

second look - Headline 22



THE 22 and 25 were the largest in the range and, apart from the obvious difference in length, were very similar boats. In fact the only immediately obvious feature that tells them apart is the cockpit coaming, which on the 22 was stepped, as shown on the accompanying photographs, and on the 25 was a sweeping curve.

The GRP mouldings were laminated by Midland Marine, another Stourport company, on behalf of Heads, who then fitted out the shells using high quality Bruynzeel marine plywood. The 22 first came into production in the early 1960's, although at this time the superstructures were made from plywood.

However, by 1965 they had moved over to GRP and the design remained the same until production for public consumption ceased in 1972. During this time approximately eighty 22's left the factory

Heads Boatyard of Stourport on Severn, built a number of small pleasure craft for the waterways under the collective name of Headline Cruisers.

Here David Fuller reports on a good example of an early seventies 22 footer

having been fully fitted by Heads, together with an unknown number of shells for DIY completion.

Although some five boats were built in 1973 these were all for the hire fleet of Severn Valley Cruisers, who in 1974 took over Heads Boatyard, and went on to build another half a dozen or so 22's until production stopped completely in 1975.

Construction

The 22s' hull can easily be identified by the three moulded rubbing strakes: one on the chine and two intermediates on the hull side, all of which stop approximately eighteen inches from the stem.

The underwater shape is typical of craft built expressly for the inland waterways, with a rounded chine, and medium-vee section forward which flattens out towards the transom.

The hull/deck joint was capped by a timber rubbing strake, which needs to be kept in reasonable condition to prevent water seeping into the cabin space. Although the superstructure was of single skin construction it was given heavy

reinforcing, and consequently we felt quite confident walking about the cabin roof on our test boat *Diane*.

On Deck

The windscreen and other deck fittings on *Diane* were a little underpar, although they had obviously survived some twenty years of operation. The cleats for instance were on the small side, but there were no signs of stress cracks in the surrounding gelcoat, or water penetrating into the cabin. We felt happy moving about on deck with the non-slip moulded decks, and substantial handrails, and found it remarkably easy to get in and out of the cockpit.

Although the cockpit layouts varied depending on the engine configuration, they were all relatively practical, with excellent underfloor stowage, a reasonable doorway into the cabin, and a good helmsman's position. Seating for the over worked and under paid crew however, was not so sensible, with a tiny transverse (solid mahogany!) bench squashed in between the helm and engine/gas/fuel boxing.

Accommodation

The accommodation space was almost open plan, with a conventional linear galley to starboard, parallel dinette opposite, and 'V' berths forward. However, the simple toilet compartment was situated amidships, partially separating the dinette and forward berths.

One of the most impressive features of the Headline 22 was the size of the galley. The work top extended for over seven feet, with all the space beneath being given over to shelved cupboards. In addition to this a cooker with two burners, grill and oven was installed opposite the toilet compartment, in such a position that allowed access from the cockpit to the dinette with out disturbing the cook!

RIGHT: The cockpit features a (probably not original) helmsman's seat and 'ships wheel'.

BELOW: Looking down into the cockpit, the rather angular coaming harks back to the boats seventies ancestry.



Brokerage Boat Test

Headline 22 cruiser

CONTINUED...

Although the interiors were fitted out with warm mahogany faced plywood, vast areas of GRP were left uncovered, and therefore, together with a lack of secondary shelving and fancy fittings, Headline interiors can be a little bland and cold. On *Diana* this had been overcome with the now universally accepted practice of carpeting the cabin and hull sides, and lining the roof with pine tongue and grooving.

Engine and services

Although a large number of 22's were fitted with outboard engines the option of an inboard petrol, or diesel, engine with outdrive unit was available. A 15hp outboard, or the 1 cylinder Yanmar diesel, which was one of the more common inboard options, gave the boat a top speed of 8/9kts on flat water.

The electrical systems were relatively basic on the outboard engined versions, and if you are considering purchasing a boat with original wiring and appliances you should give this careful consideration. However, the gas system, although well short of modern specifications was installed with a sealed and vented bottle locker, and part of the pipe-work was clipped at the appropriate intervals. Water systems



tended to be relatively basic, although galvanised 20 gallon tanks were fitted under the cockpit floor.

Underway

Both the Headline 22 and 25 are ideal waterways craft, designed for easy handling with minimum wash. The lack of a deep keel did not seem to spoil the directional stability, although we have seen a number of boats fitted with the ubiquitous adder rudders.

General

Factory finished craft were given a hull number, which was usually stamped on the inside of the transom. However, no records exist and such numbers cannot be dated. Factory finished boats were also given a builder's plaque which was mounted above the doorway in the cockpit.

Finally it is important to note that the 22 is often referred to as a Headline 23. Although the hull was 22' 10" long, it was officially known as a 22. ↴

MAIN CRAFT SPECIFICATIONS

MAIN CRAFT DIMENSIONS

LOA	22ft 10in
Beam	6ft 10in
Draft	1ft 6in
Air draft	6ft 6in
Displacement	1500Kg (approx.)
Fuel capacity	Variable
Water capacity	20 gal
Berths	4

CABINS & BERTHS

Dimensions

Main cabin	8ft 6in x 6ft 4in
Fwd cabin	4ft x 6ft 4in
Toilet	2ft 5in x 2ft
Cockpit	6ft 6in x 5ft 5in

Headroom

Main cabin	5ft 10in
Fwd cabin	5ft 10in
Toilet	5ft 3in
Cockpit	6ft 4in

Berths

Main cabin	6ft 3in x 3ft 2in
Fwd cabin(x2)	6ft 2in x 2ft

HEADLINE 22 - Specifications

TEST BOAT DETAILS

Date of build	Early 1970's
Engine	Honda 10
Asking price	£3,000.00
Condition	Average externally & internally

These craft are widely available throughout the country, although there are higher concentrations in the Stourport area. Expect to pay considerably more for an inboard engined version, which may not necessarily be worth it. Prices for outboard power boats vary from approximately £2,500 to £5,000.

OWNERS CLUBS

As far as we know there are no Headline Owners' Clubs.

BUILDERS

Head Boatyard, York St., Stourport, Worcs. (Ceased trading 1973)

SPARES AND INFORMATION

Limited information is available from: Roger Page, Severn Valley Cruisers, Boat Shop, Mart Lane, Stourport on Severn, Worcs. Tel: (01299) 871165

OUR THANKS

To Shardlow Marina for the loan of Diana, who are contactable on (01332) 792832, and to Roger Page for his assistance with historical information.

FOR AND AGAINST

FOR

Very Spacious
Good stowage space
Reasonable headroom
Excellent galley
Good handling characteristics

AGAINST

No roof insulation
Simple construction
Narrow double berth
Poor cockpit seating
Simple services