

29' MAGNATUDE

Shockwave

Step-bottom technology has changed the face of vee-bottom boating by partially liberating the running surface, but harnessing the efficiency of this drag-reduction device without adversely affecting the boat's handling and ride at cruise speeds can be tricky territory. Truth be told, in some cases, the trade-off isn't worth a few extra miles an hour on the top end.

Shockwave's 29-foot Magnatude, on the other hand, is one of an emerging breed of full-sized performance cruisers to integrate the technology into a very serviceable rough-water hull, with dramatic

results. Under power by a set of MerCruiser's killer Scorpion 377-inch small blocks, the 6,800-pound Shockwave flagship was a well-mannered driver with a mean streak that had us flirting with a very smooth and savory 80 miles an hour.

It's the consummate big-water cruiser: tall, broad-beamed and full-cabined, with a sharp entry and a string-straight, four-strake, 24-degree vee.

In production less than two years, the Magnatude already accounts for about a third of

Shockwave's overall sales, a remarkable showing for such a big boat, particularly for a company that was built largely on the success of the 21-foot bowrider. It's currently the largest in Shockwave's stable, with the next size down their best-selling 25-footer, although that status will be moot in early 2002 with the release of a new twin-step 34-footer.

THE SETUP

The Magnatude carries a broad 102-inch beam across

its elevated profile and provides the degree of freeboard and protective cockpit and cabin environment that is essential to the comfortable open-water powerboating experience. Hull and deck are fully balsa cored. Although the standard Magnatude isn't a liner boat—most of Shockwave's clientele are Havasu-bound and not headed for salt water—they plan to offer one in the near future. A walk across the Magnatude's bow reveals its solid structure, and the strength of its construction

becomes self-evident in the midst of high-speed throttle bouts in rough water.

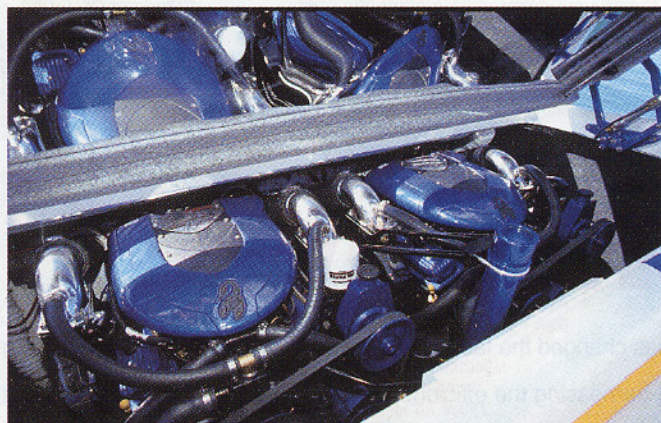
Shockwave's fiberglass and color work have been instrumental in the company's relatively fast start and strengthening foothold in the market, and it's still deserving of front-and-center status. Our test boat's dramatic, high-contrast design used a ghostlike fade-checkering effect and a lot of white to set a clean aesthetic tone that overtook the entire boat, in and out. Shockwave is open to virtually any graphic direction, and they have the talent to back that flexibility.

The Magnatude topside is elegantly cut, with sheer lines tracing a parallel pathway alongside side-by-side, low-profile deck railing; on our boat, it was powdercoated white and was neatly absorbed into the ▶



gloss of the deck. The deck flares dramatically as it rises to meet the dash and, in the process, creates depth and headroom below. Accent lines are cut into the boat's flanks and taper neatly to the transom, which has a unique design that incorporates a small footstep into the trailing edge.

