

Title decider?

The Regal 35 Sports Coupe adds plenty of muscle to the mid 30ft market REPORT BY NICK BURNHAM

BOAT REPORT

REGAL 35 SC

The brief...



Whilst the big fish fight over the 40ft hardtop pond, there is a very interesting battle group forming at 35ft. Sealine's SC35 has triumphed till now, but will another SC from Regal deliver a knock-out blow?

Nick

LOA: 36ft 10in (11.2m)

PRICE: from £227,163

TOP SPEED: 37 knots

BUILDERS Regal Marine Industries Ltd, Orlando USA

ENQUIRIES www.regalboats.com



Scan the QR code to watch the Regal 35 in action



bit.ly/NC2b76

It's official, the 35ft hardtop market is the most exciting place to boat right now. OK, so the big guns of Princess, Fairline and Sunseeker have a self-imposed 40ft glass floor, under which they fear to tread but with Sealine, Sessa, Jeanneau, Bénéteau and Bavaria all involved we are hardly left wanting for boats. And now the Yanks are coming.

As far as the European market is concerned, American yards have had something of a glass ceiling imposed on them, with very few brands enjoying success over 30ft – a fact not helped by their inability to produce decent hardtops under 50ft. But has the US finally woken up to the idea of 30ft hardtops? Sea Ray has recently launched a new 355 Sundancer (look out for a full test in the Oct 12 issue), but first comes this Regal 35 Sport Coupe, or 35SC for short. Given the Sealine SC35's market leadership, the Regal's certainly got the right name to be a winner, and comes loaded with an enclosed mid cabin, twin diesels and joystick control.

Hard times

Adding a hardtop to a boat of this size is always a fine balancing act between getting the necessary headroom required inside whilst avoiding top heavy looks outside. Regal have gone for a contemporary angular look to the 35, with an unashamedly tall but equally sharp superstructure. The high windows are framed in dark grey and the flat roofline includes a proper solid GRP sunroof, instead of a canvas type, and, as ever, this limits the size of the aperture. Regal has cunningly managed to eke out the opening almost to the edges of the roof which, combined with a slim windscreen header rail does work to make the helm feel more open than most of this type.

The line between what constitutes a hardtop and a coupe is more of a zigzag, which fades to grey in some places. In theory, a coupe delivers more of a deck saloon than a cockpit, and the 35 certainly packs in some accommodating features. The aft seat's backrest is multi-

positional so that the small aft sunpad can have an aft facing backrest or it can be dropped flush with the seat base to extend the sunpad forward. It faces an L shape settee alongside the helm which also has a two way backrest so that the trailing part of the seat can be configured to face forward underway, or backwards to make a roomy social area, or create a dinette by slotting in the demountable cockpit table.

The helm itself is equally adaptable, featuring a lift up bolster and a fold-out footrest. Immediately aft is a comprehensively equipped, triangular wet bar. There's even a flat-screen TV that folds out of the headlining. As a result the whole area is remarkably flexible, equally suited to lounging or cruising. It's so good you almost don't expect to find another living area below, all of which makes the 35's cunningly designed interior saloon as surprising as it is impressive.

Despite the 'Euro-tweak' mid cabin, Regal has

gone for an open plan forward sleeping area, rather than the separate bow cabin offered by the Sealine SC35. The simple reason for this is that the Regal is a smaller boat, but its main cabin does work well. A long L shape settee runs the length of the starboard side, curving across the foot of the forward double berth. Ingeniously, the berth is cut short to create extra floor space, but at the touch of a button the settee backrest cantilevers up to create an extension, taking the berth length up to 6ft 5in.

The galley area to port features all electric cooking courtesy of a halogen hob and microwave. The usual sink and fridge are augmented by plenty of cupboard and drawer space. A perfectly adequate heads with a fixed shower head built into the ceiling lives aft to starboard, whilst over to port, a bi-fold door leads to the mid cabin. It's compact, and made to feel more so with the doors in place, but a small changing area and generous double berth make it very useable.

PHOTOS: WILLIAM PAYNE



FOLDING BITS



TABLE STORAGE



AFT COCKPIT



SUNPAD



GRP SUNROOF SYSTEM



WET-BAR

Exterior

Plenty of options and stowage facilities

Side decks, whilst narrow, are more than useable, although the up-and-over through the windscreen is still the preferred route forward to the foredeck. Cockpit wet bar includes a griddle as well as a fridge, sink and bin. Large storage areas live beneath most of the cockpit seating with the table neatly hidden behind a backrest. Huge standard-fit bathing platform is useful but likely to add a four-figure sum to marina berthing costs.



FOOTREST

Performance & handling

The high screen and flat roof mean that even stood at the helm the view is still through the screen, not over it. As a result there is no header rail blind spot to crane over or duck under and the protection from wind blast is total, very welcome for the high-on-sub-zero temperatures of our test day. Also welcome is the challenging long rolling swell, which a brisk easterly wind always drives into Torbay where our test is.

Twin D3-220 diesels tucked way back under the sunpad are quiet and responsive, lifting the 35SC quickly onto the plane. Trimming out to zero on the leg indicators picks the nose up and allows the boat to skim effortlessly at a very comfortable 27 knots at 3500rpm, 500rpm off maximum revs. At wide open throttle, the tachos nudge 4200rpm delivering 33 knots on our lightly loaded test.

This suggests props ideally suited to full tanks and some gear on board, which should pull the revs back to the recommended 4000rpm maximum.

