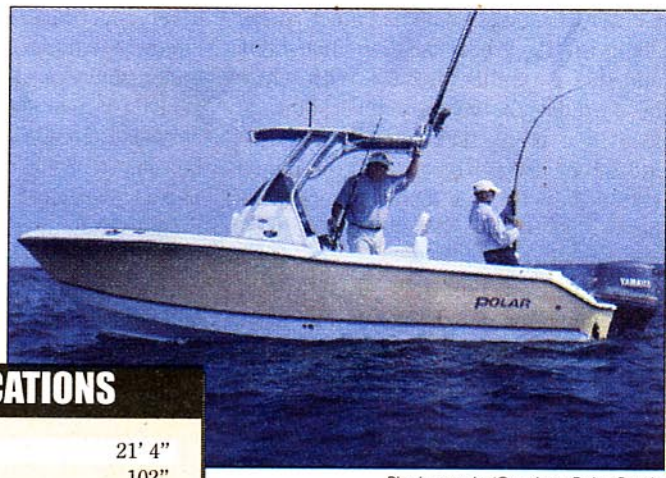
By The New Jersey Angler Staff

The Polar 2100 Center Console

Not your average 21-footer



Photographs/Courtesy Polar Boats

Polar Boats has made a name for itself by producing quality, yet affordable rolled-edge flat bottom skiffs. As Polar enhanced its skiff designs over the years to include tunnel effects and bow flare, it also expanded into the lined fiberglass boat market, and now produces several models of lined boats, including center consoles, bay boats and walkarounds, ranging from 17 to 23 feet, with larger models coming.

The most popular model in our area, and arguably the most versatile boat in their product line, is the 2100 Center Console. Paul Gioe and Scott Barnikow, proprietors of New Jersey Outboards in Bayville, NJ had been raving to us about this boat for months, and we finally had a chance to go over this boat with a fine-toothed comb at the Garden State Outdoor Sportsmen's show in Edison last month. What we found was an extremely functional, attractive, and solid, if not overbuilt, craft that is sure to appeal to the most serious and demanding of coastal anglers. "Built by fishermen for fishermen" may be an overused cliché in the industry, but it certainly applies here.

SPECIFICATIONS

LOA	21' 4"
BEAM	102"
DRY WEIGHT	2680 lbs.
FUEL CAPACITY	97 gals.
MAX HP	240 hp
PERSON CAPACITY	8
TOTAL CAPACITY	2400 lbs.
DEADRISE	21 degrees
TRANSOM HEIGHT	25"

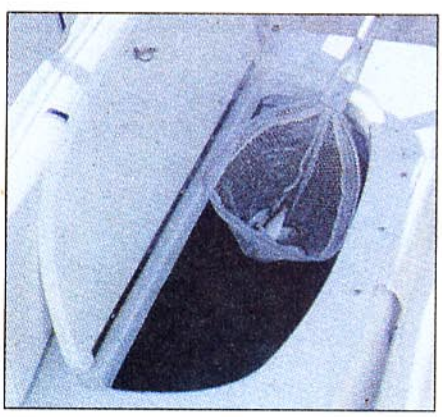
Right off the bat, it's obvious that this boat is built to handle big water. The hull is larger than most any other boat in its class, and the dead rise is steep at 21 degrees. The boat's distinctive bow flare and sleek lines give it a classic, attractive look. In fact, with the optional dark blue hull, this boat is an absolute knockout.

Inside, the layout is smart and uncluttered, with plenty of freeboard and ample fishing room fore, aft, and on both sides of the console. We really appreciated the comfortable combing pads and the open aft corners that allow an angler to "lock in" when fighting a fish, a feature any angler who has battled a big striper in a snotty sea will appreciate. The transom is bustled to divert aft waves while backing down on a fish, which will be helpful when that trophy tuna comes a calling.

The low-profile bow rails are mounted slightly inboard and angled inward so as to allow extra gunnel width for a person to easily step on and off, improving maneuverability around the dock. And, the optional T-top is large and very well constructed. These are important considerations that anglers tend to overlook until after purchase.

The most impressive features of this boat, however, are "under the hood."

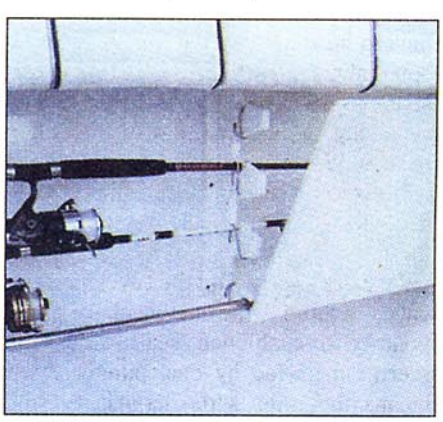
We spoke with Bob Chew, a member of the Polar design team, about the 2100



A lighted, 48-gallon livewell with recirculating raw water is the largest available on a 21-foot boat.



The optional leaning post has an integrated rigging station and supplies an additional four rod holders.



Side rod storage racks hold 8 rods securely, and optional removeable locking doors provide security.

Center Console, and he had much to say about the Polar boat building philosophy and this particular model. "With every boat we design, we try to incorporate at least five innovations, or features that are either completely new to the industry or new to that particular class of boats." According to Chew, this approach has given the 2100 Center console a number of features that are normally only found on much larger and more expensive boats.

