

YEARN FOR YOUR YOUTH

SENSATION 22SX

Words and pictures Dean Castle

Vereeniging-based boat builders, Twin Boats and Trailers, have always had the ability to predict which boats will be extremely popular in the South African market. They implement this knack into their boats; and with their newest reincarnation of the 22SX, things look set to make this model more desirable than ever before!



Legendary twins Andre and Riaan van Helsdingen are well known in our industry – not just for their good service and high level of quality build standards, but perhaps more so for the wide range of quality boats they have built over the years.

Although the 22SXi (inboard) has proved to be one of their better sellers, the twins are making some changes to the craft which is sure to please even more potential buyers.

The editor scoops a peek look at their latest model of this family favourite; destination: the Vaal River.

DECK LAYOUT

When Twin Boats put their spin on their 22SXi, the most radical change was arguably the pickle-fork bow – which, to my knowledge was a first for a South African builder. We last checked out this craft for our April

2010 edition, and it seems the twins haven't slowed down the pace one bit. For 2013 you get the 22SX which is the outboard version of the SXi.

On board, things are still as neat as they always were on the inboard version, but with a few design elements along the way to improve the overall look, perhaps giving the feeling of being upgraded, in fact all-new.

Measuring 22 foot (6.7 metres), this boat is certified to carry nine passengers for your day of fun on the river – four in the bow and five at the stern. As with most boats nowadays, simply insert the bow filler cushions and you've got a great tanning spot which proves to be incredible fun, if the smile of young Dewan in the pictures is anything to go by. In the bow, cushions are the full height of the gunwale to give maximum comfort while contours of the boat hold you safely.

Take note of the newly designed wrap-around windscreen which you normally only see on top-end wake craft. It folds back to allow access to the stern. Built into the binnacle here, I would've liked to have seen an extra something or other – perhaps a cooler, or maybe more storage space. However, there seems to be adequate space available anyhow; and because of dealing with the boat builder, I'm sure you could ask for further customisation if you wanted – but be sure to keep the added cost in mind.

At the stern, there's generous wrap-around seating for three adults while the skipper and co-pilot have their own rotating bucket seat.

A neat feature at the stern seating is the ability to remove the centre backrest to allow access to the small deck at the transom – giving you the ability to take a breather before getting





Our journalist, Richard Brown, is a taller than average guy. He found the height of the seating to be perfect for giving you good vision around the craft, no matter your height!



into the boat or the water.

A neat cubby-hole is located in front of the co-pilot and gives storage to smaller items. Here, you'll find the head unit for the supplied premium sound system.

The skipper hasn't been forgotten about. I'm a real fan of carbon-fibre lookalike, and the dash material is something that really caught my attention. Woven material like this tends to be a little difficult to clean due to the pits that the weaves create – however, I seemed to be able to clean off dust from the gravel road at the launch site with some water and my hand. Above the gauges, that comprise fuel, speed, rpm and engine trim, set inside a stylish steel backing, the skipper has got a premium view forward and around the craft.

The 22SX as reviewed was fitted with an Airborne wake tower which has board racks to keep your gear safe and ready, and also allows for speakers and lights to be added.

PERFORMANCE

On the Vaal River, we could only put the 22SX through flat water try-outs to see what she was worth. However, she had big shoes to fill since I've set my personal best speed records on the sea with a boat with virtually the same hull! Given that the SX should have similar characteristics, I gave it a full go to see the effects.

Our review craft was fitted with a Mercury 200 HP OptiMax ProXS. This V6, 3 032 cc outboard is said to have a full throttle rpm of 5 750 – and that's plenty! It provided a top speed on my GPS of 80 km/h @ 5 100 after accelerating from 0-plane in just under three seconds. Throttling back to 38 km/h (3 200 rpm), the outboard settles into a quieter rhythm which is slowly sipping fuel from the built-in 90-litre tank, and the boat kicks



up plenty of wake for a decent ride on a board. Here, the wake tower is appreciated to give you extra height on the jumps.

Being a weekday, the river was rather lonesome – but nonetheless, it allowed us to wreak enough havoc to cause a commotion on the water surface. I was pleased with the 22SX since she handled all I could throw at her pretty well – but it’s not so surprising given her illustrious history.

Although driving like a bat out of hell, those on board not only seemed relaxed

and comfortable, but enjoying it too!

The sheer bulk of heavier boats tend to make them good performers. However, the 22SX cuts through wakes and has a smooth, comfortable ride – which is pretty amazing to me since the twins claims she weighs just 660 kg dry – without the motor.

She handled like a sport boat should, and with the Goliath Mercury at the transom, she had plenty of power to put a smile on my face and of course young Dewan. In fact the 22SX made me feel like a kid in a candy shop!

CONCLUSION

The 22SX is a fantastic boat, but the SX version can’t really be likened. It’s something new and deserving to go without compare. However, it has been created from a heritage of being one of South Africa’s favourite boats, and I reckon that the SX will be the next – it is a Sensation after all!

Pricing of the 22SX starts at R336 000 which includes Mercury’s 150 HP ProXS outboard.

For more information, contact Twin Boats and Trailers on 087 751 4038.

