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SEALINE C330

Blowing our expectations out of the water, the C330 defies convention and offers space and speed in spades

Text: **Jack Haines** Photos: **Richard Langdon**



SEE THE VIDEO



mby.com/sc330



After my test of the Sealine S330 (*MBY* March 2015) I couldn't see what the yard could have done to improve the boat. The midships cabin was a bit pokey and she was a bit noisy under way but really, as a package, I thought what more could you do with 33ft 10in of sportscruiser? And that is why I am at my desk writing about boats, not in a studio designing them.

What Bill Dixon and his design team at Sealine saw was an opportunity to build on the hull of the S and offer far more than a tweaked version of the original model – the C330 they have created is a totally new boat in its own right, with a baffling amount of features crammed into what is fundamentally the same shell.

So whereas the S330 is a sportscruiser in the more traditional sense, with an open-backed cockpit consuming the main deck and the saloon, galley and sleeping accommodation down below, the C330 brings the dinette and galley on to the main deck and opens the area up below to vastly improve the cabin spaces.

The packaging of the C330 is genius. It's hard to fathom that the S and C330 are the same length simply because of the amount of additional space the design team seems to have found on board.

BETTER IN REALITY

Something that strikes you when you first see the C330 in the flesh is how much better it looks than in the rather dumpy renderings we saw pre-production. The huge windows in the saloon dominate the exterior but make for superb views out from its seating. It's not quite as sweet as the S330, which is the best looking boat Sealine currently makes, but it's not far off, especially when you consider the trade-off in living space between the two.

Thanks to a clever cockpit door that folds in the middle and then locks against the wheelhouse, and a pane of glass to starboard that flips up on a ram, the cockpit and

saloon are allowed to merge perfectly into one another. A stand-up bar with folding countertop blurs the line between the two even further and, with the small external fridge, creates the perfect inside/outside entertaining area.

It wasn't fitted at the time of testing but all UK boats will get a table in the cockpit as standard too. Covers can enclose the entire area so even if the weather is a bit grim you can still maximise the deck space.

The only downside to the layout in comparison to the S330 (aside from the reduced size of the cockpit, obviously) is the loss of the enormous electric engine hatch that's fitted to the open boat. Access is still good on the C but you have to make do with a manual hatch and it doesn't open up anywhere near as high as on its sibling.

ONE-LEVEL LIVING

Into the saloon and you have the main internal living area in the form of an L-shaped dinette to port and a sideboard galley opposite. The extra space afforded for this unit means that not only is the galley in a more sociable location but it is also larger and better equipped with a lot more storage. The whole lot is hidden away beneath a substantial timber lid too, so you don't have to stare at a sink and hob if you're not in cooking mode. The yard has sensibly fitted this lid with a couple of inches of chunky fiddle to act as a handrail in addition to its role of stopping objects flying off the counter.

Penton Hook says it will retrofit a small grabrail along the edge forward of the dinette for passengers to hold on to, and if it were me I would add a banister for reassurance along the companionway, too.

As well as providing you with a spacious, one-level living space on deck another benefit of this new layout is the amount of space afforded for the C330's cabins. The midships cabin is totally transformed from a pokey, crawl-in double to a space where a couple of adults would happily spend a few nights. There is room to fully stand up in the entrance, plus there's a decent hanging

The helm station is spot on thanks to a brilliant driving position and tiered layout

locker and a long strip of glazing in the hull, which allows plenty of natural light in.

In the forward cabin you have space to move at the end of the bed, unlike on the S330, and there is room to incorporate four large drawers in the base of the bed plus a double hanging locker on either side of the cabin. The yard has sensibly widened the door frames by a couple inches, too, which doesn't sound like a game changer but it does make getting in and out of the cabins and bathroom that bit easier.

AT THE HELM

So the C330 is the hands down winner when it comes to accommodation but is it as fun behind the wheel as the S? The S330 is a wonderful boat to drive thanks to excellent poise, agility and a soft-riding hull. The twin D3 220s were a good match for the S on test but would our C330, fitted with the same engines but carrying more weight, suffer any dilution of the fun from the helm?

