

Boat Reviews

Grady-White 228



In 1971 Grady-White released the world's first trailerable walkaround boat. Forty-five years on they are still producing boats to this unique design, with five Walk Around cabin models. Barry Thompson went to Tairua to check out the latest Seafarer 228.

When Paul and Debbie Watson went to British Columbia, Canada, 20 years ago, it didn't take them long to realise that they needed to have a boat if they wanted to explore and fish for Salmon and Halibut in the turbulent waters of Vancouver Island and the Alberni Canal. They wanted a seriously sturdy fishing boat, but also one that would offer enough comforts for overnighting.

They settled on a Grady-White 228, which they owned for nearly 15 years and only sold it shortly before returning to New Zealand. While the 228 doesn't offer a huge amount of room for overnighting, – Paul describes it as “adequate and cosy” – as for a fishing platform it is exceptional.

Once settled back in New Zealand and with a home at Cooks Beach on the Coromandel Peninsula, the need for another boat was again on the agenda.

"We were looking for a boat we could still launch off the beach or into the estuary, but also wanted to be able to tow it around the country", says Paul.

After checking out what was available in the Kiwi market, Paul said it was an easy decision to settle for another Grady-White 228. "We knew the boat's capabilities and we loved everything about the 228 so there were no surprises".

A call to Stuart Arnold of Marine Imports Ltd, the importer of the Grady-White brand and the deal was done. Other than the upgrade from a Yamaha 225 to a Yamaha 300, just about everything else was much the same as their previous 226, albeit with some newer updates and features that were not available when they purchased their first 228, almost 20 years ago.

TOUGH REPUTATION

Grady-White has a reputation second to none for ride and handling and that is certainly borne out when you read the number of independent awards they have won for their hulls. Reviews I have read from magazines in the US also attest to the hulls incredible handling and ride in moderate to rough seas. So while I was keen to experience this for myself, it wasn't to be.

The waters off Tairua/Pauanui were relatively calm and no work out for the Grady. All I can say is the 228 feels robust and stiff on the water and is very easily driven. Best I could do was hook it into hard turns, but even then it sat relatively flat with no excess heel and with the Yamaha 300 on about half trim there was no noticeable hull slide and it all felt rather natural. A very predictable boat at all speeds, tracks well and is easily driven. It's on the plane at just 10-11 knots.

Paul says that during the years he owned his previous Grady-White 228, he had many occasions when the sea state was real bad and the sort of water you wouldn't want to be in if you didn't have too.

"While I found the 228 to be amazingly dry and in most seas we never saw water on the screen, there were a few occasions when we had green water over the bow, simply because of the size of the waves, but the 228 handled it in its stride", says Paul.

He remarked that the big recessed cockpit floor drains did their job and any water – and there was plenty – drained out quickly.

"It was knowing just how damn good the Grady 228 is when it mattered, that really swayed my wife and me into buying another one", says Paul.

With every available space under the cockpit sole filled with foam, Grady-White claims their

boat is virtually unsinkable. This also goes a long way to keeping the hull silent, especially at speed in choppy water.

So what's so good about the hull? Firstly the hulls come with an excellent pedigree, being designed exclusively by C. Raymond Hunt Associates, the originators of the modified vee.

The Grady-White 228 is based on a continuous variable deadrise deep vee hull, with a combination of broad strakes and chines and a fine point of entry. The hull design has no two places on the keel where the deadrise is the same. The vee continuously sharpens from the transom to the bow stem from 20 deg at the transom to around 30 deg amidships. There are no trick design shapes, tunnels or air entrapments. It's just that what is there, seems to work exceptionally well.

Grady White call it the SeaV2 hull and its performance has been ranked #1 in each of the eight J. D. Power Associates Marine Studies ever done. No other boat builder has come close!

SINGLE OUTBOARD

Power options are outboard only, with either a single 250hp or 300hp Yamaha. If you want to go twin outboards, then you need to step up in size to the 7.55m Grady-White Journey 258. The Grady-White 228 is sold as a total boat/motor package and in all cases with the boat's sold into NZ also with a Magic Tilt trailer.

The 228 comes with what Grady call their Grady Drive, – also available on the Gulfstream 232 – which sees the outboard transom bracket and boarding platform set back nearly a full 1m past the boat's moulded transom. It comes with a side mounted four step telescopic boarding ladder and with the addition of some drop in rails would make a great extra fishing space.

When running at 5900 rpm, our test boat maxed out at 44.6 knots (51.3 mph), with a fuel burn of just over 100 lph and a range of 160nm. Best cruise was at 3500 rpm, with a speed of 26 knots, a fuel consumption of 33.5 lph and a range of around 300nm.

