

MOTOR
BOATS **TESTED**

Linssen 339

Has Linssen managed to produce an affordable 9 series, without scrimping on quality and spec?

REPORT BY MARK TURLEY

**FACT FILE**

Linssen 339
LOA: 34ft 0in
(10.35m)
PRICE: from
£153,400
TOP SPEED:
7.6 knots



The saloon enjoys plenty of light and a great view out.

Linssen is not only one of the best-known names in Dutch steel, but it's also recognised for commanding top euros. This is with some justification, as its interiors are bespoke, and the fitout and finish of the highest quality. Yet over the last few years, a number of its rivals have managed a marked increase in quality while keeping prices reasonable, causing Linssen's smaller models to look increasingly costly.

The Dutch yard has countered this by introducing the 9 series – a 29 footer and more recently this 33 footer – and by standardising the layout and spec. By introducing production line techniques, Linssen is offering these 'entry' models at a much lower price. So is this a good idea or just dumbing down a quality brand? We

checked out the 339, after its UK debut at ExCeL in January, to find out.

Design & Build

Linssen has curtailed its customising and reduced the amount of solid joinery, but the steel hull and superstructure are fabricated and finished to the same exacting standards as any of its larger models. Nor has the company cut corners on stainless components, such as stanchions, by substituting ordinary steel. Even the bathing platform, although painted, is stainless, so you are spared rusty streaks if the surface is scraped.

The 339 is available as an open aft cockpit sedan or – as seen here – an aft cabin guise. The wheelhouse layout of the former features an interior helm but on the aft cabin model it's an

outside job. That said, the standard spec includes a spray hood with a rear enclosure.

The production of the interior is the main area where savings have been made, such as in the identical, modular cabins and toilet facilities in both the 299 and 339. Much the same can be said for the open plan saloon and galley, it is here that the 339 uses its extra four feet, gaining more space, cabinetry and a neat study equipped with a desk and armchair. This open plan layout, with the galley at the same level as the main seating area, is somewhat unusual in this style of craft. However, it leaves room in the forward cabin for a toilet compartment on one side and a separate, good-sized shower opposite.

The single engine runs on a conventional shaft with the prop and rudder protected by a steel

shoe that pushes out from the full-length run of keel. As well as providing support and protection for the sterngear, this keel gives the chined hull its directional stability and gets more of the boat deeper in the water. Above the waterline the steel is as smart as any GRP and, of course, reassuringly solid.

Design & build

Imaginative layout and tidily finished low-key interior



Accommodation

With the interior only available in cherry joinery and cream leather, Linssen has tried to appeal to a wide audience. It's clean without looking too plain, and the wood has a warm feel. However, while the joinery is well executed there is a lightness to the touch, and it's one of the telltale signs as to where savings have been made.

Seated at the dinette the window line is at just the right height for a great view out, and the drop down table converts into a comfortable double



Not sure about the tarporlin duvet cover, but two decent sized double berths and plenty of storage impress

“The study area is a great idea”



Back aft things feel a bit shoe-horned in, although there is the bonus of an en suite

berth. And with this 'occasional double' in mind, it was good to find the saloon equipped with a complete set of curtains.

The study area ahead of the dinette is a great idea, and it means that the paperwork can stay put while meals at the main table come and go. It incorporates some handy storage and best of all it comes with a compact but comfortable armchair, making daydreaming or world watching all but compulsory.

The galley runs down the port hand side and when not in use it can be forgotten about by closing down a couple of sideboard tops over the sink and hob unit. The gas hob comes as standard but the oven doesn't, and our main concern is the lack of countertop for preparation or putting

down a hot pan. Storage is less of an issue and there is a good-sized fridge and useful cupboards. There is also loads of room under the sole for bulky items, although this means having to hike up a hatch set in the decking.