In a word – no. The C330 nips up on to the plane with exactly the same sense of urgency as the S, quickly and smoothly dropping into an easy 25-knot gallop. Trim the sterndrives out a touch and the running attitude levels off perfectly and makes for a clear view out through the windscreen. On an albeit very calm test I didn't need to use the trim tabs once, such was the hull's natural ability to settle into a cruise.

Top speed is down a touch on the open boat, we hit 30 knots on the nose on the C330 whereas the S got up to 33 but, crucially, the C still clips along at 25 knots with no bother. And there's no point in hanging around on this boat because it is so economical at the top of its speed range. My main criticism of the S330 was how noisy it was but, on the C, it is much, much quieter. Not only has Sealine beefed up the level of sound insulation but the engines can now be shut out by the cockpit doors, meaning there is a whole extra layer to deaden the sound of the motors. The difference is remarkable on the water where, with the cockpit doors shut, those in the saloon can chat comfortably without having to raise voices. Flat out on the S330 we recorded 85 dB(A) at the helm, whereas on the C it was down to 79

and these improved readings are in place throughout the rev range. Six decibels doesn't look like much on paper but when you've got a couple of hours' cruising ahead of you it makes a big difference.

The helm station is spot on thanks to a brilliant driving position (despite a lack of seat adjustment) and a smart, tiered layout with switches closest to you, the plotter on the next level and a row of Volvo's beautifully clear analogue dials on top of the dash. There is still nowhere to store a phone or handheld VHF, a downfall that besets the S, but on the C330 you do get that fantastic side door and the (optional) Webasto electric glass sunroof. You would be mad not to tick that box on the options list.

Side doors are becoming more of a mainstream feature but are still relatively rare on boats of this size and being able to ventilate the helm, talk to crew and physically get out on to the starboard side deck feels like a bit of a luxury in this market. To add to the practicality of the door, Sealine has made the starboard deck slightly wider, which combined with the fact that the transom door is on that side too, is going to mean you'll want to tie up starboard side to whenever you can.

Of course, in comparison to the S330, the deck layout of the C330 means you lose some space in the cockpit for sunbathing and general lazing around in the sun. The design team has countered that by working hard to make the most of the foredeck so, as well as the regular sunpad arrangement, there is also a deep well cut into the forward section to allow you to perch on a convertible bench, a lovely place to soak it all in when you're cruising slowly. The bench mechanism currently uses a rather clunky network of Velcro straps but there are plans afoot to come up with a cleaner solution. It is, though, yet another way that Sealine has managed to pack as much living space on to this boat as possible.

On a less positive note, and while we are at the bow, the partitioned anchor locker from the S330 seems to have been ditched in favour of a far less useful version with no compartmentalising whatsoever.



Windowline cuts down below the back of the sofa to deliver excellent views

Galley is far better appointed than that of the galley-down S330



Clever use of glazing aids the feeling of space in the master cabin





A CLOSER LOOK WITH JACK HAINES

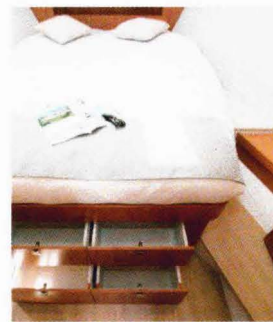
COCKPIT BAR

With the glazing flipped up out of the way this bar becomes an extension of the galley and makes an ideal platform from which to serve those sitting in the cockpit. The outdoor fridge is an extra that comes as part of the £7,559 Comfort Pack, though the galley fridge is tucked just inside the doorway.



STORAGE SOLUTIONS

Another area where the C330 betters its sistership is in the on-board storage stakes. The master cabin, for example, has two reasonably large hanging lockers and these four drawers for storing folded clothes or shoes. Under the berth there is no storage, just access to the Vetus bow thruster.



