

# BOAT REPORT SEALINE 230

Sealine's replacement for the 220 Senator was launched at Southampton as this issue hit the bookstalls. We sneaked a preview.



THE 230 will be the smaller of the two new offerings from Sealine at the Southampton Boat Show, this 25-footer being earmarked to supersede the slightly smaller 220 model (see MBM Oct 90 p 106). We were invited by the company's new Brixham sales office to take it for a trial in Torbay waters in August.

## Design

The underwater lines of this outdrive boat are based on those of the 220, with a medium vee of 24° amidships and 22° at the transom. Modifications primarily consist of a minimal increase in beam and the lengthening of the hull for incorporation of a full bathing platform.

Above the chine, Sealine's current philosophy of strong curves allied to bulbous styling makes for a truly distinctive shape. The coachroof line carries right forward onto a substantial anchor platform fashioned into the upper topsides at the bow. Similarly orchestrated curves are used to lend considerable substance to the topsides at the bathing platform.

## Exterior

Apart from the coachroof being pushed all the way forward, and increased both in width and height — the 230 having almost full standing headroom at 5ft 10in (1.78m) below — it is the cockpit layout which stands out as the main departure from earlier models in the same class.

The reversible double helm seat makes the difference here, hinging forward to create an eight-seater entertaining area which can be enclosed by the full cockpit canopy. Sealine's rethink of the canopy itself has resulted in merging the side panels with the rear portion, meaning there are just two parts supported by the



Clockwise from below left: bulbous styling forward and matching curves aft give Sealine's latest 25-footer a distinctive look. A rethink on canopy design has left a simple two-part construction supported by the stainless steel mast. The cockpit has a U-settee which converts into a sunbed, and a removable section to create a walkway through to the bathing platform. Inside, to starboard of the companionway, are the electrical distribution panel, a stowage bin, a half-height sleeping area and the fully-moulded toilet compartment. To port is a smart galley and a U-dinette which seats six in comfort.



stainless steel mast, simplifying matters.

A U-settee is fashioned around the rear of the cockpit, and the table drops to form a 6ft x 3ft (1.83m x 0.91m) sunbed. If you are using the bathing platform, you can remove a section to allow the transom walkway to be opened up.

Out on the bathing platform there is the usual run of half-moon fender holders scalloped into the after coaming, a tucked-away swim ladder and a neat moulded-in auxiliary bracket. We did not actually try fitting an outboard to the latter, but it looks as though it needs to be raised to accommodate the thumb-screws fully.

Something we viewed with rather greater unease was the rather exposed site for the shoreside power connector, low on the bathing platform side of the transom. This is a pity, given the thoughtful location of other pieces of basic fit-out such as the fuel cock, the battery switch

and even the manual bilge pump, set out of harm's way but still readily accessible in the cockpit.

Here, stowage is adequate although not excessive, with lockers set in the transom and port coaming where there is also a vented, double-bottle gas locker. Bulkier items find a niche outboard in the engine compartment.

The helm station is competent enough for this size of craft, although there is a shortage of space for flush-mounted electronics: the sliding top hatch to the cabin covers the console in front of the skipper's mate. Engine instrumentation is set in an angled panel in front of a small perspex-covered chart area (which incorporates a compass), with ready-use switches and trim-tab controls lying either side of the wheel. Everything is to hand and easy to view, and we were pleased to find the power-trim indicator up with the engine

instruments rather than buried down by the control itself.

Visibility was unimpaired, with the substantial, wraparound screen offering good protection and cleared by a pair of wipers.

Handholds are adequate around the cockpit, but it is the screen which has to be used initially when moving along the bordered, minimal 5in (13cm) sidedecks. The guardrail runs back just to the break of the screen.

The coachroof has a fair incline and camber to it. Whilst it is covered in a reasonably effective non-slip, there is no flat area of foredeck, which some may find slightly disconcerting.

Up at the bow, a substantial platform at the stem hides away the anchor and bow roller assembly, with the windlass itself set in a moulded indentation in the coachroof line. A large hatched locker is provided, taking the chain in one segment with the rest left clear for warps and the like. Mooring is handled effectively by three pairs of 8in (20cm) cleats.

## Interior

Designed to sleep four adults, the accommodation is proportioned in practical, well-appointed comfort.

The galley, immediately to port of the companionway, incorporates a twin-burner hob and grill, a stainless steel sink and a fridge beneath smart (but unfiddled) grey rolltop work surfaces. Outboard are a number of useful-sized, open-fronted cave lockers, and there is a double cupboard under the worktop.

