

# leisure boating

march 2008

SA's leading power boat magazine

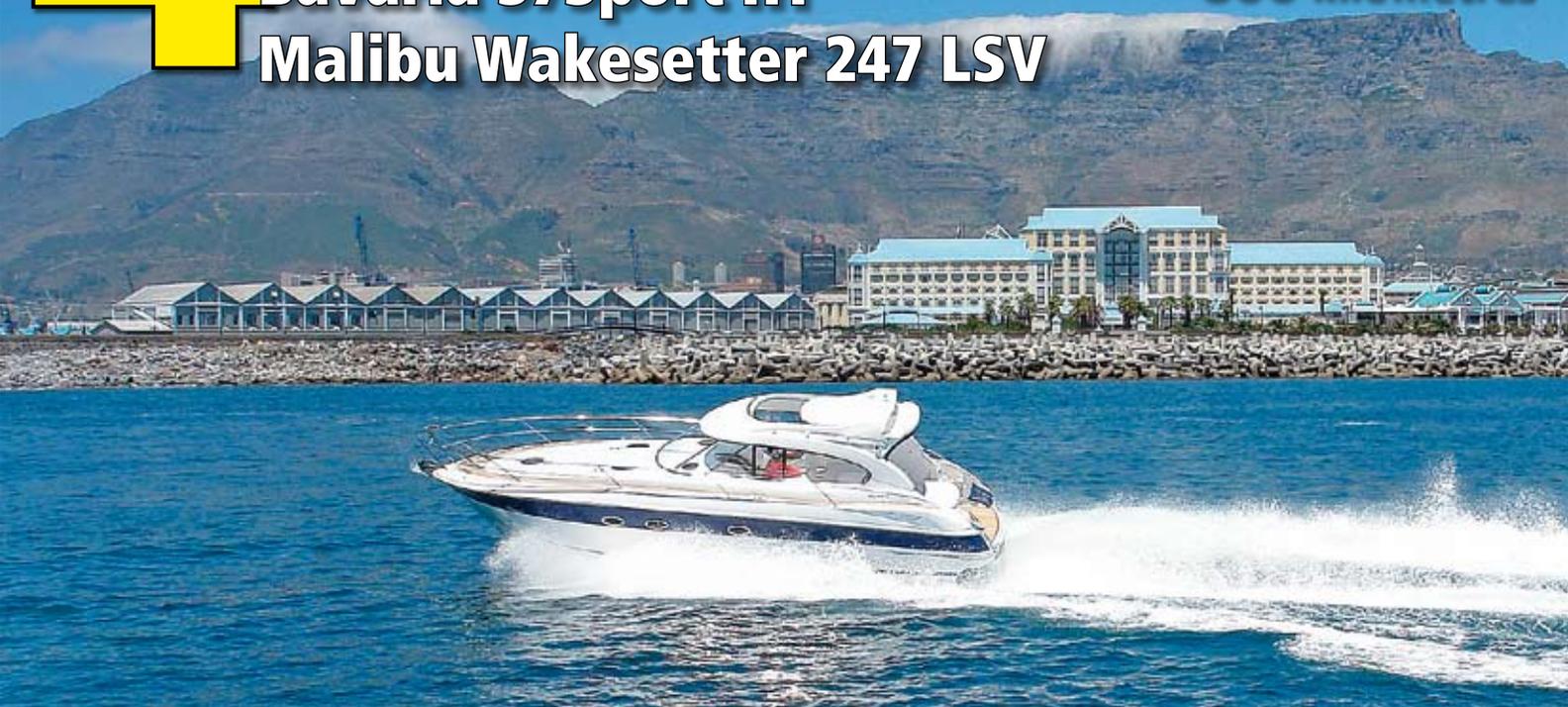
**4** **HOT REVIEWS**  
MacGregor 26M  
Sensation 1900LS  
Bavaria 37Sport HT  
Malibu Wakesetter 247 LSV

**Trans Agulhas**

5 days of **MAYHEM!**

60 Rubber ducks

800 kilometres



**Wakeboarding: Learn awesome new tricks**



**WIN**  
A BOAT,  
TRAILER  
& GEAR,  
worth  
**R380 000!**

R19.95 VAT incl. Other R17.74 Tax excl.



PHOTO CLASSIFIEDS > BOATING DESTINATION > INDUSTRY NEWS

NEW MODELS > BOATING GEAR > JETSKIS > WAKEBOARDING

# BAVARIA

## 37SPORT HT

Words by Dean Castle.

Pictures courtesy of Wiltel Marine.