Both cabins benefit from good-sized berths, their own en suites and masses of storage. This is to be applauded but, to our mind, the space given over to the aft cabin's mini en suite, with stooped standing room, might have been better served by simply making more of a spacious cabin. In fairness, given the length restrictions on the cabin due to the engine space, it would have been difficult to incorporate anything but an offset berth. This, in itself, has full sitting headroom and there is even space for a dresser. >>

Linssen's history

Established in 1949, Jac Linssen started the company as a boat repair facility. After a few years he started to develop wooden steering wheels, small rowing boats and the first viets (small pleasure boats). In the 1970s Jac's eldest son, Jos Unssen, joined the company and started serious production with St. Jozef Vlet, the Classic Sturdy. In the 80s Jan, Peter and Harry Linssen joined the business and the SE/SX Cruiser series was introduced, which heralded the start of international trade. In the 1990s production of the Variotop, Grand Sturdy series, Dutch Sturdy series, and the new SL-series began. The 9-series was introduced in 2004 and the Mark II Grand Sturdy was launched in 2005.



It's a long way from making wooden steering wheels!



Cherry joinery and leather upholstery are standard issue on the 339



This clean-looking galley has plenty of stowage, and is easily hidden away



The forward toilet compartment and shower room are of a good size



BOAT REPORT

LINSSSEN 339

'Steady as she goes' but seating is optional



Forward, the washing facilities are more generous, with a toilet compartment on one side and a roomy shower on the other. The forecabin has a central berth flanked by the wood-lined hull and some handy shelves.

Accommodation

Lots of good points but the galley isn't one of them



Exterior

For craft like these, which are likely to encounter plenty of locks, the relatively low side decks, are important to make hopping on and off easy. Similarly, the widths of the decks and hefty gunwales make moving around easy and safe, plus the cabin top benefits from a handrail on either side. The anchor is tidily housed within an integral stem head fabrication in the bow, but the standard windlass is manual, not automatic.

To reduce clearance the aft deck windscreen is designed to fold down, as is the rather smart



A neat bathing platform is tucked out the way



Wide side decks and plentiful railings make for safe boating



Bin storage and micro-workshop are below the saloon sole

No problem with access to the single engine



Engine Options & Access

There's no point offering a whole raft of high-powered options for a displacement vessel such as this, as the vessel is limited by its hull speed. For the designer, it's a matter of working out what horsepower will deliver the goods, then calling it a day. As a result, the only option here is a Volvo four-cylinder unit rated to 75hp at 3000rpm. Some owners may not be happy with the Volvo route, but this smooth-running, slow-revving unit appears to be a good choice for this vessel.

A hatch in the saloon lifts on sprung-stays to give access to the majority of engine check and service points, and it is just a short hop down into the bay when it's necessary to get more involved.

The fuel tank and primary filter are equipped with sight gauges and readily accessible inspection plates. Set outboard, where there is restricted access due to the cabin sole, are the calorifier and batteries and if the latter need to be accessed it is a matter of removing some of the decking. A holding tank, fitted as standard, runs across the rear of the compartment and there is just the right space left forward for a generator set if required. Our only slight misgiving is the

Engine options & access

A good, tidy installation of the standard engine



siting of the raw water strainer, which while handy for inspecting and cleaning, is a bit vulnerable to being knocked when hopping into the bay, as the steel tank makes a useful step.

Performance & Handling

One problem with boating at displacement speeds is, in reality, not being able to ease down your speed by subtle increments, which gives you additional control in a crowd of other vessels. The other important factor is the boat retaining steerage as speeds drop.

As you would expect from a yard that has lived and breathed slow-boating for over half a century the 339 doesn't have a problem with either of these, and there is around 1000rpm of slack between poodling along on tickover and

usual river speeds. The hull responds smartly to the helm but quickly steadies and, importantly, there is plenty of boat under the water to counteract any windage. Opt for the de Luxe package which includes bow thrusters, and there is little that can't be managed.

If you might need to punch into a tidal stream a hull speed of around 7.5 knots is delivered easily and quietly, without much vibration. However, for most coastal and continental cruising you are likely to run in the region of 2200-2500rpm to give a steady 6.5 knots under most conditions.

