

## HOW WE TESTED

### Getting a Grip

We followed the same basic testing protocol and rating guidelines for the women's boat shoes as we did for the men's (See *PS*, June 2007). We evaluated each shoe on comfort, construction, foot protection, grip, weight, and water retention/drainage.

To assess comfort, we had three testers wear each pair of shoes for an extended period of time and rate them. We then averaged the ratings. We didn't rate the shoes' construction, but made notes on specific aspects, and did likewise for protection. We weighed each shoe dry and wet. We also made notes about its tendency to retain water.

The grip ratings were determined

by using an incline testing device (pictured at right) with both teak and nonskid fiberglass panels. We started each pair at an incline of 20 degrees and progressed intermittently to greater inclines (30°, 35°, 40°, etc.) to find out when each would lose traction with a tester standing in them. We repeated the process with fresh water streaming down the surfaces (via a hose).

Finally, we wet the shoes with salt water and put them in black plastic bags for a week to assess their resistance to bacterial growth and odor. All were still wet after a week, when we conducted a sniff test and mold search.

