

# Eurocrown 420 CR

Open-cockpit sportscruisers with six permanent berths are rare beasts indeed. But will extra cabin space be enough to see off this boat's very stylish market rivals? **REPORT BY CARL RICHARDSON**

three cabins • twin 285hp sterndrive diesels • 33 knots • £246,600 as tested

**M**athematically speaking, three into 42 goes very neatly. But in boat design it's a bit different. Three-cabin layouts are scarce on any boat of this size; on a sportscruiser, they are right up there with happy Australian rugby fans.

If you have a large family, or a penchant for inviting guests to stay on board, it's the convertible dinette or saloon settee that will have to provide the extra accommodation.

Or will it? A new option has emerged with the unveiling of Eurocrown's new flagship, a genuine three-cabin 42ft sportscruiser for under £250,000.

## DESIGN & BUILD

Designed and built in Italy, the 420 CR is the first truly European boat from American parent company Crownline. Yet it not only takes on European Tardis specialists such as Sealine or Gobbi head on, but in some

ways leaves them trailing.

How have its designers succeeded where others have failed, or at least declined the challenge? Is it a case of a groundbreaking design, or simply a misleading model number that disguises a 50-footer?

No. In fact, the answer is far more straightforward. A closer look at the boat's lines, and specifically its long nose of a foredeck, tells you that the internal/external balance is weighted very





much in favour of life below decks.

The major difference between this boat and the obvious competition is the size of its cockpit. The price you pay for your extra cabin is having no fixed sundeck, no tender garage, and slightly less exterior space than on, say, Gobbi's 425 or Sealine's S42. All of which makes Eurocrown's decision to include such a deep integral bathing platform,

encroaching yet further into what might have been cockpit space, a strange one.

Down below, the two spacious guest cabins flank the companionway stairs. Twin bunks or a fixed double berth can be chosen in each case, and our test boat quite sensibly had one of each. The rest of the layout follows a proven path, with the master cabin forward of the galley and saloon.

Styling borrows more from Mediterranean boatbuilders than from Britain's. With no teak decking to provide contrast, the cockpit is a clean but fairly stark and square blizzard of white mouldings and upholstery.

In its favour, the 420 CR is being promoted as a bespoke flagship, so any number of cosmetic additions or changes can be made. But with a starting price of around £245,000,

**below** The forward master cabin offers plenty of space around its central double berth, pleasant cream and cherry decor and an en-suite WC with a bidet.



**below** Both the guest cabins are surprisingly large, with good stowage and the option of a double or twin berths. The adjacent WC is small but neat.



**below** Disappointing in comparison with the sleeping cabins, the saloon can seat only four and the galley would struggle to cater for a full crew.



more than an equivalent Fairline, Princess or Sealine, how much more will you be prepared to spend?

Build quality seesaws a little. Although not the heaviest 42-footer in the world, the boat feels solid enough in terms of structural stiffening, but there are unresolved issues of cosmetic finish. Ten of these boats have been built already, yet our test boat felt rather like the first off the production line. The laminate work was rippled along the saloon's eyeline cabinetry, and there was a surprisingly eclectic mix of doorknobs on show.

All this is easily remedied, but at the top end of the market it is difficult to swallow.

#### ACCOMMODATION

The tri-cabin formula is clearly a key selling point, but the real surprise is the fact that each of the sleeping quarters is a good size.

There's no disappointing box room in this property. Helped by towering headroom, both guest cabins are spacious and offer something close to walk-in wardrobes.

The starboard one, which can also be given a separate access point from the cockpit (perhaps for use as crew's quarters on a charter boat), has slightly more space if you want to opt for a double berth. But both are equally well appointed, with cherry joinery, softly toned furnishings and lighting. A small but neat adjacent toilet/shower compartment has matching cherry decor.

Upon entering the forward master cabin,

one thing that won't hit you is the foot of the double berth, which has generous space around it. The cream deckhead and surrounding cherry cabinets set a very comfortable scene.

The en-suite is bigger than the compartment servicing your guests, but, oddly, the builders have opted to fit a bidet instead of leaving room to install a separate shower cubicle.

In comparison with the cabins' easy comfort, the saloon has a less welcoming feel. It has some attractions, such as the mock strengthening ribs running behind the subtly curved bench, but somehow it doesn't quite work. Shouldn't a boat that can sleep six or eight be able to seat more than four?

The same goes for the galley, which looks neat, nestled inside a curved bulkhead, but would struggle to provide food for more than a couple. Eurocrown's

assumption seems to be that, in modern motor cruising, a galley is seldom used in anger.