Performance & handling

Slow, of course, but steady and pleasant to helm



Our one slight concern is the size of the fuel tank. It's not small at 50 gal (230lt), but if there is space for something larger that would eliminate the worry about topping up.

Specification & Value

Linssen may have set out to get competitive but fortunately it has tightened its belt with more efficient production, rather than cutting the standard boat specification to the bone. That said, you still really need to budget for the £8000 'de Luxe pack' which includes costly items like a bow thruster and heating. And all credit to Linssen as the bottom line doesn't look bad when stacked up against erstwhile rivals. However, the

Specification & value

Well pitched on price, but no room to personalise



downside to the single option interior, in order to make savings in production, is that customising the layout isn't possible and even the spec is pretty well tied down.

Verdict

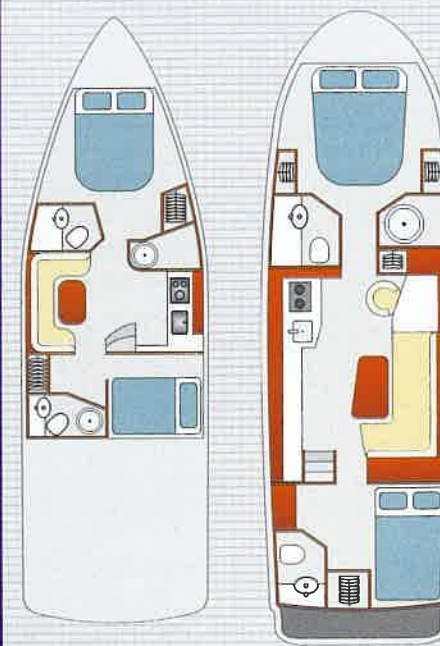
So has Linssen been clever or has launching an entry-level package done an injustice to this coveted marque? Well, to our mind it's all positive stuff. The boat is well specified and ably fitted out, plus its layout offers something different. However, whether Linssen is able to stick with just one interior finish remains to be seen.

7/10

MBM rating



Linssen 339 technical data



specifications

BUILD	Steel
RCD	Category C
LENGTH OVERALL	34ft 0in (10.35m)
HULL LENGTH	32ft 4in (9.87m)
BEAM	11ft 2in (3.40m)
DRAUGHT	3ft 3in (1.0m)
AIR DRAUGHT	8ft 2in (2.48m)
DISPLACEMENT	8.3 tonnes
FUEL CAPACITY	53 gal (240lt)
WATER CAPACITY	65 gal (296lt)

key dimensions

WIDTH OF SIDEDECKS	12in (30cm)
HEADROOM IN SALOON	6ft 4in (1.93m)
FORE CABIN BERTH	6ft 6in x 5ft 0in (1.98 x 1.52m)
AFT CABIN BERTH	6ft 6in x 4ft 3in (1.98 x 1.30m)

performance

Engines	single Volvo D2-75 diesel				
Configuration	4cyl 2.2lt 75hp @ 3000rpm				
Conditions	wind SW'ly, Force 2, sea state slight				
Load	50%o, water 100%o, crew 3				
Rpm	knots	gph	mpg	range	noise
1800	5.4	0.8	6.75	284	62
2200	6.2	1.4	4.43	186	66
2500	6.9	2.0	3.45	145	71
2950	7.6	3.6	2.11	89	74

Range figures quoted above are in miles based on standard fuel tanks and include a 20% margin. GPH & MPG refer to Imperial gallons. These figures may vary due to weather conditions, air, water, engine temperature, crew numbers, hull fouling, fuel quality etc. Noise readings are in dB(A) and were taken in the wheelhouse.

prices

STANDARD BOAT with single Volvo D2-75hp diesel	inc VAT £153,400
ANTI-FOULING (chlorine-rubber)	£625
HEATING	£1985
BOW THRUSTER	£2340
SHORESIDE POWER	£1470
TEAK DECKING	£9000
WINDLASS (manual)	standard

BOAT AS TESTED £161,430

ENQUIRIES Berthon International. Tel: 01590 679222, www.linssenyachts.co.uk

the rivals



PEDRO 35

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