

## Buccaneer 735 Sportsman

# Day & Night

RELEASED AT THE RECENT HUTCHWILCO NZ BOAT SHOW, THE BUCCANEER 735 SPORTSMAN REPLACES THE EXISTING 735 EXCESS AND ALTHOUGH BASED ON THE SAME HULL, WHAT'S ABOVE THE WATERLINE IS QUITE DIFFERENT.

TEXT & PHOTOS BY BARRY THOMPSON

WEEKENDING, DAY TRIPS OR SERIOUS FISHING, THE 735 IN EITHER GUISE IS AN IDEAL BOAT WITH A STRONG PEDIGREE

**A** base model fishing boat, the 735 Sportsman is also available with a more highly spec'd trim level, which in effect puts it right up there with what was offered in the previous 735 Excess. It all depends on what you want and what you plan to use the boat for...day boating or overnighting.

The new 735 Sportsman follows along behind the recent releases of the 635 Excess HT and the 685 Excess HT, sharing features and aesthetics very similar to its two smaller siblings. This has long been the direction designer and MD of Buccaneer Pleasure Craft Ltd, Gerry Gerrand had mapped out, as not only do they all look similar, they share certain construction and fit-out componentry, which makes the boats quicker and less complex to build.

Gerrand chose to retain the same 735 Excess hull, which was derived a few years ago from the earlier 720 hull, although with a deeper V, steeper stem, different transom, extra chine and a longer waterline, it was very much a totally new hull. It is also the same hull that is under the 735 Billfisher.

The 735 is around 500mm longer than the 685, with most of that extra length given to extending the cabin to allow for an optional enclosed toilet compartment, with the cockpit only 50mm longer than the 685. Cockpit beam is the same but the coamings are higher at approx 900mm.

Another significant change from the previous 735 Excess is the new hardtop moulding which has its roots in the 685, although it has been extended by 340mm. From the cabin bulkhead to the transom the layout is the same as the 685



and the same mouldings are used for the seats, transom lockers and hatches.

#### One Size Fits All

The dash is all-new for the 735 and will accommodate up to a 14" MFD screen and still leaves room around it for extra switches, controls and navigation equipment. Our test boat was equipped with a Raymarine C120 screen, Ray492E VHF, Electrotabs switches, Fusion IPS600 and a dual bank of BEP switch panels to take care of all the necessary switches. A trio of Yamaha square gauges looked after all the engine and fuel functions and if your electronics stop working there's a handy Ritchie compass for you to steer by. The helm position is designed for people of all sizes, with a

fully adjustable helm chair on sliders, foot rest and above all, 1.94m of headroom under the hardtop. While the height under the cabin is 20mm higher than the previous 735 Exess, the cockpit sole is in fact 40mm lower, due to the design of the new full GRP liner and fibreglass top hat stringers. The previous 735 Exess was built the traditional way using timber and ply glassed over. The new construction is stronger, stiffer and while costing more in materials is significantly quicker to build. There is minimal timber in the boat now and what's there is encased in fibreglass and is used as a solid base to screw fittings to. The centre floor sections under the cockpit sole are also now all GRP and glued to the hull for even more hull stiffness. Sliding windows either side let in some extra fresh air and a

**INSET: THE COCKPIT LAYOUT IS THE SAME AS THE 685 EXCESS, WITH LOADS OF STORAGE AND GREAT FOR FISHING.**



**TOP: THE 735 SPORTSMAN IS IDEALLY SUITED TO THE YAMAHA 225, BUT WILL EASILY TAKE MORE HORSEPOWER.**

**BELOW LEFT: THE CABIN HAS BEEN EXTENDED BY ALMOST 500MM.**

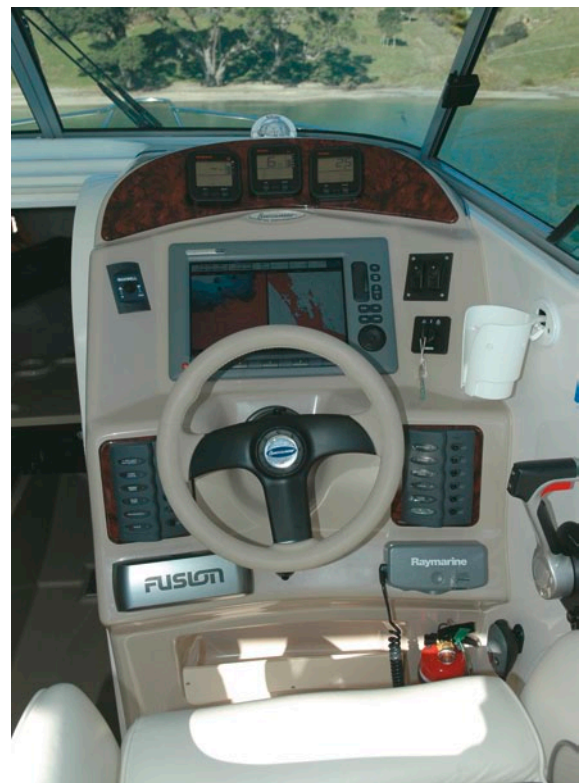
**BELOW RIGHT: THE DASH HAS PLENTY OF SPACE FOR UP TO A 14" MFD SCREEN.**

wide-arc wiper helps you see where you are going when it rains. A passenger wiper is optional and would certainly be handy when driving in extreme weather conditions. The cockpit sole in the 735 Sportsman is finished with panels of decktread, whereas the more highly spec'd version has carpet. The choice is yours, but personally I would recommend the decktread if you are spending a lot of your time fishing.

