



Best Seat on the Boat

Whether you fish for sport or in tournaments, fishermen and women need a solid platform to fight and land the trophies.

When you're battling a big fish, the fighting chair is your link to the boat. It provides comfort and leverage when the struggle is long and the angler is weary. Fighting chairs were developed in conjunction with the popularity of heavy-tackle sportfishing and originally constructed of steel. Technological improvements have introduced materials such as fiberglass, aluminum and carbon fiber, but the most popular chairs still utilize teak and stainless steel. Some chairs are designed for fighting the world's largest gamefish, such as marlin, which can top 1,500 pounds.

On boats with limited space, smaller chairs or leaning posts can alleviate the pressure and fatigue of standing during the quest to land a fish. Regardless of size, the fighting chair helps anglers enjoy the experience more and clears the way for deckhands to assist in the battle.

Here's a look at the top fighting chairs and the unique features they offer, including a vintage series of chairs that harken back to yesteryear.

BLUEWATER CHAIRS

Go big or go small with either the Large Marlin Chair or the smaller Battle Station. Bluewater Chairs—founded in

1987 by Tom Ackels in Fort Lauderdale, Florida—offers these two distinct models among its product lineup. The Large Marlin Chair is a fully featured chair built of Burmese teak and stainless steel, and comes with a lifetime structural guarantee. Offering mirror-polished stainless-steel legs with a teak footrest, padded arms and solid backrest, the chair keeps you locked in. A high-tech bearing swivel system allows for freedom of movement, and additional features include fail-proof cast gimbals, boltless rod holders and one-piece working tray with rocket launchers. All chairs are built by hand, and can be customized to meet exact specifications. The scaled-down Battle Station is for smaller boats, where the combination of a rocket launcher and a fighting chair is needed in a tight space. bluewaterchairs.com

MURRAY PRODUCTS

Originally named Murray Brothers when founded by Ed and Frank Murray, Murray Products in West Palm Beach, Florida, has been building fighting chairs for more than 50 years.

By DON MINIKUS

Strength is the keyword, for back in the 1960s chairs were breaking as larger species like marlin and bluefin tuna were increasingly sought after. Murray's large tuna chair is built out of select aged teak and mirror-polished stainless steel. The thru-bolt attachment of accessories and epoxy construction comes standard; no wood screws and fasteners are used. A five-position fighting gimbal fits all rod-butt lengths, and the chair is designed with a double-bearing system for smooth turning under extreme pressure. The rounded front edge of the seat is easy on the legs during a lengthy fight, and a UV-resistant finish keeps the chair looking new. All the main hardware including the arms of the chair are prepared so that the stainless-steel bolts are epoxied and sealed right into the seat for superior strength without risk of any water intrusion. A rocket launcher back includes a magnetized cutting area to help keep hooks and other tackle organized. murrayproducts.com

NAUTICAL DESIGN

For 31 years, Nautical Design in Harmony, Pennsylvania, has manufactured sportfishing equipment such as fighting chairs, helm chairs, rocket launchers, fiberglass tackle centers, and leaning posts. While producing a full line of fighting chairs, a popular offering is the FFC-130 fighting chair and gimballed rocket launchers. Smaller cockpits and larger center consoles require space-saving features. The Nautical Design FFC-130 has a tight turning radius, while uniquely engineered tuck-away and knock-down footrests allow you to clear the footrest out of the way quickly. The gimballed four rocket launcher, tray and cupholder station offers versatility. Combined with a four-inch stainless steel adjustable pedestal, the configuration is designed to have a full range of adjustment that in seconds, takes it from a waist-high rocket launcher height to a lowered fighting chair position that allows the angler to sit, pivot and turn just like a fighting chair. Best of all, it fits into a small space compared to a regular fighting chair. nauticaldesign.com

POMPANETTE

Pompanette has been building rugged fighting chairs since 1949 starting out in Dania Beach, Florida. Pompanette's lineup includes its International Line of teak chairs and Tournament Series chairs that are constructed



Release Marine, Trillion Series

with fiberglass and injection-molded components. From custom sportfish to charter boats, Pompanette has a chair to meet every need and budget. All International and Tournament Series fighting chairs come standard with 316L stainless steel components and are rated for 130-pound line class. No aluminum is used, and fasteners are thru-bolted to ensure the chairs last over time. Utilizing hand-picked teak in the construction, the chairs are cross-laminated with a long-lasting, high-gloss finish. The company has developed a reverse offset pedestal to make large boats fishable. Careful bending rather than welding of

a solid piece of four-inch stainless steel helps ensure the offsets hold up over time. The modern curves and shapes of rocket launchers combined with polished stainless-steel boltless rod holders add elegance. pompanette.com

RELEASE MARINE

Since 1979, Release Marine in Savannah, Georgia, has been building some of the world's finest fighting chairs. The Trillion Series is the company's top-of-the-line signature chair and is rated for use with the heaviest tackle. Release starts with hand-selected teak in the construction, matching the individual pieces to ensure uniformity of color and grain. The Trillion features a sleekly curved and contoured seat, footrest and matching backrest. High-tech CNC machines cut and shape the teak seat, backrest and footrest, then multiple stages of sanding and finish applications help ensure a long-lasting shine and durability under harsh conditions. More than 100 man-hours go into the production of each Trillion chair. They are available in either a straight or offset pedestal configuration for larger vessels. Release Marine also custom-manufactures marine products such as teak deck furniture and marine tables. releasemarine.com



Left: Murray Products, large tuna fighting chair; Right: Nautical Design, FFC-130

SCOPINICH

With more than 100 years of experience in the marine business, Scopinich strives to deliver the finest fighting chairs, helm chairs, custom and teak accessories. In addition to traditional fighting chairs, Scopinich has been developing and constructing products for the vintage fighting chair market. Based in Stuart, Florida, Scopinich's Limited

Edition Vintage Collection is for the collector or the fisherman who is refitting a classic vessel, or for the angler who simply appreciates the look and design of chairs from yesteryear for use on today's modern boats. Each vintage chair is custom built and utilizes high-polished stainless steel and chrome-plated brass. The backrests and seats are typically metal but can be substituted with either mahogany or teak in a high-gloss finish. The side rod holders are fixed tapered tubes, with a single tube per side. The vintage chairs can be updated with a heavy-duty gimbal and modern pedestal bearing systems for dependability. All Scopinich products are manufactured in the U.S. scopinich.com

It all starts with
the HULL...

THEIR bottom

OUR bottom

think **ROUND** *think* **COMFORT**



Contact Bob Chew:
 (772)285-4780
www.StuartBoatworks.com