



Monterey 234SS

THEMING WITH STOWAGE, INTEGRAL SPEAKER mounting flats and armrests, the sculpted fiberglass panels that ring the cockpit of Monterey's 234SS provide the cohesive look and ergonomic functionality of a touring automobile. They're a unique treatment — seeing as most runabout builders cut holes in the liner and then upholster them — and one I applaud. The panels look great and provide easy cleanup in the short term. For the long haul, tears, rips and fading, long the bane of runabout aesthetics, have been minimized or eliminated.

Notable too is extra space allotted to the aft cockpit compared with other bowriders this size. There's about a 70/30 split, the results allowing for more comfort in the primary area of the boat. Sitting on the aft lounge, I didn't feel cramped by the helm seats. Also, the large aft cockpit allows for the integration of the aft lounge, which converts from cockpit seating to sun pad to fore- and

aft-facing reclining chaise. Combined with the extended swim platform, inlaid with optional SeaDek faux teak (\$875), the 234SS delivers the amenity of a larger day boat in a trailerable, single-engine package.

I tested the 234SS with a 300 hp MerCruiser 350 Mag Bravo Three sterndrive on a wake-rolled stretch of the Intracoastal Waterway. It accelerated briskly, handled the slop with aplomb, and

EXTRA POINT

Check out the proprietary, stainless-steel post and socket system that Monterey uses to secure seat cushions aboard the 234SS.

displayed no handling glitches I could sniff out.

Service access to the engine stood out, but the 234SS possesses other details that impressed me. The four-step ladder deploys deeper in the water than most, easing boarding. The cockpit drains are integral to the aft lounge base, not separate fittings, so they allow quicker drainage and nicer looks. Hinges and hardware are through-bolted; where the fastening is blind, T-nuts are used; security is assured. The helm is nonglare. There's another four-step ladder in the bow.

Eye candy aplenty exists in the form of the square-shaped latches, oval-section rails and overall angular "edge" styling that has become the signature look of Monterey's SS series.

For all of this, Monterey's 234SS stands out as one of the few distinct boats in a size and type that have regrettably been reduced to commodity status. — *Kevin Falvey*

MORE ONLINE

For an accommodation plan of this boat, visit boatingmag.com/2753.

AVAILABLE POWER:

STERNDRIVE



High Points

- ▶ Molded cockpit panels provide a rich look and great functionality.
- ▶ Choose either twin bucket helm seats or helm chair and companion lounge.
- ▶ Aft cockpit is deliriously amenable.

Low Points

- ▶ Our test boat's transom stereo remote was installed to port — the side opposite the ladder — an inconvenience that Monterey said it would address.
- ▶ We'd like to see a door or curtain to block wind blast through the bow walk-through.

Toughest Competitor

Cobalt's 232 (\$73,892 with a 300 hp Volvo Penta Duoprop sterndrive) is another distinctive bowrider, offering standard snap-in carpet, bow walk-through doors and a higher horsepower rating (420) than the Monterey's.

- ▶ LOA: 23'0" ▶ Beam: 8'6" ▶ Draft (max): 3'1" ▶ Displacement (approx.): 3,950 lb.
- ▶ Transom Deadrise: 20 degrees ▶ Bridge Clearance: 4'8" ▶ Fuel Capacity: 52 gal.
- ▶ Max Horsepower: 300 ▶ Available Power: Twin MerCruiser or Volvo Penta gasoline sterndrives up to 300 hp

- ▶ **Price: \$63,549** (with test power)

▼ BOATING Certified Test Results

rpm	SPEED			EFFICIENCY				OPERATION	
	knots	mph	gph	naut. mpg	stat. mpg	n. mi. range	s. mi. range	angle	sound level
1000	4.52	5.20	1.60	2.82	3.25	132	152	0	63
1500	6.17	7.10	2.70	2.29	2.63	107	123	3	66
2000	7.21	8.30	4.60	1.57	1.80	73	84	5	71
2500	16.51	19.00	6.00	2.75	3.17	129	148	2	75
3000	24.24	27.90	7.90	3.07	3.53	144	165	2	79
3500	27.98	32.20	11.90	2.35	2.71	110	127	2	82
4000	33.89	39.00	13.00	2.61	3.00	122	140	2	84
4500	37.54	43.20	16.60	2.26	2.60	106	122	2	86
5000	41.62	47.90	19.60	2.12	2.44	99	114	2	86
5200	45.80	52.70	24.70	1.85	2.13	87	100	1	88

MOST ECONOMICAL CRUISING SPEED

HOW WE TESTED

ENGINE: Single 300 hp MerCruiser 350 Mag Catalyst DRIVE/PROP: Bravo Three/24" stainless-steel propset GEAR RATIO: 2.2:1 FUEL LOAD: 35 gal. CREW WEIGHT: 400 lb.

Monterey Boats Williston, Florida; 352-529-9181; montereyboats.com