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SEALINE S330

First full test - how good is it?



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SEALINE S330

Small but perfectly formed, the latest Sealine is everything we wished for and more, with handling, styling and finishing touches a cut above the rest

Text: **Jack Haines** Photos: **Nick Burnham & Sealine**





The doubters, who worried how the Hanse Group would handle its ownership of Sealine, should be feeling very sheepish. Not only has Hanse finished and launched the excellent F380 but, without taking a breath, it has unveiled the S330 too. The vigour with which the German yard has grasped the scruff of Sealine's neck and started churning out new product beggars belief; it has done in a matter of months what Sealine as its former self couldn't manage over a period of years. This is what the might of mass production gives you and doubters be damned.

If anything, the S330 is an even more important boat than the F380, being the smallest boat with a Sealine badge for a long time. So many boat owners have got into the sport via small Sealine sports cruisers and the S330 looks set to reignite that flame.

So what have we actually got here? The hull is a creation of renowned British architect Bill Dixon, the man behind the Azimut Magellano 43, Pearl 65 and many more. The S330 has a sweet-looking hull, which maintains hints of the modern Sealine look with subtle differences. The topsides don't look quite as upright and the bow is high on vertical in comparison to the more gently sloping forefoot of the larger boats. The glazing in the hull, as well as its obvious benefit to the interior, is a prominent feature of the outside and, for a boat so short, the hardtop is well integrated, which ensures it doesn't look top heavy. The S330 is, by some margin, the best-looking boat in the current Sealine range.

NIPPY AND AGILE

The engines all come from Volvo Penta and you have the choice of twin D3s in either 170hp or 220hp guise, or the single D6 in 330hp (the standard option) or 400hp flavour, all on DPH stern drives.

We edged out of Greifswald, home to Hanse HQ, with the largest pair of D3 220s burbling away beneath the cockpit. This most potent D3 option is a fine match for the S330's athletic hull, providing ample grunt even if the top speed just shy of 32 knots seemed a little down on what

Hanse expected in its press literature. In fairness, we did have 75% fuel plus five journo's and all their associated clobber on board.

That being said, the S330 leapt up on to the plane in 12 seconds and took a reasonably swift 34 seconds to reach its 31.7-knot top speed.

Although the calm seas made it difficult to give the hull a properly thorough shakedown it meant we could really get to grips with, and enjoy the handling of, the brilliant hull and power train. The agile, surefooted hull and DPH drives are sweet as a nut and make for wonderfully accurate and assured inputs from the helm. The best part of the S330 driving experience is the fine balance it possesses between being fun and exciting yet feeling safe and pleasingly forgiving at the same time.

We were driving the thing with far more aggression and absurd manoeuvres than an owner would even dream of, not to mention the photoshoot that involved a lot of wake jumping and high-speed lock-to-lock turns, and the boat didn't bite once. It's like a wonderfully docile dog that will tirelessly put up with a toddler yanking its tail and not snap. Trust me, these toddlers were going for it and the dog behaved impeccably.

IN FOR THE RIDE

An issue that Hanse needs to address is the amount of noise emanating from the engine room. Even at a relatively low 2,400rpm the noise levels in the cockpit were in the late 80s and hit 90 dB(A) at times, which is pretty raucous. Strangely, this can probably be put down to a total lack of sound insulation in the engine room. Hanse says it increased the thickness of the deck hatch but sadly that hasn't cut the mustard. Thankfully, it's not a difficult fix for the yard to install some decent soundproofing.

This aside, the engine room installation is actually very good. It's especially nice on a boat of this size to have an engine hatch that not only rises to reveal a truly enormous aperture but does so on a powerful hydraulic ram, operated from the helm. This makes the descent into the engine room very easy and there is acres of space to work around the compact D3 lumps. Spec either the single D6

The design is clever in that it finds ways to make the very most out of the limited space

330 or 400 and you'll have even more room to play with.

