

PERFORMANCE
TESTED

PURE INNOVATION

THE JC TRITOON 246
PILES INNOVATION ON
TOP OF SPACE, STYLE
AND PERFORMANCE

By Go Boating Test Team
At 24 feet in length, the 16-person JC TriToon 246 is the most popular TriToon model from the Indiana-based builder. It has the space, performance and style that resonates with many boaters, and it has a number of innovative features that allow it to stand out in the crowded pontoon boat market.

The first thing to know about JC is that TriToon is a registered trademark for the builder. While many might think that any pontoon boat with three logs under the deck is a TriToon, the fact of the matter is that in order to be a true TriToon, it has to be a JC.

It's also important to understand that a JC TriToon is not just a pontoon boat with



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» JC TRITOON 246



SPECIFICATIONS

Length	24 ft.
Beam	8 ft., 6 in.
Capacity	16 people
Dry weight	3,888 lbs.
Fuel capacity	55 gals.
Maximum power	275 hp
Tubes/diameter	TriToon

▶ The first thing we noticed inside our test boat was the bold yellow, white and silver upholstery, which is made of durable vinyl with a defense finish for long life. The seat bases themselves are rotocast plastic, which will add to the longevity of the topside furniture.

At the center of the boat where the ends of the lounges face each other we saw firsthand what JC means by interchangeable modules. The end of the forward port lounge housed a flip-out trash receptacle, while the port aft lounge end had dedicated space for a portable cooler. The end of the starboard forward lounge offered dry storage accessible through a door on the inboard side or through the flip-up chaise back. Other options include a pop-up changing enclosure, a refrigerator, a sink and storage drawers.

The flip-up fiberglass helm pod offers

easy access behind the dash, and the front of the dash is heavy on burlwood accents for a clean and classic look. Mounted on center just above the tilt wheel is the standard GPS/depth finder combo unit that includes a chip downloaded with maps of every navigable waterway in the country. Behind the dash we had one of JC's Visionaire helm seats, which is like a marinized version of one of those posh executive chairs in the corner office. Under the helm and seat we had the optional finished footwell, which really cleans up the look of the control area.

To the rear of the L-group cockpit lounge is a large sunpad that flips up to reveal a finished fiberglass storage area for wakeboards, PFDs and other items. Just aft of the sunpad is a stainless steel rail as well as the standard stainless steel ski tow bar.

three round logs under the deck. A TriToon actually has a welded unibody aluminum hull that almost makes it a cross between an aluminum deckboat and a pontoon. On center is a wide 36-inch U-shaped tube that is flanked by a pair of asymmetrical sponsons with surfaces that are angled toward and attached to the outboard sides of the center tube. This creates V-shaped channels between the center tube and the outboard sponsons. No lifting strakes required here — the bow wave comes off the center tube to create lift as it is forced down the channels, allowing the hull to behave more like a deckboat than a pontoon boat.

TriToons are designed for performance, which means lots of horsepower. JC learned back in 1985 that boaters would push their boats to the limit, so the builder decided to bulk up the underside construction with .125-gauge aluminum instead of the .090-gauge aluminum it was using. To this day, JC is one of the few builders that uses 1/8th-inch aluminum.

Another element that allows JC to stand out is its fiberglass molded furniture pods, which give the boat a distinct and stylish rounded bow that you just can't get with aluminum. You'll also notice that the 246 is heavy on stainless steel. Boarding gates, grabrails, corner castings, cleats, cupholders — they're all stainless.

The ends of the lounges themselves were designed to accept any one of a number of interchangeable modules. Options include a sink, a refrigerator, a trash receptacle, storage drawers, a changing enclosure, a portable cooler nook and more.

Whether above the deck or below, the 246 gives you something different in terms of style, function and performance.

PERFORMANCE

Our test boat was equipped with a 225 hp Honda four-stroke outboard (if it's a Honda, it's a four-stroke). We used to see only one or two Hondas during a season of testing, but we're seeing more and more these days, which makes sense considering Honda's world-class reputation for reliability.

Before we even stepped aboard the 246 we were told this was a 40 mph boat, which



We also couldn't help but notice that our 246 was equipped with an optional wakeboard tower, pointing to serious watersports action. The 225 hp Honda provided plenty of pull off the line for starts, and the boat even comes standard with a stainless steel ski tow bar if you're not interested in the tower.

