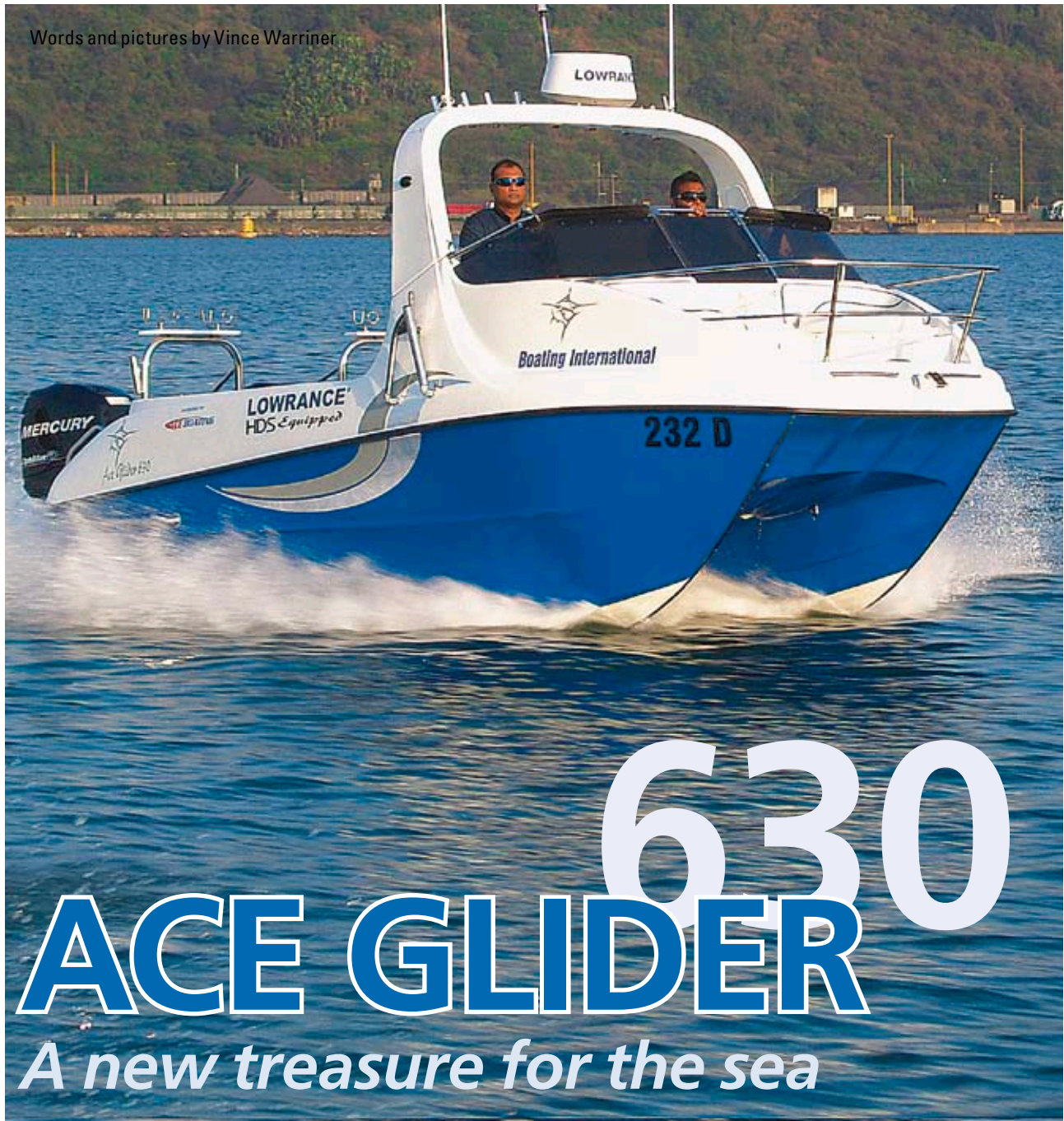


Words and pictures by Vince Warriner



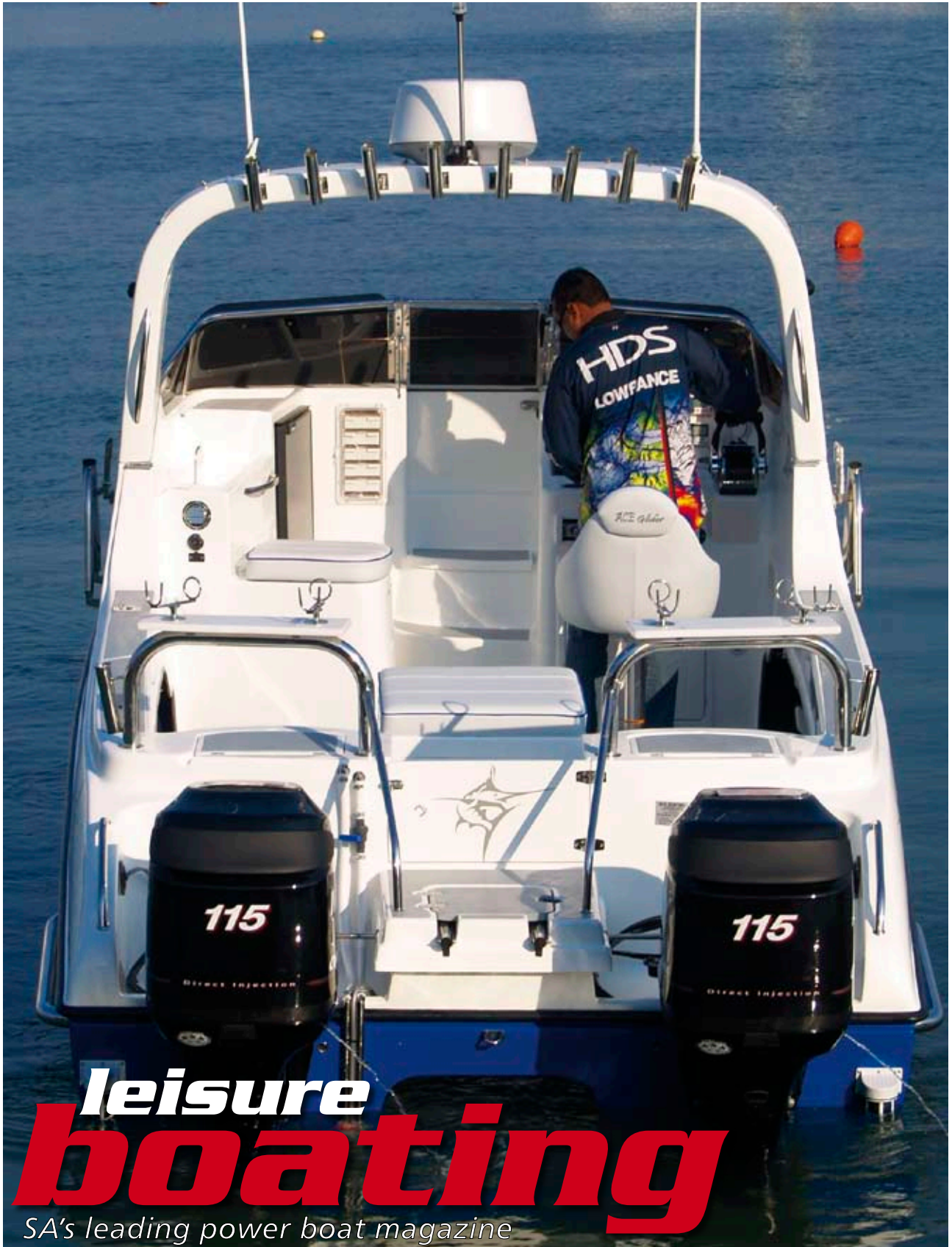
630 ACE GLIDER

A new treasure for the sea

Boating International has every reason to feel upbeat about the launch of their new ski boat: the Ace Glider 630 – following the huge success of the 530 model (covered in a previous review).

Wow – just when I thought they had the ultimate winner they come up with another – appropriately timed for her debut at the recent National Boat Show in Johannesburg.

Full marks must go to the Ace Glider company designer Harry Naidoo and directors, Dayalin Naidoo and Moses



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The Ace Glider 630's sleek design, modern, streamlined contours and radar arch certainly makes one sit up and take notice!



Forward seating in front of the consoles is comfortable and easily accessible – great for parking off and casting your rod.

Thanjan for forging ahead in developing this new model. The 630 adds yet another arrow to the bow of Boating International's impressive range of new water craft.

Conditions for test

For this review we went to the Natal Rod and Reel Club on Durban Harbour which has an excellent slipway and a great parking and entertainment area

– ideal for competitions! It was already 2.30pm, and while the water looked calm the north-easter was blowing and I knew that once offshore we would be in for a bumpy ride. But what better way to really test the mettle of a ski boat than in difficult conditions?

General impression

Having been privileged to witness the building of the 630, which looked increasingly impressive as she progressed through the moulding and construction phase, it came as no surprise that the finished article truly is amazing. Although there are a lot of ski boat cats on the market, the 630 sets a new benchmark!