In truth, I would really like to give the single D6 400hp a go in this boat. The single D6 is heavier than the pair of D3s so performance is likely to be much the same and possibly a little worse. But I have tested a lot of boats with the single D6 sterndrive set-up and it is so smooth, solid and gratifying to use that I think it would suit the S330 very well. It might even help the noise levels having just the one (albeit larger) lump down there rather than two little ones chattering away.

As for fuel consumption, if Hanse's figures (which we had to use as there was no fuel reading software installed) are to be believed the S330 still manages over 2mpg even at full chat. We couldn't put these claims to the test, though, so use your pinch of salt with the data.

Some minor tweaks aside, the cockpit layout worked very well, even when we had five or six people on board. The design is clever in that it finds ways to make the very most out of the limited space available. The aft section of the dinette, for example, has a folding backrest that can be locked in three positions to create a flat sunbathing area that links up with the convertible sunpad at the dinette.

Having three forward-facing seats (including the helm chair) up front is a great touch and one that makes long journeys much more pleasant for skipper and crew. The raised navigator's area is the perfect place to sit and while away a longer cruise and, being that bit higher than the main deck, is brilliant for eyeball navigation when you're in unfamiliar surroundings. The only improvement could be some additional storage to chuck phones and sunglasses, as there's plenty of spare space.

Considering how wide the cockpit feels when you're inside, it's a pleasant surprise to discover that the side decks haven't overly suffered. Sure, they're a bit pinched but I found crewing perfectly easy and that's without the handholds in situ that Hanse plans to add to the hardtop coaming.

The double soft-top roof set-up is an interesting concept. Both fore and aft sections are manual and you simply undo the catches and slide them into the middle where they

both stow in the radar arch. I can think of no better way of making what is technically an enclosed sports cruiser feel like an open one. It's brilliant.

COSY CABINS

Below decks is where you begin to feel the boat's size, or lack of it. Headroom isn't an issue, I'm pleased to report, but get a few bodies down there and it soon starts to feel cramped. If four of you were to stay on board then the shuffling around each other at breakfast could be tricky. It is only 33ft 10in long, though, and you do get two perfectly usable and totally separate cabins, plus a well-finished heads compartment with shower.

There is an option to have no door on the forward bulkhead but I can't see why you would deny yourself the privacy of an enclosed cabin. The only reason I can think of is that with the berth infill in place there is nowhere to stand inside the cabin so you would have to get changed in the saloon anyway. The workings of the berths needs tweaking as it's pretty useless to have an infill in the last remaining space there is to stand in the cabin. But, having said that, you can still use the berths without the infill.

In truth, the midships cabin is probably going to be used as the master because, despite its low ceiling, it has a better shaped double bed, superior storage in the form of a nice tall cupboard and low-level locker, plus it's ever so slightly nearer the bathroom.

The level of finish seemed pretty good on what was technically a prototype model that had been rushed together to make a surprise appearance at the Southampton Boat Show. Everything felt solid enough and behind the scenes it seemed up to scratch considering the price and size.

The S330 certainly looks and feels good on the inside, with smart bleached oak cabinetry, chunky square catches on every locker, standard dimming LED lighting and quality components, such as Isotherm fridges in the galley and wet-bar. It didn't wobble about all over the place at sea, either, as was put to the test with our wake-jumping antics. Very few bangs and rattles infiltrated the cockpit and all