*When I first set eyes on Bavaria's range of boats, I thought they were toys for only the super rich and famous. But, since testing the 37sport Hard Top (HT), I've realised that you don't have to be a tycoon to own one.*

“The boats are built to be used”, “We don't sell boats, we sell a lifestyle”, and “More boat for your money” are all guidelines that the Wiltel Marine (the agent for Bavaria in South Africa) employees live by. And they have many more.

Such as that people only remember the last ten minutes of a boat trip, so even if you've been out on the ocean all day, having the time of your life, if the weather suddenly turns miserably cold and wet and your passengers have to endure this, that's all they'll remember of the day. Bavaria cabins are made to be safe havens for when the weather turns bad.

And another is that no one jumps off a Bavaria – they step elegantly off one, merely because you don't have to have great physical dexterity to make docking look easy while putting the craft in exactly the spot you chose.

## Conditions for test

Our test took place in Table Bay just outside the V & A Waterfront in Cape Town. The weather was a warm 27 degrees with a slight wind teasing the port. After getting the go-ahead from Cape Town Port Control at 09h15, we made our way smoothly into the Atlantic Ocean.

## General impression

If you think that this 37 footer looks longer than most 37s, you'd be quite correct. While most boat manufacturers measure the length of their boats from the outside tip of the swim ladder on the stern to the furthest point of the anchor on the bow, Bavaria measure their craft according to the usable length in the water. This makes the 37Sport HT just a little shy of 39 feet in length.

A design feature of this new Bavaria is that the freeboard height has been increased, giving the captain significantly improved visibility and resulting in a very impressive 1.9 m of headroom in the saloon. ◻



This beauty's all about comfort and entertainment, while still oozing class. The touches of stainless steel following her sleek and slender lines and the warmth of the optional teak decking make her a supermodel of note.

## Deck layout

The regular 37 Sport has a radar arch with no weather protection, but HT stands for Hard Top, and this gives the helm ample protection from the elements. But the hard top doesn't mean that you're losing that open-air

experience, and missing out on the feeling of the wind in your hair – it has an electrically operated sunroof that can be slid back to create an opening of around 1.5 m in length. Even when it's closed, windows on each side of the cockpit can be opened to ensure good ventilation.

The sunbed at the stern is standard on all models, and the backrest for the cockpit seating can be moved forward on hinges to provide an even bigger area to sprawl out on. With the table removed from the cockpit seating area, you've got about enough space to play

a game of Twister, and the wet bar with sink and optional flush-mounted stainless steel fridge makes for a stylish business entertainment area.

When you move downstairs to the saloon, you begin to appreciate this 37's size. The ample head height alone isn't what makes the area so fabulous – it's the atmosphere of sheer opulence provided by a combination of the warmth of the U-shaped, mahogany teak seating with beige upholstery, and the light radiating from the ceiling skylights. At night the warm glow of the ceiling down-lights



Beneath the galley work surface are stainless steel sinks with hot and cold water.



The bathroom is bigger than those on most 50 footers.

ensures that this cabin is welcoming and inviting. On the whole it's as stylish and comfortable as most upmarket hotels.

Throughout the saloon the flooring covers hidden storage lockers which assist in keeping the interior neat by keeping unused gear out of sight.

The galley comprises a stainless steel sink (with lift-up covers to maximise the work surface area) with a cutlery drawer beneath it, a pressurised water system, a two-plate electric hob with an additional alcohol burner, a large, flush-mounted stainless steel fridge/freezer combo, and a microwave. There's also enough cupboard space to store food for an army.

The forward cabin in the bow features a luxurious double bed and is well appointed with cupboards, shelves, and two wardrobes. A sliding door for

privacy separates it from the saloon area. The roomy aft cabin features two single beds that can made into a double bed, and clothes storage in the form of hanging lockers and two wardrobes. The 37Sport HT's bathroom is bigger than those on most 50 footers. It's got a full-sized mirror, a washbasin with hot and cold water, a fully enclosed separate shower with hot and cold water, storage compartments, an AC-outlet, and a sea toilet.

Fresh air fanatics will be happy that there are numerous opening skylights and portholes throughout the yacht.

## Motors and controls

I know it's very clichéd to say that engines purr, but on idling through the harbour at 6 knots with the motors ticking over at 1 500 rpm, this cruiser



The warm ambience of the saloon.



The cabins are spacious and comfortable.



A skylight in the forward cabin allows you to look up at the stars as you drift off to sleep.

couldn't have sounded more like a litter of contented kittens having their tummies tickled. Once out in the open ocean with the throttles pushed open all the way, the powerful 5.7 litre V8s make her leap forward. We achieved 29 knots GPS speed while travelling against the incoming current. But this kind of speed requires fuel, so expect a consumption of around 57 litres an hour. While we continued to run against the current, we cruised at a comfortable speed of around 18 to 20 knots at 4 400 rpm. This turns the burn rate to a much better 38 litres an hour.

