



SMOOTH OPERATOR: CHALLENGER 595 SP

Review and Photos by Kevin Power

**EVEN WITH THREE
OF US MOVING FROM
SIDE TO SIDE ONLY
A LITTLE ROLL WAS
EVIDENT.**

SITTING BETWEEN THE MORE spartan Challenger 595 S and the fully-optioned 595SE, the Challenger 595 SP is designed and fitted-out to appeal to boaties who enjoy their fishing and recreational water sports such as skiing and wakeboarding. Having just the one lounge seat facing backwards instead of the two in the 595 SE means plenty of cockpit room for two to three persons to fish comfortably, and enough room to get in and out of wetsuits when waterskiing. The test boat was fitted out with a Four Stroke Suzuki 115HP - right in the middle of the recommended 100-130hp HP range - which suits this boat perfectly, being super quiet, economical and having grunt out of the hole for skiing. A 100 litre under-floor tank is optional and would provide a range of approximately 200 miles travelling at 30 mph which means peace of mind on extended fishing trips.

The helm layout is a clean and uncluttered design with all the controls falling to hand nicely and fitted my 5ft 11 frame without any adjustment. The test 595SP had an optional bimini fitted with a built in six-rod rocket launcher which, together with three holders on the bait board attachment and one on each gunwale gave a total of eleven: more than enough to keep most anglers happy.

Up forward there is a reasonably-sized weaver hatch to access the anchor well and bow area. I was pleased to see there was also enough deck room around the windscreen to allow access to the bow area so you are not consigned to using the hatch all the time. Makes docking easier, too.

The cuddy cabin features two bunks on top of built-in buoyancy compartments. Neatly upholstered squabs could be used for occasional sleeping during an overnight fishing mission but would be too small for serious over-nighting.

Storage-wise, a shelf runs along the full length of both cabin sides and there is additional stowage under the forward-facing pedestal seats and under the rear-facing back seat plus



SPECIFICATIONS:

PRICE AS TESTED: \$67000

LOA: 5.96M

BEAM: 2.3M

DRAFT: 0.38M

DEADRISE: 18.50

HULL WEIGHT: 1350KG

TRAILER: BRAKED,

**SINGLE AXLE PRESCOTT TRAILER
WITH SPARE WHEEL**

full-length side pockets on each cockpit side and cavernous space underfloor - particularly if you don't spec the optional underfloor tank.

Aft access on the Challenger 595 is via a step-through opening on the port side of the transom with a fold-down stainless ladder on the stern platform.

The fit and finish on the 595SP is faultless and the whole rig has a feel of solidity about it which is borne out in its approximate towing weight of 1350kg and the ride it provides when the going gets rough. For this test I was hoping for more wind and chop to really give the trademark Challenger strake-less hull a workout as it is these conditions that set a good hull apart from the not-so-accomplished. However we did find some reasonably rough stuff in the trusty Tauranga entrance with an outgoing tide and a light northerly to stir things up a bit. The 595 SP handled this with ease and could certainly handle a lot rougher conditions without dishing out a pounding ride.

I would be quite comfortable taking this rig on out to Mayor Island and the outer reefs, even on a less-

OVERALL THE CHALLENGER 595SP IS AN IMPRESSIVE PIECE OF KIT AND A WORTHY CONTENDER IN THE MULTIPURPOSE 6M TRAILER BOAT MARKET.

than-perfect day. The slightly heavier-than-average hull and resulting rigidity give the 595SP that bulletproof feel that some other 6m fibreglass hulls struggle to attain; it certainly handles the rough better than most. Cornering is sure-footed and fuss-free and with a bit of fiddling around with the trim a nice balance can be found for cruising along at about 32 mph.

We stopped for a bit of a drift fish in the harbour, and although the snapper either had their mouths shut or were on holiday somewhere else it did give me a chance to experience how stable the 595SP is at rest. Even with three of us moving from side to side only a little roll was evident - certainly far less than I had anticipated for a hull with a fine entry and an 18.5° deadrise. All in all pretty uneventful, which in this case is a good thing!

Overall the Challenger 595SP is an impressive piece of kit and a worthy contender in the multipurpose 6m trailer boat market. **BF**

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