

Buccaneer 565 Classic XL

By Freddy Foote

Still a Classic

Buccaneer Pleasure Craft recently released a new version of its popular 550 Classic XL model, now renamed the 565 Classic XL. Freddy Foote tests out one of the first of the new models to hit the water.



When Buccaneer released the 550 Classic XL in 1997 it was designed to be the quintessential kiwi cabin runabout and managing director/designer Gerry Gerrand obviously saw that such a model would have great potential in the local market and would surely be popular. Well, he sure was right, for in just over 10 years Buccaneer went on to produce just over 570 of the 550 Classic XL, the most popular model in the Buccaneer line-up.

Now in 2008 we see the release of the new model of this popular boat, albeit with a slightly different name, the 565 Classic XL, the change in number bringing it into line with other similarly sized Buccaneer models.

As with the previous incarnation, the 565 has a definite big boat feel and when you're out on the water you soon forget that you're in a boat which in reality still has a hull length of 5.67m and an overall length of 5.91m (including bowsprit).

The majority of the changes on the new 565 model are within the new styled deck and full internal hull liner. One of the requests from dealers and customers was for the provision of a freefall anchor winch. Thus a larger, deeper anchor locker is a new feature of the 565, however it sees the forward cabin bulkhead moved by 150mm to accommodate this. No major loss – I spent a few minutes in the cabin and for a boat of its size, it is still a generous space, with plenty of headroom even for adults, lite well by the new alloy framed forward hatch designed to reduce leaks.

One of the big changes is that the 565 Classic now shares the same construction methods that we have seen introduced to other Buccaneer models released over the last few years.

The 565 utilises the Advanced Composite Stringer System (ACSS), which incorporates a full fibreglass inner liner and stringer system and virtually does away with any timber in the boat, a construction method that vastly cuts down overall construction time – a benefit that in the long run is a win for both the manufacturer and the consumer. The boat itself is made up of three large moulds for the hull, deck and inner liner respectively. All timber side panels and upholstered boards have been replaced with polymer plastic board. Plexus adhesive is used to bond everything together, the liner stretches from gunnel to gunnel, bow to stern. It has not only cut down production time, but has also produced a stiffer and stronger boat which is very much noticeable compared to the previous 550 model. There are three composite stringers either side, with foam filling all the side cavities to maximise the flotation capabilities of the boat.

Room to Move

As I mentioned earlier, the 565 is certainly a roomy boat, with a host of features and a well laid out interior, which has helped make the model so



Buccaneer 565 Classic

Specifications

Model: Buccaneer 565 Classic
Priced From: \$49,985
Price as Tested: \$74,995
Type: GRP Cabin
LOA: 5.91m
LOH: 5.67m
Beam: 2.29m
Deadrise: 23 degrees
Height on Trailer: 2.3m
Trailerable Weight: 1420kg
Engine Capacity: 115hp-150hp
Power Options: Outboard
Fuel Capacity: 165L

PERFORMANCE

600 rpm 3.0mph
1000 rpm 5.0mph
1500 rpm 7.0mph
2000 rpm 8.5mph
2500 rpm 10.0mph
3000 rpm 16.5mph
3500 rpm 27.0mph
4000 rpm 32.0mph
4500 rpm 37.0mph
5000 rpm 42.0mph
5500 rpm 47.0mph
5900 rpm 52.0mph

Notable Standard Equipment

Cabin hood lining, BEP wiring loom and switch panel, polymer upholstery panel boards, polyurethane foam filled hull, N.Z. CPC Boatbuilding standard.

Notable Options on Test Boat

Bimini rocket launcher, 150hp Yamaha four-stroke, VHF, sounder, carpet.

Engine

Make: Yamaha
Power: 150hp
Model: Four-Stroke
Cyl. Config.: In-line 4
Displacement: 2670
Max rpm: 5900
Propeller: 19" Reliance
Retail Price: \$25,326 **Trailer**
Make: DMW
Braked: No
Suspension: Durotorque
Rollers: Multi roller
Equipment: Submersible LED lights and jockey & spare wheel.
Retail Price from: \$5,050

Manufacturer

Buccaneer Boats
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Boat Supplied by

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popular.

Bunk bases in the cabin are one unit (part of the hull liner) with moulded recessed bins for storage under both sides. Notably on the new 565 there is provision made in the cabin floor mould for a chemical or electric flush toilet, with a hinged lid this is a great feature for this style of boat. Wide side trays provide ample storage and padded backrests provide a little extra comfort.