ATTENTION TO DETAIL

One thing I noticed when looking through the 228 was the attention to detail and ease of access to everything. Grady has made sure that any electrical, plumbing, engineering fitting or component you may need to get to is easily accessible. There are even tubes with drawstrings running fore-aft should you want to retrofit some electronics at a later stage. A separate fuse box with extra terminals is already available in an overhead locker to attach

the wires, so you don't need to run additional ones to the battery down aft. Batteries, fuel filters, isolators, fuses, seacock controls, etc. are mounted in the port side locker under the aft seat so everything is handy when required.

The cockpit layout is fisherman friendly and everything is designed to be functional. The wide flat side decks come with three stainless rod holders per side, with deep toe kicks under and soft padded sides which are at the right height for stand-up fishing.

In the centre of the transom is the huge optional livewell, complete with bait rigging area, cutting board, drink holders and rod racks. There's another seat to starboard, with storage under in separate removable bins.

Standard in the 228 is a trio of insulated lockers, one in the cockpit sole aft and the others accessed from the rear forward seats. The port side one is divided into 75.7 litres and 42.6-litre removable bins. No need for an extra esky bin on deck and a perfect place to keep your food or drinks on ice, or to stow the catch/bait during the day.

Standard seating for the Kiwi boats is a pair of Pompanette adjustable seats, with storage lockers under and a pair of squabs over the storage bins either side. Flip down foot rests are ideally placed when seated to drive, but if you prefer to stand, then I found the space in front of the moulded seat base was a little short, although adequate. Including the aft pair, there is seating for six.

SOFT OR HARD TOP

The 228 is available as an open boat with a soft bimini or with a solid hardtop and clears. The anodised alloy frame, grp hardtop and overhead radio box is an, but it's something that I feel would be a must-have for Kiwi boats. It also comes with a place to mount the radar, aerials, outrigger hand controls and a rod rack.

The dash layout is available with a recessed electronics box that lets you have your MFD screen behind a lockable clear Perspex cover. However, Paul wanted a flush mounted MFD so a custom made flat panel was fabricated to mount a Garmin 704 XSB. This also includes the autopilot, radar, fishfinder and even the Fusion stereo controls. There is space enough to go to a 12" MFD or twin 7" screens. Above is a single panel Yamaha display with all the necessary engine management systems.

The cabin is fully lockable with bi-fold doors and an overhead panel, which also gives you privacy when using the optional head. The cabin v-berth is a generous length and comes with an infill to make this one extra large accommodation space. There are two storage bins either side under the squabs, side trays and access panels to the anchor locker and rear of the helm. I liked the dedicated racks either side for your more expensive rods that can be kept out of sight and locked in the cabin.

If you plan to cook on board, then you'll need to add a portable bbq out in the cockpit, but there is a moulded sink unit with fresh water inside the cabin under the port squab. Fresh water capacity is 38 litres, which can also be used for a hand held shower.

GRADY FAMILY

Stuart says that Grady-White owners are people that appreciate quality, exceptional attention to detail and ride and handling that is as good as it gets. "Our boats may not be the cheapest but I like to think they are the best in their class and our customers know exactly what they are buying".

If the 228 is an example of that, then I can understand why they have such a following. The last word from Paul; "Once you are in the Grady White family you never leave, they are that good"!

As you have mentioned both the 228 and a twin engine 258 here, You could mention that both of these models are on display at the Auckland On water Show end of September in the New 2017 Grady-White hull colours. .

SPECIFICATIONS

- | | |
|--|--|
| ■ Make & Model: Grady-White 228 Walk Around | ■ Height on trailer: 2.54m (with hardtop) |
| ■ Manufacturer: Grady-White Boats | ■ Trailerable Wgt: 2400kgs (est) |
| ■ Type: Hardtop | ■ Test Power: Yamaha 300 |
| ■ Construction: GRP | ■ Propeller: 19" SDS |
| ■ LOA: 8.85m | ■ Power Options: Outboard only |
| ■ LOH: 6.76m | ■ HP Range: 250-300 hp |
| ■ Beam: 2.44m | ■ Fuel capacity: 431 litres |
| ■ Deadrise: 20 deg (aft) | ■ Fresh Water: 38 litres |
| | ■ Trailer: Magic Tilt |
| | ■ Manufacturer: Grady-White |

FUEL & PERFORMANCE DATA

GRADY WHITE 228/ YAMAHA 300

Fuel capacity:

431 litres

rpm	knots	L / h	Range (NM)
1000	4.7	4	450
1500	6.3	8	290
2000	7.3	14	190
2500	8.5	21	150
3000	19.8	25.5	290
3500	25.9	33.5	290
4000	30.1	45	250
4500	34.3	58	220
5000	38.1	75	190
5500	42.5	95.5	160
5900	44.6	101	160