

FREE DIGITAL MAGAZINE

Motorboat Owner

JANUARY 2020

Affordable practical boating



BOAT TEST

XO 270 Cabin



Destination Guide
LOWESTOFT



Seamaster 813 ● Spectro Oil Analysis kits ● Broom 425 'My Boat'

XO 270 Cabin

BOAT TEST

Length (LOA): 8.6m / 28ft 3in

Beam: 2.59m / 8ft 6in

Displacement: 2,900kg

Fuel capacity: 315/450 litres (inboard/outboard)

Water capacity: 45 litres

RCD category: C10

Engines as tested: 2 x Yamaha F200

*Other engine options: 1 x 250-300hp outboard,
2 x 150-250hp outboard, 1 x Volvo or Mercruiser
diesel inboard 300-370hp*

*Price from **£129,000***

*Price as tested **£178,236***





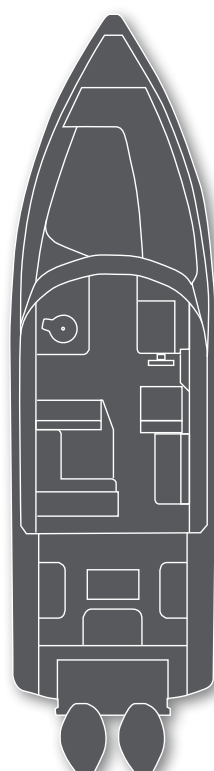
“A fast, Finnish aluminium-hulled sportster that is a real head turner”



The XO 270 is a boat with many identities. There is the Cabin model, another called ‘Front Cabin’, versions with inboard or outboard power, single or twin, and then the options of ‘Rider’, ‘Touring’ or ‘Utility’ packages to determine basic equipment levels, and that is before you even start on the optional extras.

The particular boat we are testing is a 270 cabin with twin outboards, notably Yamaha F200. I am still not entirely sure which of the three equipment packages our test boat had, as the mix of these and a few optional extras does somewhat blur the lines, but the exclusion of the galley

unit leads me to believe we are onboard the extensively equipped ‘Rider’ model. As the name suggests, this version is, perhaps, slightly more geared to family day-boating, rather than the more cruiser orientated ‘Touring’ or commuter/workboat equipped ‘Utility’. Of course, if you want the most ‘cruiser’ you can fit into the 270’s aluminium hull, you might find the ‘Front Cabin’ version even



more suitable. The ‘Cabin’ in this boat’s title refers to the wheelhouse and, as you will see, although it does have some basic overnight accommodation, the ‘Front Cabin’ forgoes the open bow deck to provide a proper two-berth cuddy that will make overnighting just that little bit more comfy.

While there may be some differences in the front of the boat between the two models, at the stern, depending upon engine choices, and in the bits in between, depending upon equipment package, there are many aspects of the various 270 models that will be identical or very similar. The aft cockpit, the wheelhouse

and of course, the driving experience and hull dynamics will change little between models, so if after reading this you like the sound of the 270, there will almost certainly be a configuration that will take it into ‘the perfect boat’ classification for you. On that basis, let’s take a closer look at what’s on offer.

At the stern of the boat, at least on the twin outboard version that we tested, the engines are flanked by a pair of bathing platforms. The port side one has a fixed bathing ladder, while on our test boat the starboard platform housed a stern anchor, probably not an option likely to be taken up in great numbers in UK waters. The



“Its wheelhouse provides a dry, warm and comfortable environment”

platforms are compact, but allow easy access onto the boat from either side when moored alongside. Easy access is aided by a pair of cockpit transom gates, one on each side, to allow progression into the boat from either side. In between the transom gates there is dedicated storage for four fenders outboard, and a two-person transom seat inboard. Elsewhere in the cockpit there are fold up bench seats on both port and starboard sides and a centrally mounted table that allows all six seated persons access to it, and creates a surprisingly sociable al fresco area. In the cockpit sole there are a pair of hatches, with gas struts to keep them open when in use. These allow access to lockers below where you will find the boat's batteries in the port side locker and optional water

tank in the starboard.

Moving forward on this boat is best achieved via the wheelhouse. There are two very slender side decks, with grabrails running the length of the wheelhouse top, but with little more than toe room available, I would see this as a secondary, and rarely used, choice. If required, there are conveniently placed steps moulded into the forward corners of the cockpit, as well as a pair of sturdy vertical grabrails, to help with your ascension to deck level.

Entrance to the wheelhouse is via a single sliding door. Inside, the cabin is light and spacious, thanks to the all round glass and over 6ft of headroom. The layout in here will depend on which one of the equipment packages you go for, and perhaps the biggest question you have to

ask yourself is: “do I want a galley?”. If the answer to that is yes, then the Touring package provides one with a hob and sink on the starboard side just inside the cockpit door. If your only requirement is for somewhere to keep your beer and sandwiches cold, then you'll be pleased to know that all three packages provide a, circa 45l, refrigerator as standard. On this Rider version, the galley unit is replaced by a two-person bench seat with open storage below, making it a great option for those that want to accommodate lots of people in the dry, warmth and comfort of the wheelhouse when underway.

