady-White has targeted this boat to several groups of boat owners -- hard-core anglers, casual anglers with families that like to use the boat for watersports and excursions, and people transitioning from other types of boats, including sailboats, sportboats and large cruisers, who want a good, all-around day boat that looks salty and they can be proud to own.

Grady-White Fisherman 216 options

Our test boat was equipped with many of the options that make the Fisherman 216 a versatile boat for both avid anglers and a watersports-oriented family.

Overview

The Grady-White Fisherman 216 comes standard with family-friendly features, including a head compartment in the console and supportive jump seats at the transom. Add some options and she becomes akin to a sportboat bowrider, with cushioned full-length V-lounges forward, or even a bow-filling sun pad. She has a swimmer-friendly transom with dual molded-in platforms that are a little longer than normal. They also facilitate boarding from dockside.

When it's time to fish, the filler cushion and watersports gear can be left ashore and the Fisherman 216 becomes what her name implies: A no-nonsense fishing boat.

Grady-White Fisherman 216

The Fisherman 216's SeaV2 hull exhibits the bow flare characteristic of North Carolina boats. The Outer Banks inlets can be boisterous, and extra flare comes in handy in keeping the Atlantic Ocean spray off the decks and out of the helmsman's face.

Major Features

- **Port and starboard jump seats** swivel inboard and out of the way to allow unencumbered passage between the cockpit and the dual stern platforms. When flipped upside-down, the upholstered seat bottoms self-stow, revealing a hard surface with nonskid strips for sure footing.

- **V-seats in the bow**, which house a pair of insulated fishboxes, can have optional foldaway backrests so that two people can face forward while underway. They are plush. An additional fiberglass insert with cushion can turn the bow into a full sun pad. With the cushions removed, anglers have an elevated casting deck.
- **The console houses a lockable** head compartment with 4'8" (1.42 m) headroom, a standard portable head, LED lighting, and storage. The molded forward console seat is cushioned and houses an insulated cooler/fishbox that drains overboard.
- **The standard helm seat** is large enough for two people (sitting or standing); a backrest, flip-up bolster and molded-in footrest are standard. Tackle trays, more lockable storage, a fire-extinguisher holder, and four rocket launcher-style rod holders complete the leaning bar package.
- **All deck hardware is marine-grade 316 stainless steel**, through-bolted for maximum strength.
- **Nothing Drains into the Bilge.** The Fisherman 216 has been engineered to be "self-bailing"; this means that not only the cockpit but also all of the fishboxes, coolers, livewells, rod holders, and cup holders have been designed to drain overboard by gravity.
- **Secure toe-rails in cockpit** allow anglers to feel safe and more secure when leaning over the gunwale trying to land their catch in sloppy conditions.
- **Hull design by Ray Hunt & Associates.** This is probably the most important feature of all, as few center console builders have hulls designed by the firm that invented the deep-V bottom and has refined it continually for over 50 years. Grady-White calls it their "SeaV2" which signifies that it is a "Continuous variable V" hull. Over numerous tests, we have found it to stay under control, has no bad habits, is forgiving, and is a good compromise between ride and fuel economy and speed.

Grady-White Fisherman 216 running

Even in relatively high-speed turns the Fisherman 216 stayed under control and was dry. Her sharp entry *cuts* through waves rather than *pounds* through them.

Design and Construction

Grady-White boats are priced near the top of the center console range, where impeccable quality and finish work is expected. The boats are designed and built by craftsmen, many of whom have worked for Grady-White for 20 years or more and know the company's best practices.

Grady-White Fisherman 216 deadrise

The deadrise of Grady-White's SeaV2 hull varies continuously from bow to transom, where it is 19-degrees. The sharp forward sections provide comfort when driving into bigger waves and the flatter stern sections increase efficiency underway and stability at rest or at trolling speeds. The hard chines and running strakes knock down spray and keep the boat dry.

Hand-laid Lamination. The hulls, decks, and major components are hand-laid, using the best resins, fabrics and reinforcement, according to the company. There's no wood in the structural components. Stringers and frames are composite -- fiberglass over structural foam -- and the transom is cored with high-density foam that won't get soggy if water gets in.

