

SEA VEE 500

A Flying Fish

Doing five boat reviews at various venues in KwaZulu-Natal in just two days is both exciting and challenging to say the least, and this particular review took place on the second day. By then I was well into "review" mode and looked forward to a trip to Hazelmere Dam just outside Verulam, on the KwaZulu Natal North Coast.



Words and pictures by Vince Warriner



Under the spotlight this month is the nifty Sea Vee boat produced by Peter's Watersports from Durban – run by Peter Kuffler – which has grown over the past few years into a bustling and busy concern.

I was met at the dam by workshop manager and sales consultant Chad Llewellyn and assistant Riaz Thaver. Llewellyn has been with Peter's for some time now and has really helped to grow the business.

Conditions for test

This was a weekday afternoon so there was not too much activity going on around us and we basically had the dam to ourselves. While the weather was perfect with a hot sun though the water, it was almost too flat and calm.

General impression

I had seen the Sea Vee 500 previously at Peter's shop but in among lots of other boats and it was difficult to get a true impression. Now seeing her at the dam she seemed to come alive!

A five-metre boat does have real presence and the Sea Vee definitely stood out with her nice shape, top deck lines, centre console and stainless steel fittings. I could see this model had come a long way from earlier versions by the improved finishings and outward appearance.

Launching and trailering

Towing a boat of this size is relatively easy, even for a 1.5 litre vehicle, except of course if you are launching off a beach, where a stronger 4x4 vehicle would be needed. Thankfully, the facilities at Hazelmere are excellent as are the slipways.

The trailer was of the single-axle, brake-neck type. We did not need to use this, though, as the dam water level is high at the moment. Llewellyn reversed the Sea Vee down the slipway, released the winch and she was off the trailer in a jiffy. What a pleasure! Recovery later onto the trailer proved just as simple. ☒



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Deck layout

The general layout of the interior is pleasing to the eye – it is simple, spacious and uncluttered. Up front is the standard bollard and anchor hatch. The wraparound front padded seating is white with blue piping in colour, and is striking and comfortable. There is plenty of storage to be found under the seating.

The well-designed centre console with its screen and stainless steel screen rail is an attractive feature that cleverly houses two 25-litre jerry cans of fuel. The console also hosts a rev counter and a Furuno L54100 fish finder. The steering system used is a cable push-pull type that is well-proven and functional with little strain necessary on the arms. In front of the console you'll find a flush fish hatch while behind the console is a comfortable, white upholstered bar stool seat.

Along the inside of the high-sided gunwales there are two storage panels on either side – ideal for lures –suntan oil, glasses, etc. The gunwale height offers passengers and crew a real sense of safety and confidence at all times.

A raised, upholstered centre coffin hatch will adequately store your safety equipment. In the rear of the boat you'll find a bench seat that is also upholstered and offers good storage capabilities. Two battery boxes are built in on either side at the transom and a stainless steel roll bar (with a ski tow hook) at the rear enhances the look of the boat and is aesthetically pleasing.

Two scuppers are fitted at the back to help drain any water off the self-draining deck. Anglers will appreciate the four plastic rod holders, although stainless steel might be the better option. On the inside of the boat are the traditional built-in standard type rod racks.

There are port and starboard lights as well as a night light. A blue canopy was fitted but it was a bit too high for my liking. It tended to wobble around quite a bit when travelling, but it should be easy to cut it down to a lower height.




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Motor and controls

This Sea Vee was fitted with a single 85HP power trim and tilt Yamaha outboard with a 15-inch pitch propeller. (Other options include two 40HP motors for dual installation).The motor had two Aqualifts fitted onto the cavitation plate of this

pre-owned motor. While these do help to get a boat onto plane quicker, I don't think they are a must for this particular boat. The installation itself was very neatly done as we have come to expect from leading boat companies such as those offered by Peter's Watersports. 



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Handling

Thanks to the Aqualifts and the 15-inch propeller fitted, this 85 Yamaha literally jumped onto the plane. Starting proved straightforward and easy and the motor idled well. On opening the throttle on straight runs we reached a maximum of 5200 rpm, and going really well (we couldn't measure the actual speed as there was no speedometer fitted).

There was certainly more than enough power for multipurpose use, from running from a wave in the surf to pulling out a skier. When we went into tight turns this motor did not cavitate but we had correctly trimmed the motor in each time. She felt totally stable thanks to the semi-deep-vee, and did not rock and roll as we moved around the deck while stationary.

While there was a distinct feeling of porpoising as we rode along – which is not ideal – a lack of crew/passengers and safety equipment weight might have contributed to this particular issue.

Conclusion

Overall the Sea Vee is a well turned out value-for-money package. It is not an entry level type boat and its ability to be used as a multi-purpose craft weighs in its favour. For further information contact Peter's Watersports on (031)573 1465 or Peter Kuffler directly on 082 9512669

At a glance



LOA	5.0 m
Beam	2.20 m
Motors	85 HP or 2 x 40 HP
Hull	Foam filled
Weight	350kg
Passengers	5