#### EXTERIOR

In common with many smaller American sportscruisers, the 420 CR features a huge bathing platform, with practical lockers for warps and fenders built into the transom. On the other side of the transom gate the emphasis switches to social amenities, with a mini galley and wet-bar that can house a grill as well as the standard fridge.

A wraparound screen and a low-level radar arch give the one-level gripped-sole cockpit a sheltered feel. Easily erected canopies offer more protection when it's needed.

There is seating for eight, split between a bench to port and a larger U-shaped settee that will convert down into a sunpad. Under all this, large unfinished voids can be used for stowing away mooring and cleaning gear.

Forward, and well cosseted by the screen, is a sunlounger opposite the twin helm bench.

The console has yet more gleaming white mouldings where a less dazzling tone might be appreciated. There's nothing wrong with

**below** Starkly white, the cockpit is on one level.



✓✓✓  
Cabin layout is great, but compromises in finish are noticeable.

✓✓✓✓  
Three comfortable cabins, but the saloon and galley are tight.





**above** The view from the helm is good, but there is limited space for adding electronic gadgetry.

the ergonomics, but the dash offers just one obvious space for fitting an electronic navigation aid.

Out on deck, low guardrails border the long, flat foredeck, where there's plenty of space to move around. But getting there is the tricky bit. It involves stepping up from a locker lid onto 3in of partly gripped side deck that slopes precariously away outboard.

Underway, you just wouldn't go there, so be warned: a call of "fenders in" will require you to slow down swiftly to avoid a mutiny.

### ENGINE OPTIONS & ACCESS

Although there is a petrol engine option, it is only the three diesel choices that most buyers will consider. All twin installations, these are

split between the main sterndrive suppliers, across a narrow range of horsepower.

It's a matter of personal preference whether you choose Volvo Penta's 285hp (272hp at the prop) KAD300/DP, Mercruiser's 300hp (270hp at the prop) 4.2L 300 or Yanmar's 315hp (285hp at the prop) 6LPSTZP.

Our test boat had the Volvo Pentas, which slot comfortably into the enginebay with space to spare.

Entering via a large push-button hydraulic hatch and a two-step ladder, you find plenty of room all round the engines for general checks, even in the normally cramped outboard areas.

However, one frustration was that the decent set of diesel pre-filters have been set low into the bilge, beneath the treadplate, making them incredibly difficult to get at. And we never managed to find the

raw-water strainers at all.

The batteries are stacked neatly, and there is plenty of room left over for a generator. Aesthetically, the finish of the bay is a little scruffy due to the

flame-resistant cork-based putty that has been employed as the final layer.

### PERFORMANCE & HANDLING

Larger sterndrive craft have a livelier reputation than their shaftdrive counterparts. They can sometimes be pushed to a point where they let go, and produce something akin to a handbrake turn.

But the 420 CR would have none of that. No matter how hard we tried, the poise and grip of the hull remained unwavering. Full chat, legs trimmed out, full lock at the helm — all produced nothing more dramatic than a tightly banked turn.

The natural trim is quite level, and the tabs are a little slow to react, but the 23°-deadrise deep-vee hull feels really assured. In a nasty 5ft rolling chop, there was some degree of slam when riding a head sea, amplified by the hollow acoustics of the hull. But when running upwind all was calm and dry.

One let-down was the helm seat, second only to a back-bench politician in the lack of support it offers. On the other hand, the view and feel from the helm was very good, the level ride ensuring good visibility across the foredeck.

The top speed we recorded was 33 knots at 3600rpm, which is 200 revs down on the manufacturers' stated maximum. Easing off gives a 30 knots fast cruising speed at 3400rpm, or a more fuel-friendly 25 knots at 3000rpm. At this pace, the boat takes on the feel of a mile-eating passagemaker, belying the nimbleness it shows when pressed.

With screen and side mouldings doing a good job of deflecting the wind, cockpit noise stays at a comfortable level, increasing only from 79dB(A) to 80dB(A) as you range between 17 and 32 knots. Below decks, 25 knots gave a 72dB(A) reading in the saloon, quiet enough for a nap on longer voyages.

### SPECIFICATION & VALUE

The 420 CR's starting price is around £235,000 with petrol engines, and more realistically £242,650 with the cheapest diesel option. Considering that most other three-cabin sportscruisers are closer to 50ft and £400,000, this looks like a bargain.

