



## Monterey 197FS

**I** SPOTTED THE SPRING-LINE CLEATS ABOARD Monterey's 197FS right away. These stand out because so many runabout builders not only neglect to install them, but they also fail to even offer them as options. Their presence didn't surprise me. After years of testing Monterey's boats, I've come to expect boats designed to succeed on the water, not just in the showroom. The 197FS proved no exception.

At a time when runabout builders are bolting outboard engines to the transoms of boats originally designed for sterndrive power — and making the boater pay the price in the form of craft that trim by the stern and display a penchant for pitching — Monterey is starting with a clean sheet and drew this new fish-and-ski for outboard power from the get-go. The result is a crisp-handling little boat, one that's effortless to steer and gave me a satisfying feeling of control while negotiating a wake-roiled channel that resembled a ski hill's mogul field. Top speed with Mercury's 150 four-stroke outboard was 45.8 mph.

### EXTRA POINT

**This boat is** offered with either Mercury or Yamaha outboard motors, so keep access to a servicing dealer in mind while shopping.

Monterey built the 197FS as though it knew discerning customers would come calling. Details that impressed me included the tow pylon (\$542) that's stepped atop a steel channel bolted athwart the stringers. All of the stowage compartments are fiberglass-lined, inhibiting the mildew that plagues carpeted lockers. The 197FS swallows a ton of gear too. Check the ski locker. It holds two

removable fishing seats and the trolling motor (both part of the fish package, \$2,942) below the fiberglass cockpit sole. Access to pumps, filters and through-hull fittings does not get any better aboard a boat of this size and type. Electrical runs are neat and robust.

Boaters with serious tow sports on the agenda will want to consider the wakeboard tower (\$3,333), which comes with a special Bimini top (a conventional Bimini is standard), and might also want the onyx deck stripe and hull bottom (\$333), shown in the picture.

The outboard-powered 197FS allows access to shallower water than a comparable boat with sterndrive power does, and our test results show that it's quieter at all rpm levels as well. For coastal boaters, the corrosion resistance of an outboard offers great appeal.

Looking for a sharp, family do-it-all? Sea-trial Monterey's 197FS. — *Kevin Falvey*

**MORE ONLINE** For an accommodation plan and photo gallery of this boat, visit [boatingmag.com/2742](http://boatingmag.com/2742).



### High Points

- ▶ This boat's ski pylon is so robustly installed, you could drag the former Cypress Gardens' stunt squad in the wake without problem.
- ▶ No switch-hitter, this boat was designed for outboard power, and its handling and balance proved great during my test as a result.
- ▶ The 197FS has outboard power for shallower draft, lower noise and more cockpit space than comparably sized sterndrive-powered boats.

### Low Points

- ▶ We'd like to see a tackle box option added to the "fish pack."
- ▶ With ethanol fuel so prevalent, we prefer filters with clear inspection bowls.

### Toughest Competitor

Check out Rinker's Captiva 196 OB (\$40,500 powered like our test boat). No fishing package is offered, though a telescopic ski tow is available for \$413.

- ▶ LOA: 19'7" ▶ Beam: 8'4" ▶ Draft (max): 2'4" ▶ Displacement (approx.): 2,800 lb.
- ▶ Transom Deadrise: 19 degrees ▶ Bridge Clearance: 7'7" ▶ Fuel Capacity: 36 gal.
- ▶ Max Horsepower: 150 ▶ Available Power: Mercury or Yamaha outboard engines up to 150 hp

▶ **Price: \$44,702** (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	4.26	4.90	0.80	5.32	6.13	172	198	NA	NA
1500	5.21	6.00	1.00	5.21	6.00	169	194	NA	NA
2000	7.13	8.20	2.10	3.39	3.90	110	127	NA	NA
2500	14.51	16.70	2.40	6.05	6.96	196	225	NA	NA
<b>3000</b>	<b>18.94</b>	<b>21.80</b>	<b>3.20</b>	<b>5.92</b>	<b>6.81</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>221</b>	NA	NA
3500	21.03	24.20	4.80	4.38	5.04	142	163	NA	NA
4000	25.11	28.90	5.40	4.65	5.35	151	173	NA	NA
4500	32.33	37.20	8.20	3.94	4.54	128	147	NA	NA
5000	35.63	41.00	10.00	3.56	4.10	115	133	NA	NA
5665	39.80	45.80	14.40	2.76	3.18	90	103	NA	NA
<b>MOST ECONOMICAL CRUISING SPEED</b>									

### HOW WE TESTED

ENGINE: 150 hp Mercury 150 four-stroke DRIVE/PROP: Outboard/15½" x 17" 3-blade stainless steel GEAR RATIO: 1.92:1 FUEL LOAD: 25 gal. CREW WEIGHT: 320 lb.

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