Across the rev-range, sound levels are particularly impressive, especially given the all-encompassing hardtop which might have trapped and amplified noise. Just 76dB(A) registers on our sound meter at 25 knots, allowing the solid, rattle-free ambience to shine through.

Running into the wind can be the undoing of many a sportscruiser, with a hard, bone-rattling ride the normal outcome, but the Regal thrives in a head sea. Trimming the legs in, we shoulder through the lumpy grey topography with total confidence, slicing cleanly and landing softly, throwing spray out low and wide. Despite several hours of extreme provocation, not one drop of spray touches those tall screens. The hull loves to turn too, banking steadily with no digging in or lurching round.



"The hull steadfastly refuses to misbehave"



MID CABIN



SALOON TO MID CABIN



TOILET COMPARTMENT

Interiors

Quality finish and room to manoeuvre

Clever forward berth conversion makes excellent use of space, while the dinette area extends to create a small third double berth. The galley is an all-electric cooking package, so

an inverter might be needed. High quality materials and finish help justify the cost, whilst over six feet of headroom maintains the feeling of space.



EXTENDING BERTH



MAIN CABIN

From the helm

Great protection and viz

Expensive joystick control sets off what is a very smart and sophisticated helm console, the only real issue is that the space given over for a chartplotter is small and not central. Everything else is pretty much perfect for the skipper, the helm seat is comfortable whether stood or sat, and it's well sheltered by the tall screens, which also deliver class leading visibility.



Specification & value

Regal has long been considered a premium brand, and not without justification – real cherry veneers, hardwood saloon flooring, Corian countertops, stainless steel drinks holders, that excellent electric GRP hardtop and a chartplotter all help to justify the £245,000 base price as fitted with the joystick controlled D3-220 Volvo Penta diesels of our test boat. Useful though it is, we'd be tempted to ditch the joystick and save £18,000 which would help toward the extra Regal charge to supply the boat with the enclosed mid cabin and bed instead of open plan seating, not to mention an electric windlass, synthetic teak swim platform and shorepower, all of which you might expect to find on the standard equipment list.

Technical data

KEY DIMENSIONS

BUILD	GRP
RCD	C
LENGTH OVERALL	36ft 10in (11.2m)
BEAM	11ft 4in (3.4m)
DRAUGHT	2ft 11in (0.90m)
DISPLACEMENT	5.75 tonnes
FUEL CAPACITY	140gal (636lt)
WATER CAPACITY	42gal (189lt)
WIDTH OF SIDE DECKS	5in (13cm)
HEADROOM IN CABIN	6ft 2in (1.88m)
FORECABIN BERTH	6ft 5in x 4ft 11in (1.95m x 1.50m)
MID CABIN BERTH	6ft 7in x 5ft 0in (2.01m x 1.52m)
Engines	Volvo D3-220 with joystick, DPS outdrives
Configuration	5 cyl 2.4 litre, 220hp @ 4,000rpm

PERFORMANCE

Conditions	Easterly force 4 gusting 5, sea moderate
Load	0% water, 20% fuel, 2 crew

RPM	KNOTS	GPH	LPH	MPG	RANGE	NOISE
2,500	11	5.7	26	1.9	213	76
3,000	19	8.8	40	2.2	246	78
3,500	27	13.2	60	2.0	224	76
4,000	30	20.2	92	1.5	168	78
4,200	33	22.0	100	1.5	168	79

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 and other issues. Noise readings in dB(A) were taken in the saloon.

PRICES

STANDARD BOAT	inc VAT
with twin Volvo D3-220s	£227,163
JOYSTICK	£18,015
ANCHOR UPGRADE FROM DANFORTH TO PLOUGH	£647
ANTI-FOULING	£2,765
COCKPIT FRIDGE	£600
AIR CON/HEATING	£4,339
FLEXITEAK SWIM PLATFORM	£2,118
FOREDECK SUNPAD	£629
GARMIN EURO 100 VHF RADIO	£541
WINDLASS – ALL CHAIN	£2,882
GENERATOR – DIESEL	£9,876

BOAT AS TESTED £277,163*

*Boat as tested price may include alternative options



Enginebay

Hydraulically powered engine hatch opens backwards towards the stern. Engine installations are tidy, and the optional generator tucks neatly into the corner. Access into the engine room is something of a scramble however. Electric fuel transfer pump between twin tanks is an unusual feature.

THE VERDICT

The enclosed mid cabin and proper side decks are the most obvious efforts to transform this American interloper into something that will appeal to the Europeans. But actually the real change takes place below the waterline. American boats have in the past been noted for their expansive open plan interiors and flat bottoms more suited to intra-coastal than offshore, but Regal show that they can build a hull to take on the rough stuff. So, for all the clever cockpit arrangements and electric berth conversions, the thing that impresses most about this boat is the way it tackles a sea.

Meet the family



BIGGER

Regal 42 Sport Coupe from £507,000
LOA: 42ft 4in (12.9m)
Big step up in size and an even bigger one in price gives same high hardtop styling but two separate cabins, both en suite.



SMALLER

Regal 30/35 Express from £120,167
LOA: 29ft 5in (8.9m) / 34ft 8in (10.5m)
No hardtop, but similarly adaptable cockpit and the unusual window line lets plenty of light into the four berth interior.

The rivals



Sessa C35 from £209,000
LOA: 37ft 1in (11.30m)
Sleek hardtop and a solid sliding roof. A clever sliding bulkhead system allows the forward berth to be open plan yet shut off at night.



Sealine SC35 from £206,280
LOA: 36ft 5in (11.10m)
Soft top sunroof and separate forward cabin combine with edgy styling to deliver a bona fide best seller.