

Sealine SC42

Sealine's next generation hardtop is loaded with features, but does it all add up to a cruiser you will want to buy? REPORT BY CARL RICHARDSON

BOAT REPORT
SEALINE SC42

OK, let's start with some straightforward facts about this boat. It is undeniably one of the most sophisticated, accommodating and downright thoughtful 40ft crafts you will ever clap your eyes on. It has bits that move, where other boats don't even have bits. But for all its cleverness, which we promise we will get to, the story behind this boat is pretty simple.

Sealine has sold an awful lot of 35ft SC hardtop sportscruisers over the past few years and it needed, urgently, to create something for all the owners of said 35-footers to move up to. The premise for testing this boat is, therefore, equally simple. Does it deliver? Will it give 35ft owners a significant, affordable and realistic step-up in quality, ride and accommodation? And if you're reading this thinking, 'I'm quite interested in the SC42, and I don't own a 35ft boat', it is still simple. Because if it can impress your average 35ft sportscruiser owner, a hard-to-please and demanding skipper if there ever was, we can guarantee it will be good for everyone else.

The joy of toys

As with the SC42's *raison d'être*, its fundamental make-up is pretty straightforward too. Based on the same hull as the F42, we know it's going to perform pretty impressively on the water, regardless of whether you opt for the standard-fit sterndrives or optional IPS pods. We also know it will be wide, with 14ft 8in of beam (that's nearly as much as the Prestige 500S), and that it will be capped by a SC hardtop design that offers the best visibility and sunroof system in the business. Below decks the two-cabin layout will include a class-leading forward master suite, complete with that 'invite-a-friend' shower stall. So with those fundamentals in place, we can focus on a suitably festive level of toys.



The brief...



One of the most eagerly anticipated boats of the last 10 years comes packed with clever features and good ideas. Is this the boat to really move the game on or

will it flounder in a sea of specification-induced price hikes? **Carl**

LOA: 45ft 10in (14m)
PRICE: from £373,584
TOP SPEED: 33 knots
BUILDER: Sealine
ENQUIRIES Tel: 01562 749100
www.sealine.com



Most of the excitement surrounding the SC42 has been about sliding cockpit seats, which are admittedly fun and potentially even useful, offering owners a variety of ways to sit, lounge or dine. In a similar move, only involving shifting ownership, Sealine itself changed hands during the SC42's development and emerged proclaiming itself to be a prestige brand, something that its many boatowners may have already assumed. But the point is, to underline its new serious prestige status, Sealine has not only decided to create all manner of on-board features for the SC42, but also to make many of them standard. So the sliding seats are standard, as is the tastefully discreet coloured topside gelcoat, a bow thruster and the electric sunroof. The IPS boat includes a generator as standard, while a sterndrive boat will have to make do with an inverter.

The cockpit, where most of the fun stuff is found, is pretty revolutionary itself. By doing away with the usual raised side decks to the aft third of the boat the cockpit is full beam, stretching out into that near 15ft of hull. Moving

shape of arm rests to the two inboard seats to help keep occupants safely ensconced. That would elevate this Sealine's helm from the merely fantastic to the absolutely perfect.

Luxury below

A wide saloon flanked by two side windows and a large skylight sets the scene for a very bright below-decks layout. The galley is afforded particular space and specification, a big fridge and standard fit wine-cooler set under the stairwell are two impressive features of note, the tiny sink less so. Like the F42, stowage across the interior is good, with any spare void utilised and both cabins laying on enough space for a fortnight away.

One of the peculiarities of the SC42's big sister, the SC47, is its mid-cabin, which might be described as a luxurious cave – well-finished but with precious little headroom to play with.

When fitted with sterndrives, the SC42's mid-cabin is of a similar design but it works better, with plenty of cute ideas, including the three sliding single berths that give you

all sorts of sleeping options, and a head with a decent shower stall. On the IPS boat you will lose some space down here with the engines pushing the bulkhead forward.

The interior fitout is clean but also warm, with a new timber sole adding some class. But there are some issues. Back in the July 2011 issue, we waxed fairly lyrically about the SC35, mainly due to its much-improved finish. Here the story was less than impressive. We tested the first boat out of the factory, with Sealine freely admitting that this particular SC42 would be heading straight back there for ongoing development work.

The main issues were in the engine bay, where pre-production tinkering was very evident. To a lesser extent the cabinetry and general finish in the saloon was not of the same standard as the SC35 we looked at.

Sealine is adamant that the boat you see at a show near you will be much improved.

