

HYDROSTREAM VANDAL

POWER: EVINRUDE 75

At the conclusion of every Performance Trials, it's only natural for the staff to sit down and study our notes looking for those special boats that turned in unique performances. Reviewing the data it's easy to spot the slowest, fastest, loudest, quietest, quickest and largest boats evaluated. If you were willing to look hard enough, you could probably find one area where each of the 27 boats tested at Cypress Gardens, Florida stood alone.

Without even looking at the stat sheets, we could tell you before the Trials ever started that HydroStream would have one of the most unique boats at our East Coast site. They always do. This high performance outboard manufacturer, whose nerve center is located in Minneapolis, Minnesota, has always had a knack for original hull designs. Anywhere you travel in the U.S., you'll always be able to detect a HydroStream because there just isn't any other boat like it!

When HydroStream's top man, Howard Pipkorn, called our Powerboat offices before the Performance Trials, he asked our opinion on what type boat he should bring to the Gardens. As we told all the manufacturers, this year's tests would be divided into four segments and the Florida locale was to showcase an emphasis on economy sized hulls. We advised him to bring a hull with solid dollar value, one that would get excellent gas economy and that could be towed by some of the current sized automobiles that are coming from Detroit. Judging from the performance characteristics of the HydroStream Vandal that showed-up

in Florida, Pipkorn evidently took us very literally.

Measuring in at a mini 14'6" down the centerline, the 450 pound bare hull Vandal was not only the smallest boat we tested this year, but among the most

the boats uncanny ability for superb top-end performance. While browsing through the HydroStream catalog, you'll find nine different models that share in common exclusive outboard power and a model name that always begins with the

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economical with a price tag of \$5,105 including the Evinrude 75 horsepower outboard. Entering the 1980s, it appears quite clear that boating must downsize to attract new customers and you'll be hard pressed to find a package that can match HydroStream pound for pound and dollar for dollar.

One of the most enjoyable aspects of owning a HydroStream of any size, is

letter "V". Maybe it's because of the boats unorthodox flowing concave deck or unique bottom design, but HydroStream outboards simply invite their owners to play with engine heights, angle adjustments and props in a quest to keep adding a mile or two to the big end numbers.

If you're interested in learning and experimenting with some of the basics



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involved with outdoor performance boating, then the Vandal could be an excellent place to cut your pseudo racing teeth. The boat has a 21 degree bottom that features two sets of lifting strakes and a comparatively wide 7¼ inch pad along the keel. One of the reasons HydroStreams are constantly among the fastest outboards around is the hull's actual wetted surface is substantially less than the overall centerline measurement, because the entry at the bow is quite pronounced. This unique HydroStream trade mark is greatly responsible for the boats constant nose high attitude and consequently high speed capability.

Our test specimen Evinrude 75 Sport engine was mounted on the boats stock 21½" transom at 22¾". The maximum clamp-on punch the boat is rated for is 80 horsepower. The beam is a compact 73". For the evaluations, an OMC SST II 19 x 21 prop was used which produced a top end speed of 46 mph on our calibrated speedometer.

Needless to say, it was quite a sensation, driving this little runabout at speeds near 50 mph. We might add without hesitation, that a boat of this size, running in the aforementioned speed range, is a most challenging piece of equipment to handle and tame. Because of its size to horsepower ratio, it's not too far fetched to think that the Evinrude 75 is all the engine you'll ever want or need.

At under 15 feet, you would suspect that the boat might be sensitive to trim and certainly it was. In straining to pull maximum speed from the Vandal, the driver can instantly tell when the engine has exceeded its trim out limitations. At full pedal with the engine jacked out, the nose will lift past a safe point and the



hull will rock considerably on the chines and keel. In the hands of an unexperienced boater who doesn't know when to back off the throttle, the HydroStream Vandal could easily provide a hairy moment or two that will guarantee a saner operation after the first baptism at all out speed.

With the engine trimmed level or slightly under, the boat handles well and can still provide some exciting feelings in the operable 40-41 mph range. In the slow and cruise speeds, the Vandal is a stellar performer with excellent tracking capabilities and turning characteristics. Low end throttle response was a bit sluggish and although it improved on top end, the acceleration just wasn't up

to the standard we feel the boat could achieve. A change in props more than likely would solve most of the throttle response difficulties without sacrificing too much usable top-end speed.

Small outboard combinations designed for semi-high performance constantly tease owners to come up with a better combination. Part of the fun in owning a boat of this variety is continually taking it to the water to try new adjustments. While you're on the never ending experimentation trail, don't fret that the Arabian oil sheiks are going to hijack your paycheck as fuel economy on this boat is marvelous, especially in light of its nearly 50 mph capacity.

