

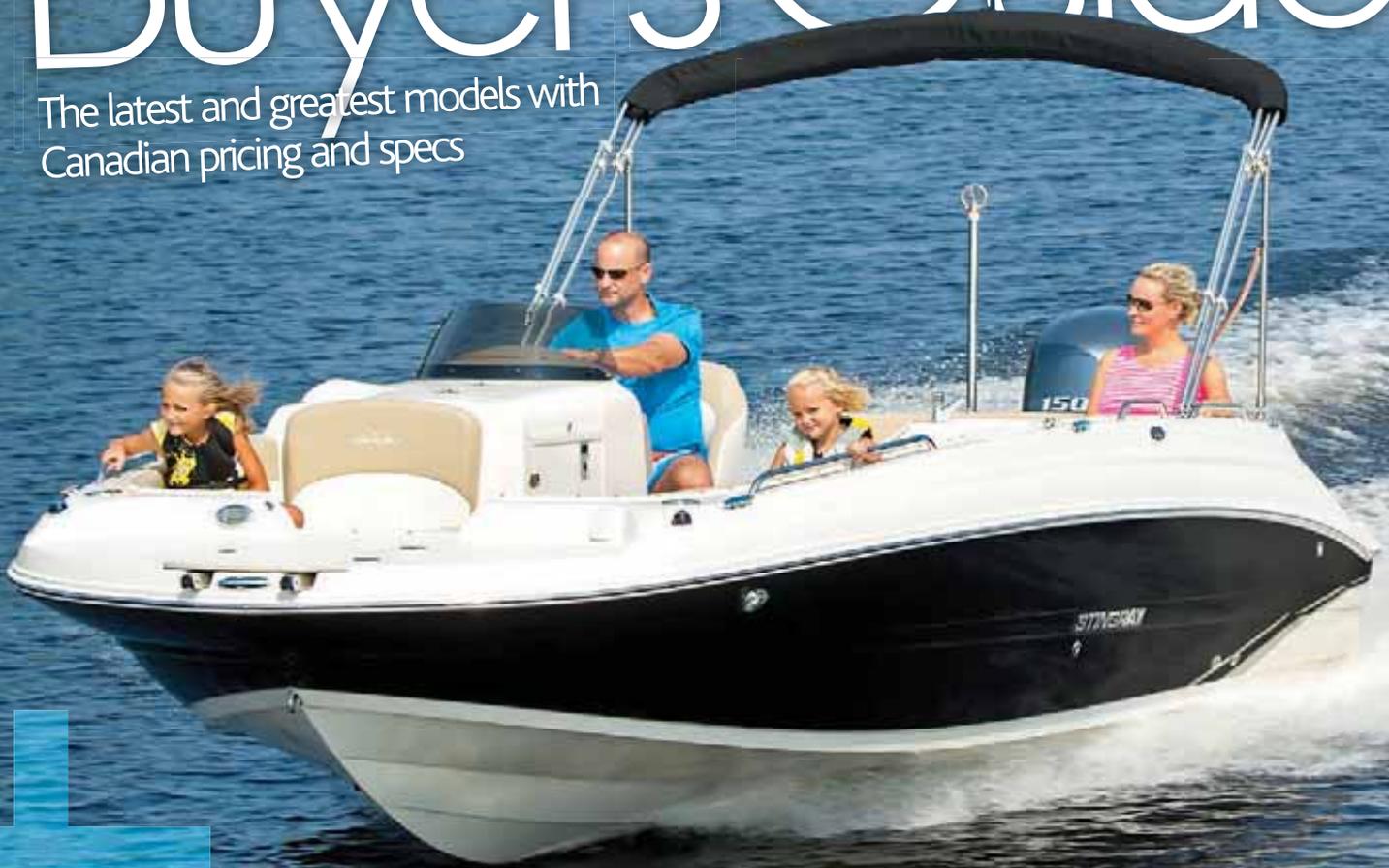
LOOKING AHEAD TO NEXT SEASON

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2014 POWERBOAT Buyer's Guide

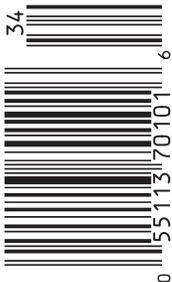
The latest and greatest models with
Canadian pricing and specs



- Exploring Ontario's French River
- Teach Your Kids How to Fish
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Boat Tests

Bennington 2575 QCW OB
Legend Luxura Bar
Princecraft Nanook DLX WS
Slyvan S5
Starcraft 176 Starfish SC
Stringray 212SC





The arrival of 2014 marks 35 years of boat building for Stingray. Founded in 1979 by company President, Al Fink, the Hartsville, South Carolina-based fibreglass boat builder has a long reputation for delivering quality performing boats at good value for your dollar.

In addition to its anniversary, the 2014 model year also represents another milestone for the company. At its annual dealer meeting this past summer, Stingray announced that it would be offering new full-colour hull paint jobs on its 2014 models. It also unveiled its brand new 212SC, a 21-foot, 11-inch deck boat with a wide eight-foot, six-inch beam and a long list of standard features.

It's easy to understand the appeal of the category. Deck boats incorporate the best aspects

of two different classes of vessels. They combine the handling of a V-hull with generous interior space close to that of a pontoon.

Our boat test took place on Lake Robinson, not far from Stingray's headquarters in Hartsville. The shallow man-made lake only has a maximum depth of around 30 feet but our boat's depth finder often displayed an average in the mid teens. The 2,250-acre body provides cooling water for the H. B. Robinson Nuclear Power Plant, which sits at the lake's southern tip. After the exiting water leaves the plant it's cooled and re-enters the lake, where it creates a noticeable – and from what I've been told by locals – year-round steam effect. Suffice to say, it certainly made for a memorable backdrop to test the 212SC.

