

Jeanneau Cap Camarat 755WA

This French performance boat takes advantage of being outboard-powered to offer an extremely usable cockpit.

REPORT BY JOHN WOOD

From its sports-fishing origins, the walkaround layout has long since been widely adopted in the sports cruiser market. It tempts many buyers away from rigid inflatables, offering plenty of cockpit space without tubes impinging.

But whereas, for leisure use, you would normally expect to see craft of this size with a stern-drive layout, the Cap Camarat 755WA from French builders Jeanneau sticks closer to the layout's origins by having twin outboard engines on the transom.

Today's four-stroke outboards are a

revelation. Their low noise levels mean you are hardly aware that they are there. Add in their economy, their smooth power delivery and the fact that not having an engine room frees up space on board, and they represent a more sensible choice than ever.

DESIGN & LAYOUT

The lines of the 755 drop in a swooping curve from bow to stern. Emphasised by the contrasting hull colourings, this bestows a distinctive sporting appearance that gives it a strong presence on the water.

Whilst most walkarounds have decks on both sides of the cabin and console, here the console is offset to starboard, leaving a generous flat area forward for a large sunpad. This and the space available aft give the boat very good cockpit accommodation.

The twin helm seats swivel, adjust fore and aft and have a forward bolster that lifts up if you want to adopt a lean-back driving position, helped by the raised footrest.

The outer ends of the full-width aft seat have open stowage underneath, handy for fenders and warps.

highlights



LAZARET

The cavernous lazaret is a direct benefit of having outboard rather than inboard engines.



SUNPAD

The forward sunpad is unrivalled on any other craft of this size.



ACCESS

It is easy to move all around the boat, thanks to a well thought-out layout.



above Swooping lines give the 755WA a sporting appearance, and its performance bears that out. **left** The versatile cockpit offers twin helm seats and an aft bench, with good protection from a wraparound screen.

A large lazaret under the cockpit sole offers all the cockpit stowage you could wish for, though getting at this does mean moving some of the seating.

Despite the emphasis on cockpit space, the builders have still managed to come up with a usable cabin, one which would suffice for overnight stays on board, with a toilet compartment and small galley.

Our test boat featured two sets of extras: the Luxe package (sundeck cushions, teak

foredeck top, cockpit table, teak strip at the helm and opening hatch in the cabin) and the Comfort package (mooring awning, fenders and mooring ropes).

POWER OPTIONS

The hull is rated to a maximum of 400hp, from either single or twin motors. Our test boat had twin 140hp Suzukis, which is currently the only boat/engine package available, although of course owners

can specify the engines of their choice.

The size of the lazaret means that the boat could even be adapted for a stern-drive installation if required. But if you wanted to buy one of these off the shelf, you would have to opt for the slightly smaller Cap Camarat 725WA, which comes as standard with a single 190hp Volvo Penta 4.3GL SX.

PERFORMANCE & HANDLING

One of the most impressive features of this boat is the quietness of the twin Suzukis. As we ran through the rev range, there was little discernible change in our noise readings.

At a relaxed cruising speed of 19.5 knots, with the engines pulling 3000rpm, we recorded just 81dB(A), and most of that was wind, water and hull noise. Another 1000rpm gave 27.5 knots for a very comfortable fast cruise, but saw the same sound levels.

Maximum speed, achieved without fuss or drama, was an average of just over 40 knots on our runs with and against wind and tide, with the engines pulling to 5900rpm once the engine trim settings had been fully manipulated.

Acceleration is excellent, with the 140hp engines straight into their stride and quickly propelling the 755 onto the plane. Similarly, mid-range response is very good and the boat gets up near its top speed in short time.

Progress is also smooth. On our test day the hull cut through all the wash and waves of a lively Southampton Water, ▶▶

decks

One result of the well thought-out design is an adaptable foredeck. There is plenty of room to work here, but the electric windlass on our test boat was an optional extra.

Guardrails reach right back from the bow to the forward end of the cockpit, offering a handhold as you move around.

The lazaret opens on a gas strut to reveal a cavernous space that goes back to the transom, under the engine well. The fuel tank is mounted forward, with an inspection hatch in its wood casing, and the twin batteries just aft of this. Besides the other engine services and battery master switches, the rest of the space is available for stowage.

