

ShockKing!

SHOCKWAVE 29-FOOT MAGNITUDE/MERCUISER HP500 EFI Rocking the Epicenter of the Move to Full-Sized Customs

BY KEVIN SPAISE, PHOTOGRAPHY BY FERNANDO ESCOVAR

For the custom-oriented performance hound who feels the allure of the open water, these are amazing times. The simultaneous emergence of the step-bottom platform and the ongoing onslaught of potent, high-output production power sources has dramatically expanded the realm of the trailerable, single-engine deep-V, intensifying the appeal of the full-sized performance cruiser.

Case in point: Shockwave's stunning new 29-foot Magnitude. An afternoon aboard the first hull to emerge from Shockwave's largest set of molds provides ample insight into the appeal of this increasingly popular size class.

In debuting the 29-foot twin-step, Shockwave orchestrates an all-out custom assault that's saturated with style and luxury, complemented with a highly impressive bottom. The Magnitude takes full advantage of Shockwave's obvious production talents, and even the newly dialed copy number one establishes this hull as a legitimate lake-scorcher.

The enthusiast-level hot-boater who has resisted the step to an offshore-level, open-water lake machine because of the inevitable compromise in performance can now officially scrub that excuse, thanks to Mercruiser's amazing HP500 EFI package. The 470-horse, electronically managed EFI motor worked in perfect concert with the dynamics of the sharply cut, 24-degree V. So tight is this package that it will run with, and more often than not, *outrun*, the lion's share of production lake boats, regardless of size and power. From a rolling idle, we hammered to a 50-mile-an-hour pace in under nine seconds—a phenomenal showing. The 5,500-pound Shockwave ran a nice, free 71 miles an hour, and we'd bet our Bravo that there are easily a few more to be had with a little prop play and vertical drive movement.

All of this is available in a trailerable single-engine package that floats on an as-tested bottom line of \$75,000. The upgrade from the base 7.4 boat (\$59,900) also included a highly recommended Warlock Performance Marine (WPM) external steering-system upgrade (\$1,500).





SHOCKWAVE

ONBOARD

Shockwave carries its sharply cut offshore entry across a maximum-width 102-inch beam. The Magnatude's lines are graceful and clean, evocative of Shockwave's popular 25-footer. The bloodline is evident. On our test boat, these lines were effectively enhanced with a typical dose of Shockwave color: a four-color execution that shows off one of this company's obvious strengths. Gelcoat knows no boundaries at Shockwave, where unlimited colors are available without a pricing premium.

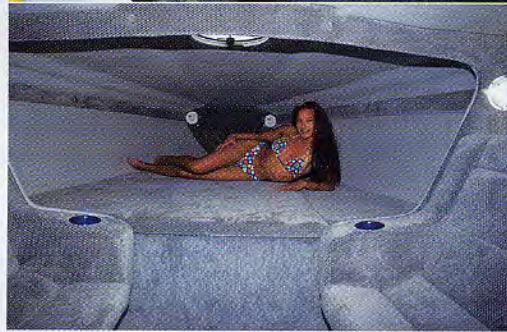
Our test boat's smoothly sculpted, elevated windshield area was defined by black gelcoat, and its clean theme was underscored by the smooth, uninterrupted deck flow. Style won out over convenience in this first boat; the deck's smooth, graceful shape is interrupted only by a single flush-to-glass circular hatch. The minimalist look grabs without fail, but for some, it may not justify the inconvenience of boarding and disembarking on an angled, slippery surface without the benefit of any railing.

Our test boat's fuel-injected HP—fully dressed from the crate, with blue and red accent paint, polished valve covers and stainless headers—was partner to Bravo One internals, and turned a 24-inch Mercury Bravo four-blade. The standard-issue power hatch revealed an attractive, splatter-painted, completely illuminated well.

Segmented storage is dressed with carpet, and all mounting brackets and hardware are trick pieces from the hallowed shop of Eddie Marine.

Shockwave's wiring work scaled new heights in the production world, running through a loom, being routed with stainless steel and matching plastic brackets. All lines were routed at 90 degrees.

Dual batteries protect against the drain of the Clarion CD system (standard, along with four speakers); Bennett tabs are also standard. Our boat's Bravo internals were cooled with an Eddie Marine drive shower (\$150). Power Halon is also standard.



An integrated fiberglass swim step (not factored into the 29-foot length) is textured with non-skid, and the transom shows off more of Eddie Marine's trick hardware. Aluminum vents are flush against the transom. Shockwave will reportedly offer rear boarding handles at no additional charge, although they weren't included on our boat. Cleats lie flush to the glass until popped into use.

Shockwave earned driver raves with its interior, which was laid out to accommodate a cockpit full of passengers. Those in front are comfortably wrapped in oversized, padded buckets with drop-through seats. Powdercoated mounting through-bolts the bases to the floor. Integrated foot pegs insure that the ride is comfortable and natural while seated, as well as while in the standing position. Side panels were nicely padded and sported neatly matched accent colors.