As in previous models, the 735 has plenty of storage options,

both wet and dry. Either side of the cockpit are full length trays with built-in rod racks, plus you have stainless steel rod holders around the coamings and in optional cabin external rod racks. An overhead rocket launcher is optional.

Wet gear can also be stowed in the centre underfloor area, which is the same as in previous 685s and 735s. Even if you fit a freshwater tank in the aft section, there is still a reasonably large area forward for a removable fish bin. Forward is the 240L alloy fuel tank.





**THE TRANSOM AREA FEATURES TWO STORAGE LOCKERS, ONE OF WHICH DOUBLES AS A LIVE BAIT TANK.**

There are a couple of storage options in the transom with the port side bin able to be plumbed in as a live bait tank. A large GRP panel lifts up to reveal even more storage space under the aft deck area where there is room for a 15 litre hot water tank or somewhere to stow the Magna rod holder mounted BBQ. Our test boat also had an Engel 98-litre polybin complete with a top cushion, which I have in our 685 and it's certainly proved a great addition. You can toss in some ice to keep the catch fresh and also use it as a double seat.

The 735's seating is the same as in the 685, with back-to-back king/queens with sliding bucket seats forward and huge dry storage beneath. Some of that space is taken up with an Engel fridge on the starboard side, but there's still plenty remaining. There are also smaller upper trays for keys, cellphone, etc., and a wide expanse below the front curved toughened glass screens.

#### Separate Head

The big difference between the 685 and the 735 can be found in the cabin, where the extra length has allowed for an optional separate enclosed moulded head compartment. The standard boat has a chemical toilet under the squab, with full length squabs either side, which means without the enclosed head compartment you end up with two very long berths. Drop in an infill and you have a huge double berth, ideal for those nights away. With the infills removed there's an optional table available which can also be used in the cockpit with a separate floor mount.

There are deep moulded storage areas under the squabs, as well as in wide side trays. Aft is a small sink unit with an optional water pump and a storage locker beneath. If you plan to do any cooking aboard then the best set-up is a stalk-mounted BBQ or one that sits on the bait station in the cockpit. Small enclosed cabins like the 735's are hardly conducive for cooking inside. The 735 has a completely lockable cabin which provides extra security when leaving the boat unattended.



**ABOVE RIGHT: WITH THE INFILL THE CABIN TRANSFORMS TO A HUGE DOUBLE BERTH.**

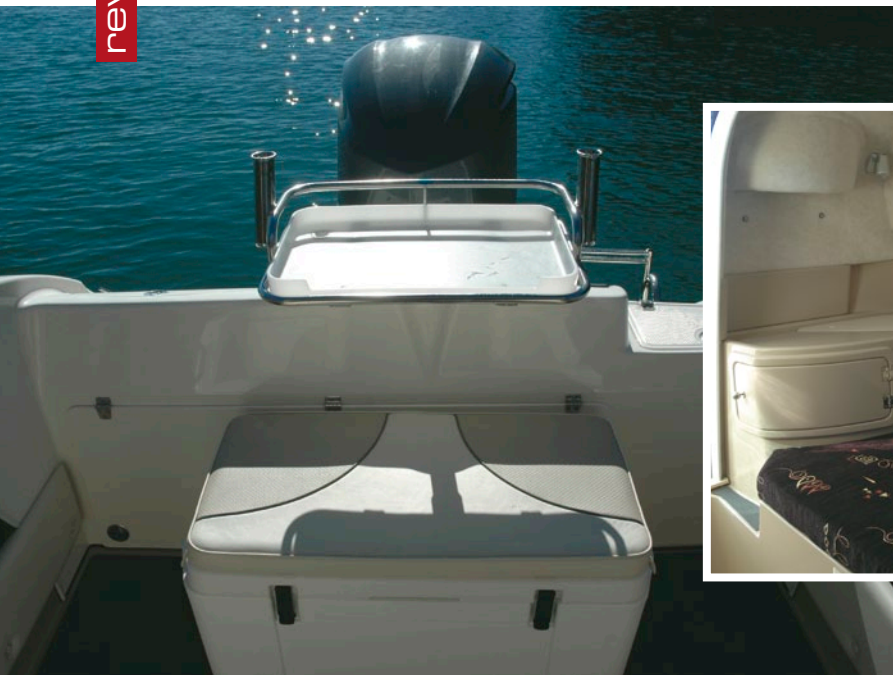


**LEFT: THE AUTO ANCHORING SYSTEM MEANS YOU NEVER NEED TO GO ON THE FOREDECK.**

#### Pleasure to Drive

During my few hours aboard the 735 Sportsman the sea state never got much worse than 1/2m and 15-18 knots of breeze. Obviously with a boat this size it ran fine. Most of our trip around Waiheke Island I had the speed set at around 30 knots, which gave not only a really comfortable ride but was also reasonably economical.