A large, extra-deep and very functional bolt-on swim platform assures easy boarding, and its nonskid surface is framed with powdercoated rail mounting. Oversized grill vents enhance cooling in the well, and stainless support railing is center mounted and supported with individual grab handles on both sides of the step. Another step is tooled into the transom,



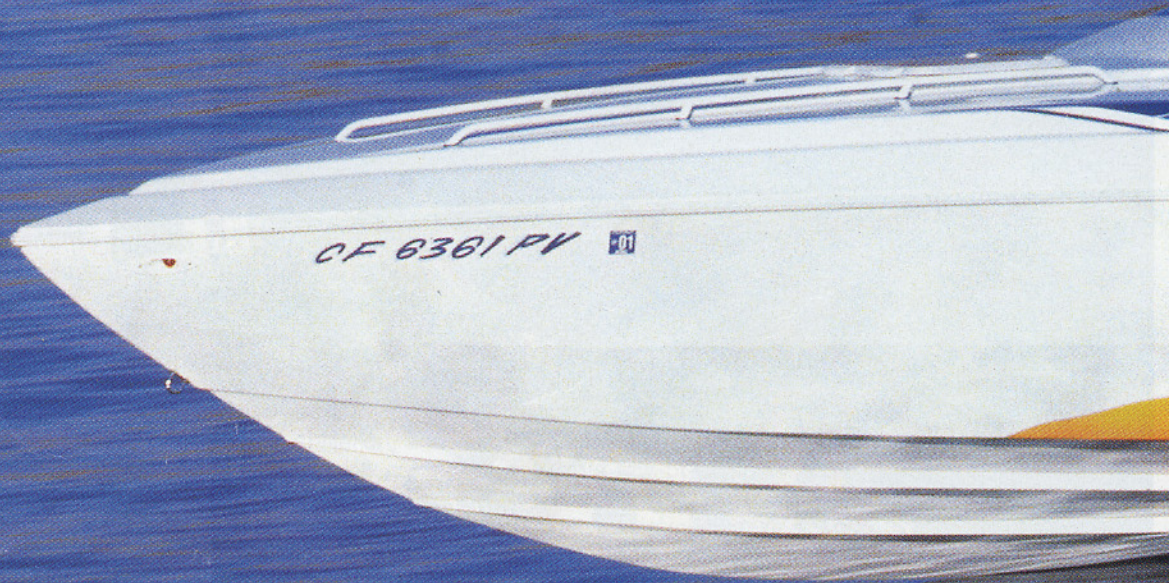
just below the padded hatch, a convenience that eases passage over the large, padded, flat and very comfortable rear deck lid. A cutout makes way for the optional removable, tall

billet ski pylon (\$1,700).

Though most commonly built under single HP500 power, the twin-step Magnitude is steadily gaining interest as a twin-engine performer among those

who consider the upgrade a practical expenditure. Aside from the obvious advantage twin-screw boating provides—easier maneuverability around the docks, the reassurance of a spare motor and more power on the big end—the dual setup also builds monster acceleration, under the right power. The single HP builds 470 horsepower behind its 5,650 pounds, where the twin 377 Scorpion small blocks combined for 720 horsepower and a 6,800-pound bottom line.

Our boat's twin 377 Scorpion/Bravo ZX makeover, which added \$27,000 to base, single 6.2's \$76,000 starting point, motivated a thoroughly impressive acceleration test



session that distinguished the Shockwave as one of the quickest of the new wave of full-sized step-bottom muscle cruisers. We also flirted with 80 mph (78.2), with our usual heavy passenger payload and a nearly full fuel reserve.

Absolutely nothing was spared in battle tuning this Magnitude, which utilized every imaginable resource in its successful quest for premium-level performance. Though the 360-horse stroker Scorpions don't begin to push the stock Bravo's capacity for power, extra drive insurance was added in the form of optional XZ drives (\$3,000) with 1.5:1 gearing and 26-inch four-blade propellers. WPM's silk-smooth, full-external hydraulic-steering



system was rigged into the train, along with Dana's new and characteristically gorgeous, powder-coated trim tabs (\$2,500).

