

Stingray 205LR



Versatile seating in an economically efficient bowrider.

BY LB STAFF

Based in Hartsville, South Carolina, Stingray Boats has been building quality runabouts since 1979. Today the fleet consists of 16 models, including bowriders, cuddy cruisers and sportboats.

On our recent trip to Hartsville, we tested the 205LR. There are three models in this 20-foot bowrider niche, differing primarily in their seating arrangements (as seen in the lower lefthand corner). The LS version has a motorbox with side jumpseats that can be raised to form a small sundeck. Forward on the passenger side is a back-to-back seat that opens into a lounge. LX models feature a hull-width bench and large sundeck aft, with a bucket seat in lieu of a fold-down lounge. The LR we were aboard also comes with a large sundeck and sports a stylish wraparound lounge across the transom and up the side. All models have an adjustable bucket seat for the driver.

Both the LR and LX feature a walk-through companionway from the extended swim platform to the cockpit. This practical touch includes a removable center cushion on the sundeck and a step down to the cockpit. Stingray has also made disembarking from the bow a cinch.

Special standard features include pop-up cleats, an easy-to-clean fiberglass cockpit floor liner and a 32-quart integrated icebox with overboard drain. Like all Stingray models, the 205L series features engine-vibration dampers, an automatic bilge pump with manual override, 36-ounce vinyl upholstery with foam backing, indirect cockpit lighting and a remote oil-changing system.

Mindful of environmental responsibilities, each boat is made with low-VOC resins and gelcoats. All models are backed with a five-year hull protection plan and a three-year hull blister protection plan.

Al Fink, the colorful hands-on founder and patriarch of the family-owned Stingray Boats, joined me and Mike Weatherford at Stingray's lake house on Lake Robinson to put the 205LR through its paces.

Before Mike and I got in, Al mentioned

that the boat had topped out at 62 mph with one person aboard the day before. When Mike and I boarded, with a combined weight of 375 pounds, we decided to start with a speed run to see what the 205LR would do with the extra weight and the current conditions. Pushing 60 mph into a blustery 2 1/2-foot chop with a 20-mph gust on the bow, one would expect some instability. Not so on the 205LR. There was no slipping or sliding when, at 50 mph and continuing to trim, I hit the sweet spot and began to accelerate to 60. It wasn't a gradual climb—this was like afterburners. Coming into the dock, it held steady and was not blown around. Weighing 2,850 pounds (with engine), the boat was easy to control. It generates V-8 speeds with the more economical V-6.

The ride was exhilarating and comfortable. The reason for this is the Z-plane hull, introduced in 1991. The 205LR runs on a modified Z-plane, which features contours to the running surface that extend beneath both sides of the integrated swim platform. This creates a virtually three-point contact with the water at high speeds, which delivers better handling and faster speeds than possible in previous versions of the hull design.

All Stingrays come with a mystingray.com personal web page, where you can access information about your boat, upload photos and communicate with other Stingray owners in the forum. If you're looking for repairs or upgrades, you'll have access to a parts list specific to your model, as well as an online auction for buying and selling parts. Other perks include an owner's manual and a nifty performance calculator.

LR specs

LOA.....	21'2"
Beam.....	7'9"
Draft.....	2'7"
Weight.....	2,850 lbs.
Fuel capacity.....	35 gals.
Base power.....	Volvo 4.3 Carb SX (190 hp)
Base price.....	\$25,844

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