

## HOW WE TESTED

# A Feel for Four-strokes

**A** Walker Bay Genesis 270 rigid inflatable boat served as *Practical Sailor's* testing platform. The 119-pound Hypalon RIB has an 8-foot, 10-inch LOA and a beam of 5 feet, 4 inches. It can take up to a 10-horsepower outboard. The field tests were run on Sarasota Bay, Fla., in a light breeze and light-to-moderate chop.

*PS* testers used a FloScan digital fuel meter to record fuel usage, and they took noise measurements with a Radio Shack decibel meter. A Garmin GPSMap72 handheld was used to determine top speeds. Speed and noise levels were taken in two directions and averaged to account for wind and current.

Testers closely examined all operational components and vital access areas, such as the oil dipstick and oil fill, carrying handles, tillers, throttles, forward/reverse shifts, flushing ports, ease of engine tilting, cowlings, their clips and fasteners, etc.

Both male and female testers evaluated both engines' smoothness and ease of starting on cold and warm starts. We also rated the engines for how difficult they were to carry, mount, remove, trim, and tilt.

The ratings and performance numbers for these two engines were compared to each other and to those of the other 9.9s we last tested: the Mercury 9.9, Honda 9.9, and Tohatsu 9.8 (June 2007).

In the small-outboard tests, *PS* has determined that the better



*To evaluate each engine's ease of tilting and starting, multiple testers put them through their paces.*

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engines are usually the ones that are easy to operate, transport, store, and maintain. Performance numbers among the engines in the various horsepower groups have varied little; therefore, they carry less weight in our overall conclusions.