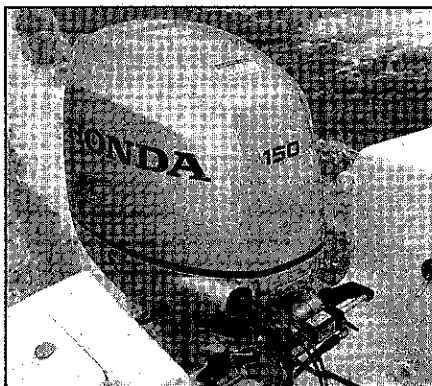




YAMAHA						
RPM	DECIBELS	MPH	GPH	MPG	RANGE	
1000	65.5	4.3	0.7	6.1	398.9	
1500	70.0	6.1	1.0	6.1	397.5	
2000	73.5	7.3	1.9	3.9	259.2	
2500	78.3	8.2	2.9	2.8	185.8	
3000	82.0	11.5	4.1	2.8	185.7	
3500	82.0	22.6	5.0	4.6	300	
4000	84.0	27.9	6.5	4.3	281.5	
4500	88.0	32.5	8.6	3.8	248.7	
5000	88.5	35.9	10.0	3.6	237	
5500	92.5	40.0	14.5	2.8	181.9	
6000	102.0	45.3	15.6	2.9	191.2	
Prop: 14-1/4" x 17" x 3-blade SS						



HONDA						
RPM	DECIBELS	MPH	GPH	MPG	RANGE	
1000	66.5	4.0	0.5	8.0	525.6	
1500	70.5	6.0	1.0	6.3	411.5	
2000	75.5	7.3	1.5	5.0	328.5	
2500	83.5	8.1	2.6	3.2	208.7	
3000	81.0	12.5	3.4	3.7	245.1	
3500	83.0	22.7	4.3	5.3	350.9	
4000	84.5	27.6	6.3	4.4	287.3	
4500	87.5	31.3	7.5	4.2	276	
5000	89.3	35.1	10.0	3.5	232.1	
5500	90.5	39.8	14.6	2.7	178.9	
5900	92.5	42.9	15.3	2.8	184.6	
Prop: 15-1/4" x 18" x 3-blade SS						



SUZUKI						
RPM	DECIBELS	MPH	GPH	MPG	RANGE	
1000	63.5	3.9	0.5	7.7	505.9	
1500	71.5	5.9	1.3	4.6	298.2	
2000	74.5	7.2	2.2	3.3	220	
2500	81.0	9.2	4.0	2.3	152.2	
3000	82.5	19.9	4.9	4.1	268.9	
3500	88.5	25.5	6.2	4.1	272.4	
4000	90.5	30.3	8.5	3.6	234.2	
4500	92.5	34.3	10.6	3.2	212.6	
5000	92.0	39.3	14.7	2.7	175.6	
5500	94.0	43.6	16.2	2.7	176.8	
5900	99.0	44.0	16.1	2.7	180.1	
Prop: 16" x 20" x 3-blade SS						

our data for their engines. Suzuki said our fuel-flow numbers were high at the upper rpm settings. This may have been a propping issue (the Suzuki also takes 21"- and 23"-pitch wheels) or a result of trim angle. All engines were left at the same trim angle (full down) to ensure a level playing field. Not all the boats were equipped with trim-angle meters.

## Conclusions

The Mercury OptiMax is light and quick and gets excellent mileage. But it's too loud. We prefer the smooth, quiet operation of a four-stroke. The Verado is too heavy and burns too much fuel at higher speeds. The E-TEC, with its vibration, hesitation out of the hole, and lower fuel-efficiency numbers in this test, doesn't make the cut, either.

If fuel efficiency and quiet operation were the only factors in buying an engine, we'd go with the Honda BF150. It's no speed demon, but speed has never been that important to us. In addition, Hondas are virtually bulletproof, with a proven track record.

The Yamaha has also earned respect out on the water, but it's not quite as fuel efficient overall as the Honda.

So it comes down to either the

Honda or the Suzuki. Despite its middle-of-the-pack performance numbers in this test, the Suzuki enjoys a special price advantage in the marketplace these days. If a Suzuki engine is packaged with a new boat at a dealership, there's a good chance that the engine will be heavily discounted. For instance, the Suzuki-powered Angler carries an MSRP of \$30,810—that's \$1,850 less than the Honda boat, and \$3,590 less than the Verado boat. Wow. We found the same disparity at another boatbuilder, Pro-Line. The Suzuki-powered 21-foot center console from Pro-Line, the 21 Sport, retails for \$34,577, compared to a Honda-powered (\$36,223) or an Evinrude E-TEC-powered Pro-Line (\$36,377).

"[Suzuki] is buying the market," says Bill Erickson, a Pro-Line dealer. "They're discounting deeply to us through the boat manufacturers like Pro-Line."

**Bottom Line:** If you're buying a boat-engine package, the Suzuki is a no-brainer. Its numbers in this test fell short, but we know from previous longterm tests that Suzuki makes a darn good four-stroke. If a bargain can't be had on a Suzuki, we'd certainly pay the extra money for a Honda or Yamaha. ■



MERCURY OPTIMAX						
RPM	DECIBELS	MPH	GPH	MPG	RANGE	
1000	72.0	5.1	0.8	6.7	442.4	
1500	79.0	6.8	1.3	5.2	341.1	
2000	82.0	7.8	2.4	3.3	218.1	
2500	85.5	9.8	3.7	2.6	173.1	
3000	89.5	22.6	4.6	5.0	326.3	
3500	89.5	27.7	6.0	4.6	305.3	
4000	92.0	33.3	8.3	4.0	263.2	
4500	94.5	36.6	11.4	3.2	210.9	
5000	98.0	41.1	15.8	2.6	170.9	
5400	101.8	45.0	15.1	3.0	195.6	
Prop: 14" x 17" x 3-blade SS						

**Evinrude**, 847/689-7090, [evinrude.com](http://evinrude.com) **Mercury**, 920/929-5916, [mercury-marine.com](http://mercury-marine.com) **Yamaha**, 800/962-7926, [yamaha-motor.com](http://yamaha-motor.com) **Honda**, 770/497-6400, [honda-marine.com](http://honda-marine.com) **Suzuki**, 714/572-1490, [suzukimarine.com](http://suzukimarine.com)