A lot of emphasis has gone into the dash configuration, a detail I have noticed on all Buccaneer models, as each one is very clean and practical. The dash itself comes as a separate moulded unit.

Everything has been placed to be either easily accessible or easily readable. The instrument cluster forms a natural line at eye level, with the flush-mounted electronics right in the centre where the driver wants to see them. Our test boat was fitted with an Eagle sounder, but there's ample space to accommodate larger combination units.

A Quick rope/chain anchor system allows all the anchoring chores to be carried out from the helm, so there is really no need to go forward at all, although the large alloy framed for'ard deck hatch will provide plenty of airflow through the cabin if opened.



The seating configuration seen on this boat is what comes pretty much as standard; a back-to-back on the port side, single pedestal to starboard with aft corner seats, the port corner seat being removable and providing access to the transom walk-thru. This arrangement will provide seating for five. If you need an extra seat, you can opt for a removable bin seat that sits just behind the helm seat, once of the many options on Buccaneer's spec sheet. I have always liked removable bin seats and I have one on my own boat, as they provide an extra seat, extra storage and are easily removed and left on the beach when you want to free up the cockpit when water skiing.

In what is designed to be an all-rounder, the 565 boasts new higher cockpit coamings and a large cockpit ideal for family fishing. Rod holders complement the coamings and with the addition of a sizeable baitboard you have all the makings of a great boat to fish from.



Storage in the cockpit is via an aft moulded wet locker immediately behind the generous 165L fuel tank. Further storage comes in the form of moulded side trays and lockers built into the transom. The battery, oil tank and cut-off switch are fitted in the centre under the engine well. Further storage space is under the king/queen passenger seats and under the helm pedestal seat. Handy and sizeable storage shelves are conveniently placed for the front passenger and skipper.

This particular boat was set-up with a rigid frame bimini/rocket launcher which provides ample head room for most adults and protection from the sun. If you have a height restriction in your garage, then the whole structure can be folded down.

Bluewater Pedigree



As for handling, like all previous Buccaneer models I've experienced, they have always seemed to have gotten this aspect pretty well right. It is a hull that can be easily powered by a 115hp outboard right through to the maximum allowable, a 150hp



four-stroke which we had fitted on our test boat.

The 150hp Yamaha four-stroke outboard provided copious amounts of power right through the whole rev range, pushing the hull up onto the

plane quickly and having excellent throttle response when powering into the steep harbour chop that we experienced on test day. The 150hp outboard was definitely as much horsepower as you would want on this hull, and would be the preferred choice for those who want to go fast or want the extra oomph to pull Dad out of the water when waterskiing.

In the limited amount of flat water that we could find on the day, we managed to squeeze 52mph @ 5900rpm out of the 565 and Yamaha 150hp four-stroke combo. A pretty quick speed figure for a family cabin boat! Given the perfect conditions, which we didn't experience, I think you could squeeze a little more out of it.

Essentially nothing has changed underneath for the 565 from the previous 550 model. It still features a 23-degree hull with two strakes running each side and flat chines and a central running plank tapering away for'ard.

Test day wasn't really a good day to be out boating, a brisk harbour breeze was blowing down the harbour at around 25 knots, whipping up a nasty harbour chop, but it was a great day to be testing a boat!

I was notably impressed with how the 565 handled the conditions. It performed well, always landing straight when coming off waves. The ride was soft and pleasant, a little harder when running into a quartering sea, but we were pushing reasonably hard and it was to be expected. A high windscreen kept the wind to a minimum and no spray was taken onto the windscreen.



The seated driving position was good and the throttle/gearshift control lever was in easy reach. The driving position standing was also great, with plenty of foot room and enough space to stand back from the wheel slightly.

My only negative was that when standing as a passenger I would have liked to have seen more of a handrail, maybe along the top of the cabin entrance or even across the top edge of the windscreen.

As tested, this model was \$74,995, however Buccaneer has also released a limited introductory package of the 565 onto the market, packaged with an Eagle sounder, DMW trailer, and Yamaha 130hp two-stroke outboard, with packages starting from \$49,985.

In recent years Buccaneer has released at least one new model every year, continually developing and improving its models and keeping them at the pointy end of the market. The 550 Classic XL was a great boat, and after 11 years, its replacement the 565 Classic XL is simply superb.



