

boat review

Gone with the Wind

Words by Scarlett Steer

Pictures courtesy of Bavaria/Wiltel







The only constant that us Cape Town boaters can be sure of in terms of weather is change. The notorious Cape wind is probably the single greatest factor that just about halves the amount of time we could potentially spend with family and friends out on the water. No matter how blue the sky, warm the sun or clear the water, a howling gale can turn a perfect day on the ocean into a thoroughly unpleasant experience. Bavaria Yachtbau may have come up with a solution however. With the introduction of the new Bavaria 35sport Hard Top, there's no such thing as sailing too close to the wind.

At just over 37 ft, the 35sport HT offers plenty of onboard room, with a spacious, family-friendly cockpit covered by the craft's key feature, the hard top in GRP. When comparing the hard top to a flybridge model craft, two things work in a hard

top's favour. Firstly, the helmsman need not be separated from his passengers while driving the hard top model, which often happens with flybridge models, where the helmsman must sit up top, away from family and friends. Secondly, while a flybridge is ideal for fishing,

it does make a boat more top heavy, and can accentuate a boat's pitch and roll on the ocean – not ideal for those of us who are less certain on our sea legs.

The weather on the day of our review really put the hard top to the test, with strong, rapidly changing





Open-plan galley sits opposite the saloon, and comes standard with plenty of mod-cons.

winds and sizeable swells making for unfavourable sea conditions. The 35sport HT is rated CE category B, meaning that she can handle anything up to four-metre swells. Weighing in at around 8.5 tons, the craft sat solidly in the water, and handled the adverse conditions admirably well. The thick fibreglass hull adds to the considerable weight of the boat, while above the waterline is constructed from a PUR-foam core, providing insulation and reinforcement of both the hull and the deck. This boat can reach up to 40 knots in perfect conditions with a stern wind, and, depending on the engine configuration, should easily reach a top speed of about 37 knots.

Settled comfortably into the cockpit bench seating underneath the hard top, I can honestly say I didn't feel a breath of wind, even with the fully electronic sunroof wide open. This is the only hard top craft with sliding windows in the cockpit, which enhances the feel of being out in the open. A canvas canopy encloses the cockpit at the stern, while still allowing plenty of light to enter, and a broad arc of safety glass wind-screen gives a clear 180-degree view for all onboard. Spacious C-shaped bench seating, upholstered in heavy marine fabric, wraps around a good-sized GPR picnic table, perfect for family lunches. The overall result is a spacious, light and airy, but fully protected cockpit area where everyone can gather regardless of the weather. ▶





The helmsman gets to perch on an adjustable, flip-up chair before a comprehensive panel of analogue instrumentation, monitoring the engine and boat's every move. Standard features include log, depth finder, and voltmeter, rev counter, engine temperature display and hour counter, illuminated compass and gauges monitoring fuel and oil pressure. The steering wheel comes standard in carbon design, and is fully height adjustable. The safety glass windscreen is fitted into a stainless steel frame and comes with a windscreen wiper and transportation and camper covers.

The cockpit area is fully draining through the transom, and illuminated in the hard top. It comes complete with a tinted sliding cabin door, stern shower with both hot and cold water, and a handy sink with stainless steel drink holders.

Moving from under the shelter of the hard top and towards the stern of the craft reveals a teak bathing platform and ladder. Standing at the bow gives you true appreciation of the size of the 35sport HT. A stainless steel bow rail and toe lip track the circumference of the bow as an added safety extra. A great optional extra here is the sun bed, which, in my mind, makes the absolute perfect spot to catch some rays. Stainless steel drink holders on the foredeck

are (thankfully) standard – what is a day full of sun and sea without something to wash it down with? Other standard features at the bow are a stainless steel bow fitting with anchor roller, a self-draining anchor locker, a 1 000 W electrical windlass with anchor and chain, and six stainless steel cleats.