Opposite there is a dinette with U-shaped seating created by flipping the backrest of the navigator's seat forward. With the leaves of the table folded out,

there is plenty of space for the whole family to sit and eat. Alternatively, when underway, it provides seating for up to three, with two forward facing seats on the aft bench. With the forward seat backrest flipped aft, you get a good sized, two-person co-pilot position with a conveniently placed grabrail and access to a couple of cup holders on the moulding in front. This moulding initially looks bereft of features normally found here such as a glove box, chart locker or bits and bobs tray. The reason for this becomes clear when you spot a door handle mid way down and flip it open to reveal a far better use. Inside this console there is a toilet compartment. Yes, it is quite small and no there isn't a sink or shower, but a basic facility like this is so



This clever cabin, hidden below the console, is a compact but very useful feature

important for improving onboard family comfort that these details can easily be overlooked. Sitting inside with the door shut there is plenty of light available from the overhead glass panels that it never feels claustrophobic, despite its compact dimensions.



Access to the cabin can also be achieved from the bow, useful if using the space for storage

Opposite, on the starboard side, is the helm position. The fully adjustable helm seat, with shock absorbing suspension on our test boat, is mounted on top of a moulding that contains the boat's fridge. The bucket style supportive seat swivels to face the dinette, adding a further seat for socialising, and has a lifting bolster to allow comfortable helming whether seated or standing. The helm console is well laid out and, although compact, has room for a decent size multi-function display as well as engine instruments and bowthruster and trim tab controls. The steering wheel is adjustable to provide the perfect position whether standing, leaning or seated.

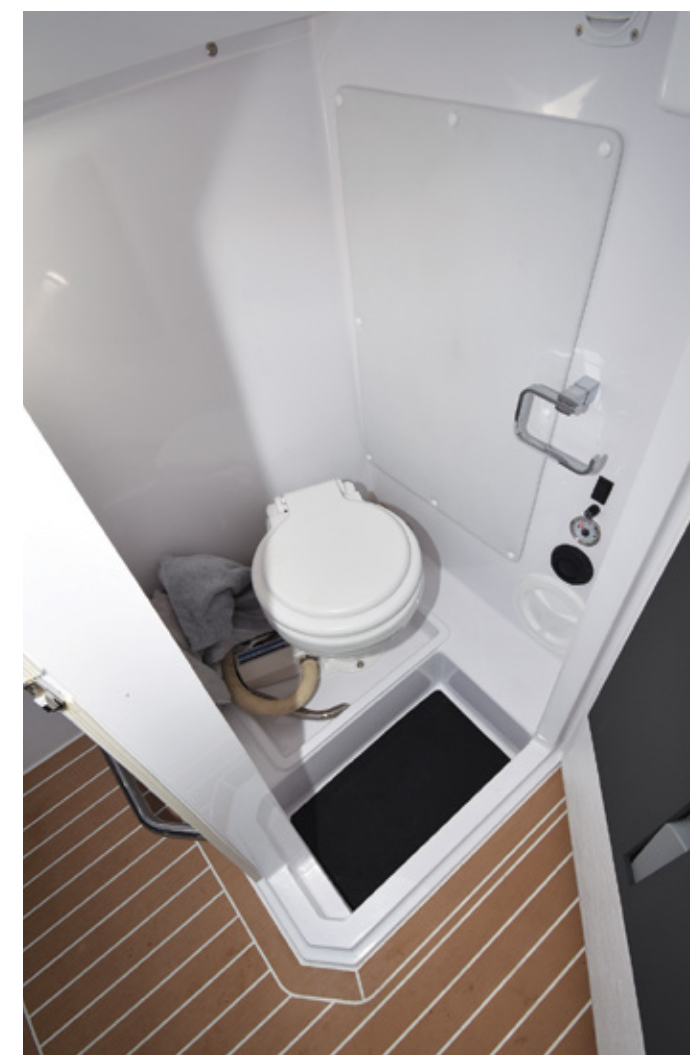
At your feet, a fold down flap provides a raised plinth so that the skipper can poke their head out of the opening roof above



“Its safe and secure-feeling bow area has boarding, seating and storage capabilities”

for close quarters maneuvering or crew communication. A matching opening roof can also be found above the navigator's position. Along the length of the wheelhouse, on both sides, are grab rails that make moving around when underway an easy and safe option.