"The fitout is clean but also warm"



SURROUND SEATING/PORT ACCESS



LOUNGER



FOLDING BACKRESTS



HIDDEN FUEL FILLER



SAFETY KIT



FOREDECK



STANDARD LAYOUT

SEATING PLAN

A simple electrical worm-drive system shifts the seating into three distinct

layouts – split, surround and lounge, with about 100 variations in between. In full

loafing mode, with the table and backrests dropped, you end up with the kind of sun

pad Hugh Hefner would be proud of. The shifting seats can also create a central or

portside walkway, the latter being useful for alongside rope work.

On deck

Class-best decks outshine sliding seats

The full beam aft cockpit design is the key here, affording 50ft levels of space aft and class-best deck access. On the practical side, working the stern lines can be safely carried out from within the cockpit, while forward there are chest-high stanchions at the side deck entrance way. The decks themselves are wide and set within a substantial toe rail, while the foredeck is well gripped and comes with neat rope lockers. Sealine has borrowed an idea from a former model, the F37, with a fold-up backrest to the foredeck, making this a far more usable spot.



WET BAR



DECK ACCESS



ROPE LOCKERS

"The wine cooler is impressive, the tiny sink less so"



GALLEY

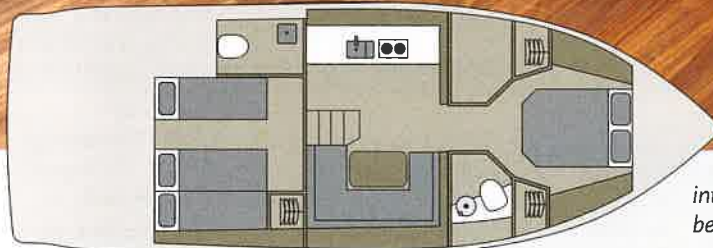
SNEAKY STOWAGE



SALOON



MID CABIN



Interiors

Masterful forward, mediocre amidships

Mediocre might be a bit harsh – most 40-footers would kill for a mid cabin offering three proper berths and a full en suite. There is no hull window for the cabin, but the ports are bigger than those on the SC35. The saloon's skylight and

integral blind allow it to switch between bright daytime parlour and cosy evening retreat, the main seating smartly converting into an occasional berth. The tall, wide, forward cabin is the master and comes armed with a separate shower stall to go with another toilet and shower compartment to starboard.

12V/220V SYSTEMS



TOILET COMPARTMENT



SHOWER



FORWARD CABIN

HELM



SIDE WINDOW



CHART AREA



HELM LOCKERS



From the helm

Four of a kind beats all

The two seats over to port might look a little short on legroom but they are incredibly comfortable when underway, allowing you to brace yourself in quite well. They also provide the skipper with two more pairs of look-out eyes. The helm console sticks to Sealine's preferred minimalist design, which you seem to either love or hate. This version does add in more sophistication with its graphite paint job and a sporty run of vents. It works very well, with paired gauges, cup holders, a bits tray and a clean central space for a 12in plotter screen. Another nice touch is the chart table worked into the cabin door. The twin-helm seat sat before the helm is fixed but looks like it could easily be modified to slide fore and aft. Visibility is excellent forward, aft or down the flanks, while standard-fit blowers should keep the windscreen clear.



PORT-SIDE SEATS

"Not so much a driver's boat, as a boat that drives itself"



Performance & handling

This Richard Crocker-designed, medium-vee hull consistently proves itself to be an easy and adept performer. Fitted with twin 370hp D6 sterndrive diesels, running joystick control, the SC42 metronomically hit 33 knots, turns in at this speed without the slightest concern and can deal with most sea conditions thrown at it, as long as you slow down a bit. It's not so much a driver's boat, as a boat that drives itself.

Without the joystick and its clever steering management, a standard hydraulic system might be a little less composed, and more aggressive, but this will always be an easy boat to handle. Trimming the drives is child's play. You simply keep the legs tucked in until the boat is well past 20 knots, only taking the legs out to perhaps -1 at speed.

A cruising speed of between 25 and 27 knots will return you around 1.2mpg, and at that rate

you really are cruising, with a very laid-back, noticeably more refined vibe on board than at 30 knots. If you do drive the boat a hard, its beam and bluff bow sections can be felt. Running into a fairly innocuous 2ft to 3ft chop, the ride was ruffled into something less composed than you would experience on a similar sized Princess.

Another surprise is that this lighter, lower SC does not feel much more honed when compared to the bigger, taller F42 we tested last year. That said, the F42 was running twin 435hp IPS-600s. You can fit the same IPS set-up to the SC42, but whether it will deliver any more speed is open to debate. What is clear, is that IPS will cost you a lot more money.

