

Jeanneau MF895 Offshore

Greg Copp explores the rationale behind the creation of a new beefed-up Offshore version of the Jeanneau MF895 ...

You are probably asking why we are featuring a boat that we reviewed last November. The answer is that this is not your normal Jeanneau Merry Fisher 895 but the MF895 Offshore, and the first one in the country. To all intents and purposes, at a glance it looks much the same. However, there are some subtle differences, and I will go so far as to say that this boat is a more rewarding drive.

The MF895 in standard form is offered with either 1 x F350, 1 x F300 or 2 x F175s



YAMAHA F200

The Yamaha F200 is ideally suited to the twin rig configuration; it has been designed with an offset crankshaft and gear-driven balance shaft to help make the unit as compact as possible.



(all Yamaha), but with the Offshore version Jeanneau have put a sting in the tail, with a pair of Yamaha F200s. This is not all, as they have also stiffened the transom and increased the laminates throughout the length of the hull to make a boat that can live up to its name.

The subsequent result is that it now qualifies for RCD category B, as opposed to being a category C boat. Category C craft are designed and rated for inshore use up to 6 miles from land, with wind conditions not exceeding F6 and wave heights up to 2m. Category B is for offshore use, with wind conditions touching F8 and wave heights of 4m. The reality is that in the UK these categories are considered basic guidelines, and often taken with a pinch of salt, but in France it is a different kettle of fish. In a



All photography by Graeme Main

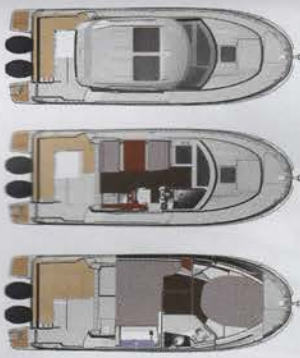


PRACTICALITY IS A KEY THEME THROUGHOUT THE DESIGN OF THE BOAT, WHICH IS EVIDENT FROM THE MOMENT YOU STEP INTO THE COCKPIT.



SUN ROOF

The addition of a sunroof gives an even greater feeling of internal space.



Specifications

LOA: 8.90m
 Beam: 2.99m
 Draught: 0.63m
 Power: 2 x 200hp Yamaha F200
 Fuel capacity: 2 x 300 litres
 RCD category: B for 6
 Test engine: 2 x 200hp Yamaha F200

Price

As tested: £129,999 (inc. VAT)
 From: £111,200 (inc. VAT)

Performance

33.6 knots – sea conditions F5,
 gusting F7 and worsening, with 70%
 fuel and 2 crew

Contact

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The cabin is very well lit from the abundance of window space.

country that takes its middleweight sports fishers seriously, this has led to the birth and growing popularity of the MF895 Offshore.

The moment you push the throttles forward, the difference between the two models is obvious. Having two 200hp engines as opposed to one 300hp motor is a distinct advantage when it comes to middle-range power delivery. The standard MF895 with one F300 needs to spin up to 4000rpm to realistically plane at 18 knots, and to cruise around 23/24 knots it needs to be running at 4750rpm. In comparison, the Offshore's two engines need to run at 3600rpm and 4000rpm respectively to match the same speeds. Both the

F200 and the F300 produce maximum torque at around 3400rpm, which is also their most fuel-efficient spot, so the Offshore is always going to be closer to this sweet spot at like-for-like speeds. Further up the spectrum the efficiency gap closes slightly due to the extra drag of a second outboard. However, the power delivery of the Offshore all the way to its top speed is noticeably stronger than the standard boat with one F300. The standard MF895 also requires a bit of fine-tuning with the trim of the outboard leg to squeeze out the last 3 knots of her 33.7-knot top speed.

Fine trim tuning was not an option when I

THE MF895 OFFSHORE IS A TOUGHER VERSION OF ITS STANDARD MF895 SISTER ...



tested the Offshore as the weather conditions were bad and getting worse. I set off with a strong south-westerly F5 on my stern, which meant, with the exposed position of Brighton marina, and the residual swell of the past five days, that the boat was actually going to have to prove its category B status. Heading east, I trimmed the outboard out three bars on the gauge, and we started recording performance and fuel figures, knowing it was unlikely we would get another chance. The conditions were such that we could not hang out for wide-open throttle for the last knot or two. Having recorded over 33 knots with a bit left to spare, I have no doubt about the boat's ability to cross the 35-knot barrier and possibly more.