One such innovation is the amount of rod storage. The 2100 Center Console has optional lockable rod storage along the gunnels for eight rods, very unusual for a boat this size. Even more unusual are the nine in-deck, drained rod holders. Add the capacity for four more with the optional T-top plus four with the optional leaning post, and you're looking at the ability to accommodate a whopping 25 rods, which is way more than any of our readers own (kidding, of course).

Another innovation which we loved is the optional leaning post seat that bolts to a stainless steel frame surrounding a 90-quart cooler. The aft side of this assembly contains flush-mounted tackle trays and storage drawers perfect for storing lures, terminal tackle and miscellaneous tools. Perhaps the neatest aspect of this assembly is that in a matter of minutes the leaning post can be removed and replaced with a swing back seat or two captain's chairs, essentially solving the comfort vs. utility dilemma that plagues many fishing boat owners.

The console itself is also unique for a boat this size, in that it contains a roomy, lighted head area that accommodates an optional porta-potti. Also, the functional, stainless steel bezel gauges are stacked vertically to allow more room for electronics. We especially liked the recessed indirect courtesy lighting, which should make for some enjoyable nighttime fishing.

We were shocked by the cavernous 48-gallon lighted livewell, which is found beneath a cushioned seat across the stern and is fed by dual pumps. Polar claims that this is the largest livewell available on a 21-footer, and we don't doubt it. With the growing popularity of live bait fishing for striped bass and other species, a livewell this size is a major advantage. A second livewell under the integral console seat is optional.

Also impressive is the insulated fishbox under the bow casting deck, which has an overboard drain and can accommodate fish up to 5 feet long! There aren't many fish to be found within range of this boat that won't fit in there. A second below-deck storage compartment on the port side also drains overboard and can be used as a fishbox, as well.

This 21 footer also has a transom door, yes a transom door, which allows easy access to the integrated aft platform - a nice feature when an errant fishing line or seaweed finds its way around the prop.

The 2100 center console comes standard with a 97-gallon fuel capacity, and, powered by a 150-hp outboard, can exceed 45 mph, according to Chew. Not bad for a burly fishing machine.

Some boat manufacturers tend to skimp on hardware to cut production costs, but Polar seems to have spared no expense on this boat. All thru-hulls are made of brass for durability and all electrical connections utilize NMMA-certified marine grade automotive-style electrical harnesses with quick disconnects, a decided advantage come maintenance time. Perhaps best of all, a corrosion-proof printed circuit board backs the helm switches, eliminating one of the most common electrical problems found on boats these days.

With a good many coastal anglers in the New Jersey area desiring a serious fishing platform that performs just as well drifting for fluke in the inlets as it does tackling an angry sea in search of bluefish, stripers or mid-range tuna, this boat is sure to be a popular choice. For a closer look at the 2100 Center Console or any other boats in the Polar product line, pay a visit to New Jersey Outboards, located at 105 Route 9 in Bayville, NJ, call them at (732) 505-3002, or surf to their website at njoutboards.com. To get a birds-eye view of this boat, come see them at the Atlantic City International Power Boat Show in Atlantic City, February 5 through February 9.

The Polar Product Line

Center Consoles

Polar manufactures two center consoles in addition to the 2100, the 1700 and 1900 respectively.

The 1900 features a large forward casting deck, an insulated fishbox with overboard drain, aft corner seats, a recirculating baitwell, port and starboard side rod storage and six in-deck rod holders. The center console boasts anti-feedback steering and a nifty instrument panel with speedometer tachometer, trim and fuel, plus lockable storage, raw water washdown and 6 integrated rod holders.

The 1700 is similar, with the baitwell built into the console and an integrated locking tackle box with removable trays built into the seat back located in front of the helm.

Also, look for two new models later this spring - a 23-foot center console and a hulking 26-footer which will feature a 9 ½-foot beam.

Bay Boats

Polar has extensive experience in the bay boat venue, having manufactured Fishmaster boats for Travis Marine for several years. Now, there are three models of bay boats that carry the Polar name, the 1910, 2100 and 2310, the largest of which will be introduced at the Atlantic City International Power Boat Show this year and should prove to be very popular in our area with the inshore light tackle and fly fishing crowd. The boat features a 38 gallon recirculating livewell, and two additional livewells can be added. The huge aft casting deck contains two compartments that are designed to hold 5 gallon buckets, an interesting and useful feature.

Walkarounds

Polar Boats will be introducing their first walkaround at this year's Atlantic City International Power Boat Show. It is a 23-foot model with an 8 ½-foot beam. It sports a single-piece molded cabin, which is rare for a boat that size. The cabin is said to be extremely spacious, accommodating an 8-foot berth on the port side and a 6-foot birth on the starboard. The head is concealed below the step in the cabin, making very efficient use of space.

The boat features a transom door and a 48-gallon lighted livewell, along with dual 5-foot below deck fishboxes. The walkaround area is wider than usual, due to an innovative bow rail design. The boat comes standard with a 150-gallon fuel tank, 20-gallon freshwater capacity, and a separate saltwater washdown.

Polar plans to unveil two new walkaround models, 21 and 26 feet respectively, in the fall of 2003.

Flats skiffs

Polar manufactures 3 models of rolled-edge flats skiffs ranging from 16 to 18 feet in length. These boats are very economical yet functional, and are ideal for many of the sheltered water applications that are found in our area. All three boats feature large forward casting decks, lockable storage compartments, and an unbeatable electrical system. Their extremely shallow drafts make them great tools for sneaking into the shallows in pursuit of weakfish, stripers or bluefish, or for clamming, crabbing or just plain family fun.