

Bavaria

270 Sport

From Germany comes an alternative to the massed ranks of American sportscruisers. Is this the BMW of the small-boat market?

Though the pound has been falling against the US dollar, its strength compared with European currencies is bringing quite a few craft from continental boatbuilders to the British market.

One welcome addition are the designs of German manufacturers Bavaria, who make both yachts and motorboats, and now have separate UK importers for both.

The 270 Sport is the smallest in their three-strong range of motorboats.

Design & layout

Whilst American sportscruisers have been marketed with 'European styling' for many a year, the Bavaria range shows that the Americans still have something to learn from European designers. It seems to be looking for a similar image to that of its Bavarian counterpart in road cars, BMW, and this can be seen particularly in the standard of finish and in the materials used.

The 270's accommodation layout keeps to a tried and trusted

formula, in its location of forward berth, galley, WC and midships berth, but the feel is markedly different from other craft. Smoothly curved mouldings combine well with mahogany wood and bird's-eye veneer — traditional-looking but contemporary in execution.

The cockpit offers plenty of space and accessibility, as well as a tidy seating arrangement. And, again, good quality mouldings combine with teak decking and stainless steel fittings

for a quality feel.

Good proportioning of cockpit to cabin space means that this craft can serve equally well either as a cruiser or a dayboat.

Its hull is narrower than the average American offering, favouring a smoother ride. The recessed transom and the contrasting colourways elongate its appearance on the water, concealing what is quite a high air draught. An aft-reaching radar arch, a sweeping screen and raked bow rails all enhance the boat's



sporting pretensions.

The 260hp Volvo Penta KAD44 EDC/DP diesel fitted to our test boat is the most expensive engine option offered, the least expensive diesel being a 170hp KAD32P. Cheapest of all is a 205hp Mercruiser 4.3GI/SX petrol, although a 260hp Mercruiser 5.7EFI looks likely to be a more popular choice.

Performance & handling

The KAD44 does a pretty effective job of moving the 270 Sport through the water. We recorded a top speed of 32 knots at 4000rpm, which the hull took in its stride in a typical Solent chop.

Easing back to 3500rpm saw 25 knots, which would represent a comfortable fast cruising speed, especially with a respectable noise reading of 84dB(A) at the helm. If you want to take it easier, cutting the revs to 3000rpm yields 18 knots and 82dB(A), and the boat can be tempted to stay on the plane as low as 2750rpm, or 16 knots.

From standstill, the KAD44 is quickly into its stride and pushing the Bavaria surely onto the plane,

Bathing platform

The fairly deep bathing platform extends aft of the transom flanks to ease boarding from alongside, with access to the cockpit being via a tidy stainless steel transom gate.

The optional teak-laid sole extends back onto the platform, making this area feel an integrated part of the craft, rather than just an add-on as with some other boats.

