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NEWPORT INTERNATIONAL BOAT SHOW ANNOUNCES 2026 NEWPORT FOR NEW PRODUCTS™ AWARD WINNERS

Coveted Award Program Celebrates 20 Years in Recognizing Innovation in New Boat Models and Marine Products

Newport, R.I. – The Newport International Boat Show announced today the results of the 20th Annual Newport for New Products™ (NFNP) Awards. Judged on Thursday during the Show's opening day by leading marine journalists and experts, and announced at an awards ceremony on Friday, September 18, 2026, the winners are:

Best New Boat Overall – Lyman-Morse Boatbuilding Inc. Hood 42

"The Hood 42 has a retro look but with modern touches tastefully incorporated throughout. This one is a throwback to the days of the Golden Era of American dayboat cruising. Simply incredible," said judge Sam White, senior editor, *Yachting*.

Best New Power Boat – Hunt Yachts Hunt 56 presented by DiMillo's

"The Hunt 56 is a model that ushers in a new era for the storied brand under DiMillos ownership. Stunning and well built, the future is looking bright for the brand," said judge Dan Harding, editor-in-chief, *Power & Motoryacht*.

Best New Sailboat – Windcraft Multihulls Dragonfly 36

Honorable Mention: X-Yachts XR 41 presented by Rodgers Yacht Sales LLC

"The Dragonfly 36 combines classically beautiful finishing with an innovative design brief for a boat unlike any other on the market," said judge Lydia Mullan, editor-in-chief, *SAIL Magazine*.

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“Improvements to the signature swing wing system and a stable cruising platform make the most of this modest LOA from a sailing perspective, and the cozy interior is both stylish and cleverly organized.”

Best New Power Boat Under 35-feet – Highfield ADV9 presented by Kirby Marine

“The Highfield ADV 9 marks a new chapter for the successful tender builder. A cross between the rising class of adventure cruiser and inflatable tender, this newcomer offers the kind of versatility that give it wide appeal,” said Harding.

Best New Power Boat Over 35-feet – Riviera 55 Belize presented by Bosun’s Marine

Honorable Mention: Targa 37 presented by East Coast Yacht Sales

“Smart layout, striking, with the build quality the brand is known for, the Belize 55 was simply a star of the show,” Harding said. “Such a debut from the Australian giant is good for both the Newport Show and show goers alike.”

Best Innovation Boat – Vandal Marine Vandal 50

“Built in Holland, the fit-for-adventure Vandal 50 is a bit of a unicorn: the foil-assisted, aluminum catamaran has a draft under three feet, the range of a coastal cruiser but can also reach speeds over 45 knots,” said judge Jeff Moser, editor-in-chief, *Passagemaker*. “I particularly liked the versatility of the semicustom layout options combined with the sleek carbon fiber touches throughout.”

Best Innovation Product – Facnor TackFurl by Wichard Group

“Facnor’s innovative new TackFurl sysyem allows sailors to tension a furling headsail from the tack, adjusting the drum placement to achieve a better sail shape,” said Mullan. “This fresh approach to fine-tuning trim is a clever option for getting more from your sails, whatever your performance goals are.”

Best Product for New Boaters/Accessibility – TuffTide Marine TuffTide 13

“The unofficial motto is ‘Stop paddling, go fishing,’ and it lives up to it,” said White. “A great entry-level product for those who want to get into boating and fishing, or who want a motorized option from a kayak or stand-up paddleboard.”

Best New Product – SwiftLoc Adjustable Fishing Rod Holder

“This heavy-duty rod holder is built to last and has a smooth-motion mechanism that allows anglers to adjust rod angles to three different positions while also providing a swiveling option,” said judge Gary Reich, editor-in-chief, *Soundings*. “It’s a clever, well-built piece of gear that no doubt will be popping up in gunwales everywhere.”

Best Operational, Maintenance & Safety Product – Prospeed Foulfree Multi-Surface

“Propspeed has taken its already innovative foul-free coating and adapted a clear version to stick tenaciously to everything from plastics to inflatable boat fabrics,” said Reich. “If you have something on your boat that’s underwater, there’s now a solution to keep it free of marine growth.”

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Developed in collaboration with seven premier marine media outlets including *Cruising World*, *Passagemaker*, *Power & Motoryacht*, *SAIL*, *Sailing World*, *Soundings*, and *Yachting*, the program provides participating exhibitors with extensive marketing exposure through editorial features, digital promotion, public relations initiatives and targeted outreach to boating audiences. Each entry benefits from a promotional campaign valued at more than \$250,000, delivering over 2.5 million audience impressions.

NFNP entries were open to domestic and foreign products that were nationally launched after April 1, 2026 and made their boat show debut at Newport. All category winners were selected by a refreshed panel of judges made up of industry journalists that are core experts in their field.

During the awards ceremony, the Show also presented its STAR Awards, recognizing exhibitor excellence across four best of show categories. The 2026 STAR Award winners are:

- **Best In-Tent Display:** IK Yacht Design
- **Best Freestanding Display:** Artisan Boatworks
- **Best In-Water Power Boat Display:** Hinkley Yachts
- **Best In-Water Sail Boat Display:** Signature Catamarans

As one of the most coveted in-water events in the country, the Newport International Boat Show spans over 17 acres of Newport's renowned waterfront. It features hundreds of exhibitors, dealers, and manufacturers, showcasing a dazzling array of powerboats and sailboats ranging from 15 to 90 feet, alongside a comprehensive selection of marine equipment, services, and accessories for boating aficionados.

The 55th Newport International Boat Show continues through September 20, 2026. For more information, visit www.newportboatshow.com.

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About Newport International Boat Show:

Based in Newport, Rhode Island, Newport International Boat Show has produced the highest quality consumer/trade show for more than 53 years. In 2025 the Show brought in \$22.5 million in economic infusion for the local economy and continues to be a quintessential Newport experience as well as a true leader and partner for the State, community and marine industry driving economic goals for all. It encompasses over 17 acres of Newport's waterfront and hosts hundreds of exhibitors, dealers and manufacturers, with new powerboats and sailboats ranging from 15- to 90-feet, plus an extensive selection of marine equipment, services and accessories for boaters. Visit newportboatshow.com for more information.

About Informa Markets' South Florida Ventures:

Informa Markets' South Florida Ventures creates platforms for the art, beauty, boating and healthcare communities to trade, innovate, and grow. Based out of its namesake, South Florida Ventures provides a global audience with opportunities to engage, experience, and do business through face-to-face exhibitions and marketing solutions. As the nation's leading connector of a diverse range of communities, South Florida Ventures brings a unique range of specialist markets to life, unlocking opportunities and helping them to thrive 365 days of the year.

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