

SOUTHPORT 33FE CENTER CONSOLE



This hot new center console will change your idea of what a Maine-built fishing boat offers.

BY GARY CAPUTI

TEST CONDITIONS

SUNNY
LOCATION: Great Peconic Bay, New York
WIND: SSW 20 knots
TEST LOAD: Two adults, 120 gallons of fuel
SEA STATE: 1- to 3-foot tight chop



When I think of Maine-built boats, I picture displacement hulls with a Down-East look and single diesels, but Southport is redefining what “built in Maine” means. Southport’s beautiful center consoles offer performance and fishability, constructed using the latest in high-tech composites and manufacturing techniques. The 27 and 29 already have serious anglers — and the competition — taking notice, and the brand-new 33FE raises the bar.

Getting to the bottom of things, the 33 rides on a running surface designed by the gurus of deep-V at Hunt Design.

The variable deadrise transitions from 46 degrees forward to 22 degrees at the transom, with a pair of longitudinal strakes running along 12 feet of chine before tapering, all balanced for the boat’s center of gravity and weight. The proof is in the pudding — in the ride, in this case — and this boat has it in spades. The wind was howling on Peconic Bay when we pulled out of Lighthouse Point Marina, and the first thing I noticed was the Southport feels more substantial than its weight suggests. It exhibits little bow rise out of the hole, comes on plane quickly, and it adopts a level running angle at almost any speed.



The roomy cockpit allows for stowing necessities close at hand, offering tackle drawers and a sink within reach.



The oversize helm station easily accommodates a pair of 19-inch multifunction displays, with room for more controls.



An integrated cooler in front of the console doubles as seating and provides convenient access whether fishing or entertaining.



The starboard side door provides easy dock entry, wheelchair access and a welcome assist when landing big fish.

LOA: 32'6"	Beam: 10'8"	Draft: 21.5"	Transom Deadrise: 22 degrees	Fuel: 300 gal.
Weight: 7,300 lb. (dry w/o engines)	Water: 20 gal.	Max hp: 700	Base Price: \$264,000	

FISHABILITY

Cruising at an efficient 33 mph, the ride remains level with the engines trimmed up slightly. The tabs aren't needed, except to equalize an uneven load, a testament to the hull's balance and integrity.

At 4,200 rpm, I turned the boat hard and it dug into a tight circle with little speed loss and no cavitation, even when crossing the chop. At wide-open throttle, the F300s pushed it to 53 mph on the GPS. Looking for more of a challenge, I headed to the narrows near Robbins Island, where wind against the tide created a mile of standing waves that proved no match for the 33 running up- or down-sea. The wide bow flare did a great job of keeping spray to a minimum. According to Skip Robinson, Southport's managing director, the boat wasn't designed for blistering top-end performance, but rather to provide a stable platform that cruises in the mid-30s economically in almost any sea

conditions. The 33FE definitely hits the mark!

The general appearance is rich and eye-catching, with the unique transom treatment and impeccable glass and gelcoat work. Most of the hardware, including the 10-inch pop-up cleats, the transom trim, grab rail and anchor guard, is heavy-duty polished stainless steel. Almost everything is blind-fastened — no screws visible — which is more expensive and time consuming, but it adds to the clean, plush look. The 33 features a level-deck design, and the FE (Family Edition) version has forward seating with lockable compartments long enough to hold 7-foot fishing rods and deep enough for a small mountain of gear. A removable table fits snugly between them. When lowered, it creates



an expansive casting platform. With cushions in place, it's a comfortable space to lounge or entertain. The boat's wide beam is carried well forward, which adds more square footage to the foredeck. The anchor locker houses a Lewmar windlass (standard equipment) and has room for all the rode you could ever want.

Moving astern, you'll find a functional and aesthetically pleasing console with a top height that provides excellent visibility from the helm. It holds a pair of 19-inch multifunction displays with

room to spare for controls, switches, Lectrotab trim tab system, radios, stereo and more. You'll find room for a bow thruster or Yamaha Helm Master joystick, available as options. The hardtop is beautifully crafted, and the oversized Plexiglas windscreen includes a wiper and freshwater spray.

You access the console interior from the starboard side. Inside is an electric head, Corian countertop with stainless sink, a mirror, a shower with floor-drain system and a 6-foot sleeper compartment extending under the bow deck. A drop-down hatch provides rear access to the electronics wiring.

The helm seats, plush with armrests, are backed by an aft-facing cabinet with refrigerator, freshwater sink and tackle storage. The cockpit offers lots of fishing room, a 35-gallon livewell, a transom-access door and a starboard side door that grants easy entry from the dock. Three

doors in the port aft corner access shore power, an outlet and a master kill switch. A deck hatch provides bilge and pump access; a hatch in the transom opens to reveal the two engine batteries. Two Group 31 house batteries sit in a compartment inside the console. All hatches feature drain channels and gaskets, including the two 6-foot, 75-gallon insulated fish boxes on either side aft of the console.

The Southport 33FE is a family edition rich in both fishing and comfort features. If you want a more hard-core fishing machine, the Tournament Edition will be available shortly. It replaces the forward seating with an open bow that houses a coffin box, a second livewell and a rigging station with rocket launcher. Whichever model you choose, I'm sure you'll be thrilled with the quality of design and construction, as well as the legendary Hunt Design ride. Welcome to the new definition of Maine-built! 🍷

PERFORMANCE

RPM	MPH	GPH
3,000	14.2	12.9
3,500	23.8	17.5
4,000	32.8	22.9
4,500	37.9	30.1
5,000	43.3	36.0
5,500	48.9	49.7
5,850	50.7	52.3

With twin Yamaha F300 outboards

PLENTY OF GET-UP-AND-GO: Our test boat, fitted with twin Yamaha 300 hp outboards, offered impressive speed and solid performance with that package. If you need more, the 33FE is rated to handle additional power, with twin 350s.



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