

NOT YOUR FATHER'S Formula

With Hot Rod Graphics and 1400-horsepower, Formula's 382 FAS³TECH is the Real Deal, a high-performance package you can count on.

By Mark Rotharmel

T This wasn't the first time I've tested Formula's fast and elegant 382 FAS³TECH.

In 2003, a similarly finished 382 powered by twin Mercury Racing HP500's and spinning 30" pitch, four-blade Bravo propellers topped out at 76 mph / 5200 rpm during a sea trial in Biscayne Bay. I vividly recall how easily the boat turned, how effortlessly it tracked and how stable the ride was.

Formula's 2008 model promised to be considerably quicker – and it was. Sporting two Mercury Racing HP700SCi's and a pair of five-blade Mercury CNC 17"X 34" propellers wrenched onto the shafts of Dry-Sump NXT¹ Drives, the 382 delivered a top speed of 93 mph@5350 rpm, fully fueled and loaded with a weekend's worth of gear in dead calm water.

Given the boat's added weight of approximately 1000 lbs. and zero chop on the water to help lift its tail, we figured two-to-three mph was left on the table, which in fact was confirmed by Vic Spellberg, Formula's VP of Sponsor Promotions and primary operator of the boat. Of interest is Formula's indifference in publishing the boat's ultimate max speed. Many manufacturers bent on peak performance drain their tanks and take pillows out of the cabin in preparation for radar runs. A tip of the cap to Formula for stepping out of the box and running the test in average operating form.

Accelerating to a flat plane in 6 seconds, the 382 whisks from 0 to 30 mph in 11 seconds, 0 to 50 mph in 17 seconds and 0 to 60 mph in 21 seconds. Acceleration numbers at mid-range look good too – we clocked runs from 30 to 60 mph at 12.4 seconds, and 40



Mercury Racing's HP700SCi's provide the 382's punch. A red carbon-fiber dash panel flaunts Livorsi instrumentation, a Garmin GPS and Mercury's SmartCraft SystemView.

Mark Rotharmel finds the McLeod Bolster Seats easy to get in and out of.

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to 70 mph at 13 seconds - again impressive considering the added pounds.

One can't help but appreciate the way this boat handles. Formula's proven two-step hull design works very efficiently, especially with the NXT¹ Drives trimmed correctly. Tracking straight or carving hard-lock turns, the 382 is predictable – a boat that “speaks” to you when driving it hard.

As I've discovered during test drives of other FAS³TECH models, you can actually feel the bottom break suction from the water throughout various stages of acceleration. Though sensitivity is required when steering at speed, keeping the drives trimmed at zero degrees or slightly higher will maintain a proper angle of attack and there is virtually no torque on the wheel thanks to Latham's external hydraulic system.



Although our data-collecting test took place in a confined bay near Key Largo, we ran the boat offshore, one day later, in two-to-four foot waves for hours on end. Rattle-free and comfortable at 50 mph, the hull frees up nicely and requires little tab to ride level and clean. Pedal to the metal, the 382 felt rigid and strong thanks to Formula's obsessive attention to detail and high quality construction techniques.

The company is fastidious about its mold work. The lamination schedule includes days of cure time which accounts for minimal distortion in the finish. This particular boat was built from Kevlar, and though more expensive, when combined with Formula's custom engineered matrix stringer system made the boat tough as nails. For structural integrity, the hull and deck are fastened together with S/S bolts, and a tough bonding agent called Plexus to ensure inseparable joins.

Formula's offering of contemporary graphics have been, at least for the most part, designed for general appeal and if anything have leaned toward the conservative nature of many Formula owners. Featuring the latest 2008 Hot Rod Platinum Graphics Package, this particular 382 FAS³TECH looked stunning with its black metal-flake sides, silver decks and red accent lines.

We also loved its carbon-fiber dash panel and matching red custom steering wheel. The 382's helm is meticulously laid-out, featuring high-end Livorsi Monster gauges and chrome, shifters/throttles, a Garmin GPSmap 172C and Mercury's SmartCraft SystemView instrumentation.

As always, safety comes first at Formula so leading components including snug fitting, securely fastened McLeod bolsters with electric drop-out seats are installed. Whatever your height, you can brace your feet on the two-tier, integrated McLeod electric-assist footrests. Keep in mind that when run-

ning hard, comfort matters.

Formula ingenuity shines through in several ways. Not only is each grab handle well-mounted, they are formed to be unobtrusive yet functional. The 382's combination step-pad/storage compartments are perfectly integrated into the sides for jumping in, out and onto the deck in a hurry.

An elegant, air-conditioned cabin will help you relax in style and comfort. There are some very nice amenities, including a full galley, luxuriously upholstered Ultraleather™ lounges, and an entertainment system. Inside and out, the sound system is terrific.

When high performance boating, the risk of something breaking during a two-day destination based test is pretty high, and before heading out I fully expected that “stuff” could happen. But it didn't. During 12-plus hours of mid-to-high speed running there wasn't a hiccup along the way.

This was indeed the Formula for a successful journey – we couldn't ask for more. 🍷

POWER & PERFORMANCE

Test boat engines:

Twin Mercury Racing
HP700SCi's 700 hp each, 502
CID, 8.2L, V8 NXT¹ Dry Sump
Drives
17" X 34" Pitch Mercury CNC
Machined 5-Blade Cleaver
Propellers

Acceleration

MPH	TIME/Seconds
0-30 mph:	11.1
0-40 mph:	14.1
0-50 mph:	17.1

Top speed (GPS)

5350 rpm 93 mph

Cruising speeds (GPS)

3500 rpm 59 mph

RPM & Speed

rpm	mph
2,500	12.3
3000	47.1
4000	68.1
4500	76.7
5000	85.0
5350	93.0

SPECIFICATIONS

Length:	38 ft, 2 in
Beam:	8 ft, 3 in.
Weight:	10,450 lb.
Fuel:	195 U.S gal.
MSRP (As tested with options).....	\$633,695

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