A capacious, triple-stitched rear bench will seat four easily and five in a pinch, and it resisted bottoming out, even during our most aggressive driving stints in the roughest water we could find. Interior accent colors (designed to customer specs) were beautifully matched with the tones of the glass. The rear-bench base houses two of the four standard speakers, and drink holders are integrated into

the armrests. The rear deck lid is deeply padded, making it ideal for sunning.

It is evident that Shockwave has invested considerable forethought in the cockpit's engineering, which showed off optimum positioning of controls, gauges and seating, whether driving from a seated or standing position. All gauges (Faria are standard) were visible, and the standard ensemble was bolstered by a standard compass and Gaffrig depth-meter. The dash is hollowed with a nicely oversized compartment that's easily accessible to the driver—a simple but appreciated concept that seems lost on most builders.

Shockwave's tidy custom skills were on display even in obscure quarters, like the back of the dash, where wiring was tied down every few inches and glasswork was gorgeous. Ten drink holders were scattered throughout the cockpit.

A Gaffrig shifter unit loaded the trim in the handle. The driver's seating position, access to controls, and gauge visibility all elicited top ratings from our driving team. Admirably, Shockwave ironed out all the bugs before it released copy number one from the molds.

Below, the Magnatude is designed and built to West Coast tastes, with basic amenities and continued, stout cus-

tom work. Carpeting lies neatly to the floor, and facing jump seats provide a roomy, comfortable, protective haven from the elements. An oversized bed saw to the requirements of the overnight experience, and the cabin was well-lit and comfortable. Ventilation flowed through the smallish deck hatch.

TURN THE KEY

This is how a step-V is supposed to feel: reactive, responsive, stable and fast. The Magnatude set the tone with the first introduction of throttle as the HP steadily and quickly pushed it into plane mode with no more than a foot of bowrise. Even with the plates up, this hull lay flat and screamed off the line. The prop held its bite, and the Magnatude begged for trim quite early on.

In fact, the Magnatude loved the trim button! The ride cleaned out instantly, and the bottom shed water in a hurry. The look down the deck, the elevated driver position and the responsive feel of the hull contribute to generate the feel of a smaller lake boat. There's nothing awkward or unwieldy about the Magnatude, and even those with the most basic bowrider experience will find this new Shockwave flagship utterly easy to drive.

That agility came in handy while maneuvering around the

SPECIFICATIONS

Centerline length: 29'

Beam: 102"

Hull type: twin-step 24-degree V

Engine/drive: MerCruiser HP500 EFI

Horsepower at prop: 470

Drive ratio: 1.50:1

Prop: 26" Bravo four-blade

Base retail price (incl. trailer): \$59,900

Standard features: MerCruiser 7.4L/Bravo One, drop-out seats, stereo CD with four speakers, power hatch, dual batteries, interior lighting, pop-up cleats, compass, Faria gauges, Gaffrig controls, unlimited gel-coat graphics, fiberglass swim step, electric fuel valve, lighting package, ten drink holders.

Options on test boat: MerCruiser HP500 EFI upgrade (\$13,300), external WPM steering (\$1,900), triple-axle trailer (\$1,200), Eddie Marine drive shower (\$150).

Price as tested: \$75,550

Top speed, radar: 71.0 mph

Maximum rpm: 5,300 rpm

Speed at 2,000 rpm: 23 mph

Speed at 3,000 rpm: 37 mph

Speed at 4,000 rpm: 53 mph

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docks; the Shockwave was very much at home under the controlled circumstances of the marina. It shifted quickly and smoothly without clunking, and moved crisply to the directive from the wheel. The EFI motor idled agreeably, ran quietly and stayed utterly civilized—that is, until we dropped the hammer.

As the Faria needle spiked, the hull went to work, creating lift and begging for more up-button in the process. Our drivers quickly pegged the Shockwave as one of the quickest Vs we've tested in this size range on either coast. "An accelerating fool," quipped one of our drivers, nailing the feel of the hull. This quickness carried the Magnatude all the way through the midrange and went a long way in creating the feel of a smaller boat.

Trimmed into the zone, the Shockwave ran an effortless 71 miles an hour. The ride up top was eminently stable and controlled.

We elicited more of the same responsive manners as we piled the big cruiser through harder cornering exercises, where the Shockwave continued to impress on a grand scale. Banking was minimal, even during aggressive wheel play, and blowout was nonexistent. When the water turned to churn, the big V knifed right through it, and the hull seemed oblivious to wind and water shifts.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Shockwave has made the most of its bid at the upsized market with the Magnatude, which earned gushing praise in every area key to the full-sized, upscale cruiser. It's a fitting flagship for Shockwave, which is steadily shaping an industry signature with its consistent, polished brand of custom workmanship. ■