



20 Boats That Count

Is yours one of them?

THIS IS A LIST OF BOATS THAT MATTER, ONES THAT will make, or have already made, an impact. I'm sure you've seen lists like this before, but what's different about this one is that you can still buy most of the boats on it. What we're talking about here are modern classics.

Other benchmark compilations are usually limited to boats from the 1960s. And I can understand why. It was the time of the first deep-Vs, trawlers, bowriders, and center consoles. Innovative Boston Whaler arrived on the scene as did Hatteras and the first fiberglass convertible. So it's easy to see why we often don't look past this era. But doing so discounts decades of development.

Yes, I know there are only 10 here, not 20. The rest were in last month's column and can be found at www.boatingmag.com.

So here, as before, in no particular order, are my choices. Think I've forgotten one? Share the knowledge and write me at rocktheboat@hfmus.com.

LOGIC 120

We threw it off the roof and it bounced. In 1995 Logic (now Triumph) was the first to break away from conventional materials and use rotomolding. Everything—hull, deck, and seats—is in one piece. The plastic floats, absorbs shocks, and doesn't fade or blister.

HINCKLEY PICNIC BOAT

For generations, the wealthy summering in Maine had local builders turn out one-off "lobster yachts"—graceful boats perfect for family outings in rough coastal waters. In 1994 Hinckley offered a highly polished version of these boats, and others followed.

TRACKER TUNDRA 20 SPORT

Aluminum is lighter and can take more punishment than fiberglass. Yet aluminum boats don't have the same curves because they're built from flat sheets. Tracker changed this in 2004 by stretch forming the metal. The boat has the soft curves of fiberglass with the durability of aluminum.



CARVER 396 MOTOR YACHT

Everyone had something to say—good and bad—about this unconventional-looking boat when it was launched in 2000. In a successful attempt to maximize interior space, Carver brought the cabin sides out to the hull for the full length of boat and raised the sidedecks.

CORSAIR FOILER 2200

Since the early 1900s, designers have been trying to make hydrofoils work—usually without much luck. Now, foils are being tried on catamarans. In 2004 this was the first in the country to get foils right and go into production. It's smooth, fast, and efficient.

CORRECT CRAFT PRO AIR NAUTIQUE

A wakeboard boat in the late 1990s was a skiboat dangerously loaded down with ballast aft and a flimsy extended pylon. In 1998 Correct Craft gave us two important firsts: a hull specifically designed to make wakes and a high, solid tower.

PILGRIM 40

In 1983 this was one of the first nostalgic cruisers, or "character boats." It's a combination of tug and old-time river boat. Although not for everyone, everyone loves to look at them and 41 were built. It sipped 1.5 gph at 8.6 mph from a tiny diesel and had a fantail veranda for civilized living.



ALBEMARLE 27

A jackshaft lets the builder install the engine far forward of the stern drive. In 1987 Albemarle was the first to offer one with a stern drive in a production model. The setup put weight amidships for a big-boat inboard ride with all the benefits of a stern drive—but without the engine box aft.

YAMAHA WAVERUNNER FX 140

Those who hated waterbikes said they were polluting. They weren't, but it was a clever legal ploy. To counter, in 2001 Honda announced it was coming out with a clean four-stroke. But Yamaha beat Honda to market. The four-stroke Yamaha, and the others that followed, saved waterbikes from extinction.

AVON 4M SEARIDER

College students in the U.K. had a volunteer lifeboat station that used Avon inflatables. The boat's floors kept wearing out so they tried adding a wooden hull. Avon adapted the idea to fiberglass and in 1971 gave us the first RIB, "for going out when others are coming in."

That's my list. As I said, if you have others, wave me down the next time I see you outside the inlet and let me know. ↴