Stern drive fans will also be glad to know that the 246 is available with an I/O instead of outboard power. The boat will accept 6.2L stern drives up to 320 hp (275 hp is the maximum for outboards).

OVERALL

After 30 years in the business, including more than 25 working on TriToons, it comes as no surprise that JC is able to bring something truly innovative to the water. It's just not easy to compare the JC TriToon 246 to other boats. The TriToon setup sets it apart from other

triple-tube pontoons, and it doesn't have a true deckboat-style hull either. It rests somewhere between the two, which allows it to offer something unique to boaters.

With room for 16, the 246 certainly has more comfortable passenger space than you'll find on any 24-foot deckboat. With the TriToon setup you get performance that goes beyond what you can expect from a typical three-tube pontoon.

Additionally, the 246 is heavy on style and interior function in a way that other pontoons are not, thanks to the use of molded fiberglass furniture pods and interchangeable modules.

We imagine that this boat will appeal to the pontoon enthusiast, or even a boater shopping for a deckboat, who demands a high level of space, performance, style and utility. As you would expect, the JC TriToon 246 is a top-shelf pontoon boat, and you're looking at an MSRP of \$52,334 with the 225 hp Honda, wakeboard tower, rear dual swim platform and other options present on our test boat. It's an investment in fun that will give you many happy returns. **GO**

seemed a little optimistic considering the size of the boat and the additional weight the TriToon setup brought to the equation.

Sure enough, we topped out at just over 40 mph (40.2 mph to be exact), not bad at all considering a total weight of more than 4,000 pounds (including people and fuel). In terms of acceleration we posted a 0-to-30-mph time of 9.7 seconds, and we could definitely tell there was something different going on under the hull compared to what we're used to with a traditional triple-tube pontoon.

First of all, we experienced a noticeable amount of lift while coming up to speed. It doesn't come up to a full plane like a V-bottom deckboat or runabout, but it comes close. The TriToon 246 also banks in the curves similar to a deckboat, giving it a sportier ride than we've come to expect from most three-tube pontoons.

Thanks to a large 55-gallon fuel cell, located low in the center tube for balance, you should expect about 225 miles of range at a comfortable cruising speed of 18.6 mph or 100 miles at 40 mph, much more than you'll find on 'toons with smaller deck-mounted tanks.

PERFORMANCE & PRICING JC TRITOON 246

PERFORMANCE

	MPH	RPM	MPG	RANGE	DBA
PEAK	40.2	5,800	2.04	101	86
CRUISE	18.6	3,000	4.54	225	76
0-30 MPH ACCELERATION	9.7 seconds				

Fuel consumption measured with FloScan digital fuel-flow meter; range based on 90% of total fuel capacity

TEST POWER

MOTOR 225 hp Honda
BF225 four-stroke

PROP 17-pitch 3-blade
stainless steel

WOT RANGE 5,000-6,000 rpm

Craft available with outboards ranging from 150 hp to 275 hp from most manufacturers

LOAD

	PEOPLE	FUEL (GALS./LBS.)	MISC.
TEST	2	28/175	15 lbs.
TYPICAL	9-11	55/344	180 lbs.

BASE PRICE

WITH TEST POWER	\$52,334*
BOAT ONLY W/NO OPTIONS	\$28,733*

**Price can vary depending on options and location — price does not include trailer or freight*

FINANCING

\$453/month for 15 years*

**Assuming a final price of \$56,000 with a 10% down payment and a fixed interest rate of 7.0% — does not include sales tax*

FIVE NOTABLE OPTIONS

Rear swim platform, wakeboard tower, ski storage in deck, hydraulic steering, remote spotlight

FIVE NOTABLE STANDARDS

Fiberglass bow corner cabinets, 9-foot Sunbrella Bimini w/stainless steel hardware, white powder-coated rail pack, choice of captain's chair (Visionaire, Avenir or reclining), Clarion AM/FM/CD stereo w/Sirius satellite

BUILDER

JC Manufacturing, Inc., 7248 St Road 13 N., North Webster, IN 46555; (574) 834-2881; www.jcpontoon.com

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