With the aft doors open the cockpit and saloon merge together perfectly



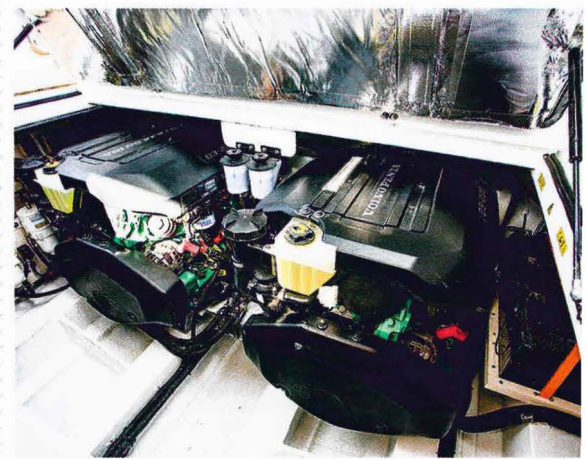
CREWING MADE EASY

It seems a small detail but this side door adds so much to the practical workings of the C330. It makes communication with crew easier, as well as physically getting out on to the decks and, of course, ventilating the helm. Very few rivals offer a door like this, apart from the more traditional Nimbus 305 Coupé.

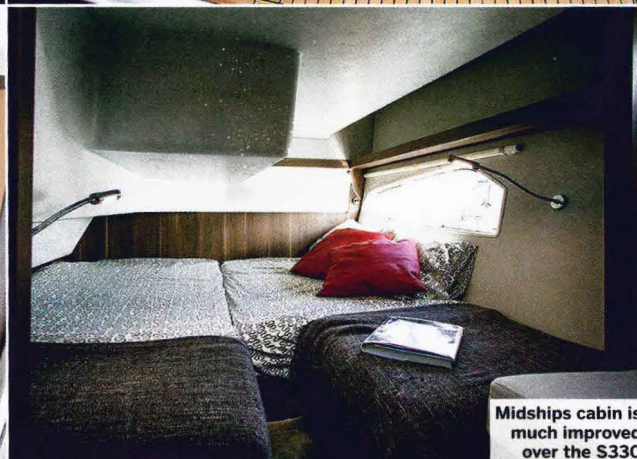


ENGINE ROOM

One of the few places where the C330 concedes points to the S330, whose entire aft section of the cockpit opens on a hydraulic ram to deliver fantastic engine access. The C still makes daily checks and more thorough repair work perfectly simple thanks to a wide-opening manual hatch on a pair of gas rams. More than enough room for a generator, too.

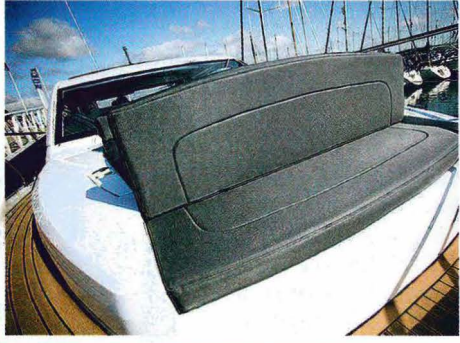


Wet room style heads uses space well



Midships cabin is much improved over the S330

Less cockpit space is compensated for by the neat sunpad and bench arrangement on the bow



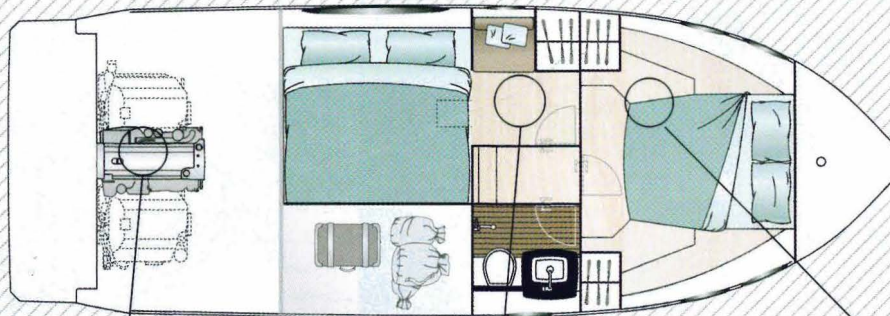
Closing the saloon up on the C330 is quick and easy, making her perfect for year-round cruising