If the towing eye on the aft



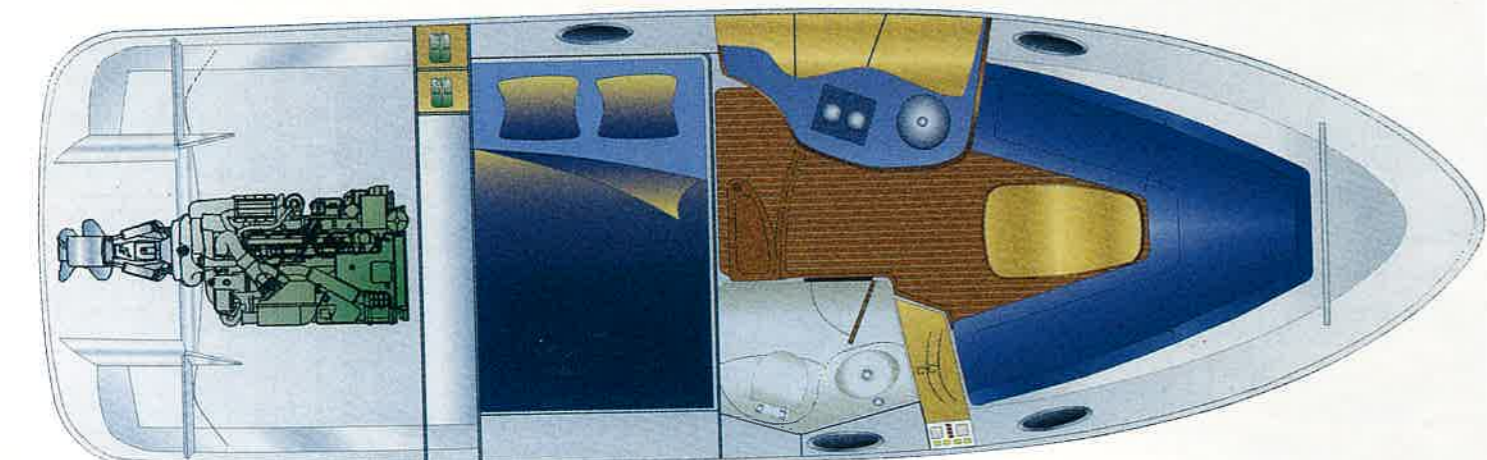
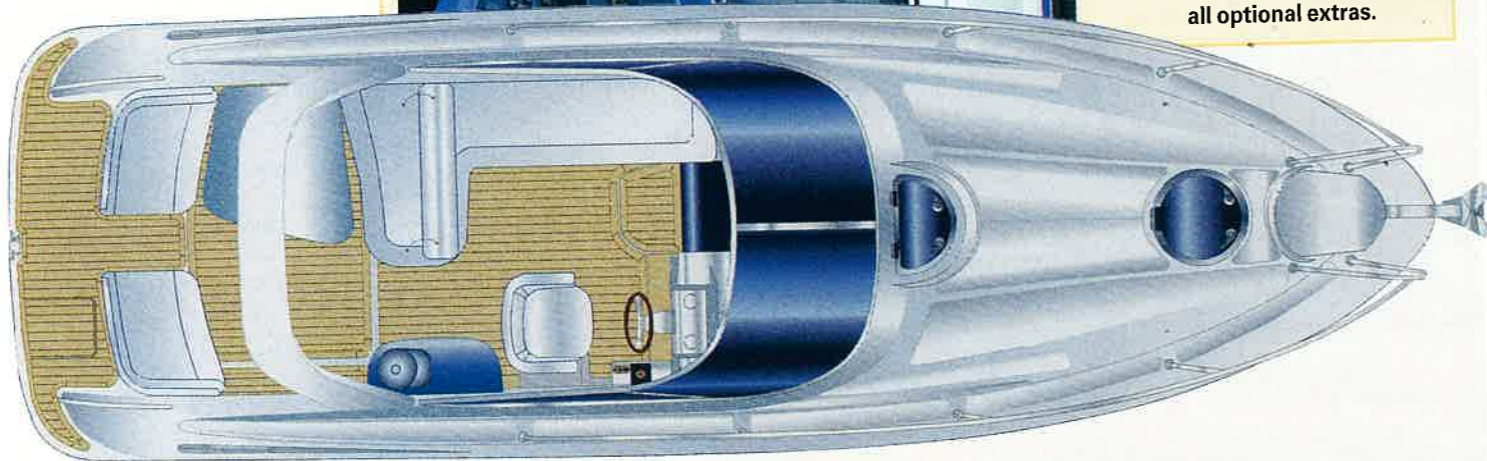
edge of the platform encourages you to indulge in watersports, a telescopic boarding ladder is neatly hidden under a hinged hatch,

and a convenient stainless steel handrail will help you ease yourself up from the water. You can then rinse off under the cold-water transom shower.

Decks

A step on each side of the cockpit help you up onto the narrow side decks, and bars on the outside of the radar arch offer a handhold as you proceed forward. This is the only way to get to the bow, as the windscreen has no opening section.

The guardrails rise as you move forward to give an improving handhold. At the bow there is a tidy anchor locker and roller, but anchor, chain and electric windlass are all optional extras.



Cabin

Since the Bavaria lacks beam in comparison with some of its competitors, our expectations were for a cramped feel to the cabin, but this is not so. There is good headroom in all the right places, and the space is well lit, both during the day and at night.

The forward vee-seating is a good-sized dinette converting into a comfortable double, and offering stowage in lined lockers underneath. A hanging wardrobe to starboard, with



the electrics control panel located above it, complements open shelving behind the seat-backs.

The galley, to port, is well provided with stowage, and covers fitting over the sink and single-burner stove mean there is also enough workspace. The microwave is an extra, but the standard specification is high, with a fridge, a quality mixer

tap, fitted-out drawers and even a rubbish bin.

