

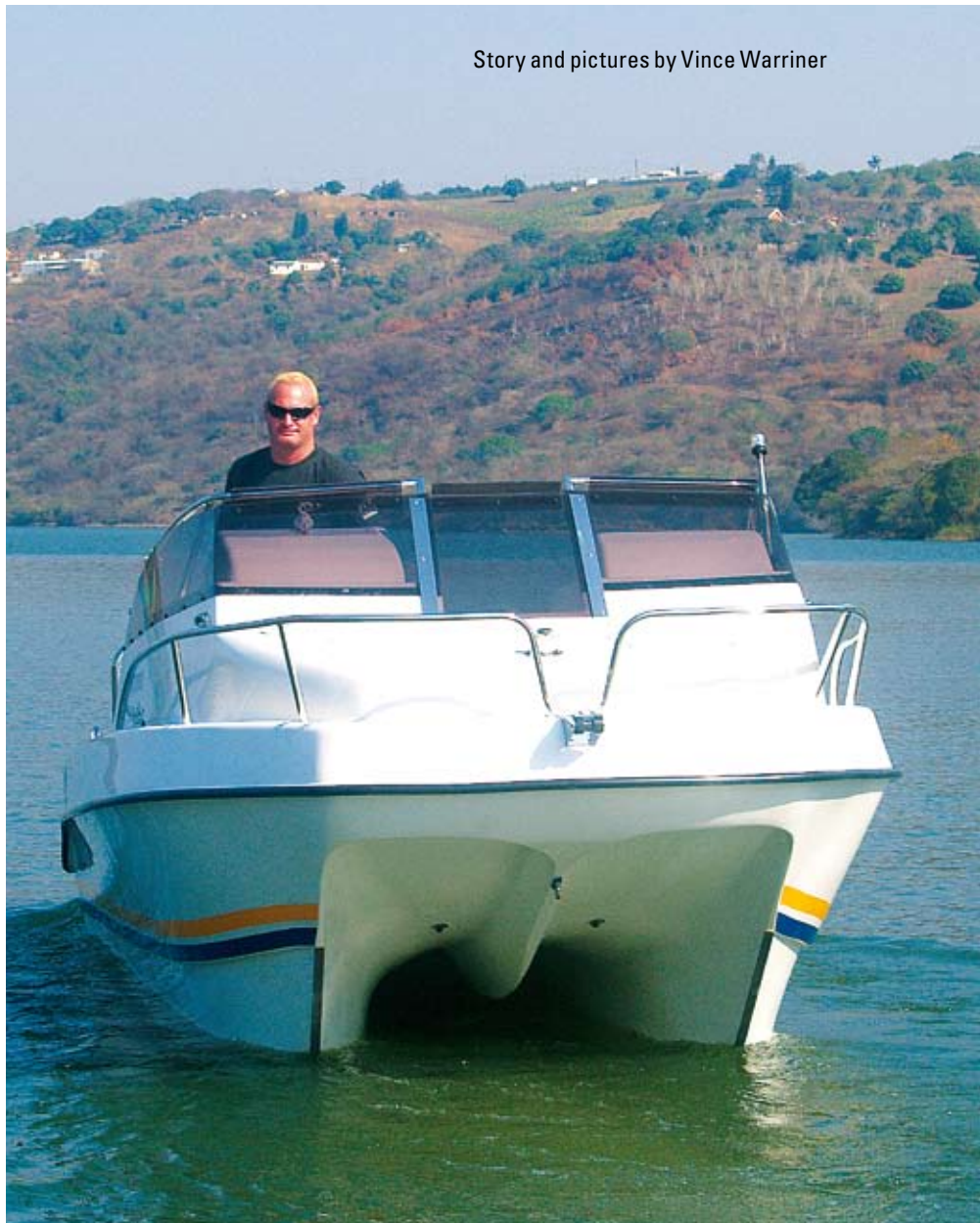
OCEAN CAT

A serious boat for the serious fisherman



Living at the coast from a boat review scenario definitely has its advantages. The opportunity to evaluate sea-going boats as well as bass and water ski boats adds variety, along with the added pleasure of new destinations to visit.

200




Story and pictures by Vince Warriner

When Peter Kuffler asked me to review two of his boats, the request came on the back of three boats I had to do the day before. (Our November edition of *Leisure Boating* covered the Sea Vee 500). The Ocean Cat 200, the main subject of this account, was done on the same day, and due to time constraints we did the review at the popular and picturesque Hazelmere Dam just north of Verulam on the Natal North Coast. I was met at the

dam this time by sales and workshop specialist Chad Llewellyn and assistant Riaz Thaver.