Gated Entrance

~~Grady-White Fisherman 216 stern~~

This view of the stern shows the backs of the jump seats that swivel inward to create port and starboard walkthrough passages from the swim platform to the cockpit.

~~Grady-White Fisherman 216 ladder~~

This swim platform and the one on the port side measure 28" (71.12 cm) fore and aft and 24" (60.96 cm) wide. The standard 4-step ladder reaches 22" (55.88 cm) below the surface.

~~Grady-White Fisherman 216 jump seats~~

Seen from inside the boat, the backs of the jump seats have plush-padded back rests for comfortable riding. The seats are 22" (55.88 cm) wide.

~~Grady-White Fisherman 216 passage~~

By flipping the seat cushion and its base over, a passageway with non-skid has been created. This, along with the swiveling back rest, creates important added functionality to the boat for watersports activities as well as boarding.

~~Grady-White Fisherman 216 passage~~

With the seat back swiveled to the inboard side, passage is unencumbered.

The molded stern platforms are longer than on previous models, and the non-skid on the passageway allows this area to be used for launching watersports. Note that the seat back has been swiveled inboard. This is a functional innovation in this class of boats. The re-boarding ladder has four steps.

~~Grady-White Fisherman 216 tow pylon~~

The optional tow pylon stows in the transom and extends above the outboard engine.

~~Grady-White Fisherman 216 drink holders~~

Drink holders are carefully placed all around the boat where guests and owners might need them. Note the drain in the bottom -- all drink holders and rod holders drain overboard. Nothing on this Grady-White drains into the bilge.

~~Grady-White Fisherman 216 rod holder~~

Rod holder, drink holder, and grab handle -- all are close at hand from the port side jump seat. There is an optional freshwater shower under a stainless cover (arrow) which is fed from a 10-gallon (37.85 L) tank.

Note the coiled raw-water washdown hose under the gunwale.

~~Grady-White Fisherman 216 fishing~~

The freshwater shower isn't just for swimmers -- more important to many Grady-White owners it's convenience for rinsing the salt off expensive fishing tackle.

~~Grady-White Fisherman 216 battery switch~~

Above is the starboard jump seat and to the right is the battery switch; a handy place for it to be when first boarding or leaving.

~~Grady-White Fisherman 216 led lights~~

Grady-White includes blue LED courtesy lights in the cockpit as well as under the swim platforms. As can be seen, it creates a cool-looking effect and may even attract fish. And, it's much less expensive than aftermarket underwater lights.

General Design Considerations

The Fisherman 216 has design details that make the boat functional for both fishing and more general use. The first detail is her two swim platforms that are much longer than on previous designs. Second, Grady-White has designed the backs of the jump seats so they swivel out of the way, permitting egress on both sides of the boat to the swim platforms. The cockpit depth ranges from 25" (.64 m) aft to 34" (.86 m) forward.

Fishability. With a hull draft (outboard up) of just 16" (40.6 cm), the Fisherman 216 can get into shallow water to hunt redfish, bonefish, or other species. Her cockpit depth is 25" (63.5 cm) which means the bolster hits the anglers leg at mid-thigh and the sturdy toe rails provide security. Four rod holders are standard.

~~Grady-White Fisherman 216 rod racks~~

There are three rod racks each, port and starboard. Grady-White's toe rails are sturdy and designed to lock anglers in sloppy conditions.

Forward, with the cushions off, the seats/fishboxes provide platforms for casting or netting. The two insulated and self-draining (overboard) 81-quart compartments can be used as fishboxes, beverage coolers or for general storage.

~~Grady-White Fisherman 216 fish boxes~~

Under the seats forward, the insulated 81-quart fishboxes which drain overboard can be used for fish, beverages or general storage. Note the gaskets and latches to keep them from rattling.

~~Grady-White Fisherman 216 gas assist~~

Each box has a gas assist strut that holds the lid open so that both hands can be used to organize contents in the boxes.

~~Grady-White Fisherman~~ 216 fish box

This 28.5-quart insulated box in the forward side of the console drains overboard and can be used as a fishbox, for beverages or for general storage.

