

Savage 525 Scorpion Review - BoatAdvice



by Dom Wiseman

May 18, 2016

Aluminium boats are certainly popular in Australia if the mere number of brands is anything to go by. In Queensland they seem to be made almost on every corner but one company has the lions' share of the market and that is Telwater. Not only geared to produce boats, they also make their own trailers and even dabbled in camper trailers for a time. They purchased the Savage brand, a well respected aluminium and fibreglass manufacturer known for their no nonsense build quality, in 2008 and rolled it into their existing operation that already included Stacer and Quintrex. Now all three brands are manufactured in a purpose-built facility with the Savage brand catering to the entry level purchaser looking for an affordable, good-value product.

Savage may not be the most well known of the trio but it is Australia's oldest name in aluminium boats.

BoatAdvice was invited to test the latest model in the range, the Savage 525 Scorpion before it was officially released at the 2016 International Marine Expo.

WHAT YOU GET

The new 525 Scorpion is now the biggest model in a well established range and is available in a side console or centre console configuration. The boat we tested was set up with a small side console and while I traditionally have preferred the aesthetics and ride of centre consoles, I came to really appreciate the increased space created on board this five plus metre platform by having the console and helm seat pushed to the starboard side. The console itself is small, leaving more room internally, and doesn't feature any storage underneath. It's completely open. It will accommodate up to a 12 inch sounder mounted on a bracket on the flat space atop the console protected by the Perspex windscreen.

There's no doubt the core function of this boat is fishing and while capable of carrying up to six people, you're more than likely going to fish two or three up at a time. The platform itself is the perfect crossover more than at home fishing inshore areas such as estuaries and the inside of break walls, but it also is a capable on offshore fisher with drifting and casting plastics or trolling more than possible. At around 6 knots, the fuel burn on the 115hp Evinrude is only 3.1L per hour. Couple that with a 77-litre tank and you can cover quite some territory chasing pelagics trolling.

Internally the carpeted floor is flat with a small forward casting platform and storage underneath for safety gear and fishing kits while the transom features a small platform housing the battery compartment and small live bait tank. Up front the compartments are accessible via five separate lids making accessing gear an easy process that won't have you contorting like a professional gymnast through the one hatch to find that special something you've stowed. Like many boats in this style, the low set rear bait tank located in the platform at the transom does mean you have to bend over to grab a livie and with no bait prep station nearby, any owner will have to fashion their own set up to make this style of fishing possible. You can get some tables that will fit into the existing rod holders but I would prefer a stand-alone unit and not sacrifice the rod storage. You can fit an additional live

bait tank under the forward casting platform too. Additional quick access storage is provided both port and starboard with side pockets that sit low to the ground.

Up front optional split bowrail and bow roller were fitted which not only looked the part but added a level of safety for anyone unlucky enough to be on anchor duties. The roto moulded anchor locker is incredibly big and Savage also offers the option of an anchor windlass on this boat but unless you use the anchor a lot it's not an option I would go for. The helm seats are relatively basic but functional enough with three seat positions across the boat.

POWER

As mentioned, the test boat was fitted with the maximum horsepower this hull will take, an [Evinrude E Tec 115 hp](#). The performance was strong with quick acceleration. Weighing in at 184kg, this four-cylinder power plant is incredibly frugal. At wide open throttle we managed a top speed of 63 km/h (34 knots) with a 41.7 litre per hour fuel burn. At a modest cruising speed of 30 km/h, (16 knots) the motor was spinning at 3000rpm and using 11.1L/h which will deliver a range in ideal conditions of roughly 200kms.

ON THE WATER

[Savage's](#) Ultra Lift hull has been around for a number of years with Savage claiming faster planning speed, increased stability and tighter cornering. In short the Ultra Lift hull is a design that incorporates a reverse chine that is pressed into the 3mm hull sheet prior to welding and creates a flat on the outside edge of the hull that aids helps get the hull up on the plane quicker and also gives the boat greater stability at rest. While the angle of the reverse chine might not be as great as can be created on a fibreglass hull it does seem to work.

While conditions were relatively flat I did see enough to note the hull pushes spray down and away from the boat maintaining a dry ride in most conditions. Steering courtesy of the Seastar hydraulic unit was precise and with the steering wheel easy to turn once the trim on the engine had been set. With the engine trimmed right down, it was a little trim sensitive, pulling hard to the left.

When it came to cornering, the 525 Scorpion was a beauty. It turns a little flatter than some boats but still beds in nicely to a turn and will take a fairly sharp corner without cavitating or bouncing it's way around the turn. Halfway round, you can apply a little more throttle and it will smoothly power away from the corner.

Fishermen will appreciate the stability at rest, although, two adults on one side of the boat will result in a little leaning. I weigh 73kg while my compatriot, 85kg. That said, it wasn't excessive and having to net or gaff a fish should pose no problems. The only issue I had with the design was the engine well which is very low to the water and in an offshore situation, I can imagine some water slashing over the transom, into the well and consequently into the boat in rougher conditions.

TOWING

In a boat, engine, trailer package the 525 Scorpion sits on a TA 1298 single axle aluminium trailer with mechanical brakes built in-house by Telwater. The trailer is rated to 1500kg and is fitted with Teflon coated skids which make it easy to drive the boat on and off the trailer or do it manually if you

prefer. The trailerable weight of this boat is around 1100kg so it can be towed by any family vehicle or small SUV.

OVERVIEW

I've slowly come around to the side console arrangement and on the Savage 525 Scorpion it provides enormous space onboard and fishing versatility. Couple that with the fact you can tow it with a medium sized family car and you have a winner for Australian families.

POSITIVES

Versatile spacious layout

Capable straight off the showroom floor

Easy to drive

NEGATIVES

Low motor well

NUMBERS THAT MATTER

Price: as tested \$38,964

Construction: Aluminum (3mm sides, 4mm bottom and transom)

Length Overall: 5.39m

Beam: 2.07m

Max hp: 115hp

Capacity: 6 people

Weight on trailer: (approx.) 907kgs

Engine: Evinrude E-TEC two-stroke DI 115hp

Fuel Capacity: 77 litres