

Edgewater 318



BY DEAN TRAVIS CLARKE

EDGEWATER HAS ALWAYS MANUFACTURED perfectly acceptable, totally unsinkable boats. But with this 31-footer, the company adds some “bam!” as chef Emeril Lagasse would say. It seems like until now, Edgewater has been cruising in

fourth gear, and the 318 shifted it into overdrive.

PERFORMANCE

I wouldn't call our fishing day on the 318 rough, despite the 4-foot swells out of the northeast that rolled into the jetty at Ponce de Leon Inlet in New Smyrna Beach, Florida. The long ocean rollers had an effect only if you launched off them at top speed — which of course I did to better assess the hull design. The 318 landed with a solid, quiet thud and without any shake, rattle or clank. The Lenco electric

trim tabs performed superbly, keeping the bow down. I wouldn't want a boat without a tab indicator like the one on the 318; it removes all the guesswork.

I found the 318 to drift directly beam-to-the seas. The roll moment proved short, but with very gentle transitions and modest chine slap. On every point of sea, the 318 ran dry as dust. Not a speck of salt landed on the handsome curved, tempered-safety-glass windscreen (with no

visible distortion). Overall, this Edgewater gives the impression of being a much heavier boat than its 6,500 pounds.

During speed trials back in sheltered water, I discovered that with the engines trimmed down, cranking in a wheel-hard-over turn at cruising speed resulted in a steep bank and speed bleeding off rapidly. The 318 then reverses course in less than two boat lengths. You can turn sharply while keeping everyone safely inside the boat. Here I admit to being spoiled. I'd certainly choose the optional power-assisted steering to augment the dual-ram hydraulic system.

We topped out at 6,100 rpm, scooting along at 52 mph while drinking 43.6 gph. Optimum cruising speed is a very respectable 38 mph at 4,500 rpm while burning just over 25 gph. Surprisingly counter to the current trend, Edgewater doesn't offer the 318 with triples. No great loss.

FISHING

This 130-square-foot cockpit provides more than enough room for multiple anglers to work. Edgewater also kept the



console width narrower than some of its competition's, meaning that moving fore and aft with a fish on just got much easier. The table forward between the bow seats goes up and down on an electric ram. In casting-deck mode, it made a great non-skid workspace. And with two vertical rod holders in the aft end of each forward seat, you can always have a backup weapon handy when the fishing action gets hot.

You'll find some serious rod storage on the 318. Lockable rod storage in both port and starboard bulwarks amidships



complements the capacity for three under each gunwale around the cockpit and three more in each gunwale. The lockable compartments each accommodate up to one 50- and two 30-pound rigs, and here's another novel feature: The lockable rod holders are vertically adjustable. Edgewater also includes a Frigid Rigid cooler under the deluxe leaning post that offers another four rod holders, and if you order the optional hardtop, you get another six across the back of that. I'm not sure I have that many fishing rods.

Two livewells come standard: a 66-gallon main live-well plus a 28-gallon tank in the port corner of the transom. Pop-up cleats keep you snag-free, and the fresh- and saltwater washdowns help keep your cockpit clean.

Gunwale coaming pads proved the perfect height for me, and will be slightly higher on an average-sized person. Edgewater also supplies a fold-down transom seat for comfort on the way to and from fishing.

DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

Back in 1996, I described Edgewater as a small company living on the leading edge of technology. If anything, that's truer today. The most noteworthy aspect of this 318 has to be its unusual construction technology. The company refers to it as SPI (Single Piece Infusion).

After spraying the gelcoat layer,

"The transom and stringer grid are made from composite and glass, so you'll find no wood in the Edgewater."

Edgewater lays in all the dry ingredients, such as specially engineered fiberglass, Divinycell coring and the like, including the stringers. Then it encases the mold in a plastic bag with a strong vacuum pump attached at one end and the vinyl ester resin supply on the other. Turn on the vacuum and the pump sucks the resin throughout the laminate. The bag, combined with the vacuum pressure, prevents

excess resin buildup and any air bubbles or voids. The resultant hull has an optimum glass-to-resin ratio.

The transom and stringer grid are made from composite and glass, so you'll find no wood in the Edgewater. Additionally, Edgewater bonds the stringers into the hull right from the start rather than gluing them in after the hull is finished. Talk about a better mousetrap! Eliminating excess resin means a lighter boat without sacrificing strength, and of course lighter means better performance, too. As a result, the 318 runs extremely well with just two engines.

Another improvement in the 318 finds hatches upgraded from basic StarBoard to the two-part, finished-on-both-sides variety. And of course, like all Edgewater's, the 318 is unsinkable no matter what you do to it. Yes, Edgewater has just stepped over that leading-technology edge, and things look great on the other side.

SPECIFICATIONS

LOA	31 ft. 10 in.
BEAM	10 ft. 2 in.
MAX HP	(2) 300-hp OB
DEADRISE	24 deg.
HULL DRAFT	1 ft. 10 in.
FUEL	296 gal.
WEIGHT	6,500 lb.
MSRP	\$146,038 (w/T250-hp four-stroke OB)

Edgewater Power Boats

Edgewater, Florida
386-426-5457
www.edgewater.com

YAMAHA 250-HP FOUR-STROKE

TYPE	60 deg. V-6
DISPL.	204.6 cid
MAX RPM	6,000
HP/LB RATIO	.42
FUEL SYSTEM	EFI
GEAR RATIO	2:1
WEIGHT	592 lb.
ALT. OUTPUT	45 amps
MSRP	\$20,235

NOTABLE STANDARD EQUIPMENT

- Electric hi-lo table
- Fresh- and saltwater washdowns
- Lenco trim tabs w/indicators
- SPI construction
- Lockable/adjustable rod storage
- Deluxe leaning post

IMPRESSIONS

Without question, the 318 represents the best hull Edgewater has ever created.

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