Optional Angling Accessories. For avid anglers we would recommend getting:

- The filler platform that goes between the fishboxes/seats in the bow
- Cockpit bolsters, which are a “must”
- The deluxe lean bar with backrest, 25-gallon (95 L) insulated livewell with full column distribution
- The fiberglass T-top with painted frame, spreader lights, rod holders, overhead equipment box, and windshield.

Our test boat had all of these options installed.

The Helm

As one would expect, the Fisherman 216’s helm has been well-designed. The steering wheel is to port, not in the center as we sometimes see. The compass on the dash forward is aligned with the hub of the wheel, and not centered on the console, as many builders do. The ignition has been placed under the wheel so the kill-switch lanyard is easy at hand, but the ignition key is out of the knee-strike zone. These are all small details, but important ones.

~~Grady-White Fisherman~~ 216 wind shield

The helm of our test boat was equipped with the optional T-top with scratch-resistant acrylic wraparound windshield.

~~Grady-White Fisherman~~ 216 helm

The helm’s instrument panel is clean, well-organized, and simple. We like the aircraft compass installation as it saves space and is easy to read. While there is room for two 12” screens on the panel, with multi-screen functions in modern electronics, who needs them?

~~Grady-White Fisherman~~ 216 console tray

On top of the console is a handy tray with rubber mat for placing cell phones, a GPS or any other gear. The arrow points to a drain, something some builders have forgotten.

~~Grady-White Fisherman~~ 216 nav

The navigation screen and Yamaha diagnostic readout (between the compass and the red button) are front and center. We like the VHF radio within easy eye-shot of the helm, not mounted overhead or low where

reading the screen is problematic. Note the 12V outlet at right, which is close to the tray above.

~~Grady-White Fisherman 216 switches~~

Accessory rocker switches are easy to see and reach and their breakers are just above. The red rocker at the left of the row is for the horn.

~~Grady-White Fisherman 216 engine control~~

The engine control binnacle and optional hydraulic trim tabs with indicator lights are easily at hand, and the standard Fusion stereo and drink holders are located handy to the companion seat.

~~Grady-White Fisherman 216 key~~

We made sure that the ignition key was out of the knee strike zone both standing and sitting.

~~Grady-White Fisherman 216 foot rest~~

The molded-in foot rest was at the proper height for comfort, according to our test captain.

Helm Seating

We think that the Fisherman 216 comes standard with one of the most luxurious center console helm seats in this size and type of boat. Most provide simply a barebones leaning post. The Fisherman 216's helm seat is built on a sturdy fiberglass base that provides stability as well as being a cabinet for tackle boxes and a structure to hold four rocket launchers.

~~Grady-White Fisherman 216 helm seats~~

With the twin bolsters in the down position, both the skipper and the companion have comfortable seating. The upholstery is plush and uses multi-density foam. There is a molded-in foot rest below.

~~Grady-White Fisherman 216 leaning post~~

With the twin bolsters up, the seats turn into a leaning post.

~~Grady-White Fisherman 216 rocket launchers~~

The seat backrest is supported by a robust white bracing system that also holds four rocket launchers, as well as holders for rigging tools.

~~Grady-White Fisherman 216 tackle boxes~~

A number of tackle boxes can be fitted into dedicated spaces in the console unit.

~~Grady-White Fisherman 216 helm seating~~

The primary difference between the standard seating arrangement and the optional Deluxe lean bar is the 25-gallon (95 L) livewell under the starboard seat. Also, these seats do not have, or really need, bolsters, as the lip of the seat becomes the bolster.

~~Grady-White Fisherman 216 lean bar~~

This is a view of the back of the optional Deluxe lean bar, as Grady-White calls it. We like the handrail welded across the four rod holders on the backrest on both the standard and optional backrest arrangements.

Grady-White Fisherman 216 deluxe

The optional Deluxe lean bar has one long back rest. The seat is 40" (101.6 cm) wide and the seat back is 16" (40.64 cm) high. The seat cushions are individual.

Grady-White Fisherman 216 tackle drawers

Tackle drawers in the back of the seat console can stow not only tackle, but also all kinds of important gear.

Grady-White Fisherman 216 lean bar

The test boat had the optional Deluxe lean bar, with a 25-gallon (95 L) insulated livewell under the seat. That's the main difference between the standard seating/leaning post, and one that will be important to hard-core anglers. The livewell makes a great drink cooler when it's not filled with bait.