We did a double take, but at 25 mph



HYDROSTREAM VANDAL

the FloScan gauge wasn't quite to the two gallon per hour mark and through a magnifying glass, we rated it at 1.6 gph which was the lowest consumption rate at this speed, of any boat tested. Moving the throttle down to 35 mph we came up with a scrawny 3 gph reading. In the upper speed ranges, 45 mph was a conservative 6.5 gph; and top end throttle netted only a 7 gph usage of fuel. The boat comes equipped with two, six gallon carry on fuel tanks which is going to require a good long while to empty even on busy weekends.

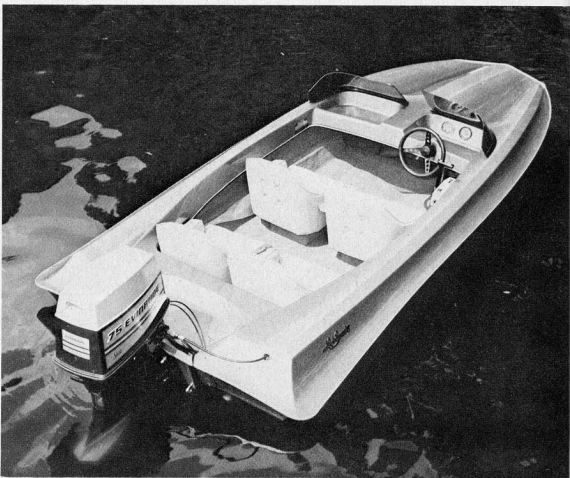
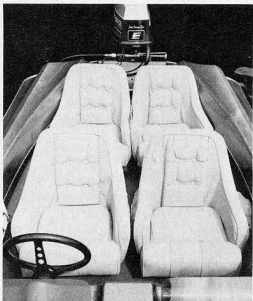
In the mid-range, the boat has a rather long distance 140 mile potential cruising distance, but we must caution future Vandal owners that it's not a wise idea to stray too far from the confines of completely protected waters. In our wake jump test, the HydroStream seized a noticeable gust of wind and got offshore racing high coming off the swell at only 25 mph. The boat doesn't pretend to be designed for rough water use so don't tempt fate. Keep a constant eye on weather conditions when you're boating with this little tycoon and avoid even a potentially dangerous situation.

Keeping in mind the poor low speed throttle response and somewhat lackluster bottom end acceleration because of prop selection and engine height, we had some grave worries about the boat's ability to pull even a lightweight water skier. To begin the evaluation, our ski test observer situated himself in one of the back seats and even with the engine all the way tucked-in and a full throttle take-off we could tell that petite Lisa Emry was in for a mouthful of spray. However, when we moved the 165 pound observer to the front and had him lean on the forward deck, much like a knee jockey co-rider, the boat popped on plane with noticeable improvement. Once again, a change in props would greatly aid in the boat's skiing potential and we felt that with some re-adjustments, the Vandal might actually make a fair tow vehicle.

Once the pull-out ordeal was completed, the boat handled the towing job adequately. Sure, in hard slalom cuts the skier could fishtail the transom but a continual correction of the wheel always kept the Vandal under complete control. The wake was very narrow and flat which was excellent for crossing but inadequate for jumping. The Vandal didn't have a boarding ladder but with relative ease, skier Emry could pull herself up on the low freeboard hull as long as other passengers situated themselves on the opposite side of the boat.

The interior design on the Vandal is very basic. It doesn't have a flat floor board, but instead, the natural contours of the bottom are carpeted and the under deck area has a small retaining lip to aid in storage. Standard equipment on the Vandal is back-to-back, but our test model was equipped with the more plush two-plus-two individual bucket seat option. Although the accommodations are a bit spartan, to say the least, if any member of our test staff was going to buy

this boat, we agreed that the additional passenger seating was worth the trade-offs in space. The bucket seats were quite attractive and they'll probably undergo insurmountable wear and tear because it's impossible to move about the cockpit without clumsily stepping on the cushions. There is absolutely no room between the buckets and leg room at the rear is cramped. The shape of the cockpit narrows as it moves toward the transom, but with a little misalignment, the two



back seats fit snugly. It's not the Ritz, but what can you expect from a 14 footer?

The front dash has a recessed area on both the driver and passenger side. The boat's limited instrumentation of tach and speedo are located in the back of the well on the captain's side. At no time did the steering wheel obstruct vision, but we felt that the visibility of the instruments was somewhat limited simply because they were mounted too far away from the driver's eyes. In rough conditions, with the boat bouncing from side to side, it was impossible to take an accurate reading. The Vandal comes complete with a very dark windshield that afforded

good breeze protection, but would probably be improved if the shades of filtration were toned down quite a bit. Reflections from the boat's brilliant blue metalflake were bothersome in the windshield.