JEANNEAU HAVE TRADITIONALLY BUILT STRONG HULLS, AND THE OFFSHORE IS CERTAINLY A GOOD EXAMPLE OF THIS.

We now got a chance to drive this boat in the conditions for which it was designed. Jeanneau have traditionally built strong hulls, and the Offshore is certainly a good example of this. This boat has a medium-vee hull, so driving it like a Hunton Gazelle is not really ideal, but with the weather strengthening we had our moments. It had its work cut out, even running at its rough-weather sweet spot of around 25 knots, with just a couple of bars on the engine trim gauge. It can deal with such conditions comfortably provided you keep focused and work the throttles according to the sea. This is where two engines pay dividends, as the strong bottom-end power delivery makes it easy to power up and down the waves. When turning into or away from the weather, the stability afforded by two motors was reassuring, especially as this boat has a fair degree of windage.

When helming, you have an equally tempting choice of being seated or standing. Though the helm seat puts you in a good spot to see clearly over the bow, with the seat bolster up you can wedge yourself in standing, and get a slightly better view. Visibility on all quarters is outstanding thanks to the abundance of window space. I could be wrong, but I got the impression that the windscreen wipers have been upgraded over the standard MF895, as the ones fitted to the Offshore were quite capable of dealing with the constant deluge of sea cascading over the windscreen and coachroof. The standard MF895, I



The fridge has a 50L capacity.



The galley is a compact affair.



Helm seat with its flip-up bolster for standing.



Anti-glare dash.



Great access to engines via the swim platform



15"-deep bulwark complete with side gate



The mid cabin has full standing headroom in the doorway. Deck-level lighting for running at night.

FUEL FIGURES
(YAMAHA FLOW METER)

RPM	Speed (knots)	Fuel consumption (mpg – both engines)
3500	16.0	1.8
3750	20.7	2.0
4000	23.4	1.9
4250	26.5	1.9
4500	28.3	1.8
4750	30.1	1.8
5000	32.0	1.7
5300	33.6	1.6

Due to rapidly worsening weather conditions we did not get a chance to squeeze the last knot or two from her, as we are told this boat can top 35 knots. In better weather these fuel figures will also improve.

recall, was wanting in this area.

Having headed east past Newhaven, we now had to return into the face of the weather, which had certainly got worse. The sea had heaped up considerably in a short, sharp and angry manner. Planing was not an option, so we settled down to discover life at a 12-knot semi-displacement speed. It was an up-and-over ride, but at this speed the boat is reasonably stable. At no point was there any need for trim tabs, any more than there was a need at planing speed. I will say that the forecabin door would not stay shut, and spent the whole return passage annoyingly sliding back and forth with a loud bang. A decent

door catch is in order instead of the inevitable budget catches that many builders fit, as this could develop into a more serious fault. Also, due to the conditions, the backrest to the navigator's seat came loose as a result of an inadequate Velcro fastening. The standard MF895 had a different and stronger seat back set-up.

Practicality is a key theme throughout the design of the boat, which is evident from the moment you step into the cockpit. The wheelhouse is offset to port, enabling a wider 9" starboard side deck enclosed by a 15"-deep bulwark complete with side gate – and you still get a 6" side deck on the port side. The aft bench seat assembly can slide forward on rails, enabling the engines to be trimmed clear of the water when berthed. The large cockpit hatch reveals an even larger lazarette beneath that has its own internal storage lockers. Forward deck access underway is all the safer thanks to tall guard rails and effective non-slip decking everywhere, and the anchor locker is deep enough to cater for fenders and warps, as well as housing a good-sized Lewmar windlass. I was a bit disappointed, however, with the size of the cleats, which, all things considered, was out of keeping with the rest of the boat.

ITS POWER DELIVERY IS NOTICEABLY IMPROVED OVER THE SINGLE F300-POWERED MF895.

