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Innovation awards handed out at MAATS

By IBI Magazine

Seven marine aftermarket products gained NMMA Innovation Awards at MAATS last night. At a gala event hosted by IBI, NMMA president Thom Dammrich and Boating Writers International Judges presented six Innovation Awards as well as an Environmental Award. Fifty new products in eight categories were entered into the awards.

McMurdo's Smartfind Plus 406 GPS EPIRB won the award in the Aftermarket Electronics category. It is the only all-digital GPIRB available today, allowing the use of a non-hazardous battery. Judges also cited its low cost.

Engine Check Up, a fast and economical way to diagnose problems with four cycle gasoline or diesel engines, was given an award in the Boat Care/Coating/Chemicals/Maintenance Tools category. The tool tests oil from the engine to determine its condition and the amount of contaminants.

Performance Metals marine water heater corrosion alert monitor also received an Honorable Mention in that category. Judges noted that a "smart" electrode activates a light and alarm to alert the boat owner to when it is time to change the anode.

Floatstep Dock Ladder from Floatstep won this year's Dock Equipment category. The ladder rises and falls with water levels, allowing water access at all times, regardless of tidal or water level conditions. When not in use, a bottom-mounted float holds the ladder above water to prevent marine growth.

Mustang Survival's Survival Rescue Stick won the award in the Safety Products category. The device incorporates a handle with a horseshoe buoy that inflates in the water on contact. It is much smaller than a traditional life ring.

In the Trailer Parts & Accessories category, judges selected two products. The F2 trailer jack from Cequent Performance was cited for its advanced mounting system and twin independent wheels. It also has nine patented advancements. Rope-A-Boat, an automatic boat loader that simplifies launching and loading, was the second winner. "It overcomes all of the common launch ramp theatrics caused by unpredictable currents, tides, winds and operator error," said BWI judge Jan Mundy.

The Environmental Award winner went to Blue Water Marine Paint for its Enviro-Pads. It is a synthetic fiber pad that is placed under a boat before pressure washing filters wash water. The pad traps contaminants, and BWI judges noted that results in no impact on water quality. The panel said it offers marine businesses an economical alternative to installing a costly catchment system.

(20 July 2007)