I found if I worked the tabs as the sea conditions and wind direction altered and combined that with the engine trim I could settle the big 735 easily. However, when I did give the boat a fast run it required full trim to get the engine to a maximum 5400 rpm, - 100 rpm short of optimum - and



**ABOVE: THE ENGEL POLYBIN MAKES A GREAT FISH LOCKER.**

**TOP RIGHT: THE ENCLOSED HEAD COMPARTMENT IS A GREAT OPTION.**

**INSET: THERE IS A SMALL BASIN TO WASH YOUR HANDS AFTER USING THE HEAD.**

even then there was no cavitation. The engine could possibly come up a hole (20mm) and maybe a 5-degree wedge fitted behind the bracket would give us the desired rpm and require less trim on the outboard.

Although I didn't get into any rough stuff with this particular boat I feel I already know its handling attributes. That's because I have spent the last 12 months doing my weekend and holiday boating with our own Buccaneer 685 Exess and Yamaha 250. During that time we have experienced some reasonably foul weather at times and after more than 100 hours in just about every sea state, I have to say that the 685 handled exceptionally well. With the extra length of the 735 I wouldn't imagine that to change – if anything it should be even better!

On one particular run back from Great Barrier Island in a steep following sea, I think I would have preferred to be in a much bigger boat – like about 15m – but we got back home okay and the boat handled fine. It's all a matter of driving to the conditions. I also really appreciated the benefits of the hardtop and arrived home still dry, which is more than could

be said for the rest of the boat. That's when I would also have really liked the second windscreen wiper, as even layers of Rainex on the screen couldn't keep it clear.

**Weekender or Not**

Released at the New Zealand International Boat Show, the 735 Sportsman is a 7m dayboat that you can overnight in occasionally by adding a few extra comforts, such as fresh water shower, something to cook on and a fridge. Buccaneer doesn't promote the 735 Sportsman as a serious weekender, but as I have found with our smaller 685, if you set it up right, it works really well for 2-3 people overnighing. Such has been the success of the 735 Sportsman, Buccaneer are now offering the 635 and 685 Exess in the Sportsman model. Not everyone wants the comforts of overnighing in a big trailer boat and that's what makes the 735 and now its siblings so attractive. Weekending, day trips or serious fishing, the 735 in either guise is an ideal boat with a strong pedigree and performance and handling attributes to match.

PPB

## Buccaneer 735 Sportsman

<b>Model:</b>	Buccaneer 735 Sportsman
Priced from:	\$NZ125,000
Price as tested:	\$NZ145,000
Type:	Hardtop
Construction:	GRP
LOA:	7.71m
LOH:	7.34m
Beam:	2.48m
Deadrise:	22.5°
Height on trailer:	2.90m
Trailerable weight:	2550kg (approx.)
Power:	Outboard Only
Power options:	200-300hp
Fuel capacity:	240 litres

**Notable Options on Test Boat**  
 Maxwell RC6 winch, Electrotabs, electric toilet and compartment, Engel fridge, Engel 981 Polybin and squab, table, Raymarine VHF, Raymarine C120 screen, Fusion IPS600.

<b>Performance</b>					
RPM	Knots	L/H	L/NM	Range, NM	
600	2.7	2.8	1.04	208	
1000	3.8	5.1	1.34	161	
1500	5.5	8.4	1.53	141	
2000	7.0	13.8	1.97	110	
2500	11.0	20.5	1.86	116	
3000	17.4	24.7	1.42	152	
3500	23.5	34.2	1.46	148	
4000	28.0	46.0	1.64	131	
4500	31.4	58.2	1.85	117	
5000	35.5	81.0	2.28	95	
5400	43.0	84.5	1.97	110	

**Notable Standard Items on Test Boat**  
 Hydraulic steering, stainless rod holders and rails, cockpit rod rack, teak coaming treads, deck tread flooring, windscreen wiper, lockable cabin, polyurethane closed cell foam filled hull, CPC rated.

<b>Engine</b>	
Make:	Yamaha
Power:	225hp
Model:	Four-stroke
Cyl. Config.:	V6
Displ.:	4.2 litres
Max rpm:	5700
Propeller:	17" Saltwater Series
Retail Price:	\$NZ34184

<b>Trailer</b>	
Make:	Voyager
Braked:	Sensabrake
Suspension:	Springs
Rollers:	Multiroller
Std Equipment:	LED submersible lights
Retail Price:	\$NZ11900

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