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numbers included a 6.9-second time from 30 to 50 mph and a 9.2-second time from 40 to 60 mph.

During slalom maneuvers, the boat was predictable and stable. Because it was slightly heavier and a bit taller than the VR-1, handling wasn't as crisp as the smaller and lighter model we tested in February 2002.

Offshore, the boat could have used trim tabs. They come standard on boats with HP500EFI or greater power, but even if you're only opting for the 496 Mag HO, it would be a good idea to get tabs, especially since Velocity installs the good ones at the factory: 280S K-Planes. Even without tabs, the boat felt solid in some nasty 4- and 6-foot swells and with just drive trim it was easy enough to get the boat to fly level.

#### Workmanship

Beneath the positive-molded engine hatch, which lifted on a single electric screw jack, Velocity rigged the 290 SC like a race boat.

Wiring and plumbing from the helm was tucked beneath the gunwales and wrapped in conduit. The cool part was that the stainless cushion clamps were through-bolted to the fasteners that retained the rubrail so there weren't any screws driven into the hullside. Pretty smart.

The engine was mounted on the standard Mercury mounts fastened to white powder-painted L-angles through-bolted to the outside stringers, which were capped with diamond-plate that extended to the chine. To starboard, the company mounted the freshwater tank. To port, the single battery was mounted in a powder-painted box, just aft of the trim pump.

On the outside, gelcoat had a traditional Velocity "V" painted on the side in purple with white airbrush accents and a yellow "ribbon" on the deck. Gelcoat exhibited decent shine over its mostly wave-free mold work and the rubrail was a stout plastic extrusion with a rubber insert.

Unlike the VR-1 or any Velocity we've tested in recent years, the 290 SC came with a white powder-painted windshield from Taylor Made. A wise choice, the windshield complemented the lines of the boat and knocked down the wind.

#### Interior

The cockpit featured Pirelli flooring beneath its lay-in carpeting. Vinyl used for the bolsters and seats was a tan pearlescent vinyl backed with substantial padding. Comfortable and kind of cool looking. There was room for up to four people in the back seat if you don't mind getting cozy, three if you do mind. More important, the gunwale was nice and high in the back seat, up to the shoulder of 6-plus footers.

There also was a grab rail that attached to the gunwale and the rear of the bolster. It served as a handhold for rear-seat passengers and a brace for the forward bolsters, which featured powder-painted aluminum construction and manual dropout bottoms.

To starboard, the helm was fitted with Livorsi gauges and chrome throttles. The speedometer and tachometer were the standard 3 3/8" diameter units and the peripheral gauges were Monster series. On the starboard gunwale, a row of lighted plastic rocker switches actuated all the accessories. For convenience, all the circuit breakers were rubber-booted and located beneath each switch.

In the cabin we found a full head on the starboard side. Amenities included a pump-out toilet, a sink with a spigot that doubled as a shower head and stowage. It also featured a mirrored door that had a latch and a couple of twist latches so the door stays closed in rough water.

To port there was a mini galley, which included a couple of stowage lockers, the housing for the stereo

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and DVD player and the Sharp Aquos flat-screen TV (think "Finding Nemo"). Facing lounges and a spacious V-berth rounded out the interior. The best part? There really was a decent amount of headroom in the cabin--enough so you could sit in the facing lounges without slumping. Those same lounges converted to a berth.

#### Overall

Nothing brings more relief than finding a boat that fits the needs of the whole family--especially after a long debate. With Velocity's 290 SC, that debate just got a little shorter.

#### Hull and Propulsion Information

Deadrise at transom 22 degrees

Centerline 28'6"

Beam 8'2"

Hull weight 4,650 pounds

Engine MerCruiser 496 Mag HO

Cylinder type V-8

Cubic-inch displacement/horsepower 496/425

Lower-unit gear ratio 1.5:1

Propeller Mercury Bravo One 15 1/4" x 28" (modified)

#### Pricing

Base retail \$85,100

Price as tested \$100,300

#### Options on Test Boat

Upgrade to MerCruiser 496 Mag HO engine (\$15,200).

#### Test Conditions

Location Fort Myers Fla.

Temperature 94 degrees

Humidity 48 percent

Wind speed 4-6 mph

Sea conditions 2? to 4?

Elevation Sea level

#### Acceleration

5 seconds 23 mph

10 seconds 41 mph

15 seconds 53 mph

20 seconds 59 mph

#### Midrange Acceleration

30-50 mph 6.9 seconds

40-60 mph 9.2 seconds

#### Rpm vs. Mph

1000 7 mph

1500 10 mph

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2000 18 mph  
2500 28 mph  
3000 32 mph  
3500 43 mph  
4000 52 mph  
4500 66 mph  
Top Speed  
Radar 70 mph at 5000 rpm  
Nordskog Performance Products GPS 69.8 mph at 5000 rpm  
Planing  
Time to plane 5.3 seconds  
Minimum planing speed 19 mph  
Fuel Economy  
At 25 mph 2.8 mpg  
At 35 mph 3.1 mpg  
At 45 mph 2.7 mpg  
At 55 mph 2.2 mpg  
At 65 mph 2.2 mpg  
At WOT 2.1 mpg  
Fuel capacity 80 gallons  
For More Information  
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Dept. PB  
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[www.velocityboats.com](http://www.velocityboats.com)