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# BOATING

WORLD'S LARGEST POWERBOAT MAGAZINE

#3169

# REGULATOR 26XO

Regulator's 26XO blends family amenities with the features of both offshore and inshore fishing boats.

**C**  
BOATING  
CERTIFIED  
TEST



PHOTO: BILL DOSTER

PHOTOS: COURTESY REGULATOR MARINE

**C**rossover boats are all the rage. Regulator Marine's answer is in its new 26XO. Are there trade-offs with such a boat? Understand that the 26XO's territory consists of estuaries and near-coastal waters. It's not the boat for 70-mile canyon runs, but its Lou Codega-designed modified-V hull (17-degree transom deadrise) is more than capable of running gnarly inlets and venturing a few miles offshore. The design's combination of sharp bow entry, flare, subtle curves, reverse chines, lifting strakes, carefully shaped running surface, and weight results in predictable performance and inspires confidence. We shook out the test rig in sharp, choppy bay waters, and it ran dry without pounding at

speeds from the mid-20s to low 30s with six people aboard. The strength that Codega engineered into the design and Regulator's rock-solid construction make it safe and stable at rest and underway. Design details such as rounded corners on the transom for maneuverability at low speeds, a subtle crown on the sole leading any water to a gutter system that drains overboard, and secure glove boxes at the helm make the boat easy to live with. Hatches fit. Holes for all bolts that mount fittings are

drilled with jigs, for precision. From hull and liner lamination to assembly and quality control, we got to see the process firsthand. This is a long-legged boat for both fishing and exploring. Loping along easily at 27 to 32 mph (4,000 to 4,500 rpm), it boasts a range of over 200 miles. The standard Yamaha F300 outboard offers appropriate power for realistic cruising speeds and efficient operation in big waters, with plenty of pull for casual tow sports when equipped with an optional, removable

tow bar. Top speed is in the mid-40s. Meanwhile, the hull's 14-inch draft, moderate deadrise, transom hull pocket, and standard SeaStar Solutions hydraulic jack plate with a 6-inch setback make shallow-water operation easy, whether fishing or beaching at a sandbar.

Other features appreciated by families and anglers alike include a hardtop that shades the helm and the seat forward of the console, well-placed grab handles, cup holders, and USB charging ports. The console houses a vented, lighted compartment with 60 inches of headroom and a standard portable toilet, but it can be fitted with a

## Uniquely, Regulator's single-piece stringer system is bonded to the hull in the mold, resulting in tremendous structural integrity and a rock-solid feel in waves.

permanent model, holding tank and electric pump-out. Snap in the cushions for the bow's port-and-starboard storage compartments, and tilt up their forward-facing seatbacks to create a pair of lounges. The forward console seats two in comfort, with a cooler beneath, as does the helm's leaning post. A 32-gallon livewell is built into the tackle center behind the helm seats, with tackle storage beneath. Forward of the console's front seat is an illuminated 70-gallon in-sole fish box.

The stern deck offers three cushioned seats side by side, plus storage and a swim platform with retractable ladder to port. A 20-gallon freshwater system serves a shower wand at the transom. A Bluetooth-capable, four-speaker marine stereo is standard, with a Polk Ultramarine package optional.

OK, it's comfortable, but after all, Regulators are fishboats at their cores. For bluewater duties, opt for Taco Grand Slam 390 outriggers (\$3,495) and T-top rocket launcher (\$1,895). A 16-inch Garmin GPS-Map 8616 chart plotter/sounder comes standard, with a VHF and Airmar CHIRP transducer mounted to the through-hull,



but a pair of 12-inch Garmin 7612 XSV displays (\$3,195) are available with the same VHF and transducer setup. You can also opt for a Garmin XO Convenience Package with autopilot and GMR 24xHD radar (\$7,295).

