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A PACKAGE DEAL

RINKER'S NEW BOWRIDER GETS DRESSED UP FOR WATERSPORTS SUCCESS

By Go Boating Test Team

"Everybody wants a 22-foot boat that's got everything inside it that a 28-foot boat does." That's what the rep from the Rinker Boat Co. said when we met up to put the builder's new R1-package 226 Captiva Bowrider through the motions. We soon learned how Rinker worked all the angles to include as many functional features as possible in a smaller runabout.

The 23-foot, 6-inch 226 Captiva is a brand-new hull for Rinker this year, and we were testing it with a number of the R1 extreme watersports features on board, including the tower with speakers and the R-series graphics. For the record, if you opt for the complete R1 package, which is a $4,500 option, you'll get a custom folding wakeboard tower with board racks, a stereo upgrade (with two tower speakers, four cockpit speakers, a 10-inch subwoofer, a transom remote, a six-disc changer and a six-month Sirius subscription), a large rearview watersports mirror, R-series graphics and a High 5 stainless steel prop.

The idea behind the R1 package is to create a simple way to take the 226 Captiva and trick it out for enhanced watersports action with most of the elements you need more of. This includes more air with the tower, more tunes with the stereo and speakers and more acceleration with the prop. If you don't have enough friends to bring along on a regular basis to weigh down the stern to pump up the wake, you can add an optional Fat Sac ballast bag to get the job done. There's also a PerfectPass cruise control option for those who are particular about their wakes.

Aside from all the watersports action, remember that Rinker is an upscale boat builder, and this new model includes a number of noteworthy innovations. You'll notice that all the storage areas are lined with rotocast tubs, which is honestly something we've never seen before in a boat like this. These tubs are nearly indestructible and will keep any water from escaping into the bilge.

Like many other craft this size, the R1 has a walk-through transom for easy access to the large swim platform. Unlike many other builders, however, Rinker managed to keep a full-beam sunpad in the equation by building in a double-hinged section that folds out of the way to reveal the walk-through (and the folding section can be propped up to create a large chaise lounge).

You'll find that Rinker has taken advantage of every possible space on the 226 to include comfort, style and convenience — we've seen 28-foot boats with less.

PERFORMANCE

Serious watersports enthusiasts, especially wakeboarders, will probably want to stick with the High 5 stainless steel prop



that comes with the R1 package. Our test boat, however, was equipped with a 350 MAG MPI MerCruiser with a Bravo III spinning a 28-inch three-blade stainless steel prop set, which provides fine watersports ability along with better cruising performance than the High 5 prop, which would come with an Alpha I drive.

Acceleration was still crisp with 3.5 seconds to plane and a 0- to 30-mph time of 7.8 seconds. We posted a top speed of 53 mph for a top-speed range of 79 miles. Our most efficient cruising speed was 26.7 mph, which would yield a cruising range of 133 miles. The sound level at cruising was 85 dBa, which is very good.

The craft rides well and takes hard-over turns without complaint. Our test boat was equipped with optional trim tabs, and we enjoyed using them to manipulate the wake shape. As equipped, our test boat would make for an awesome double-duty craft with cruising and traditional family fun on one side and amped-up watersports action on the other.

OVERALL

The Rinker 226 Captiva Bowrider is brand-new for 2006, and you can have it any way you want it. The R1 package will dial you in for enhanced watersports pleasure, and there's an optional SE package that is aimed at elevating the comfort and luxury of the craft. Without either package, however, the 226 is still a damn impressive craft.

Anytime a builder brings a brand-new craft to the water it has an opportunity to do something better — something more — than it has done in the past. And that's exactly what Rinker has done with the new 226. GO

SPECIFICATIONS

Length	23 ft., 6 in.
Beam	8 ft., 6 in.
Capacity	11 people
Dry weight	3,650 lbs.
Fuel capacity	42 gals.
Maximum power	300 hp
Deadrise (@ transom)	20°





STEP IT UP — (top) The standard extended swim platform with boarding ladder makes the staging phase of watersports activities a cinch, not to mention it adds safety and convenience when it's time to bring a rider back into the boat. (above) The R1 package includes two tower-mounted speakers, which combine with a number of other stereo enhancements for rockin' sessions. (below) The helm is clean and sporty, and the optional PerfectPass cruise control will allow you to dial it in with consistent speed and wake shape.

PERFORMANCE & PRICING: RINKER R1

PERFORMANCE

	MPH	RPM	MPG	RANGE	$/MILE*	DBA
PEAK	53	5,500	2.09	79	1.12	93
CRUISE	26.7	3,000	3.51	133	.66	85

TIME TO PLANE	3.5 seconds
0-30 MPH ACCELERATION	7.8 seconds

*-Fuel consumption measured with Floscan digital fuel-flow meter; range based on 90% of total fuel capacity. *Assuming a fuel price of $2.33/gallon*

POWER

TEST	350 MAG MPI MerCruiser
HP	300
DRIVE	Bravo III
PROP	28-inch 3-blade stainless steel
WOT RANGE	4,800-5,200 rpm
STANDARD	5.0L MerCruiser
HP	220
DRIVE	Alpha I
PROP	3-blade aluminum
WOT RANGE	4,400-4,800 rpm

Craft available with MerCruiser and Volvo Penta stern drives ranging from 220 to 300 hp

LOAD

	PEOPLE	FUEL (GALS./LBS.)	MISC.
TEST	2	42/263	15 lbs.
TYPICAL	7-8	42/263	145 lbs.

BASE PRICE

WITH TEST POWER	$43,670*
WITH STANDARD POWER	$37,136*

Price can vary depending on options and location — price does not include trailer

FINANCING

$344/month for 15 years*

Assuming a final price of $45,500 with a 15% down payment and a fixed interest rate of 7.0% — does not include sales tax

FIVE NOTABLE OPTIONS

Corsa Quick and Quiet exhaust ($2,143), trim tabs w/indicators ($921), full canvas enclosure ($1,000), dual battery system w/switch ($143), Fat Sac ballast bag ($379)

FIVE NOTABLE STANDARDS

Extended swim platform w/boarding ladder, custom folding tower w/board racks, Clarion AM/FM CD stereo (w/two tower speakers, four cockpit speakers, 10-inch subwoofer, transom remote, six-disc changer and six-month Sirius subscription), Milsco tri-tech suspension bucket seats w/bolsters, sport design steering wheel w/five-position tilt

BUILDER

Rinker Boat Co., 300 W. Chicago St., Syracuse, IN 46567; (574) 457-5731; www.rinkerboats.com

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