The shape and design of the cat hulls, the sleek entry levels of the bows and modern streamlined shape of the top deck, makes one take notice. One simply cannot miss the radar arch which is a work of art all on its own – extremely stylish and beautifully designed, with the distinctive Lowrance radar on top of it.

Launching and trailering

This 630 is simple and practical in design and suitable for both slipway and beach launching. The tandem trailer was reversed into the harbour and with minimum fuss the boat was released, slipping into the water with ease. So no need to battle – and I was pleased to note later, that recovery was also an effortless affair.

Deck layout

Attention to detail is evident throughout this boat – with clever use of all the available space.

Forward seating in front of the consoles (identical to the 530 model) adds to comfort and is easily accessible through the centre door in the windscreen.

She has a functional roll bar which is aesthetically pleasing and there are two stainless steel rails on the outside just above the water line which are easy to hold onto when surf launching.

Rod holders are well placed and multiple rocket launcher rod holders are found on the rear of the radar arch. There are twin roll bars at the rear with trawling boards on them.

In the interior one is blown away by the innovations and cleverness of the design. There is a wash basin on the front side with a 25-litre jerry can of fresh water for either drinking or washing purposes. And for those thirsty moments there is a genuine fridge with freezer on the front console.

Everything has its place and tackle drawers are both well positioned and well finished. This beauty offers fish hatches which are more than adequate and the large under-deck storage is perfect for holding safety equipment.

The steering console has much to keep one interested. A Lowrance HD58 fish finder and GPS holds centre stage! Placed around it are the mandatory instruments including compass, switch panel, two rev counters, speedometer, two trim gauge and two volt meters. There is a battery meter – not found on most boats, but nonetheless most useful. A VHF radio and 29MG radio is fitted with four waterproof speakers. The built-in sound system is awesome, although I am not a lover of loud music on a boat.

The steering wheel is comfortable to the touch with a sea star hydraulic system – well proven over the years for smooth steering and easy turning of the motors.

A nice feature that enhances the overall upmarket appearance is the use of stainless steel cup holders well-positioned throughout the craft.

The skipper's chair is adjustable forward and back giving full 360-degree vision, and is most comfortable to sit on. A live-bait well is standard and the new idea dirt bin for all those empty drink cans is well hidden away.

Motors and controls

This boat featured twin 115HP Optimax Mercury outboard powerplants. These



Twin 115 HP Mercury Optimax motors, renowned for their reliability and efficiency, clocks 71 km/h on the water and planes in a flash.



The cleverly-designed helm area with adjustable skipper's chairs and an array of instrumentation will certainly keep you entertained.

well proven, economical models – 1 526 cc each – are extremely quiet. Two four-blade stainless steel propellers were fitted at 17-pitch – giving maximum revs per minute of 5 800.

The Mercury binnacle wheel controls were very easy to access by simply dropping one's hand down into exactly

the right position. The motors started easily (as they should) and we were planing in a flash – what a feeling of power.

We got up to 71 km/h which was excellent considering the conditions. The boat comes with a four- or six jerry can option for fuel. I suspect six jerry ☒



With multiple rocket launchers and live bait wells situated at the stern, she's a craft designed for the serious fisherman.

cans may be the safer option for game fishing, considering the mileage one might clock up trawling, as economical as the motors are!

Handling

Operating a boat in a north-easterly wind is most unpleasant especially after it has built up all day. The swells, while not white capped, were up to two metres in height, which can be challenging at times!

Competent pilot, Silan Naicker of Lowrance South Africa, had lots of fun pushing the 630 Ace Glider hard (right at me in another boat) for the chance of some good photo shots – he was quite airborne at times. But after I had driven her we unanimously agreed that the 630 is extremely solid to the feel on the water. The 630 is remarkable in that even ramping into the oncoming very choppy water no spray was evident on the windscreen.

There is no doubt that the wood-free hull, chop strand matt, coosa composite transom, fibreglass laminated deck with the foam-filled hull, all combine to give you one seriously good product for use on the sea.

Finishing touches

The radar supplied by Lowrance features broadband – giving you a 24-mile radius. This is not a pulse radar – rather the first solid state broadband radar. It gives a continuous transmission wave with linear increasing frequency and low radiation. It is easy to mount and convenient to place on most boats. It uses low power and is loaded with technology.

Conclusion

So here we have a new treasure for the sea! One of these units was sold unseen at the recent Durban Boat Show where (after hearing more about the 630), the customer went ahead and ordered his new boat. I suspect he will be closely followed by many more.

For more information contact Boating International on (011) 452 8280 or visit www.boating-int.co.za.

At a glance



L.O.A.	6.10 m
Beam	2.50 m
Engines	2 x 115 HP (1536 cc)
Hull	Foam filled
Capacity	6 persons
Fuel	100 litres