Grady-White Fisherman 216 livewell

A close look at the 25-gallon (95 L) livewell which has full column aeration. It drains overboard.

The Head Compartment

Family boating demands some creature comforts. With that in mind, the Fisherman 216 comes standard with a portable head unit that can be upgraded with a deck pump out or an in-line macerator. The console interior is ventilated and comes complete with a mirror, storage hook, lighting, and a window with screen.

The inside of the head compartment is a complete fiberglass liner; an important detail that separates the Fisherman 216 from lower-priced boats. These liners are easy to keep clean and look good.

The Toilet. Our test boat had this optional toilet with an in-line macerator; offshore fishermen will prefer this, since they can pump it when beyond the three-mile limit. A basic portable toilet is legal everywhere since it has an integral holding tank, which is about the size of a rigid briefcase. It is designed to be taken off the boat and dumped in a toilet ashore. Deck pump out is an option, and one we think is worth the price.

Grady-White Fisherman 216 head

The starboard side entry to the lockable head compartment measures 16" (40.64 cm) wide and 39" (99.06 cm) high. That means portly guests will have to enter sideways and watch their head. We'd like to see a grab handle somewhere to aid entry. Note that the door is one piece and not a bi-fold door. The reason for that is because the passage between the console and the bulwarks is wider than we often see.

Grady-White Fisherman 216 headroom

There is 4'8" (1.42 m) headroom in the compartment, something that is unusual on a 21' (6.40 m) boat. Overhead there is recessed lighting. Light switches are to the left and the portlight can open for ventilation.

~~Grady-White Fisherman 216 head~~

The compartment is 36" (91.44 cm) wide and 27" (68.58 cm) fore and aft. Shown here is the standard toilet unit that has been plumbed to the optional in-line macerator for overboard discharge more than three miles offshore. The knob at the left in the storage compartment actuates the seacock.

~~Grady-White Fisherman 216 bulk head~~

In the forward bulkhead there is access to the boat's 10-gallon (38 L) fresh water tank as well as to other gear.

~~Grady-White Fisherman 216 access~~

On the aft bulkhead of the compartment is access to the back of the helm in order to reach electronics and electrical connections.

Optional T-top or Bimini?

Although it's an expensive option, we recommend that anglers add the fiberglass T-top to the Fisherman 216. If the mission of the 216 is limited to local casual boating activities and watersports, an optional Bimini top would serve just as well, or maybe even better. In any case, unless the boat will be used only at dusk or in the dark, we recommend getting some sort of UV protection.

Our test boat had the T-top, and we feel that for anglers it's worth the investment. It includes a full-height wraparound acrylic windshield -- welcome on cool days -- that adds handholds for moving around the boat and provides a surface to mount antennas, GPS receivers, and spreaders. It also houses stereo speakers, rocket launchers, and LED lights.

Less is More. There is more to this design of this T-top than meets the eye. It looks simple -- and that is one of the beauties of it -- and it is remarkably unobtrusive. Often the aluminum supports for the T-top are screwed to the deck and restrict passage somewhat, in addition to looking ugly. This T-top has supports that rest on the console itself. Another failing of T-top fabricators is to put the supports in the line of vision for the operator, with diagonal support bars. The optional T-top on the Fisherman 216 gets high marks in our book for affixing the aluminum supports to the center console and not to the deck, and for keeping forward vision clear.

~~Grady-White Fisherman 216~~

Look closely and note the four major upright T-top supports -- all anchored to either the top or the sides of the console structure. This is a good design and provides more side passage room when fighting a fish around the boat, also eliminating a tripping hazard.

Grady-White Fisherman 216 ttop supports

Attach the aft T-top supports to the side of the console.

Grady-White Fisherman 216 t top

The optional T-top also has red and white overhead lights, an equipment box overhead (we would not put our VHF radio there), and an acrylic windshield that is nestled behind and above a molding that will keep water from being driven over it onto the driver.

Grady-White Fisherman 216

Pretty much SOP on T-tops of this kind, stowing PFDs in an overhead mesh container that is open to the air keeps the life preserves handy, dry, and mildew-free.

Grady-White Fisherman 216 hand holds

Note the hand holds both on the underside of the top and connected to the aft uprights.