The bulk of the main cabin is dominated by the generous U-dinette forward with its sensibly-shaped off-square table. The backrest, towards the bow, is led around to give comfortable seating for six, and to allow greater legroom when it is converted into the 6ft 1in x 4ft 10in (1.86m x 1.49m) berth.

Large lockers beneath the seat-bases are painted out, and to an extent isolated from the bilge, while 'number ones' can be hung in the half-height hanging locker adjacent to the curved bulkhead of the toilet compartment.

Tucked under the cockpit (with a port opening onto it) is a 6ft 4in x 3ft 10in (1.93m x 1.18m) sleeping area. The curtained half-height entrance to this is found to starboard, below the electrical distribution panel. In this cabin there is sitting room but, disappointingly, no provision for clothes or personal effects stowage; the water tank takes up the space beneath the berth, and the only locker gives access to the water pump and seacocks led from the toilet compartment.

This latter area is fully moulded and adequate in size, and also has showering facilities, with ventilation via an opening section of the single windowline, but again there is nothing by way of storage. When we queried this, Sealine explained that this was the first off the line, a pre-production version of the 230, and that one or two areas of detail had yet to be finalised.

The small amount of wood trim is laid to ash, with various cloth trims covering the GRP interior mouldings which Sealine use so successfully. Even the base headlining is a moulding, inset with trim panels and with mini-spotlights to supplement the natural light offered by the foredeck hatch, composite side windows and half-glazed access door.

## Engines

All engine options come from the Volvo Penta outdrive line-up. They range from the simple 250/SP, rated at 146hp, to the 275hp 570/DP V8 petrol, with a stainless steel Duoprop, as fitted to our test boat. A diesel installation, the AD31/DP at 130hp, is also listed.

Access to the engine compartment is via a reasonable-sized but not particularly large hatch to the rear of the cockpit. Lifting this entails removing the surrounding seat-bases, which is not a problem in itself but clutters the remaining cockpit with upholstery. Once up and supported on its stainless steel strut, this gives clear access right around the engine and back to the transom.

To the sides, the fully-moulded floorpan, with a squeaky clean finish, makes the ideal landing for the calorifier and battery boxes, with room left over for some further stowage. The fuel tank is behind the removable forward bulkhead, the fuel filter finding a niche just to the side of the deck hatch, out of harm's way but still readily accessible.

A large limber hole in this bulkhead allows any water to flow quickly aft, where it can be dealt with by the good-sized Rule automatic bilge pump, or by the manual unit also supplied. A fire-extinguisher was also to be found, but no insulation at all.

## Performance and handling

Coming off the land and blowing something upwards of a Force 4, the wind turned Torbay into just the right test track for this 25-footer.

Trials with the radar gun showed a full-throttle speed, at a few hundred revs shy of the V8's full 4600rpm, of 35 knots. Obviously, full-throttle work is not likely to last long, but it is interesting to note that this engine consumes 20gph (91lph) flat-out but only around half this when pulled back to 3800rpm, where it gives a fast cruising speed of just under 30 knots.

Easing back further to an easy-riding 25 knots at 3200rpm, we criss-crossed the chop and the wakes of numerous tripboats in a steady manner, although any beam wind had to be sorted by a deft hand on the tab controls. Tucking the leg in and reducing to 2800rpm gives a gentle 18 knots should the seas pipe up.

Weighing less than two tons, with 275hp on tap, the 230 is a responsive package, pushing through the turns and accelerating in true sportsboat style, albeit in a predictable fashion that should not catch out driver or crew.

Noise levels remained reasonable, at around the 80dB(A) mark, until we decided to push on. They nudged up to 84dB(A) at 3800rpm, and at full throttle were rather more intrusive still at 88dB(A).

## Conclusions

Whether or not Sealine's penchant for heavy styling to characterise their range is to your liking, the company is due full credit for canny use of space, pin-tidy finish and layout.

On the performance front, it is much the same story. The ride is lively, albeit clean, although the slight increase in top hamper makes the 230 more sensitive than previous models in the same size band. □

## Sealine 230 Senator

**Loa** 24ft 8in (7.53m).

**Beam** 8ft 2in (2.50m).

**Draught** 2ft 9in (0.88m).

**Displacement** 1.9 tons.

**Fuel capacity** 49gal (222lt).

**Water capacity** 17gal (81lt).

**Price** from £25,489 ex VAT; £28,917 as tested with a Volvo Penta 570DP 275hp petrol engine.

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