Big, wide steps leading up to spacious side decks make crewing safe and easy

Headroom is generous in the saloon but doorways are quite narrow

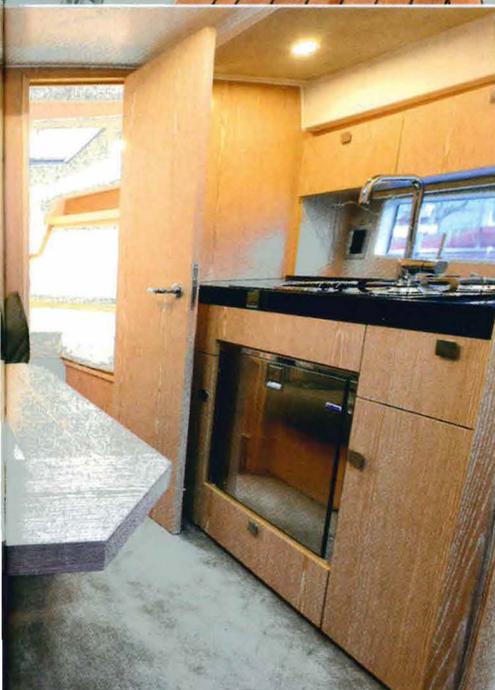


The space between the berths has an infill but this leaves nowhere to stand





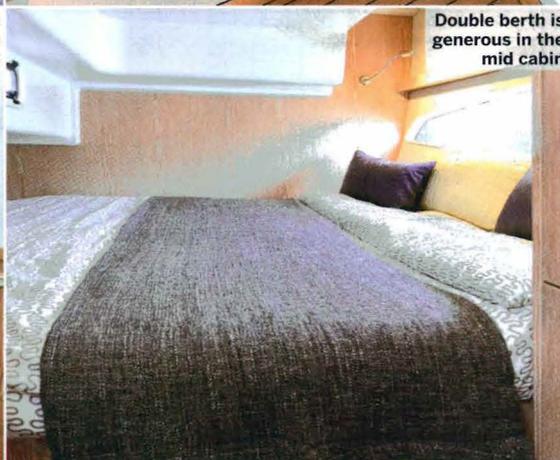
The double seat adjacent to the helm is a brilliant spot for guests to sit during a journey



Good storage in the full-size heads unit



Double berth is generous in the mid cabin



A CLOSER LOOK WITH JACK HAINES

ENGINE ACCESS

The large hatch opens via a helm switch on a hydraulic ram. Access is wonderful but, as you can see, there is no sound proofing on the hatch.



SUNPAD

The aft part of the dinette locks in three locations so that it can be adapted for sitting and eating, reclining, or lying flat out for a serious spot of sunbathing.



SOLID DETAILS

It may be a small boat but some of the detailing feels really high end. The transom gate, for example, is chunky and hewn from stainless steel



ENGINE ROOM

Access to the engineroom is excellent thanks to the large, hydraulically operated deck hatch. The installation is tidy too, and all lines and wires are neatly labelled.



THE RIVALS

Bavaria Sport 32
Price from £139,188 inc UK VAT

Voluminous below decks, the Sport 32 makes do with a curtain to cordon off the forward berth. Potential for 40 knots with big petrols.



Elan Power 30
Price from £142,000 inc UK VAT

Excellent use of space down below and feels bigger than the Sealine throughout. Seems to have a decent hull and handles well, too.



+ Cockpit table collapses and cushions fill in to join the collapsible backrest, aft, to create a large sunpad



+ The split roof is a simple yet very effective idea in the way that it so brilliantly exposes the cockpit

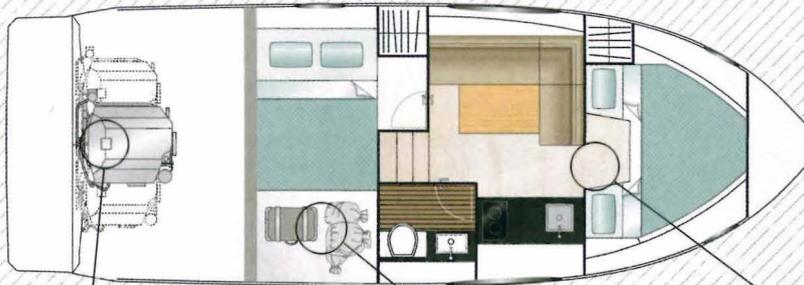


- Sealine plans to add a handrail here to make moving forward even safer

THE DATA

LENGTH OVERALL 33ft 10in (10.31m)

BEAM
11ft 6in
(3.5m)



