

# B&H WATER ROD 300



Steroid-level custom artistry is fused with a deliciously consistent triple-step vee, and a vee-bottom star is born







## b&hwaterrod

Some of the team noted the Water Rod 300 in our staging area prior to test day and saw a solidly built, muscle boat with major league performance genes. Our subsequent driving evaluations revealed more: a seriously evolved life form that retains the essence of the artistry that makes Water Rod not just a survivor, but a newly emerging leader in the pack of high performance, vee bottom boats.

B&H devotes its very talented attentions to a limited number of fiercely individual boaters who enjoy not only the experience of driving a well-heeled vee, but in having direct say about exactly how it's built. B&H is at their best when building 'em bold. This beautifully hued 30' single was a case in point, with its tantalizing mix of hot and cold

gelcoat color, teased with a stardust glow. It's not every day we test a boat with \$12,000 in lighting and audio upgrades.

B&H made that theme a continuum inside and out, creating another example of the honed art of building a nicely finished custom boat. Each is an individual project, no two alike, built to a very specific and virtually unlimited menu of available equipment, colors, and appointments, priced accordingly.

The baseline 300, with 502 power and a base build-out, lists at just under \$100,000. Basics like billet shifter, foot rests, stainless steel trim molding, and retractable ladder, standard on most performance customs, are options for B&H and start the meter running.

This one packed almost \$80,000 in options on its beautifully finished frame including a Mercury 525/XR setup with SmartCraft, a \$35,000 upgrade that made a 76 mph ride of the show quality machine.

### On Board

The Water Rod's deeply, receptive interior created a reassuring environment in which to enjoy the inevitable full-throttle indulgence that this boat, and others who run alongside, invite. It's passenger friendly throughout, and brilliant to look at, from both within or from afar. The high-back seats featured Kevlar wrap-around glass, and were as beautiful as they were comfortable. There is plenty









of freeboard, and our passengers moved easily about the cockpit and cabin as we drove this solid boat.

In any performance vee, we like the idea of electrically adjusted bolsters instead of the manual locking type on the Water Rod. And at this price, you should have them.

The 300 was a very comfortable drive standing or sitting, with short-stem Dana controls and optimal placement of its basic gauge cluster making it a very controlled driver's universe. Passenger seating was comfortable and neatly done by West Coast Interiors, and visibility was excellent throughout the boat. The cabin sealed with optional acrylic privacy sliders, which were stylish and very functional. The cabin was surprisingly large and hospitable, and neatly executed.

B&H unleashed its installers on a spectacular lighting and sound system, thematic of this 300's bold overall approach, which

included multi-color underwater illumination from Abyss. A deeply entrenched and thoroughly reverberating Kicker system sets the tone of the moment with as much power as desired for your friends on local waterways.

## Performance

It is easy in these sophisticated times to lose sight of the whole point of performance boating: not just getting there, but to have some fun behind the wheel along the way. No danger of that here: the Water Rod's bottom design, with its expansive pad and three drag-erasing steps, maintains the predictability you need in a vee with an exhilarating, responsive feel at speed. The 300's naturally elevated stance never blew out, and showed plenty of traction.

We had great fun in prodding the upper end of this setup's limits, and aired out quite nicely at 76.4 mph, faster than the builder's

target speed of 75 mph (Kudos to B&H for not over-selling.) Even without tabs installed, our aired-out 300 showed no sign of falling to one side. It has great natural balance and we experienced nothing less than total control.

The 525/XR was an excellent powering choice, though it was evident that the 300 could have easily taken on more. One of our test drivers had, in fact, tested a blown 90 mph version a few weeks prior, and reported the same polished feel.

This hull is a communicator, and it's not long before the driver is totally in tune. Despite its girth, the Rod planed quickly and easily, and rolled into a set easily without tabs. The 300 responded well at low rpm, and was equally smooth through the midrange.

We dug in and piled the big vee over some of the lumpiest Havasu water and tapped into more of the same predictable handling and feel. Tracking, even in the rough water at speed was excellent.



Our passengers retreated below, to surprising comfort.

It would have been easy, in these times, for a small builder like B&H to tuck it in and play it safe. They've opted instead for more refinement to what has always been a compelling mix of technology and fiberglass, and the resulting performance boat is something special.



## SPECIFICATIONS

### B&H Water Rod 300

**Hull Type:** Stepped vee

**Weight:** 5,800 lbs.

**Centerline length:** 29'8"

**Beam:** 102"

**Base price:** \$99,900

**Price as tested:** \$179,600

**Engine/Drive:** Mercury 525SCi/Bravo XR

**Rated horsepower:** 525

**Props:** 26" Bravo

**Standard features:** Interior lighting, glove box, four cleats, electric engine hatch, powder-coated drink holders, engine lights.

**Options on test boat:** Mercury 525SCi w/SmartCraft gauges (\$35,000), Imco hydraulic steering (\$3,500), retractable swim ladder (\$450), 3/4" stainless steel molding (\$3,800), Kicker sound system w/12 speakers/media system (\$8,000), billet shifter/standoff bezels (\$400), three built-in ice chests (\$250), cockpit floor storage/foot rests (\$1,000), pearl stardust gelcoat (\$3,000), Abyss Multi color underwater lighting (\$3,800), LED Glow multi color lighting (\$2,200), in cabin bedding (\$500), microwave and inverter (\$2,000), smoke plexi cabin door and cockpit door (\$2,800), alarm system w/two batteries, isolator (\$2,500), alarm system w/batteries (\$2,500), Competitive triple trailer (\$7,500), custom bimini top/boat cover (\$3,000)

### B&H Performance Boats

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