A small central companionway leads forward from the helm to take you out through a large swinging door into the bow area. Before you get to the door though, a small opening in the helm console, covered by a curtain, provides access to what you might expect to be storage but is, in fact, a small cabin. This is a cosy space that is ideal for one but



Another great family friendly feature is the toilet compartment below the co-pilot's console



PERFORMANCE					
As tested 50% fuel 0% water 3 crew Force 4					
RPM	Knots	LPH	GPH	MPG	Range (nm)
600	4.4	4.0	0.88	5.0	495
1000	6.2	7.4	1.63	3.8	376
1500	8.7	14.1	3.11	2.8	277
2000	10.5	25.1	5.53	1.9	188
2500	13.1	37.2	8.19	1.6	158
3000	21.0	39.8	8.75	2.4	237
3500	28.8	54.5	12.0	2.4	237
4000	31.4	75.0	16.5	1.9	188
4500	36.4	103.6	22.8	1.6	158
5000	40.8	154.6	34.0	1.2	119
5500	45.7	173.2	38.1	1.2	119

could, with an infill in place, be suitable for double occupancy, at a push. This cabin, together with a convertible dinette, does mean that the 270 Cabin is suitable for occasional overnighting, so you could still get to keep the open bow even if you do want to spend the odd night onboard.

Out in the bow you have good deep bulwarks topped with a small rail to provide a secure and safe environment. There is seating along the starboard side and across the bow, while the port side remains free and uncluttered. A moulded step in the port aft corner allows for easy boarding over the port side or a simple step up onto the small side deck. A break in the raised bow rails provides access

over the bow together with good hand holds to ease your way. The anchor locker lid is teak laid and lifts on a gas strut to reveal a usefully sized locker below. Beneath the bow seating there are storage spaces, with the forward seat and fore most port side seat combining to form one large self-draining locker. The aft



Engine options include single or twin outboards, or a single diesel sterndrive up to 500hp in total



“The 270 delivers a driving experience as close to perfect as it gets”

port side seat locker is actually part of the under helm cabin, so before you fill this up with boating paraphernalia you really need to decide whether you will be staying onboard.

Underway

With twin 200hp Yamaha outboards on the transom, the 270 is a sprightly boat. Dump the throttles and the boat is up on the plane in around 3 seconds and above that the speed increased so quickly I had trouble defining exactly when we hit different benchmarks, suffice to say it was PDQ. The power just kept coming all the way up to the top speed, which was just shy of 46 knots on the day. We had pretty choppy conditions and I feel that

on a better day we may well have seen a knot or so more with some more precise trimming. To give you some idea of how other options perform, a single 300hp is said to be good for around 38 knots, while the single diesel installations should deliver speeds in the low 40’s. With the largest horsepower option, twin 250hp outboards, the 270 should be knocking on the door of 50 knots, maybe a touch over. The front cabin version adds around 100kg to the boat’s weight, so expect a very slight reduction in speeds for this model with the same engines.

The driving experience is about as close to perfect as it gets. It handles like a sports car and, with the door and windows closed, it is surprisingly quiet and refined.

Not only is engine noise minimal, but also hull noise is almost non-existent, which for an aluminium-hulled boat is quite something. The steering is perfectly balanced, light and precise with enough feedback to allow you to really feel what is going on. The conditions on our test day meant we could tackle some reasonably sized waves and swell in the bay off Pwllheli, and again the 270 impressed. The hull was soft riding, there was no evidence of slamming, and when we threw it into a tight turn the grip was endless and the sports car became a go-cart. The suspension seat fitted to our test boat was not really required and the co-pilot's seat was an enjoyable place to be when underway. Helming was comfortable, whether standing, leaning or seated, with everything adjustable to make it just so and ensure that all the important bits are within easy reach. Yes, like other wheelhouse boats there is the odd blind spot when turning hard and fast, but with everything else so perfect it is easy to forgive this and accept that it is a price you



A galley is situated here on the Touring model

pay for having that warm and dry place from which to enjoy your boating.

Conclusion

The huge array of choices when it comes to picking the right 270 for you is both a positive and a negative. It's great that the boat can be specified in an almost semi-custom way, but the choices may seem a bit overwhelming. Luckily, I get the feeling that there is enough flexibility in the ordering process that it really doesn't have to be too hard to end up with the perfect boat. Just choose whether you want

the front cabin or an open bow, decide if inboard or outboard is your preferred engine type, or equally if you want petrol or diesel propulsion, and tick the option package that meets all or the majority of your needs. If there are a few other features you want, that don't come automatically with your option package, I'm sure a chat with your dealer and a look through the options list will be fruitful. We have only tested one of the many variants, so it's hard for us to direct you down a specific route. What we can say though is that the basic hull and structure across all the types will be the same and with hand on heart we can say that, whatever 270 you end up with, the quality of build will not disappoint, the



A great boat to drive and, with so many options, there is almost certainly a perfect 270 for you

driving experience will be excellent and the sea keeping will be fantastic. In short, it's the perfect compact 'go anywhere at anytime' boat. It's over to you now to narrow down the options.

ENQUIRIES: Ideal Boat 01758 703013 www.idealboat.com

