



# Ocean Cat 520

## by Peter's Watersports



**I**'m always happy when I see that there are still some boat dealers that have an eye on development and are willing to take the risk and put new boats on the market.

One of these dealers is Peter Kuffler of Peter's Watersports. He just seems to grow from strength to strength.

Peter is currently busy putting together a fleet of ski-boats so that he has something for everyone, no matter what size boat they want. He recently added the Ocean Cat 520 to his stable of boats and jetskis, and asked me to take her for a test run.

### GENERAL IMPRESSION

I first saw Peter's new baby in his workshop and at first she reminded me of another small boat in the market, but on closer inspection I noticed quite a few differences. This is a boat for the entry-

### SPECIFICATIONS

Length – 5.2m (17ft)  
 Beam – 2.2m  
 Min hp – 2 x 60hp  
 Max hp – 2 x 90hp  
 Buoyancy – Foam/bottles  
 Power as tested – 2 x 90hp Yamaha  
 2-stroke motors

level market, with a price to match. She also reminded me of my first boat — neat, clean and comfortable — perfect for the type of fishing I intended to do.

I was most impressed that the Peter's Watersports team is building this boat themselves and are trying to develop an all-rounder that will suit our east coast fishing conditions. By the looks of her, it seems that they might well have succeeded.

### SEA CONDITIONS

We had an awesome morning — no wind and just a little bit of swell — but by the time Chad Llewellyn arrived for

the test at 11 o'clock, the wind was blowing slightly and the swell had picked up quite a bit.

### TRAILERING AND LAUNCHING

The Ocean Cat 520 comes on a galvanised breakneck trailer and is much lighter than many of the other boats in her class in the marketplace. Towing the boat through traffic at 11am proved a cinch, and we had no problems manoeuvring her. It was also easy getting onto the beach.

We pushed her stern-first into the surf and she easily slid off the trailer and into the water. I didn't even have to turn her around by hand — I used the engines to swing her around and off we went to give her a good test out at sea. On our return I ran her out onto the sand and watched Chad load her on to the trailer with no problems. He made it seem like such a simple task. It just shows — the more you do something the better you get at it.

### MOTORS AND CONTROLS

The test boat was fitted with two 90hp Yamaha two-strokes with cable side-mount controls and hydraulic steering. On these big engines it's better to have hydraulic steering; otherwise you'd have to hang on to the steering to get her to turn.

This boat was well overpowered with these two 90hp motors, but as I've

said before, I would rather be overpowered than underpowered. The normal cable controls worked just fine — getting her into gear was not difficult and she clipped easily into neutral when I pulled back on the controls.

#### PERFORMANCE

With the two 90hp Yamaha two-strokes on the back, the Ocean Cat 520 certainly came alive. From a standing position to full throttle and onto the plane, fasten your seat belt and hang on! Indeed, she jumped out the hole with lightning speed. This is one of the aspects that makes her suitable for surf launching. She generates a great deal of speed very quickly and has the ability to swing around on a tickey.

Next we tried the turns from port to starboard and back again. Both turning circles were very tight with no cavitation at all. However, because of the power pushing her, I felt the boat coming out the water on a turn, so easy on the throttle when you accelerate and go into turns.

Pushing her nose into the swell with the weight of the engines at the back, she ran smoothly and steadily without any reaction out of the ordinary. She gave a stable, smooth ride.

With the swell behind her I increased the speed drastically, and normally this is when a boat would broach or dig her nose down into the swell. Well, I had no such problems with this boat. She just kept on running well down the swell with no swinging, rolling or broaching.

On a slow troll, as when fishing for 'cuda and other gamefish, she idled smoothly and ran straight. When I increased the speed to 4/5 knots she glided over the water and I didn't have to swing the steering all the time.

With the overpowering in mind, I'm positive this boat would easily manage with smaller engines.



At no stage did I need to use trims to correct her ride, and for me that's an indication that she would be able to handle rough seas.

#### LAYOUT AND FINISH

This little boat's layout has been kept very simple — after all, she's for fishing, not to go to a show. Her simple layout creates more space on the deck for you, while giving you the opportunity to add on some extras should you want to.

Starting at the front, the anchor hatch is easy to access. The console is neatly designed with everything in its place, and the height was perfect for me. There are storage hatches in the front, and in the middle of the boat there's an extra hatch to sit on and for storing the fuel.

At the stern she has a false transom and splashwell with a livebait well in the middle. It has a window so you can check that your livebait is still alive! The gunnels are at such a level that no matter what your height, it would be comfortable to stand on the deck and

fish while resting against them.

There's enough space on this 17ft craft for four people to fish easily. One must, however, bear in mind that this is an entry-level boat to suit your pocket, so don't expect her to come with a double bed.

#### CONCLUSION

I often get phone calls from people asking me what boat they should buy. I do give a few suggestions, but the bottom line is that you always need to test a boat yourself before you buy it. After all, you wouldn't buy a car without a test drive, would you? The Ocean Cat 520 from Peter's Watersports is an impressive entry-level craft and certainly one of the boats I would recommend you take for a test ride if you're looking for something in this category.

Well done to Peter's Watersports. Their main objective was to develop a basic fishing craft — and this they have achieved. I think they have done a great job with this boat and will do well in this market.