Imco Power Flow exhaust (\$4,400) routed through stain-

less transom tips, and rapid action Dana scissors hinges (\$1,500) upgraded the standard electric-hatch-lid assembly. A mirrored hatch lid (\$350) was added, along with an

optional tall, removable billet ski pylon (\$1,700).

Gaffrig mechanical trim and drive indicators (\$1,350) and Horizon GPS (\$850) provided input to an attractively styled and very functional driver's station, and a locking, electric slider door (\$1,100) and portable head (\$300) were cabin options. The lengthy options list, which left virtually nothing in the bag, culminated with an as-tested price of \$126,000.

ONBOARD

The Shockwave's driver's quarters blends a sophisticated and ergonomically polished design with a simplistic approach that stresses effi- ▶



cient motion and maximum visibility, whether bracing against the angled footrest off-shore style or nestled into the rich seat contour for a comfortable cruise.

The dropout seat bolsters feature integral lumbar support panels and are anchored to the carpeted floor using a tube-rail mount design, which on our boat was powdercoated white. The seats were beautifully detailed and earned outstanding ratings for their comfort and support; they were the efforts of Shockwave's in-house upholstery department. White railing also veered off their backs and into the gunnels, positioned for a most natural grip for standing rear passengers. Shockwave's rear bench did its job in the same effective, stylish manner. The interior's fit, feel and appearance were outstanding, and the interior vinyl accents meshed well with the gelcoat.

The Magnatude's driver squares off with an efficient, multilevel dash surface that positions two banks of Beedee, Shockwave logo gauges just below a smooth, horizontal tray area that is a natural passageway across the deck. Two drink holders per side are flushed into the surface. There was plenty of surface area on which to plot our optional Horizon GPS (\$850), standard Ritchie compass, Dana powdercoated main switch panel and trim and tab bezels, depth gauge and Gaffrig trim and tab indicators (\$1,350). A padded control housing extended off the dash and was perfectly positioned in front of a very comfortable, padded armrest; whited-out Gaffrig controls were standard. Every potential body contact point, from the feet upward, was dressed out in the interior's supple, protective padding. A Dana billet handle mounts to the passenger-side dash.

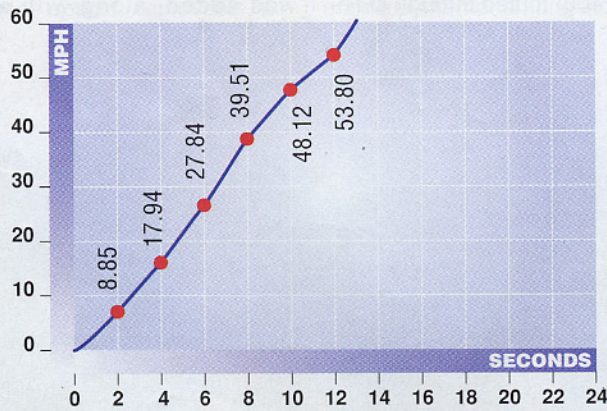
Accent lighting fills the cockpit and backlights the dash, and the boat is flush with cup holders, 12 in all. A 200-watt Pioneer CD system with four 6x9 speakers is standard, along with

SPECIFICATIONS

Test conditions: Moderate to rough
Centerline: 29'
Beam: 102"
Bottom: Twin-step 24-degree vee
Drive train: Twin MerCruiser 377
Scorpions/Bravo ZX drives
HP @ prop: 360 ea.
Overall weight: 6,800 lbs.
Base price: \$76,000
Standard features: MerCruiser 496
Magnum/Bravo I drive, unlimited gelcoat, deck hatch, Shockwave logo gauges by Beedee, Gaffrig depth gauge, electric hatch, thru-transom exhaust, dual batteries, one-piece swim step with stainless-steel frame, Bennett tabs, Pioneer 200W CD system, bimini top, storage cover, interior lighting, cabin lighting, dropout seat bolsters, Gaffrig controls
Options on test boat: MerCruiser 377 dual Scorpion upgrade (\$27,000), XZ drive upgrade (\$3,000), WPM dual