Piloting the 37 is easier than riding a tricycle. You warm up the engines, release her moorings, push a left or right button to activate the bow thrusters, and give her some forward speed. Once out of the dock, pushing a second button activates pre-set trim tabs which automatically trim the vessel to keep the horizon level. Then when you've reached your chosen speed, all that's left is for you to point the vessel in your chosen direction and to enjoy the company of your guests.

## Handling

Although weighing in at 9 tons when unloaded, the 37Sport HT feels light when you're piloting and turning. You can turn the wheel to full lock at top speed with just one finger and she'll handle it without hesitation. There is a small drop-off from top speed in tight turns, but this adds to your safety should you have to take sudden avoiding action to miss an obstacle in the water.

*"Piloting the 37 is easier than riding a tricycle"*

The dashboard contains two separate sets of volt, engine trim, temperature and tachometer gauges (one for each engine), and one gauge for speed (in knots). A digital screen allows you to choose between water temperature, depth, fuel consumption and speed indicators. All the instrumentation is clearly visible, keeping the captain well informed of the craft's performance.

The bow section of the hull which is vulnerable to damage by flotsam is protected by aramid fabric which has high impact strength – essential given this boat's exceptional performance, enhanced by the design of a flatter aft.

## Finishing touches

The 37Sport HT has bow thrusters as standard; stainless steel bow rails, stern rail and fittings; a stainless steel anchor roller; a self-draining anchor locker; and an electrical 1 000 watt windlass.

Guests who enjoy a dip will appreciate the bathing platform built into the stern which features a shower supplied with hot and cold water.

The Bavaria we tested is the second to have been brought into the country with teak decking, and this, in my opinion, really makes the 37Sport HT stand out from other cruisers.

Since its design allows it to be relatively maintenance-free, it simply requires a wash down after use. And if this sounds like too much hassle, Wiltel Marine offer their clients a service like no other: if you're running late for

an appointment, just give them a call and they'll remove the covers from your 37Sport HT, warm the engines, refuel her if requested, and give her a rinse down on her return. Certainly this is convenience at its best!

## Conclusion

I've always thought cheap things are not built to last, and the higher the price tag, the better the quality, but the 37Sport HT is the exception. In relation to its competition, the price of R2 695 000 for this well-kitted-out model is pretty good considering what you get for your money. And with every optional extra available (excluding AV), you could still expect to pay less than R3 million.

When buying a craft with this price tag and of such a calibre, you'd expect to be able to just drive it away once you've signed the purchase papers,

right? And normally, once you've made the purchase, you'd still need to purchase a marine radio, life raft, flares, safety equipment and more, and you'd then have to attend a training course to get your skipper's ticket.

But Wiltel Marine believe in offering a complete package. By the time your keys are handed over to you, you will be able to step on board and head to a destination of your choice because you will already have attended Bavaria's Sea School and undergone their training on boat handling and equipment use. Plus all necessary safety equipment is supplied as part of the deal.

And as far as crew is concerned? Although this is a real family boat, you don't need a crew to take her out. Simply take a friend, and you're set to go.

For more information, contact Wiltel Marine on (021) 790 4378. ●

## At a glance

Bavaria 37Sport HT:

|                                  |            |
|----------------------------------|------------|
| Price as tested                  | R2 695 000 |
| LOA                              | 11.95 m    |
| Hull Length                      | 11.77 m    |
| Beam overall                     | 3.99 m     |
| Height above waterline (approx.) | 3.25 m     |
| Draught, drive raised (approx.)  | 0.75 m     |
| Draught, drive lowered (approx.) | 0.95 m     |
| Unloaded weight (approx.)        | 8 900 kg   |
| Fuel tank (approx.)              | 720 litres |
| Water tank (approx.)             | 250 litres |
| Max persons                      | 12         |
| Cabins                           | 2          |
| Berths                           | 4          |
| Height in cabin (approx.)        | 1.90 m     |

### Motors: 1 of 4 options

|                              |                 |
|------------------------------|-----------------|
| 2 x Volvo-Penta 5,7 GXI      | 239 kW / 320 HP |
| 2 x Volvo-Penta D4 – 260 EVC | 186 kW / 253 HP |
| 2 x Volvo-Penta D4 – 300 EVC | 220 kW / 300 HP |
| 2 x Mercruiser 350 Mag 5     | 224 kW / 350 HP |
| Available with Axis          |                 |

*“the price is pretty good considering what you get”*