Grady-White Fisherman 216 hand holds

When riding out the fishing grounds, guests often stand behind the helm and hold on or beside it. The hand holds shown here are in the right place, in addition to adding strength to the frame.

Forward Cockpit

One of the Fisherman 216's selling points is her family-friendliness, but maximizing that feature requires investing in the bow cushions and backrests, and maybe the filler cushion, too. Otherwise, the boat's forward cockpit is typical center console -- twin seats with insulated 81-quart fish/cooler boxes underneath. A molded, cushioned seat on the forward side of the console is standard, with a 25.8-quart cooler underneath.

With the addition of optional swiveling back rests, the Fisherman 216 is turned into a bowrider and can play that role just as well as -- or better than -- conventional sportboats. A filler cushion takes it the extra mile to create a large sun pad. *Sans* cushions, seat backs and pads, the bow makes an excellent casting platform as mentioned above.

Grady-White Fisherman 216 console seat

The seat in front of the console is not an afterthought, nor has the space been cheapened with an Igloo cooler with a pad stuck on top. The seat back and 34" (86.36 cm) wide seat cushion here are well padded. The console has been designed to flow around these cushions in one harmonious unit. We like the integral cooler as it can be used for several purposes, won't slide around, and simply looks a lot better.

Grady-White Fisherman 216 bow

Adding the optional bow cushions and pivoting seat backs turns the forward cockpit into a hangout for non-fisher folk. Swing the seat back inboard, and create twin forward-facing lounges like a sportboat. Stereo

speakers and a low-profile bow rail are both standard.

~~Grady-White Fisherman 216 bow seats~~

With the seat backs in place, the average-sized person can stretch out their legs. There are 48" (121.9 cm) from the seat back to the forward bolster. The seats are 24" (60.96 cm) wide at their aft-most point.

~~Grady-White Fisherman 216 bow filler~~

With the filler cushion in place, sun bathing will be the order of the day. Anglers will buy just the filler structure without the cushion to make a casting platform.

~~Grady-White Fisherman 216 cushion~~

Note the thickness and sculptured design of this cushion. It has been engineered for comfort. To move it, just pull up and twist.

~~Grady-White Fisherman 216 cushion~~

In the fore and aft position, the backrest becomes another bolster and is out of the way.

~~Grady-White Fisherman 216 seating~~

Note the seating area forward. The speakers are standard.

~~Grady-White Fisherman 216 bow seats~~

The lounge seats are 24" (60.96 cm) wide at the seat back, and 48" (121.9 cm) from there to the forward bolster. This will be a popular place for teens when underway, but we would not put young children there unless the boat is going slowly; they can be easily tossed up by a passing wake.

~~Grady-White Fisherman 216 anchor locker~~

The anchor locker is well positioned, and we like the clips to hold the Danforth-style anchor. However, we wonder why the indentation and notch for the anchor rode is on the centerline when the only cleats for the anchor rode are actually to the sides and slightly behind the notch. We would put a proper pull-up cleat on the centerline with a flip-up navigation light.

~~Grady-White Fisherman 216 outboard~~

We think the standard 200-hp outboard engine is fine for this boat in most applications, but a 250 is also available.

Performance

Standard power for the Fisherman 216 is a single 200-hp 2.8 L in-line 4-cylinder Yamaha outboard -- the engine we used for the test. The props were 14 1/2 x 15 Reliance SDS stainless steel units. Test day had an ambient temperature of 80-degrees, 70% humidity, light wind, and flat water in the river where we ran the boat. With two people aboard, we had an estimated test weight of 5,063 lbs. (2,296 kg).

Speed Data. Our test captain measured a top speed of 36.9 knots (42.5 mph) and a best cruise of 17.5 knots (20.2 mph) at 3500 rpm. At that speed, we burned 5.4 gph and were getting 3.2 nmpg (3.7 smpg), for a range of 233 nm (269 sm), keeping 10% of the 80-gallon (303 L) fuel capacity in reserve.

Most people we know will want to spend a few extra dollars on fuel and go faster, and at 4500 rpm, we recorded 27.4 knots (31.5 mph). At that speed, we burned 9.4 gph, got 2.9 nmpg (3.4 smpg) for a range of 209 nm (241 sm) with a 10% reserve.

