

SHOCKWAVE 21' SKIER

It's a rare privilege to test an impressive new model by an up-and-coming builder as part of our annual Performance Evaluations only to reencounter the same boat outfitted with a different engine configuration just a few months later. Shockwave Boats, which began production in 1994, has enjoyed considerable success with its contingent of full-sized customs, which includes a 19-foot gull wing tunnel, 20-foot tunnel outboard, lower-profile 21-footer and a 22-foot bowrider. HOT BOAT put its 21-foot Skier through the full array of tests back in February, when the highly rated craft was equipped with a MerCruiser 7.4L with a Bravo One drive.

For our jetboat blowout, Shockwave delivered another Skier—this time pushed by a 410-hp Marine Power engine with a Dominator drive with an AB impeller and a ride plate with electric Place Diverter (a

detailed—"just a 21 with everything in the right places," as one of our evaluators wrote.

The interior on the Skier (courtesy of Stratton Marine) has been designed with a large family in mind. The forward bowrider section offers plenty of room for family members, and the main cockpit is quite large, with two bucket seats, a pair of back-to-back jumpers right directly behind them and a full width bench across the back. (A sun pad over the engine hatch gives passengers even more room to spread out.) In addition, Shockwave has utilized the side gunnel areas for storage, and both ski locker and ice chest have been integrated into the floor of the boat. Convenient drink holders are available to those in the bow section, as well as the passenger and driver.

Other well-appreciated (and standard) amenities: a grabhandle in front of the passenger console—always a good idea—and a small plexi-glass wind deflector in front of both the passenger and the driver.

The Shockwave sported a somewhat lower freeboard than the other family bowriders tested during our event in Parker, Arizona, making the boat lighter and more responsive. We were able to hit the 5,000 rpm mark, making it a bit more fun to drive than some of the other jets that just didn't feel as responsive. Give the credit to the 502 engine (a \$2,600 upgrade),

which packed enough horsepower to bring the boat to 60 mph on the nose. That's only two mph slower than we clocked the Skier powered by the big-block MerCruiser.

On the water, the Shockwave continued to impress our test team with its reasonably good tracking and stability; you're

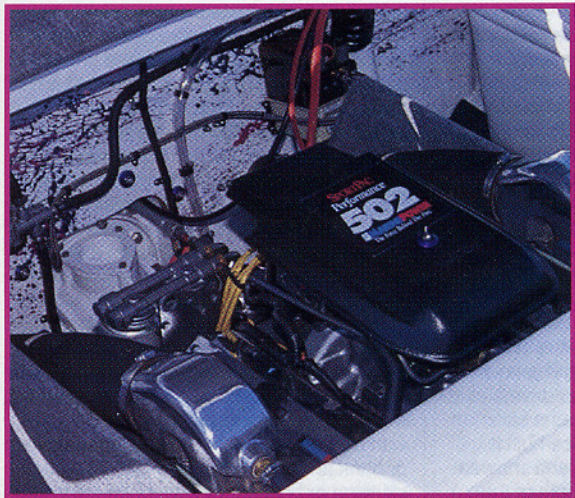
SPECIFICATIONS

Length/bottom: 21' semi-vee
Beam: 96"
Engine: Marine Power 502
Jet drive: Dominator
Base Retail Price, incl. trailer: \$24,900.
Options on test boat: 502 upgrade (\$2,600), Place Diverter (\$1,100), Diverter switch in wheel (\$225), CD player (\$750), stainless-steel bimini (\$625), power hatch (\$475).
Price as tested: \$30,675.
Top speed, radar/rpm: 60.0 @ 5,000 rpm
0-30/40/50/60: 5.31 sec./7.14/9.10/12.78/n/a
Shockwave Boats: (909) 674-9229

not going to forget it's a jetboat, with that trademark low-speed "wandering" feel, but its on-plane tracking is still rock solid. The boat comes out of the hole with a small amount of bowrise and gets up on plane nice and fast; true to its name, this would make a cool boat to ski behind. As soon as we got on plane, we hit the Place Diverter, trimming out with the nozzle just enough to let the boat free up a bit. (You can overtrim with this boat if you go up all the way; somewhere between "full down" and "full up," you'll find a happy medium for maximum performance.)

The boat is very throttle responsive; we experienced no cavitation whatsoever and found turning to be a breeze. Maneuverability in both forward and reverse won high marks from our test team, and we felt secure in this boat at all speeds. As tested, the jet-powered Skier cost \$30,675—about \$800 more than the I/O package tested earlier this year. The jet application is comparable in almost every way except one: Our stern-driven Skier ran 34 mph at 3,000 rpm, while the jet clocked at 21 mph at the same rpm. The jet did catch up a bit at 4,000 rpm (39.2 mph versus the I/O's 46.7 mph); still, the big-block I/O package probably delivers somewhat better fuel efficiency.

Regardless of your choice of power, the 21-foot Skier is an outstanding family boat all the way around. Good performance and exceptional comfort make this as good as it gets for the entry-level boating package.



\$1,100 upgrade). Visually, the boat is as solid as ever: Simple but very clean gel-coat execution, roomy bow area and keen attention to detail, making it one of the cleanest packages in recent memory. Our Skier was equipped with solid and sturdy seats and white Faria gauges with bezels. The overall construction was well

