

NEW MODELS BIG AND SMALL

It won't matter which aisles visitors cruise down at the 2017 Progressive Mid-America Boat Show, they're guaranteed to come face-to-face with a myriad of new models being displayed for the first time.

According to show manager Bryan Ralston, "Our dealers have increased the size of this year's show to present more boats and, especially, more new models than in recent years. It's the result of steady boat sales increases in Ohio and nationwide and the competition among boat builders to come out with new designs is pretty intense."

From inflatables to motor yachts, pontoons to ski boats, first showings in the Ohio market will abound, topped by the "Queen of the Fleet," the big Prestige 450 Motor Yacht displayed by Sima Marine. But that's just one of the stars on display at the I-X Center for 5 days, January 12-16.

The large multi-brand exhibitors are coming loaded this year. Clemons Boats (Sandusky), for example, will be presenting over 20 boats, 13 feet to 35 feet, from 5 major builders. Topping their list of premieres is the Cobalt R35 footer, a bowrider with a luxury mid-cabin boasting amenities like a leather 9-foot convertible sofa. Also at Clemons, visitors will get a first look at the new Boston Whaler 345 Conquest surrounded by 10 other Whaler models; the all-new NauticStar Angler 211 will join the 1900XS, 2200XS, and 2302 Legacy models along with Sea Hunt boats and Bennington pontoons.

Happy Days Boating (Port Clinton) will also be among the largest exhibitors. As the newest Chaparral dealer, they'll be premiering four new bow rider models of 30, 25, and 22 feet along with the new 21-foot outboard model. Add to that the all new Parker 28 walk around along with other Parkers 25', 23', 21' and a new 18' center console; the all-new 30-foot CC from Robalo and new 28 footers from Tidewater, among others.

Inflatable boats have never been more popular, so it's no surprise Islander Marine Sales (Lakeside) is exhibiting a large collection of Brig Inflatables. Brig is now the world's largest manufacturer of rigid inflatables ranging from 11-foot yacht tenders to 26-foot high-performance center consoles. New models from all three of Brig's series -- the Eagles, Falcons, and Navigators -- will be on display.

Pontoon boats have been the boating industry's top sellers for 3 years running and the boat show will be flush with them. Charles Mill Marine has one of the largest displays of pontoons from Starcraft, Quest, and Sunchaser, while Ravenna Marine will feature Manitou Pontoons from 18-23 feet alongside their conventional-hulled Glastron and Crestliner models.

Performance pontoons and Tritoons are hot sellers, too. Apex Pontoons and Harris Flotebote will be featured in the Buckeye Sports Center exhibit, while South Bay Tritoons will be shown by Castaway Yacht Sales and G3 and Sun Catcher Tritoons from Huron Lagoons Marina (Huron) will join still other brands.

In all, more than 450 boats will surround the iconic I-X Center Giant Ferris Wheel. In addition, there will be more than 150 accessory and service displays covering everything from marinas to clothing. More than 45,000 boaters from Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Michigan annually attend this show, the region's largest.

For updates on all the show's attractions go to: www.clevelandboatshow.com