

more durable. Fit and finish are every bit as meticulous as you would expect from a custom-built boat.

"We are not people who sleep on boats. But we wanted a nice interior—a place where a person could lie down," Stephenson says. The cabin is more than just a cubbyhole, however. It is an upscale, contemporary den. The seating is soft and inviting. A counter unit holds a sink and cooler hidden under hatch lids that match the upholstery. A full-length hanging locker lies behind a zippered panel in the sidewall. Inside is one of Andretti's racing jackets.

Forward is a long bow compartment, empty except for a 10-person life raft. Aft is zippered access to the instrument panel. In a beautiful piece of innovation, the removable companionway door fits in to this aft compartment. The door, made of carbon fiber and Kevlar like the hull, locks into place with floor pegs and a twist lock.

Good flying weather

When my turn came to take the 40 out for a spin, there was a two-to-three-foot chop on the lake, and we had four people on board. Walking the throttles forward gently, first one and then the other, I brought the boat onto plane at between 2200 and 2500 rpm, with just a bit of bow rise. I found the instrument panel, with its gauge array embedded in the red upholstered console, extremely well laid out. The rocker switches that trim the drives and tabs are just forward of the gears and throttles, set racer-style at the driver's left hand.

We settled into a cruising speed of about 53 mph at 4000 rpm and it was my turn to marvel at how smooth the ride was through the chop. The 40 did not require a lot of trimming. Everyone who has driven *Heart Racer*, including Andretti, has come away describing it as a very "forgiving" boat. It tracked beautifully and carved turns with precision. The venturi windscreen let in enough wind to let me know I was in a performance boat, but not so much that we couldn't hold a conversation.

I pushed the throttles to the wall and the boat accelerated swiftly to its top end of about 68 mph, in three-foot following seas—good flying weather. Sure enough, we launched off a wavetop and

I quickly chopped the throttles—laughing aloud with delight.

Andretti and Stephenson, McManus and Kiekhaefer have achieved what they set out to do—to build a comfortable, reliable—and fun—high performance boat. But you'd expect a team of that caliber to produce an awesome machine. "It's sort of like a dream—having Mark, Fred and Mario be involved with building your boat," Stephenson says. For him and for the newly retired Andretti, *Heart Racer* is a dream come true. ☺

Apache 40

LOA.....	40'
Beam.....	8'
Draft.....	3'4"
Weight.....	12,800 lbs.
Water.....	22 gals.
Fuel.....	250 gals.
Power.....	(2) 500-hp (crankshaft)
	Mercury Hi-Performance
Price.....	\$250,000

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