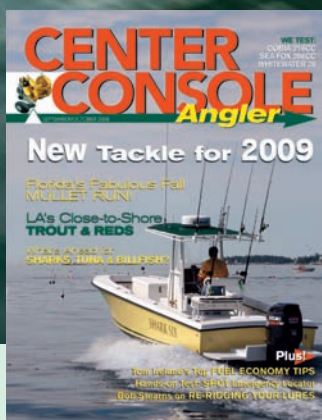


Snap Dragon

Cobia 216CC: Burn drags, not fuel. By Lenny Rudow



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The guys in those big monster convertibles used to laugh at those of us in the center console “mosquito fleet,” but now that fuel prices at the dock have surged past five bucks a gallon, the tables have been turned. Sure, they’re comfier and drier than we are when the seas kick up—but they’re paying \$1,000 or more so they can haul their foo-foo settees, flat-screen TV’s, and cappuccino machines along to the hot bite. You’d rather grab the pipework, grit your teeth like a real man, and go toe-to-toe with a tuna without making a payment on the King of Saud’s newest Hummer? Me too, and that’s why Cobia’s new 216CC has a special appeal to guys like us.

Saving Cash

The 216CC has enough beef to run offshore when conditions allow, yet rigged with a 150-hp Yamaha F-150 it posts astonishing fuel efficiency numbers. Our test boat got 4 mpg while cruising along in the low 30s, plenty of speed whether you’re headed for the rips to chase stripers or going beyond the reef to live-bait for sailfish. On the troll at six knots, efficiency jumped to nearly 5 mpg. And since the 216CC has a 100-gallon fuel tank, you’ll be able to cruise just as far from the inlet as you’d like.

Performance isn’t just efficient, it’s spunky as well. Throw the throttle down, and this boat leaps onto plane in five seconds. Whip the wheel around and the deep-V hull carves a hair-pin turn so tight you’ll lose your sunglasses. Feel the need for speed? With the thrifty 150 on the transom swinging a 14” x 17” three-bladed stainless-steel prop, we topped out at 41.8 mph, but if that’s not enough for you, just opt for the 225-hp powerplant.

Once you get where you’re going the 216CC is ready to perform, with fishing features like a 26-gallon livewell (yup, it’s baby-blue and rounded inside, to keep your baits calm and healthy) under the cushy aft seat, coaming bolsters, triple under-gunwale rod racks, and four gunwale-mounted rod holders. When the gaff comes into play you’ll be swinging the fish into an integrated 50-gallon insulated fishbox, and when that one’s stuffed you can work on filling the big cooler under the leaning post. If you’d like to keep your food and drinks slime-free (wimp) just place them in the 52-quart forward console cooler.

Ready for a fish-break? Check out the forward cockpit, with comfortable bolsters all around and a low-profile grab rail. Opt for the bow cushion package and you can kick back to enjoy a frosty beverage in leisure; naturally there’s stowage inside either side of the foredeck, as well. Your comfort level—and that of fisherladies—gets an extra boost from the fact that this boat has an enclosed head inside the console. No, you usually don’t find that on 21-footers, but Cobia designed it into the 216CC. It even has a full-sized console door, instead of one of those bi-fold doors that are always a pain in the butt to close properly. You can opt for either a portable head or a fully plumbed, fixed head with holding tank. When you check out the interior of the console, take note of its padded interior, sturdy door, and removable panels that allow you to access the helm station wiring.

One more highlight of this console: the helm is laid out so there’s space for a 10-inch LCD screen. No more squinting and peeping at that tiny fishfinder or GPS; you can put a sweet machine on this dash. There’s also plenty of space on either side of the flush-mounted compass to add a binnacle-mounted unit, if that’s your preference.



Saving Vertebrae

When we ran our sea trial on the 216CC, sea

conditions were, frankly, disappointing. It was glassy-calm and beautiful out, perfect for a day of fishing but not ideal for a boat test. My plan? I intended to tweak the trim tabs, tilt up the motor, and run at the boat's least efficient speed with the bow plowing water, to create waves as large as possible. I'd carve a bunch of "S" turns, then when I had created the desired washing-machine effect, pull in the tabs and drive and swing around to crash into the waves at full-tilt. I thought my artificial maelstrom would give me a good idea as to how the 216CC would handle rough conditions. But the boat ruined my plan — it was literally impossible to get it to plow. Even with the tabs deployed and the out-drive kicked up, this hull just naturally wants to plane. In fact, it can hold a plane clear down to 12 mph, which, although it made my boat-testing life harder, will make yours easier when you get caught in big seas. Some other boats run at 17 or 18 knots then fall off plane and drop down to seven or eight knots, with no usable speed in between, which forces you to choose between a slow crawl or a pummeling. But the Cobia's slow-planing ability means you can mush through the waves without pounding, while maintaining high efficiency, no matter how tough conditions become.



Cobia 216CC

Base price w/Yamaha F150: \$40,051

LOA	-----	21'6"
Beam	-----	8'6"
Draft	-----	1'2"
Fuel	-----	1000 gal.
Deadrise	-----	20 deg.
Weight	-----	2,800 lb.
Max HP	-----	225

For more information contact Cobia Boat Co. at (772)460-5258 or visit www.cobia-boats.com.

Your back will thank the 216CC for that trait, and it'll also be happy about the 20-degree transom deadrise this boat carries. Eventually, after a few cabin cruisers went by, I found some decent wakes to run the boat through and discovered that for a 21'6" boat, the Cobia handled them quite nicely. Credit the CAD design and quality construction features that include such touches as foam-filled stringers, through-bolted hardware, hydraulic steering, and waterproof Deutsch electrical connections. Want a hands-on example of construction level? Grab the recessed bow rail and give it a yank—a tail-rope'd 500-pound bluefin tuna couldn't shake it free. Now look at the trim tabs; yup, they're Lencos. You don't see any line-snagging cleats, chocks, or bow lights? That's because they're all pop-ups, which are there when you need them and gone when you don't.

Fish hard and save fuel on a boat that can handle both inshore and offshore duty? That sounds like a winning plan. And when those guys on the big flybridges look down at you, give 'em some sympathy. Poor souls, lord only knows how much hard-earned cash they funneled to some sheik to get that monstrosity to the hotspot! 