Sealine plans to swap the G4 props the test boat was running to G3s, which should deliver full revs - we were under-revving by 220rpm - and faster acceleration. So the SC42 you buy should be significantly more responsive.



Specification & value

Sealine's quest for greater prestige through higher specification is laudable, but risky. Many potential buyers looking to move up from a £200,000 35ft cruiser will expect to pay more for a bigger boat, but they will have a limit. The way the IPS boat is marketed, with its all-inclusive spec and a potential half-a-million pound price tag looks out of step with the Sealine fanbase, especially with its smaller mid cabin. But a 330hp sterndrive SC42 can be bought for under £400,000, delivering most of the toys and features you want including the seats that slide. You would still have to shell out £13,462 for joystick control though, which you should consider living without. Put it towards a generator to power all the toys instead.

The SC42's biggest test will come when the Princess V39 hits the water next month with an expected price tag under £300,000.

Technical data

KEY DIMENSIONS	
BUILD	GRP
RCD	Category B
LENGTH OVERALL	45ft 10in (14.0m)
HULL LENGTH	41ft 4in (12.6m)
BEAM	14ft 8in (4.4m)
DRAUGHT	3ft 7in (1.1m)
AIR DRAUGHT (MAST DOWN)	10ft 6in (3.2m)
DISPLACEMENT	11 tonnes
FUEL CAPACITY	264gal (1200lt)
WATER CAPACITY	66gal (300lt)
WIDTH OF SIDE DECKS	12in (30cm)
HEADROOM IN SALOON	6ft 5in (1.98m)
FORECABIN BERTH	6ft 5in x 4ft 6in (1.98 x 1.4m)
MID CABIN HEADROOM	6ft 5in (1.98m)

PERFORMANCE	
Engines	Volvo Penta D8-370 DPH
Configuration	6cyl, 5.5lt, 370hp at 3600rpm
Conditions	southerly force 3, slight
Load	fuel 50%, water 50%, crew 4

RPM	KNOTS	GPH	LPH	MPG	RANGE	NOISE
2400	16.0	15	70	1.06	223	78
2600	19.4	18	82	1.07	225	78
2800	23.5	20	92	1.17	247	78
3000	26.8	22	101	1.21	255	78
3300	31.2	27	123	1.15	242	80
3470	33.4	33	149	1.01	213	81

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
twin 330hp sterndrives	£373,584
with IPS 600	£443,760
JOYSTICK CONTROL (STERNDRIVE BOAT)	£13,462
BOW THRUSTER	STD
HEATING	£5,504
LEISURE PACK (WET BAR, FORE DECK PAD)	£4,500

BOAT AS TESTED £413,112

Enginebay

The engine bay was easy to access but delivered to us in a poor state. We look forward to seeing the production version, which will have new stainless steel straps for the plastic fuel tanks. We are fast coming round to the idea of plastic tanks, with various experts extolling their virtues, even suggesting they are better than stainless steel ones. New composites are improving durability while weight saving is another useful advantage. The seams on any tank are always the weak point, but Sealine uses a seamless roto-moulded process for increased strength. Another neat idea is fitting a separate battery at the helm to power the VHF. Should the worst happen, it means you can still transmit even if the enginebay is flooded.



THE VERDICT

So does the SC42 deliver? First, the easy bit: the space and specification of the deck level would impress a 60ft owner, so we're guessing our 35ft brethren will be happy. By comparison, the two ensuite interior is merely excellent. Which just leaves a price that threatens to fall into half-a-million pound territory. Thankfully, the cheaper sterndrive boat would seem to be the one to own. So it's a resounding yes. The SC42 is the most versatile and just plain enjoyable cruiser out there. In other words, it is just about good enough for a 35ft sports cruiser owner.



Meet the family



BIGGER

SC47 from £415,680
LOA: 46ft 11in (14.02m)
Wonderful sea boat with effortless pod drive performance and great visibility from the helm. Saloon gives third cabin option.



SMALLER

SC35 from £216,000
LOA: 36ft 5in (10.97m)
Best-selling hardtop delivers an almighty dose of on-water ability, with three-berth mid cabin, huge SC sunroof and a good hull.

The rivals



Princess V39 from £282,000
By the time you read this, the V39 will have made its debut at the London Boat Show and, if it works as well as it looks, Princess might well have another best seller on its hands.



Fairline Targa 44 GT from £438,240
From the slightly smaller Princess to a larger Fairline. The 44 GT offers the usual mix of solid build, sharp design and a capable hull. Cheaper sterndrive version is the one to buy.