



## HYDROSTREAM VOYAGER XT



By far the fastest boat at the tests, the HydroStream Voyager XT will please the most avid high-performance boater. With added suitability for skiing, the Voyager XT earns our Performance Ski Boat Seal of Approval. (For SOA criteria, see page 28.)

**Construction:** The HydroStream is definitely built for speed, with evidence of unnecessary weight reduction found throughout. Common fiberglass materials, plus Coremat and balsa coring, make up the lightweight, rigid hull and deck. With five colors in the deck and hull, the impeccable gel coat work in the HydroStream is truly a work of art.

The bottom design is a complicated one, yielding a boat that can be driven at a model 80 mph. It is a semi-

modified vee with a 19-degree entry and three pairs of lifting strakes. There is a keel pad, 10 inches wide at the transom, running forward for fourteen feet then stepping down to a 12-inch vee pad running forward. The chines are actually very narrow (knife-like) sponsons.

**Impressions:** The driver sits in a bucket seat with fore-aft adjustment, looking over the windshield. The passenger's seat is like the driver's,



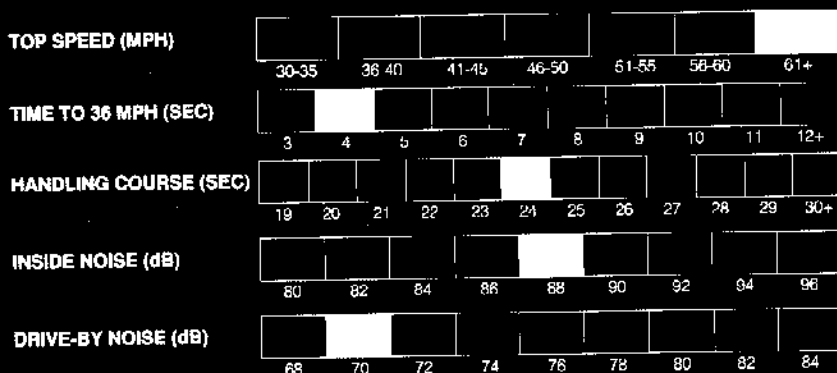
### Specifications

- Overall Length:** 20'
- Beam:** 8'3"
- Fuel Capacity:** 24 gallons
- Seating Capacity:** 6 Pass., 960 lbs.
- Weight With Engine:** 1,400 lbs.
- Engine On Test Boat:** Yamaha Pro V 200
- Warranty:** One-year structural
- Options:** Color-coordinated swim platform, ski towbar, gauge package, plated interior, pre-rigging, stereo cassette, mooring cover.
- Retail On Test Boat:** \$21,400

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## BOAT DATA CHART



but the fore-aft adjustment has been exchanged for the ability to swivel. The rear seat is a bench, with the battery and oil tank for the outboard located behind. Entry and exit over the bow is made very easy via the convenient carpeted step.

Ski storage is available through the lift-out teak floor locker and in both gunnel storage racks. The rear seat has storage for small items below.

**Performance:** With a racy design and a Yamaha Pro V 200 engine, the HydroStream tops out as the fastest boat of the tests. The manufacturer's representative at the tests achieved a speed of twice the velocity ever used for competitive skiing, with the help of an innovative prop that varies its own pitch. Out of the hole, there's plenty of acceleration, but some slippage as the boat comes onto plane. The Voyager's noise levels score quieter than average, for the spectrum of boats in the tests.

**Handling:** In the handling course, the Voyager times out in the performance range of our Seal of Approval criteria. The Voyager tends to bank toward the outside, which is disconcerting at first, but feels comfortable after few runs. Turns at medium skiing speeds are medium-wide, and depending on how it's set up, the Voyager is or isn't best suited for big lakes and open water.

Steering effort is medium-tight, which may be desirable for a boat that can go so fast. A little bit of upward trim once underway seems to help the boat drive easier. Wake crossings are extra smooth. Pulling

a skier through the slalom course is possible, but some driver attention is needed to keep the boat tracking in the center of the gates. Settling slower speeds also requires attention, as the boat wants to creep up and go fast. Like many outboards, the handling is excellent at slow speeds and in reverse.

**Driveability:** The Yamaha digital instrumentation presents an uncluttered look, and the speedo is fine for most skiing uses. The Yamaha control combines throttle, shift, and trim. In the driver's seat, the position is comfortable, and the quality of back support is up to the level of today's tournament boats.

Visibility ahead for the driver is better than on most bowriders, but for taller-sitting drivers, there will be wind in the face strong enough to remove hats. A mini convex mirror

## Company History

After 22 years, Howard Pipkorn still owns and manages the company he started back in 1968. With production currently at about 600 boats per year, HydroStream prides itself on the careful handling and custom building of each boat it puts on the market. The company's full line of performance boats ranges from 12 to 20 feet, with the HST MOD-VP (a 20-foot trimaran) and the Voyager XT bowrider at the head of the HydroStream line.

A dealer network of over 50 and a full-time production staff of approximately 20 give HydroStream a quality team able to provide personal service.

## Fast Facts

- *Zoooooom!* Fastest of test by far
- Its driveability is above average for a recreational outboard, and some aspects are near tournament quality. Big fun at speed
- The Voyager XT could be a fine slalom training boat. It's just waiting to be discovered and tweaked into condition

serves for spotting the skier, but it could be set on the driver's side of the boat for better rear visibility.

**Skiability:** There's a rear-mounted pylon about two feet high that appears up to the stresses of skiing. Our test boat was not equipped with a motor clearance bar, an option we'd recommend to keep the towline from snagging on the engine.

Skiing wakes are definitely slalom-suitable. They start out a little wide and medium-hard at 15 and 22 off, but they're low—so low that hot doggers might as well give up. At shorter line lengths, they narrow down. There's no spray to contend with, no rooster tail, and not much turbulence. With added skiability hardware and some fine-tuning of the controls, it would be a good training boat for slalomers.

The small, undefined wakes continue down into the tricking and kneeboarding speeds, and don't provide good spring for clearance.

Kneeboard slalomers will like the wake for cutting through, although it's a little on the wide side. Recreational footing is fine, with no complaints about power and speed. Wake crests are overdeveloped and roll over, but other than that, the boat could be suitable for tournament training.

**Summary and Suggestions:** This is it: the boat of choice for speed demons. The wakes also have some skiing potential that other aspects of the boat may leave untapped. We'd get the lower unit down in the water more for skiing. The ideal solution for speed and skiing would be a hydraulic jacking plate on this boat. •