General impression

This 6.30m (20 ft) outfit weighing in at 860 kg (sounds like a prize fighter) certainly looks the part. She has appealing lines and the striping along the hull adds colour and character, and one is immediately struck by her sturdiness which will surely attract real fishermen. 



With appealing lines and a sturdy hull, the 6.30 m and 860 kg Ocean Cat will surely attract the real fishermen.

Conditions for test

On this perfectly clear weekday afternoon there was a distinct lack of other boaters around so we basically had the dam to ourselves. Even though there

was hardly any traffic on the dam, the flat waters weren't ideal conditions to test this game fishing boat. I had though, previously been to sea on an Ocean Cat so I could compare performances.



The well laid out helm area has a protective windscreen, screen rails for safety and two comfortable, removable swivel seats.

Launching and trailering

Chad arrived with a single axle breakneck trailer. Obviously a 4x4 vehicle is necessary to launch off a beach but Hazelmere's facilities are excellent as are the slipways. Launching was a breeze here and once the winch was released she was off the trailer in a jiffy. Recovery later onto the trailer proved just as simple. I noted that the galvanising finish of the trailer was excellent.

Deck layout

The Ocean Cat is a serious boat for the serious fisherman! Experience and careful consideration has gone into the layout. Up front are the standard bollard and bow roller and two large anchor hatches (The bow rails are split allowing easy access through to the anchor hatches).

The windscreen is well made with a centre piece for added protection and screen rails fitted for safety. Screen spoilers on the windscreen catch any

extra spray when the going gets rough and choppy.

Two comfortable, removable, upholstered swivel seats can be found up front for the pilot and crew member, and there are two well-positioned grab handles on the gunwales for passenger safety. It is worth commenting on the quality of the stainless steel, which is 360 grade, and highly polished. This boat sports two stainless steel roll bars onto which trawling rod holders are fitted to complete the package.

There is a fish hatch upfront on the deck and space for four fuel cans on each side of the boat. A centre coffin hatch contains a cooler box for those necessary drinks to quench the thirst. The carpeted deck not only enhances the overall appearance but is very functional for better grip and coolness underfoot, instead of the usual fibreglass non-slip deck.

There is easy access to a four-drawer tackle box. This model had a night light and LED interior lights. At the rear you'll find an adequate live bait well and two battery compartments. Two keel strips are fitted to the hull for extra protection.

Motors and controls and electronics

Awesome power plants are fitted to this Ocean Cat. Two 90HP motors would suffice but this model was fitted with two 115HP Suzuki four-stroke motors. These 1950cc motors certainly are ultra quiet and getting the boat onto plane seemingly takes no effort.

Two 17-inch pitch propellers were fitted which gives the ideal torque and thrust in any sea conditions. We were on plane in just three seconds and up to top speed in no time at all. With multi-point sequential electronic fuel injection, starting is instantaneous and fuel consumption is competitive with other motors on the market.


This model was fitted with two rev counters, hour meters and trim/tilt gauges. A compass, switch panel and Lowrance GPS fish finder LCX37 complete the impressive dash line up.



The Ocean Cat was fitted with two 115 HP Suzuki 4-Stroke motors that were ultra-quiet and got the boat onto plane with no effort whatsoever!



The Ocean Cat's impressive dash line-up includes two rev counters, trim/tilt gauges, compass, switch panel and Lowrance fish finder.

The Lowrance LCX37 has incredible features including broadband, which pushes the wattage up to anything between 24000 and 30000 watts. This model, with its 8-inch screen, has picture quality and target separation that is vastly improved over previous models. The 600-watt transducer can reach deeper depths. 





There is a fish hatch upfront on the deck with space for fuel cans on either side while there's also a cooler box hatch for the thirsty.

Handling and performance

As I experienced in the surf on a previous outing this Cat can be thrown about and I never experienced any cavitation here either. Of course a skipper must make proper use of the power trims to do this. The steps and chines really soften the ride when wave jumping and tight turns are no problem. In fact one has to avoid being over confident with the smoothness of her performance.

The hull is foam-filled and with these power plants (despite being 6.3m long with a wide beam of 2.60m) her performance is very impressive. We did not do too much top-speed testing as the engines were brand new, however, there is certainly enough power to make one's hair stand on end!

Conclusion

I have no doubt the Ocean Cat's lines, deck and stainless steel layout will appeal to many fishermen. So if you are looking for a something special – whether a game fishing boat or a general all-purpose outfit, call Peter or Chad of Peters Watersports on (031) 573 1465, or visit www.peterswatersports.co.za.

At a glance

| | |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| LOA | 6.30 m (20 ft) |
| Beam | 2.60 m |
| Hull weight | 860 kg |
| Passenger capacity | Eight persons |
| Engine | 2 x 115 DF Suzuki |
| Top speed | 80 km/h |

