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BRUNSWICK

Boston Whaler Celebrates 50th Anniversary; Remains the Unsinkable Legend

EDGEWATER, Fla., July 23 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- Boston Whaler, perhaps the most recognizable name in recreational and commercial boating, will soon celebrate 50 years of success. Known for its rugged durability, performance, smooth ride and "unsinkability," Boston Whaler has been the talk of boating enthusiasts and the boating industry for decades.

The chatter began in 1958 when Richard T. Fisher -- a Harvard-educated engineer by trade and a boater by choice -- in partnership with naval designer C. Raymond Hunt, first introduced the Boston Whaler at the New York Boat Show. No one had seen a boat quite like it before. Two features set this boat apart from the others.

- It had an odd-shaped body that resembled a seagull in flight rather than the traditional "V" shape found on most pleasure craft of that day.
- Its body was constructed using the revolutionary Unibond(TM) construction process by which protective fiberglass skin and foam fuse to create a extremely durable and buoyant vessel.

The talk continued in 1961 when Boston Whaler was thrust into the international limelight. In its May 19, 1961, issue, Life magazine featured photographs of Fisher sitting in a Boston Whaler as it was being sawed in half from below with a buck saw. Subsequent photographs depicted Fisher casually driving away in only half a boat. Thus, the "Unsinkable Legend" was born.

Following this marketing stunt, Boston Whaler quickly earned a reputation for being a tough work boat in the challenging waters of coastal New England. Since then, the boats have attracted an intensely loyal group of owners. Today, Boston Whalers are used by families, casual boaters, sport fisherman, military, law enforcement, fire/rescue and commercial organizations around the world.

To meet the growing demand, a production facility was established in Braintree, Mass. Production of Boston Whaler boats soon moved to Rockland, Mass. where it remained until the mid-1990s. And although the brand is now manufactured in Edgewater, Florida, it still proudly carries the city's name and shares in its illustrious maritime heritage.

The Name

A marketer at heart, Fisher carefully chose the name Boston Whaler. Rumor has it that Fisher was looking for a name that people would remember. The "whaler" idea originally came from the boat's ability to behave well in rough waters. Ironically, whaling boats are pointed on both ends and flat bottomed -- the complete opposite of the blunt-ended, rigid-bottomed Boston Whaler. This made the "whaler" name more appealing to Fisher. Since the

boat was made in the Boston area -- an area not likely associated with whaling -- the "Boston Whaler" name seemed to have just the contradiction Fisher was seeking.

The Design

Fisher's gull-wing shaped hull design resulted in good stability, excellent load carrying capacity and performed extraordinarily well in rough weather conditions. But what set the Boston Whaler apart from the rest was the revolutionary Unibond(TM) construction process that produced unsinkable boats. The technique, still employed today, begins with a hull comprised of two fiberglass skins between which liquid foam is poured. As the foam expands and hardens, it literally fuses with the fiberglass to form a single, inseparable unit. Because of the confined expansion space, the foam is very dense -- which lends itself not only to strength and rigidity, but provides unsurpassed flotation. In fact, some Boston Whaler models boast 250 percent more flotation than is required by the United States Coast Guard.

Boston Whaler again shocked the industry in 1961 by introducing the center console design, the Nauset. This design moved the helm, or steering gear of the boat, from the starboard side, or the right-hand side of a boat if one is facing forward, to the center of the boat providing better steering control and stability, as well as made it easier for fisherman to use the entire boat to land a fish.

The "Unsinkability"

Boston Whaler began producing military, law enforcement, fire/rescue and commercial work boats in 1983. To validate Boston Whaler's claim of unsurpassed unsinkability and strength, the United States Marine Corps fired more than 1000 rounds of .50 caliber and 7.62 millimeter ammunition into a 22-foot boat. The boat, which remained afloat, was seemingly unscathed except for the savage pattern of bullet holes.

Even more, if a Boston Whaler is swamped, or completely full of water, and drastically overloaded, the boat will still not sink. Boston Whalers float level (i.e., do not tip to one side or the other) because the foam in the hull is evenly positioned throughout the entire boat.

The Boats

Over the years, Boston Whaler has made few modifications to the original hull design, but has expanded its offerings to include modified and deep-v hull boats. The company has also improved its technology and incorporated more customer-friendly features. Today, Boston Whaler continues to enjoy a reputation for quality, innovation and "unsinkability."

The 50th Anniversary Celebration

On July 29, 2007, Boston Whaler will introduce its 2008 model year recreational fishing and pleasure boats during its annual dealer meeting, appropriately hosted in Boston. The introduction of these boats marks the beginning of the brand's golden anniversary celebration. Festivities will include a series of events at Boston Whaler dealerships around the world, the appearance of Whaler's traveling museum at boat shows and other venues, contests, prizes, special promotions and much more. Information on celebration activities will continually be updated at http://www.whaler.com.

About Boston Whaler

Boston Whaler, a business unit of Brunswick's Saltwater Group, is the leading manufacturer of unsinkable family fishing boats 11 to 35 feet. For more on the unsinkable legend(TM), please visit http://www.whaler.com

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