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DECEMBER 2017 seamagazine.com

HUNT 32 CENTER CONSOLE

This stare-inducing dayboat also has fishing and performance chops.

COMING OFF THE TOP of a ship's wake at 40-plus knots, the Hunt 32 Center Console took the hard landing with nary a complaint. The wheel didn't shudder in my hands, the stern didn't shimmy, and the hull didn't rock back and forth or try to slide to one side or the other looking for a different path forward. It was a pretty good encapsulation of the boat — its design, build and mission.

Hunt Yachts are pretty, certainly. The traditional flag blue hulls stand out in a marina. Our test boat, the first 32 CC on the West Coast, is also the first one with a gray hull. And while their appearance is worth noting, as I've already done, it's the hull itself — under the paint or gelcoat — that makes a Hunt boat a Hunt boat.

The hull's deep-V entry slices through the water, and its flare keeps bow passengers dry. The deadrise lessens toward the stern, but even at the transom it is 22 degrees, which should make the boat tippy, but that's not the case. Hard chines at the waterline, working with two more features — Hunt calls them liftstrips; others might call them strakes — keep the boat from rocking, even in a beam sea. The chines begin about a third of the way aft on both sides and run to the transom, and the strakes go from bow to stern. Owing to forces that Ray Hunt and people like him understand, that combination holds the boat solid in the waves. I've ridden in several boats with gyro stabilizers, and the effect of the Hunt hull is similar to that. When a wave or swell hits the beam, the boat rocks, rocks back and then sort of locks in, like a boat with a gyro will do when

the gyro is activated during a demo. (The difference is that the Hunt boat will do that with each wave, while the gyro boat will do it once, until the gyro is turned off again, but it's a pretty impressive sensation for a deep-V boat with no stabilization system.)

We were going fast, north of 40 knots, when Miquel Corelli, Hunt Yachts' representative on the West Coast, gave the wheel a hard yank to port, at which point the 32 CC carved an arc through the ocean swell with no hint of sliding or skipping. Then Corelli let go of the wheel. And the boat continued on its tight arc. It held its course with nobody touching the wheel. I had the opportunity to try it later, at a slightly lower speed.

Our top speed on test day was 48.7 knots at 5500 rpm. Our most efficient speed was around 25 knots, which came at 3500 rpm. At that speed, the twin 300 hp Yamaha V6 4.2L FourStrokes were burning a combined 17.4 gph, for an efficient 1.5 mpg. At 4000 rpm, we were moving at just more than 31 knots while the Yamahas burned 25.2 gph (1.3 mpg). Cranking it up to 4500 rpm boosted our speed to 35.2 knots, and 5000 rpm yielded 39 knots. Fuel efficiency was 1.2 and 1.0 mpg, respectively.

Performance-wise, it's a seriously fun boat to drive. It reacts quickly to steering changes, it carves a tight turn that, as I pointed out earlier, the boat can hold on its own once it has begun, and it handles waves and wakes easily. On several occasions we let go of the wheel and watched the boat hold its line like it was on autopilot (which



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Everyone knows a Hunt boat for its Downeast styling, its luxury touches, its Ray Hunt hull design and its performance. On the 32 Center Console, all of those features are manifested, from the versatile leaning post in the cockpit to the helm console (with twin 17-inch Garmin MFDs on our test boat) to the sociable and comfortable bow.



DETAILS

Standard Equipment

Twin 250 hp outboards, Lectrotab auto trim tabs, electric windlass, two showers, hot water, insulated 45-gal. bow fishbox, front and side acrylic console windows, 10 cupholders, four rod holders and more.

Optional Equipment

Twin 300 hp outboards, joystick steering, outriggers, four additional rod holders, teak bow table, teak coaming boards, inverter, refrigerator, A/C, electric grill, bow thruster and more.

Builder

Hunt Yachts, Portsmouth, R.I.; (401) 683-7005; huntyachts.com

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our test boat doesn't even have). The wake was a straight line.

To be sure, the 32 CC has the Downeast look observers would expect of the Rhode Island-based builder, only there's a fishing-looking console in the center. To starboard is deck-height walkaround access forward; to port the sidedeck is at gunwale height, to create room in the cabin below. And while the boat can easily handle a day of chasing fish on the open water, it's a

dayboat at heart, and its layout emphasizes its sociability.

Access to the boat is through a transom door from the swim platform and into a cockpit that includes a bench seat and one or two optional removable seats in the corners. A leaning post console occupies the center of the cockpit. Its aft half can be set up as a fishing or entertainment center. On our boat, it included an electric grill and a sink, but the grill can be replaced by a livewell.

The front half of the console serves as storage and the base for the doublewide captain's seat, which faces a helm with space for twin 17-inch multifunction displays. I know because our test boat had them — two Garmin screens that serve as the nerve center of the boat thanks to their versatility and ease of viewing, even in bright sunlight. A Yamaha engine display was on a teak dash above the main dash expanse, and the throttles and joystick occupied a flat section of the dash console.

The molded T-top over the center console is plenty high for all six and a half feet of me to stand up comfortably, and three sides of it are enclosed with acrylic windows that leave just enough of a gap for a breeze to flow through to the helm.

In the bow is a settee that comes just short of ringing the area, leaving just enough room for people to walk forward. Eight people can sit up here. A teak table provides a platform for snacks, and at least six cupholders take

the hassle out of holding one's drink. Built into the deck is a 45-gallon fishbox that can serve as a cooler and an insulated box under one of the settee sections. The table lowers and filler cushions can turn the bow into a giant sun lounge or a berth (an optional dodger and vertical curtain provide privacy and protection).

Blue LED lighting — both exposed and built into the recessed spaces under the furniture consoles — sets a festive evening mood at the dock.

The console, of course, houses the 32 CC's accommodations, and despite the bow seating arrangement, Hunt managed to fit a single berth down there. Immediately to port of the helm station is the companionway door to belowdecks, and down a couple of steps, the bottom of which has storage beneath it, is a landing that separates the galley — Hunt calls it a "galette" — and the head and leads to the berth.

To port, taking advantage of the fact the console stretches to the port gunwale, is the galette. It features an under-counter refrigerator, a built-in cooler, a microwave and drawer storage. Opposite is the head, with a sink, an electric toilet and a shower. A curtain (a folding door is optional) closes off the space for privacy and to serve as a shower barrier.

Forward of the galette and head is a berth with room for one adult or a couple of children. It's forward of the console itself and under the bow seating, so it's a lying-down-only space, but that's kind of the point, right? Buyers looking for a fishing-centric boat can add storage for four rods along the sides of the berth. Thanks to windows in the console walls and the door, the belowdecks space is well-lit and airy.

For a 32-foot boat, the Hunt 32 CC offers a lot to write about, too much to fit it all here. Teak touches abound on the boat, from the flag staff on the transom to the helm to

the bow table to the gunwale planks to the optional caprail that rings our test boat. The T-top and rocket launchers are powder coated. The stereo and speakers are Fusion, the handrail is elegantly blended with the gunwale and the cleats are flush when not in use, as is one light in the bow.

Corelli called this boat a cappuccino and cabernet boat when we talked, and it can

be that, especially given the wine-colored upholstery accents, but it's ready to fish and make runs to the island, whether that's Catalina or one of the dozens in the Pacific Northwest. It's bound to draw stares in the harbor — even as we readied the boat for our test four people commented on it — but not letting it play on the big water would be a shame. 🐟