Even though the Vandal is the puniest boat in the HydroStream line, it has been race-proven and currently holds several class kilo records. If you've ever wanted to accept the challenge of high performance outboard participation, yet aren't anxious to spend a bundle to find out if you can cut the "hot dog" mustard, then the sub-15 foot Vandal is the ultimate starting place for beginners and veterans alike.



MEASURED PERFORMANCE DATA

Indicated top speed - calibrated speedometer	46
Indicated top speed - stock speedometer	48
Recorded top speed - radar speed gun	45
Measured top speed - measured 1/8 mile	45.2
Maximum RPM - calibrated tachometer	5850
Maximum RPM - stock tachometer	6100
Time to reach plane	3.07 seconds
Minimum plane speed	11 mph
Distance to stop from 35 mph	145 feet
Time to stop from 35 mph	4.8 seconds
Decibel reading (35 mph at 50 feet)	.87 dB(A)

FUEL CONSUMPTION DATA

25 mph consumes	1.6 gph = 15.62 mpg
35 mph consumes	3 gph = 11.66 mpg
45 mph consumes	6.5 gph = 6.92 mpg
50 mph consumes	N/A gph = N/A mpg

CONSTRUCTION-QUALITY-WORKMANSHIP EVALUATION

Quality of fiberglass lay-up	8
Mold detail and finish	8
Gel coat / paint finish	8
Placement and quality of deck hardware	4
Placement of instruments and controls	4
Steering system	7
Throttle controls	7
Installation and neatness of electrical wiring	5
Overall engine installation	8
Installation of fuel tanks	7
Seat padding	4
Access to minor services	10

PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

LOW SPEED

Tracking	9
Throttle response	3
Shifting of passenger weight	7
Docking maneuverability	8
Visibility	7
Ease of boarding and debarking	6
Noise level (in cockpit)	90 dB(A)

CRUISE SPEED

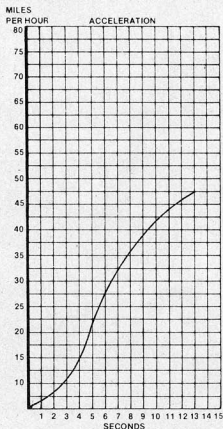
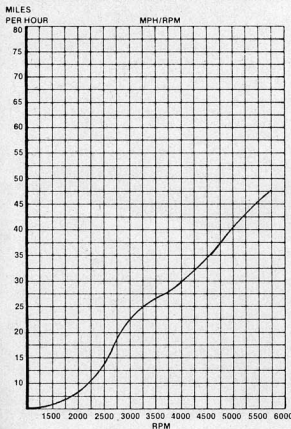
Tracking	9
Throttle response	7
Slalom course at 20 mph	8
Slalom course at 30 mph	8
Slalom course at 40 mph	8
Wake jump	5

HIGH SPEED

Tracking	4
Throttle response	7
Right turn	8
Left turn	8
Visibility	8
Noise level (in cockpit)	114 dB(A)

WATER SKI EVALUATION

Take-off power	3
Tracking consistency of hull	5
Throttle sensitivity	5
Visibility coming on plane	4
Visibility at speed	6
Wake	7
Ease of boarding and debarking	7



HULL SPECIFICATIONS

Make/Model	HydroStream Vandal
Hull configuration	Modified vee
Length	14'6"
Beam	73"
Hull weight (without engine)	450 pounds
Construction process	Hand
Passenger capacity	600 pounds
Retail price as tested (not including trailer)	\$5,105

STANDARD EQUIPMENT: Back-to-back bucket seats, rack and pinion steering, tinted windshield, recessed wrap around instrument panel, passenger side storage tray, deep pile marine carpeting.

OPTIONAL EQUIPMENT: Optional and limited edition exteriors and interiors, dual steering, mooring cover, running lights, two-plus-two seating.

OPTIONAL EQUIPMENT ON TEST BOAT: Special edition two-plus-two seating.

COLOR OPTIONS: Metalflake red, blue, apricot, with black interior.

ADDRESS OF HULL MANUFACTURER:

HydroStream
180 1st Street, S.E.
New Brighton, MN., 55112

ENGINE AND PROPULSION SPECIFICATIONS

Make/Model	Evinrude 75
Cylinder type	In-line 3
Cubic inch displacement	49.7
Maximum H.P. at rpm	75 at 5500
Fuel	Leaded or regular/ 50:1 oil mixture
Drive	Outboard
Prop	19 x 21 OMC SST II three bladed

TEST STAFF

Test driver	Bob Nordskog
Test observer	Dick DeBartolo
Ski driver	Mark Spencer
Ski observer	Norm Teague
Skier	Lisa Emry