250-hp Data. Grady-White includes on their website Yamaha test data with the 250-hp Yamaha 4.2 L V6 Yamaha. The reported top speed was 42.5 knots (48.9 mph) and a best cruise speed of 19.4 knots (22.4 mph) at 3000 rpm. There, the engine burned 9.9 gph for 3.14 statute miles per gallon.

Consumer Caveat: Yamaha Motors, for some reason, usually picks as its ideal cruising speed an RPM that is *not* the most fuel efficient. It is usually at the speed where most people like cruising in smooth water. Typically, the most fuel-efficient RPM setting on outboard engines in this horsepower range is 3500. On this particular engine (the 250 Yamaha), the most efficient RPM setting is reported to be at 3000.

Grady-White Fisherman 216 running

Beginning skiers and wakeboarders will be interested to know that our test rig got on plane in 4.8 seconds.

Hole Shot Times. We recorded a time to plane of our test boat of 4.8 seconds. Time to 20 mph was 6.4 seconds, and time to 30 mph was 10.2 seconds.

Grady-White Fisherman 216 running

Test conditions in the river were not challenging. Nevertheless, the boat responded with alacrity to all commands. Hydraulic power steering comes standard.

Handling

On a hard turn, the Grady-White SeaV2 hull digs in for secure tracking, while the chines throw the spray low and away from the hull. Turning was docile, aided by the steering knob. We punched through the photo boat's wake without pounding. At rest, the boat was relatively stable.

Which Engine to Choose?

As far as the brand of engine goes, there is only one choice -- Yamaha. Those who prefer another engine brand will have to buy another boat brand. When it comes to which horsepower engine to choose -- the 200-hp or the 250-hp Yamaha -- we'd say it depends on how the boat is going to be used. The hardcore will go with the larger engine, but most people really don't need that much power for coastal and protected water

work -- which is the primary mission of this vessel. We think far too much emphasis is placed on top speed by most consumers. They will rarely go the top speed, even if conditions permit.

Grady-White Fisherman 216 profile

Our test boat had “Seaport Blue” gel coat, and now six additional colors are available, in addition to Grady-White’s standard white.

Hull Colors

For decades, Grady-White had one hull color, an off-white cream color that is distinctive. It served the company well, and the color along with its trademark Rybovich sheer line made the Grady-White boats obvious a mile away. A few years ago, the builder introduced a set of optional colors, one of which is shown in the picture above. See our video for the other colors.

We have always liked the Grady-White sheer and think that it is even more pronounced-looking when the hull is a color.

Grady-White Fisherman 216 software

The Fisherman 216 comes standard with “Captain Grady” software that can be downloaded to iPad or iPhone that has everything an owner needs to know about the 216’s operation plus lots of other useful information.

Observations

We are often asked why Grady-White boats cost more than many of the low-priced brands on the market. The simple answer is that most of those brands are built by a one-man band -- in many cases someone who has learned how to laminate boats and started a boat company. Usually, this fellow is chief cook and bottle washer. He is the designer, engineer, construction foreman, general manager, and CFO. Typically, these brands are short on engineering staff, skilled equipment installers, QC inspection, to say nothing of customer service departments and standards compliance personnel.

For example, we recently inspected a popular low-priced model that had only one clamp on a hose connected to a thru-hull fitting below the waterline. We suspect that this was done, not to save a few cents, but because the installer didn’t know any better, and there was no adequate QC. There is much more to boats than resin, fiberglass, and an outboard motor.

Grady-White boats are not for everyone. Many people live on canals and just like to have a boat available to cruise on the ICW or other protected water and not go far from home. Many people do not really do much with their boats, so they are never put to the test, and if problems occur they are not far from shore.

On the other hand, there are boaters who want to take their small boats offshore for serious fishing, and in the case of the Fisherman 216, have a boat that can serve other functions for the whole family in comfort and without compromise. All of this without having to worry about whether the builder did everything right, followed ABYC and CE standards, used best practices in all systems and construction details, and has the engineering and customer support staff to back it all up. These people want a boat that looks beautiful and signals that they know the difference between a well-built boat and one whose main feature is simply a low price. These are the people for whom Grady-White is building boats.