The 35sport HT's interior is equally impressive in terms of space, with a good-sized saloon, galley, marine head and two double-berthed cabins. Plush carpeting is removable, and furniture is crafted from mahogany and veneer. In the saloon, a U-shaped bench seat curves around the table forming a nice eating area. Storage areas are provided under the bench seating, and together with other lockers and shelves, provide decent storage space. The saloon companionably faces an open-plan galley, which comes standard with a cutlery drawer, stainless steel sink and cover, pressurized water system, two-flame cooker, 12 V refrigerator and AC/DC outlets. The galley set up works well, making it a simple, user-friendly area in which to work. The marine head particularly impressed me, and is actually bigger than you might first expect. The shower has both hot and cold water with an electrical pump. The washbasin has a handy wall-mounted mirror above it, and the sea toilet has a manual pump and holding

tank. And for those of you that spend the majority of your time at sea either hanging green-faced off the bow or in the head, you'll be pleased to know that the door locks.

The 35sport HT's fore ship cabin is centred around a sleek double berth, which has a nifty storage compartment underneath. Plenty of shelving and two wardrobes provide lots of storage space. The aft cabin also has a double berth, as well as a smaller sleeping bench. The cabin is fitted with hanging lockers and two wardrobes. Both sleeping areas are fully lit with AC-outlets, and have portholes to maximize light and ventilation.

When behind the wheel of the 35sport HT, there's no denying the excellent manoeuvrability of the craft's stern drive system. This boat can be moored using the standard bow thruster and one engine alone, and turns on her own axis using both engines in the dual prop system, with one in reverse and one in forward. She can be easily handled by just two people, which cuts out the involvement of large crews of experienced people. "I've witnessed many people buy expensive boats and then be too nervous to take them out without a whole crew of experienced boaters", explains Willie Truter, Managing Director of Wiltel. "That doesn't happen with this boat. It's so easy to manage." ▶

The boat responds immediately to the slightest move of the steering wheel, and corners beautifully. The throttles do take some getting used to, however, as they are extremely sensitive. With a draft of less than a metre, she can be eased onto almost any mooring, and can be taken to

places like Kraalbaai, for instance, where most other boats of her size cannot go.

So, if I you have a spare couple of million in the bank, which, let's be honest, most of us will never have, then this would rate as one of my top five things to purchase. The 35sport

HT starts at R2.2 million, and the 35sport starts at R2 million. Both prices include twin petrol engines. For more information about this boat, or others in the Bavaria range, contact Willie Truter of Wiltel on (021) 790 4378 or 082 789 0319, or email him on willie@wiltel.co.za. ●

Specifications

LOA	11.40 m
Hull length	10.85 m
Beam	3.68 m
Approx. height above waterline	3.25 m
Approx. draft, drive raised	0.60 m
Approx. draft, drive lowered	0.92 m
Approx. weight	7 100 kg
Fuel tank	800 l
Water tank	250 l
Max. persons CE B	10
Cabins	2
Berths	4
Approx. height in cabin	1.90 m
Engines tested	2 x Volvo-Penta D6-310 EVC/DPH- Duoprop./include. Propeller 183 kW/248HP at the propeller

Some optional extras

Generator
Deck suction
Beech wood cockpit table
Beech wood serving table
Cockpit fridge and electric grill
Ray Marine C80 with GPS and plotter
Radar
Rudder indicator
Air conditioning
Cabin DVD with LCD screen
Cockpit CD and MP3 tuner combo
Cockpit and cabin carpeting (fully removable)
Bow sun bed

Standard electrical systems

Electrical trim flaps
Bow thruster SP 55
2 x 140Ah domestic batteries plus main switch
Starter batteries plus main switch
Bidata Sumlog-Ecosounder
AC-shore supply
20-litre warm water boiler
Navigation lights (BDI)
Engine compartment ventilator
Check-control-panel by diesel engine
45Ah battery charger (3-channel)
Bilge pump
Horn
Electrical engine hatch lifter
Stereo-radio with CD player
2 x saloon speakers
2 x cockpit speakers

Other standard features

VHF radio
CE certification, category B
CE fire extinguishing system
2 x fire extinguishers