It's immediately evident Stingray has built

the boat with family and social boaters in mind. With a max capacity for twelve and amenities including a freshwater sink with faucet, an enclosed head/change room, four-speaker stereo with Bluetooth and multiple coolers/storage boxes, the 212SC is superbly equipped for spending long days on the water when the weather is especially nice.

Stingray recent changed its upholstery supplier to Syntec, which offers its Nano Block Technology to surface-condition the vinyl. According to the company, it tests its upholstery with Sharpie markers, which can be cleaned off. The tasteful new upholstery is offered in a standard two-tone (white and tan desert tan). Desert tan as well as ivory upholstery options are also available. The desert tan really gives the 212SC an attractive warm look.



212 SC Stingray

By Jonathan Lee

Our test model had the optional snap-in carpeting, a \$640 upgrade that makes removing dirt and sand from your boat a lot easier at the end of the day. It also featured a pressurized freshwater system (\$533).

The interior layout features a wide spacious bow equipped with a pair of loungers, a step through with in-floor cooler and an anchor locker with two-step forward stainless steel boarding ladder. Abundant storage is found under the lift-out seating. In my opinion, being able to place the seats out of the way is better than some hinged seating that needs to be held open as you fill the storage area, which can make loading a lot of gear more of a hassle. An in-floor base centered in the bow allows you to set up the standard oval table.

Boarding and exiting the boat at the dock

is made easier by two portside steps. Even if you put up the standard Bimini top for cockpit sun protection, there's no interference with the steps. Also, the top features a new stiffener bar and rattle-free plastic connectors, so it's not a distraction while underway. Each step provides additional storage, the bottom one containing a small removable cooler. Just left of those steps is a lifting panel that conceals a handy waste pail, perfect for storing refuse you want kept separate from other stowed gear.

Sitting at the helm, the driver may notice the conspicuous central blank space above the wheel that's flanked by four main gauges. This thoughtful move by Stingray allows boat owners to install an up to eight-inch wide GPS chartplotter of their choosing, since ever-changing technology makes offering the

best available option more challenging. The uncluttered intuitive dash quickly provides the driver trim level, speed and fuel level on the left, and rpm, a volt meter and an optional depth gauge to the right. Just below the gauges you'll see an MP3 port for the Jensen stereo as well as a 12V outlet on the opposite side. The stereo can be upgraded to a 200W Polk audio system if you really want to make some noise. Below to the right you'll find a series of rocker switches for the boat's lights, horn, trim tabs and other accessories. Stingray also decided not to include circuit breakers on the dash to maintain the clean layout. Rather, the company moved them under the dash along with the hour meter, which is typically used by service staff. The tilt-steering wheel comes standard.

The driver's seat hugs the occupant for an



Stainless steel grab handles are considerately placed throughout the boat, as is a surplus of cup holders. Venting is provided on all large storage areas to prevent the build up of mildew and the cockpit is self-draining.

even better feeling in tight turns while the standard flip-up bolster provides a comfortable option for taking a better vantage point to dock or spot hazards.

In the cockpit, across from the captain's chair is an L-shaped seating area with a second in-floor base for the table. Below the seating is found a second built-in cooler, a storage area for the table and a space for an optional ski tow, paddle and other gear.

A walk-through transom takes to you a pair of twin swim platforms, one on each side of the outboard. The starboard platform has a telescoping stainless steel three-step ladder for re-boarding after a refreshing swim.

If fishing is your idea of the best way to spend your time on the water, an optional Fishing Package adds a removable trolling motor mount, aerated livewell, fishing seats and four aft stainless steel rod holders.

Stingray only offers the 212SC with a 150hp four-stroke outboard engine from either Mercury or Yamaha. The positive here is that the boat is built to work specifically with this engine. The engineers at Stingray had a level of performance in mind when they designed the boat, which our test model certainly delivered on our test runs.

Delivering that spirited and thoroughly enjoyable ride was Yamaha's F150 four-stroke with a standard 19 aluminum Yamaha prop. With three people on board, calm water and half a tank of fuel, the 212SC was fully on plane in just under five seconds and topped out

at approximately 50 mph (according to GPS) once properly trimmed at 5,800 rpm. Our test boat was equipped with cable steering, which delivered predictable, easy-to-control handling when put through a series of slaloms and hard turns. During these maneuvers, not once did the boat chine walk – something that those with young passengers should appreciate. With that said, I would still opt for the hydraulic steering to further enhance the simple enjoyment of driving the boat.

The 212SC owes much of its stability to Stingray's exclusive Z-plane hull, which features a style of strake that acts as horizontal planing faces when submerged and a spray release when close to the water's surface. Stingray claims its CAD-developed hull design passes through the water without causing bubbles or vortices, which can reduce the boat's efficiency.

Stingray approached the 2014 model year by analyzing every aspect of every building material for its boats, and the 212SC embodies the company's improvements to its lineup. It benefits from the additional colours on exterior gel coats, new interior designs and new stain-resistant upholstery while delivering exceptional top-end speed, handling and a long standard feature list. It's sure to generate a lot of attention at upcoming boat shows this year and should be on your short-list of models to consider if you're seeking a lively ride with space to spare for entertaining friends and family. ☑

STINGRAY 212SC

Length:	21' 11"
Beam:	8' 6"
Dry Weight:	3,100 lbs.
Fuel capacity:	215.7L/57 gal. US
Passenger capacity:	12
Power (max):	150hp
Power (as tested):	Yamaha F150
Retail price (base):	\$43,594 w/Yamaha F150
Retail price (as reviewed):	\$44,930

Quoted setup may not be exactly as depicted in photos. Prices are subject to currency fluctuations and do not include freight, PDI or additional optional equipment.

REVIEW BOAT PROVIDED BY

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