The 26XO is also a competent inshore vessel, which we saw clearly while jigging for stripers along a channel edge. With the cushions off, the forward lounges become a casting deck, with lockable horizontal rod stowage beneath. Even more important, our test boat carried an optional 36-volt Minn Kota Riptide Ulterra trolling motor with i-Pilot, a 36-amp charger, and three deep-cycle batteries neatly stowed in a dedicated compartment under the foredeck. The three seats behind the livewell/tackle center fold down to form a huge stern casting deck.

This boat's rigging proved immaculate, and I saw why on the assembly line, watching skilled technicians take care in their work. The 26XO should prove easy to care for. And by careful design and execution, it handles multiple missions well. It may be Regulator's most versatile model. Shoppers will want to check out Pathfinder's 26 TRS (about \$128,000 with a Yamaha F300 and comparable equipment) or Boston Whaler's 270 Dauntless (\$136,928 with a 350 hp Mercury Verado), a well-proven hybrid of similar layout.

Don't take my word for it. Schedule a sea trial of all three and see for yourself. —John Page Williams

### High Points

- ▶ New shallow-draft hull design works on inshore and near-coastal waters.
- ▶ Graceful hardtop provides ample shade, a wraparound safety-glass windshield and handholds.
- ▶ Large casting platforms forward and aft convert to comfortable seats with abundant stowage beneath.
- ▶ Easy access to wiring, plumbing and mechanical systems.

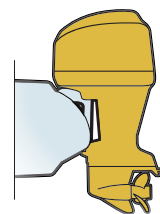
### Low Points

- ▶ Some boaters will want larger engine options.
- ▶ Make sure the vent for the hull's transom pocket is open when running, or a vacuum will form that hurts performance.

• LOA: 26'9" • BEAM: 9'3" • DRAFT: 1'2" (engine up) • DISPLACEMENT: 5,900 lb. (with engine)  
 • TRANSOM DEADRISE: 17 degrees • FUEL CAPACITY: 107 gal. • WATER CAPACITY: 20 gal. • BRIDGE CLEARANCE: 9'0" • MAX CABIN HEADROOM: 5'4" • MAX HORSEPOWER: 300  
 • AVAILABLE POWER: Single Yamaha F300

**Price: \$134,995**  
(as tested)

AVAILABLE POWER:  
**OUTBOARD**



### HOW WE TESTED

**ENGINE:** 300 hp Yamaha F300 **DRIVE/PROP:** Outboard/Yamaha Saltwater Series II 15.5" x 17" 3-blade stainless steel **GEAR RATIO:** 1.86:1 **FUEL LOAD:** 40 gal. **CREW WEIGHT:** 600 lb.

**REGULATOR MARINE**  
Edenton, North Carolina; 252-482-3837;  
regulatormarine.com



**BOATING  
CERTIFIED  
TEST  
RESULTS**

SPEED			EFFICIENCY				OPERATION	
rpm	knots	mph	naut. gph	stat. mpg	n. mi. range	s. mi. range	angle	sound level
1000	4.4	5.1	1.3	3.4	3.9	328.3	377.8	0 64
1500	6.0	6.9	2.1	2.9	3.3	275.0	316.4	1 65
2000	7.1	8.2	3.7	1.9	2.2	185.5	213.4	3 70
2500	7.8	9.0	5.6	1.4	1.6	134.5	154.8	4 73
3000	8.5	9.8	8.0	1.1	1.2	102.5	118.0	6 76
3500	13.6	15.6	10.0	1.4	1.6	130.5	150.2	4 80
<b>4000</b>	<b>23.8</b>	<b>27.4</b>	<b>12.5</b>	<b>1.9</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>183.4</b>	<b>211.1</b>	<b>4 82</b>
4500	27.5	31.6	15.1	1.8	2.1	175.1	201.5	4 84
5000	33.0	38.0	21.1	1.6	1.8	150.7	173.4	3 86
5500	36.9	42.5	26.2	1.4	1.6	135.7	156.2	3 89
5700	38.3	44.1	26.4	1.5	1.7	139.8	160.9	3 92

**MOST ECONOMICAL CRUISING SPEED**