THE DATA

LENGTH OVERALL 22ft 10in (10.31m)

BEAM
11ft 6in
(3.5m)



This layout shows the single engine option, which gives even more space in the engine room

There's space in the midships cabin for a small seat to take shoes on and off plus some hanging storage

The C330 has space at the foot of the bed for one person to get changed, unlike the S330

FUEL CAPACITY
125 imp gal (570 litres)
WATER CAPACITY
48 imp gal (22 litres)
DRAUGHT
2ft 11in (0.9m)
RCD CATEGORY
B for 8 people
DESIGNERS
Dixon Yacht Design
DISPLACEMENT
7.1 tonnes (light)

It's yet another way Sealine has managed to pack as much living space on board as possible

VERDICT

I was ready to be underwhelmed by the C330. I doubted whether it would look as good as the S330, if it could drive as well with the extra bulk, and whether the upper saloon layout would even work at all on a boat of this size. But going back to the point I made about testing these things and not drawing them, I was blown away by how well this boat works. It's so much more than a change in layout – it feels like you are on a completely different boat, and one with 10ft added to the LOA.

The cabins are genuinely usable for longer stints on board and it is far more of a year-

round option than the open version. There are so few boats of this size with a layout like this, and most of them are more sombre-looking, practical designs from Scandinavia, not a handsome coupé with 30 knots on tap.

There is the small matter of the £30-40,000 premium over the S330 but, in truth, the C feels like £40,000 more boat once you get on board, and unless you are totally smitten with the looks of the open, or if you plan to keep it somewhere with reliably warm weather, then the C330 is hands down the one to go for. **MBY**
Contact Penton Hook Marine Sales. Tel: +44 (0)1932 570055 Web: www.sealine.com

THE HELM VIEW



✚ The one-piece windscreen is part of what makes the view from the helm so clear

✚ The layout of the helm is clear and concise with regularly used controls close to the helmsman

✚ There is, strangely, still nowhere to store a mobile phone or mug, which was an issue on the S330 as well

PERFORMANCE

TEST ENGINES Volvo Penta D3 on sterndrives.
Twin 220hp @ 4,000rpm. 5-cylinder, 2.4-litre diesels.

MBY FIGURES

	2,600	2,800	3,000	3,200	3,400	ECO	FAST	MAX
RPM	2,600	2,800	3,000	3,200	3,400	3,600	3,800	4,000
Speed	13.0	14.8	18.1	21.5	24.6	27.9	29.9	31.2
LPH	45	51	58	61	69	78	88	95
GPH	9.9	11.2	12.8	13.4	15.2	15.2	19.4	20.9
MPG	1.31	1.32	1.42	1.60	1.62	1.84	1.54	1.49
Range	131	132	142	161	162	184	154	149

SOUND LEVELS dB(A)

Helm	74	73	75	77	77	79	78	79
Cockpit	80	81	81	82	83	86	86	89
Saloon	74	71	72	72	73	74	79	80

THE COSTS & OPTIONS

Price from **£177,967 inc VAT (single D6 330hp)**

Price as tested **£235,597 inc UK VAT**

Cruising pack: **£7,717**

Anchor kit, windlass, trim tabs, 4hp bow thruster, tilt steering wheel, spotlight, cockpit canopies, fenders and mooring lines

Comfort pack: **£7,559**

Teak decks, fresh water wash down, electric toilet, LED lights, cockpit fridge, bow cushions, deluxe mattresses, screen covers, mosquito nets and internal blinds

= Options on test boat

RIVALS

Bavaria Sport 330

Price from **£121,084**

Awkward looks but amazingly strong value on the water.

Buy the test: mby.com/b330

Nimbus 305 Coupé

Price from **£179,123**

More traditional but a very solid boat with excellent pedigree and practical Scandinavian design.



Speed in knots. GPH & MPG figures use imperial gallons. Range in nautical miles and allows for 20% reserve. Calculated figures based on readings from on-board fuel gauges, your figures may vary considerably. All prices include UK VAT. 50% fuel, 100% water, 3 crew, no stores or tender; liferaft on board, 20°C air temp, F1 + calm for sea trials