

JEANNEAU LEADER 10.5 SERIES 2

A refreshed version of the popular Leader 10.5 proves that midlife doesn't need to be a crisis.



Much is written about middle age, the point in our lives where we pause, reflect and prepare for the second half yet to play.

Boats also hit the midlife point, but few do so as gracefully as the Jeanneau Leader 10.5. Launched in 2018, more than 400 boats were built and sold. Still, despite this rapid success, the model recently underwent what the company calls a “mid-life update.” According to Group Beneteau’s Power and Motor Yacht Product Director (a title I’ve been meaning to talk to him about), the average lifespan of a powerboat these days is 7 to 8 years.

“We always aim for evolution, not revolution,” says Stromberg. The biggest change in the 2.0 version is a new design from Michael Peters—who designed the bottom of the first 10.5. “We wanted something that could support a heavier load. This hull will be used in a



LOA: 35'10"
Beam: 10'8"
Draft: 2'5"
Displ.: 10,560 lbs.
Fuel: 212 gal.
Water: 42 gal.
Power: 2/300-hp Yamahas;
2/425-hp Yamahas
Cruise Speed: 29 knots
Top Speed: 48 knots

NEW BOATS



center console version as well. This offers an unbelievably grippy ride. All the updates were made to make it more of an all-around better family boat. This is an important boat for us; it's made to get families on the water."

Another one of the small yet significant changes is the full walk-around incorporated around the forward sun pad. It was designed for ease of use, but I think it is also much safer for those moving about the boat.

On a cloudless summer afternoon we spurred the twin 300-hp Yamahas for a short yet efficient sea trial. While I would have been happy cruising the boat at 29 knots (at 4000 rpm), it brought a smile to my face to blast around at the 48-knot top end. And as for that new hull, I wish I could've tested the original and 2.0 side-by-side, but all I can say is Stromberg wasn't kidding about the grippy-ness.

I'm fresh off a boat search and have a hard time switching between boat buyer and objective journalist, though I have to say I couldn't help but imagine my young family spending time aboard the new 10.5. The convertible dinette/berth forward is paired with an adequate-sized guest stateroom aft that would be perfect for Salty and Connor. A small galley would more than work for us when out on



the hook. I also appreciated that the head had a full, separate shower.

Nicely appointed, plenty of power, upgraded fabrics and design elements with an even more purpose-built hull, I guess mid-life isn't so scary. Sometimes, it's just the start of an even better second act.

—Daniel Harding Jr.