Put the number of cabins aside, however, and a very different picture emerges. The

current crop of 40-42ft sportscruisers are a pretty dazzling bunch. The Fairline Targa 40, Princess V42 and Sealine S42 are all supreme examples of their breed, offering exceptional build quality, finish and ability for similar money. And that's before you consider what is on offer from other top-line European builders such as Windy and Azimut.

It's a tough job for the 420 CR to match up to these boating icons, particularly when the diesel starting price is some £20,000 more than that of the Sealine.

If you insist on a three-cabin layout there are alternatives out there; Bénéteau's Antares 13.80 and Sealine's F42/5 spring to mind. Of course, that would mean trading the sleek lines of the Eurocrown for the top-heavy shape of a flybridge cruiser...

The Eurocrown's standard specification includes essentials such as a bow-thruster, shorepower capability and holding tanks, but nothing out of the ordinary. The cockpit, for example, is crying out for teak decking, which is a £6700 extra here but would come as standard on the Sealine.

✓✓✓✓✓  
Priced for the top of the market. Specification struggles to match up.

## Verdict

A three-cabin layout in a 42ft sportscruiser is a very handy selling point. As well as looking after your nearest and dearest, it offers an extra, more lucrative, dimension for owners offering their boat for charter.

The 420 CR also handles well, and there is nothing to suggest anything other than good structural build quality. But some elements of the interior finish and the starkness of the cockpit left us disappointed.

Ultimately, the price of this boat suggests that it should be as good as, if not better than, its immediate competition. And in many respects we don't think it is.

In fact, after comparing it with its rivals, we suddenly found ourselves extolling the virtues of convertible saloon bunks.

**MBM RATING** 5/10  
✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓

## Eurocrown 420 CR technical data



### specifications

BUILD	glass-reinforced plastic
RCD	design category B
LENGTH OVERALL	42ft 0in (12.80m)
BEAM	12ft 8in (3.91m)
DRAUGHT (with leg up)	2ft 1in (0.65m)
AIR DRAUGHT	12ft 5in (3.80m)
DISPLACEMENT	7.1 tonnes
FUEL CAPACITY	198gal (900lt)
WATER CAPACITY	88gal (400lt)

### key dimensions

WIDTH OF SIDE DECKS	0ft 7in
HEADROOM IN SALOON	6ft 6in
HEADROOM IN MASTER CABIN	6ft 0in
MASTER CABIN BERTH	6ft 8in x 5ft 7in
PORT CABIN BERTH	6ft 1in x 4ft 11in
STARBOARD CABIN BERTH	6ft 1in x 2ft 0in

### performance

engines twin Volvo Penta KAD300DP-G diesels.  
configuration 6cyl, 3.6lt, 285hp at 3800rpm.  
conditions wind southwesterly Force 4, sea moderate, load fuel 75%, water 50%, crew 4.

rpm	knots	gph	lph	mpg	range	noise
2000	11.4	8.4	38	1.36	215	76
2600	17.1	13.4	61	1.27	201	77
2800	22.1	14.5	66	1.52	240	79
3000	25.4	15.4	70	1.65	261	79
3400	29.6	20.5	94	1.44	228	81
3600	32.7	24.5	110	1.35	213	81

Range figures above are in miles, with 20% margin.  
Noise figures are in dB(A), recorded in the saloon.

acceleration  
0-20 knots in 12.5sec;  
0-25 knots in 16.0sec;  
0-30 knots in 22.0sec

### prices

STANDARD BOAT	inc VAT
with twin 285hp Volvo Penta diesels	£246,600
with twin 315hp Yanmar diesels	£249,250
LAUNCH & COMMISSIONING	£2,250
DELIVERY	POA
ANTI-FOULING	£1,400
TEAK COCKPIT	£6,700
5KW GENERATOR	£7,400
CANOEES	£2,960
BOAT AS TESTED	£253,210

ENQUIRIES Bluewater Horizons Ltd, Ferryman's Way, Weymouth, Dorset TQ9 5EW. Tel: 01305 782080.  
www.blue-horizons.co.uk

### the rivals



**SEALINE S42**  
from £221,227 inc VAT  
Fresh from a 2003 makeover, this stylish boat offers a great balance between cockpit and accommodation.  
Tel: 01489 581702.  
www.sealine.com



**PRINCESS V42**  
from £203,957 inc VAT  
This refined sportscruiser might look a little dated now, but it delivers across the board and has a proven track record.  
Tel: 01752 203888.  
www.princess-yachts.com



**GOBBIE 425**  
from £204,000 inc VAT  
There's no third cabin, but an amazing aft cabin is a feature of this clean and serene sportscruiser.  
Tel: 01932 242977.  
www.gibbsmarine.co.uk