external hydraulic steering (\$5,500), Imco Power Flow exhaust (\$4,400), Dana hinges (\$1,500), Dana offshore tabs (\$2,500), mirrored hatch (\$350), electric slider door (\$1,100), Gaffrig drive/tab indicators (\$1,350), trailer spare tire/rack (\$950), GPS (\$850), portable head (\$300), billet ski pylon (\$1,700)
Price as tested: \$126,000
Top speed, radar: 78.2 mph
Mfg. est. speed: 80 mph
0-30: 6.42 seconds
0-40: 8.16 seconds
0-50: 10.83 seconds
0-60: 13.91 seconds
Speed @ 3,000 rpm: 42.2 mph
Speed @ 4,000 rpm: 60.2 mph

Shockwave Custom Boats
1800 Capital St.
Corona, CA 92880
(909) 898 9360



a bimini top and storage cover.

The Magnatude's cabin is basic and clean, and ours offered the option of privacy with a locking, electric slider door (\$1,100). Facing seats were afforded abundant leg- and headroom, with no risk of contact with the fully padded headliner. Lighting is built into the seat bases and in the center of the bulkhead, and four fans assist a full hatch in ventilation. The vee-berth was also nicely proportioned and quite roomy. Our cabin also stowed a portable head beneath the berth, a \$300 perk.

PERFORMANCE

The Magnatude's luxurious and very smart interior environment provided a very comfortable and civilized backdrop for a rousing session of performance driving. Make no mistake: The Magnatude is a per-

formance machine, from bow to stern, and we found the twin-Scorpion version great fun from behind the wheel. As for the steps, they went virtually unnoticed, in terms of driver feel.

Much of our team's overwhelming, positive feedback on the hull centered on its smooth and assured throttle response, an attribute that was obviously influenced by the hard-hitting, well-dressed, fuel-injected Scorpion tandem. This setup reacted to planing throttle and trim with a smooth, hard, electric surge, and we hit a 30-mph clip in a torrid 6.42 seconds. The satisfying acceleration and tight maneuverability were continuous as we picked up speed, and the Shockwave will run with a lot of lighter, smaller boats. You can feel the efficiency working in this boat's bottom design.

We uncovered no pattern

porpoising, nor was there any vibration lurking about. The Magnatude tracked extremely well at low speeds, and the dual sticks enhanced its close-range maneuverability and shortened its radius. The Scorpions started and idled easily and powered the Magnatude into an easily accessible, optimum ride. Those stepping up from even the most basic family bowrider will find this a very driver-friendly machine.

The Shockwave retained this hospitable nature even as we engaged full use of the throttle reserve, which prompted a peak radar pass of 77.6 mph at 5,100 rpm. The Scorpions showed a wide power band, and this boat felt completely natural and locked into a happy zone at wide-open throttle. The ride at speed was clean, controlled and absolutely stable. We loved the way this boat drove at high rpm.

Tuck the bow into rough water, and you instantly neutralize it, bypassing the jarring you'll take in lesser boats. The Shockwave also very effectively clipped through and over side wakes and rollers, and we would not hesitate to brave the elements of Mead, Powell and even the Pacific with this hull. Loosen up the ride, hammer the throttle, and you move into a controlled high-speed cruise over the rough. Either way, the boat's stability and control are outstanding. Guiding the Shockwave into our turning sequence elicited more of the same outstanding handling.

DRIVER'S HUDDLE

"Excellent fit, finish and detail work...a very smooth execution.... Beautiful lines and a great interior.... Very little use of opportunities for interior storage, which is somewhat limited for this size class.... More great gelcoat work from Shockwave.... Incredibly quick, with the Scorpions: This boat was made for twin small blocks.... Excellent acceleration and a great top-end ride.... Billet half-inch angled engine mounts were clean, but there were no backing plates on the stringers...." ■