The midships berth is another good-sized double, open to the rest of the cabin so there is plenty of natural daylight but little privacy. Good headroom at the port end make access easy. There is a cupboard in the aft bulkhead and lockers at the foot of the berth.



Toilet

The toilet compartment to starboard offers full standing headroom and a high standard of fit-out, even running to a toilet brush.

As at the galley, you get a mixer tap, this time incorporating a wander lead for the shower, and the compartment's full lining should deal with the excess water when you use this.

There is plenty of protected stowage, both under the sink and in a locker behind the porcelain flushing toilet.



Cockpit

The reclining lounge seat beside the helm position is a versatile design solution, especially as its aft seat-back can be cantilevered forward or back as required. In the aft position, it leaves a full sunbed to stretch

out on forward; in the forward position it offers an extra seat next to the cockpit table aft.

Opposite, just aft of the helm seat, is a wet-bar, with a fridge in its base as an optional extra.

Where most builders provide an aft bench with a transom door set to one side of it, Bavaria have opted to place the



transom door in the centre. Though this limits the seating capacity at the table, it does offer two very capacious lockers in the seat-bases, just where you need them for stowing warps and fenders. The whole of each seat hinges up for excellent access to these.

There is another small locker under the aft section of the forward seat, the reverse of this providing the mounting place for the battery master switches.

The radar arch can be folded down if necessary to reduce the boat's air draught.

Helm

In comparison with the design in the rest of the craft, the dashboard comes over as a little bland. But there is nothing the matter with the ergonomics. The layout of the throttle, engine trim and trim tab switches works very well.

The driving position is fine, with the single helm seat adjustable for both height and reach and the wheel tilt-adjustable, which means that just about all sizes of driver should be able to get very comfortable.

The seat bolster lifts so you can adopt a lean-back position if required and, even though it



appears low, the screen offers good protection.

Space between the two raised side sections of the dash could be used for mounting extra electronics, although those favouring sophisticated bits of kit with large displays might struggle for a logical place to put them.

Engineroom

Once you have removed the table, the whole of the after part of the cockpit sole can be raised on two gas struts to reveal the enginebay.

Though perhaps the floor could lift a little more, access is still good, and the cover is fully sealed.

You can get down along each side of the engine, and all the regular service points are easy to get at. The fit-out is excellent, with a high standard of engineering and attention to detail, for instance the security and positioning of cable runs.



with only a slight diesel delay.

That same assured power is at the heart of the boat's handling. The DuoProp leg adds to the drive and grip in the water, allowing you to push the 270 Sport through some tight turns without any indication of hull skip-out or ventilation at the prop. The hull is surefooted, and the narrow beam shows through in a comfortable ride.

Response to the helm is good, though the 270 remains a sports cruiser rather than

a sportsboat in terms of its handling characteristics.

Though we managed to raise some spray on occasions, the cockpit remained sheltered, while giving the helmsman a commanding position for all manoeuvres.

Conclusions

Comparisons between Bavaria boats and Bavarian cars are inevitable, and for the boatbuilding concern there is no harm in trading

off this. The build quality is there, as is the modern feel.

The 270 Sport conforms where necessary but still manages to set itself apart from the predominantly American offerings in this market sector, through both its design and its styling. It backs these up with respectable performance, and a fair price for its specification.

So long as buyers are not tempted by the extra few square feet per pound that the Americans offer, it has an obvious appeal. □

Bavaria 270 Sport

BUILD

glass-reinforced plastic

RCD

build category B

DIMENSIONS

LOA

27ft 6in (8.40m)

BEAM

8ft 4in (2.55m)

DRAUGHT

1ft 8in (0.50m)

AIR DRAUGHT

9ft 2in (2.78m)

DISPLACEMENT

2.5 tonnes

FUEL CAPACITY

59gal (270lt)

ENGINE

Volvo Penta KAD44P-EDC/DP

6cyl 3.6lt diesel

260hp at 3900rpm

PRICE

about £68,000 inc VAT as tested

SUPPLIERS

Ancasta International Boat Sales,
Port Hamble, Satchell Lane,
Hamble, Hampshire SO31 4HB.
Tel: 023 8045 0000.

BUILDERS

Bavaria Yachtbau GmbH,
Industriestrasse 11, D-97232
Giebelstadt/Wurzburg, Germany.
Tel: +49 93 34 94 20.

