

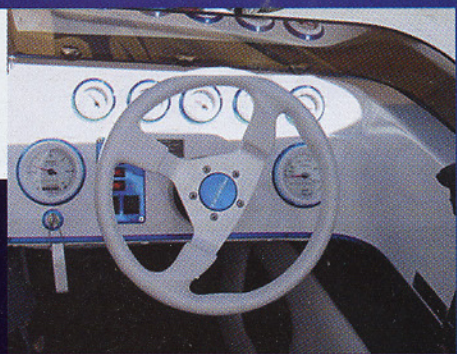
It is good to know that even as their production has shifted to larger, performance muscle-cruisers, Shockwave continues to put a great shine on their ever-popular 21-foot Step Skier, introduced in 1997.

The Skier combines Shockwave's thoroughly satisfying installation and finish skills with a ventilated bottom that really is faster than most vee-bottoms in its size class. We put this stylish lake boat through the punches in a huge range of conditions that Havasu presented and found it a highly appealing and very responsive machine.

bow-seating area, which isn't the largest you'll see, but which still rides a pair of prone riders in excellent comfort and style, and which will still carry a crowd if called upon. The seating's perimeter is wrapped in elegant stainless railing—powdercoated white, in our boat's case. There's an adequate amount of storage in the boat; three compartments are built

SHOCKWAVE

21 STEP SKIER: Introduced in 1997, this stylish lake boat once more proves a highly appealing and very responsive machine.



The Shockwave is one of the few smaller lake boats to actually use step technology to any real advantage. Our 377-inch, MerCruiser 6.2 MX small block—a lively powering package that you will be seeing much more of in coming months—powered our radar crew to 65 flat, a milepost for a stock, small block, stern-drive bowrider. It got there with no downside on the way—from the driver's seat, the stepped bottom feels no different than a conventional vee—and the

setup also paid proper heed to overall performance. This boat accelerated well, responded instantly to trim and throttle and delivered a consistent, controlled top end.

THE SETUP

MerCruiser had boats like this in mind when they developed the 6.2MX/Bravo 1, the most powerful small-block production drivetrain ever released, at 320 horsepower. The 3,400-pound Skier made the most of the 6.2's advantageous power to weight and felt beautifully balanced. Our 21-inch four-blade seemed optimum for the train, which represented a value-intensive \$2,000 upcharge over the stock 5.7L.

The Shockwave is cut deeper than a lot of lake 21s, and occupants are made to feel protected behind its tallish free-board. The interior design stresses social interaction: The seats are large and comfortable, the walkway wide, the padding firm and supportive and the touch and feels exquisite. Ten to 12 can pile in this boat without provoking claustrophobic reaction.

Shockwave is one of a core of builders who build their own interiors, and theirs is argument for the concept—our driving team gave it excellent marks across the board. Unlike some 21s, this one has a lot of driver helm room and more than adequate legroom between the bench and the two jumper seats that back to the buckets. The main cockpit area will easily seat seven, eight in a pinch.

The extra room was swiped from the

into the center flooring, one of which is large enough to stow boards and such. There are ten cup holders in the boat, some of them tucked neatly in padded, lower pockets of the side gunnels. The interior design was elegant and crisply detailed.



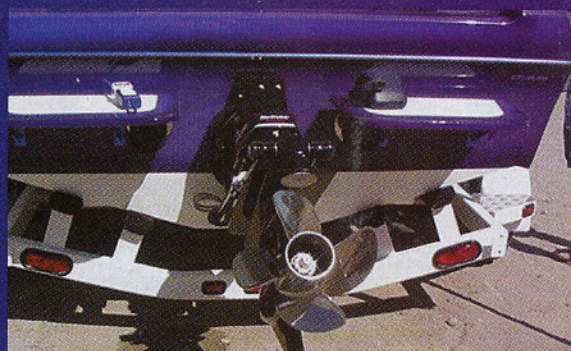
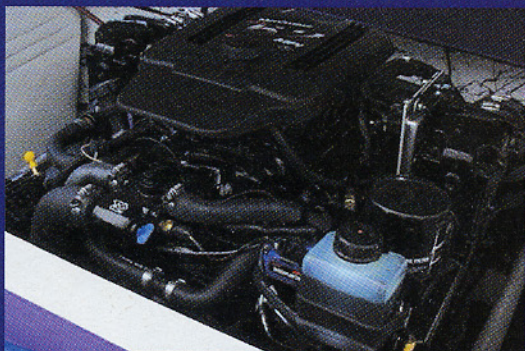
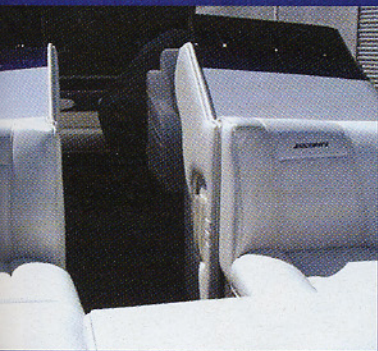
Shockwave loads their factory stock boat, extracting the pain from the process of selecting options by virtually eliminating it. Every boat is slammed: Buyer choice is focused largely on powering options, gelcoat design and color (virtually unlimited, inclusive in the Step Skier's \$43,000 base). Included in the amenities onslaught: a set of moderately effec-

The standard Beedee gauges were neatly framed with billet bezels. The trim gauge was not working, and the tach and the speedometer were optimistic, to the tune of 600 rpm and five mph.

A complete billet feast tooled by the metal artists at Dana Marine dressed the Shockwave and blended beautifully with the gelcoat and interior design and graph-

launch-ramp inspection team.

Fiberglass and color work have been strong suits at Shockwave since day one, and they were exemplary in this latest work sample. A cool-color assault entailed two fades and four shades and was dressed right with black on blue trim molding. Pockets scooped the exterior metal close to the glass.



tive wind deflectors, mechanical trim indicator and, to our knowledge, the beefiest stock stereo in the industry: a 200-watt Pioneer CD system with a quadrant of 6x9s. Dual batteries, power hatch, interior lighting, bimini top and Extreme trailer are standard.

ics. Base-boat-issue swim steps ride trick brackets, a fist grip handle springs from the copilot's dash, four cleats assure stylish mooring, and an engraved panel organized function switches. "Simple, but very clean and effective in its design and installation," summed one of our

PERFORMANCE

There were three more small-block-powered bowriders at our tests, all in the same size class, and the Shockwave decimated them in comparative acceleration and speed. This is a snappy
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