There are teak trim panels on the decking, and rod-holders come as standard.



bathing platform

A small wooden platform to port lifts to access the swing-down boarding ladder, and there is a step through the transom to the cockpit.

showing no inclination to slam.

The handling does suffer slightly from it being a twin installation, with the expected heaviness on the steering wheel, particularly at full lock, even though hydraulic steering comes as standard. However, the hull takes turns smoothly and always feels assured.

Nearer the centred position, the steering lightens and course deviation is easily adjusted.

The twin throttles fall nicely to hand.

Although their action could be smoother, they have a neat feature whereby the engine trim settings can be set to work off one button in the handle.

All-round visibility is good, and even the lean-back driving position is well protected, though you do occasionally have to duck to avoid wind-blown spray. The wraparound console design offers more cockpit protection than you will get on most other walkaround craft.



helm The console is on two levels, with walnut burr panels for the engine instrumentation and switches. A compass tops the dash, and there is plenty of space for fitting extra electronics. The wooden steering wheel makes a welcome change from the skinny steel wheels fitted by most of Jeanneau's competitors, but it has no tilt-adjustment.

specifications

BUILD	glass reinforced plastic
RCD	design category B
LENGTH OVERALL	24ft 8in (7.52m)
BEAM	8ft 6in (2.59m)
DRAUGHT	19ft 0in (0.48m)
DISPLACEMENT	1.5 tonnes
FUEL CAPACITY	61.5gal (280lt)
ENGINES	twin 140hp Suzuki DF140TL four-stroke outboards
PRICE	from £19,962 inc VAT excluding engines; £39,968 as tested
SUPPLIERS	Southern Motorboats, Universal Marina, Crableck Lane, Sarisbury Green, Southampton, Hampshire SO31 7ZN. Tel: 01489 565444.
BUILDERS	Jeanneau, P 529 85505, Les Herbiers, France. www.jeanneau.fr

accommodation

A sliding door gives access to the cabin, and where you step down there is just about standing headroom if you are of average height.

The vee-dinette forward has sitting headroom at its aft end, but the headlining dips so that the forward cushions can only be used as part of the double berth to which it converts. Headroom is also restricted in the WC, and you have to stoop on entering.

A galley unit with a single-burner stove and a stainless steel sink is set to port. There is an open shelf behind these, and a cupboard in the base.

There is open stowage extending under the cockpit, accessible alongside the companionway.

The cherry wood fit-out makes a pleasant change from plastic mouldings. However, in some places it is a coat of varnish away from being truly high quality.



toilet This is a fairly basic compartment, with exposed piping. Besides the manual pump-out toilet, there are no other facilities.

forward berths The mattress area is a decent size, longer on the port side. There are individual lockers in the base and open shelving around.



conclusions

LAYOUT

The walkaround layout means excellent access to areas, yet still allows for a good-sized console.

BUILD

Some of the finish is a little basic, particularly in the cabin. The American imports with which this boat competes are smarter in their presentation.

PERFORMANCE

The twin Suzuki 140s ensure the boat is quick, smooth and responsive, the only compromise being low-speed handling on tighter turns.

MBM verdict

Space, stowage and performance combine to make this a versatile boat.

The cockpit layout is very adaptable, but you will not want to spend much more than the occasional night in the small cabin. Speed and handling are strong enough to make all forms of watersport possible.

Packaging is a weakness, as nearly all the optional extras available would need to be added to bring the 755WA close to matching the standard specifications of some American-built craft.

the rivals

BOSTON WHALER 255 CONQUEST

from £44,236 excluding engines

You can feel the quality of this slightly larger craft.

Tel: 01202 674531

www.bostonwhaler.co.uk

WELLCRAFT 24 WALKAROUND

from £29,995 with 225hp Yamaha

Less foredeck but more cabin space and specifications.

Tel: 01634 843576.

www.medwaybridgemarkarina.co.uk

WHITE SHARK 236

from £36,429 with 225hp Yamaha

A bigger cabin and a wider choice of engines.

Tel: 01202 661630.

www.whitesharkboats.com