Huge amounts of space in the engine room even if you opt to go for the twin D3s

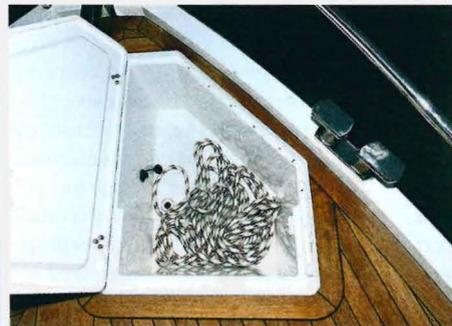
Storage void in the midships cabin comes in handy to store bulky suitcases during longer stays

This is the standard layout without the €1,500 option to have a door in the forward cabin

FUEL CAPACITY
125 imp gal (570 litres)
WATER CAPACITY
48 imp gal (220 litres)
DRAUGHT
2ft 9in (0.89m)
RCD CATEGORY
B for 8 people
DESIGNERS
Bill Dixon & Sealine
DISPLACEMENT
6.7 tonnes

The S330 retains Sealine's core values of practicality, safety and value for money

+ Anchor locker is sensibly split in two. The starboard side is shallower for storing lines and fenders



the headlinings, lockers and doors stayed put throughout – something that can't necessarily be said for some much larger boats that I've tested from other yards.

VERDICT

With plenty of eyes on the S330 and many wishing it to fill a void that Sealine has had for far too long, does the S330 stand up to the hype? Well, it looks like Hanse may have done a repeat of the F380 and pulled a real blinder. Rivals may be slightly more spacious down below and offer better accommodation, in particular the Elan Power 30 (which I haven't tested but had a good poke around on at Southampton), but neither this nor the Bavaria Sport 32 are as

handsome or as well packaged as the Sealine. This is a small boat that punches well above its weight in terms of styling, ride and handling, and all for a tempting starting price.

The S330 retains Sealine's core values of practicality, safety and value for money, but it also looks really good, goes well and offers a real sense of style and panache in an area of the market that is all too often dominated by keeping costs down and offering so much space that looks good out the window. If the F380 suggested that Sealine had rediscovered its mojo under Hanse's stewardship then the S330 is the boat that proves it. **MBY**

Contact See Sealine website for dealers. www.sealine.com

THE HELM VIEW

+ Somewhere to rest a drink or store sunglasses or a VHF wouldn't go amiss



+ Space to fit two small plotters on the dash, which has been usefully tied to give a good view of all the dials

+ Driving position is excellent, whether seated or standing with your head out of the roof

PERFORMANCE

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

MBY TEST FIGURES*

	ECO			FAST			MAX		
RPM	2,250	2,500	2,750	3,000	3,250	3,500	3,750	4,000	
Speed	10.3	11.8	15.4	19.0	22.5	26.0	29.7	33.3	
LPH	16	21	27	33	40	49	57	72	
GPH	3.5	4.6	5.9	7.3	8.8	10.8	12.5	15.8	
MPG	2.93	2.55	2.59	2.62	2.56	2.41	2.37	2.1	
Range	293	255	259	262	256	241	237	210	

SOUND LEVELS dB(A)

	ECO			FAST			MAX		
Saloon	80	81	81	82	84	84	84	84	
Cockpit	87	89	89	89	88	89	89	90	
Helm	82	84	84	84	85	85	85	85	

Speed in knots. GPH & MPG figures use imperial gallons. Range in nautical miles and allows for 20% reserve. *Calculated figures based on manufacturer readings, your figures may vary considerably. All prices exclude VAT. 75% fuel, 0% water, 5 crew + minimal stores. 5°C air temp, calm sea, F1 for speed trials

THE COSTS & OPTIONS

Price from	€144,950 (Single D6 330hp)
Price as tested	€237,460 (Twin D3 220hp)
Upgrade to twin D3 220hp	€20,000
Painted hull	€9,900
Sterndrive joystick	€13,650
4kW generator	€12,250
Cockpit BBQ	€790
18,000 BTU tropical air-con	€9,900
Heating: Eberspächer D4	€3,750
Raymarine HD radar	€2,400
Enclosed forward cabin	€1,500
Teak side decks	€3,900
= Options on test boat	

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