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# MOTOR BOATS

MONTHLY



**JOHN BOYLE** investigates

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TESTED

# Quicksilver Activ 855 Cruiser

Stand tall and rest easy within a highly flexible layout

## Nick says...



Last year the Quicksilver Activ 705 Cruiser, then the largest of the Quicksilver range of

practical motorboats, won our coveted Motorboat of the Year "Starter Boat" category, in no small part due to its adaptable layout. This year Quicksilver has raised the bar, launching its largest boat to date, the Activ 855 Cruiser. I went to Rapallo in Italy to see how it measured up.

**LENGTH OVERALL** 29ft 3in (8.91m)

**PRICE FROM** £69,999 inc VAT

**TOP SPEED** 30 knots

**BUILDER** Quicksilver

**ENQUIRIES**

[www.quicksilver-boats.com](http://www.quicksilver-boats.com)

**W**e held the launch here because it virtually guaranteed great weather," says Brunswick marketing manager Fedra Generini, staring balefully out of the windscreen at a beautiful but sodden Carlo Riva Yacht Club Marina as the two large pantograph wipers sweep away the incessant rain. It's a pity for the photographs, but actually this is ideal weather to test this boat, designed as it is to be both multi-purpose and multi-weather.

The key to this boat, like its smaller sister the 705, which we tested last year, is adaptability and usability, and in the current conditions the ability to completely enclose the deck saloon is very welcome. Deep windows, triple sliding glass saloon doors, a sliding roof hatch and a further sliding door at the helm all help to keep us in touch with the

best bit of the elements, the view of the stunning Portofino coastline, while keeping the worst, the persistent liquid sunshine, at bay. In better conditions opening all the doors, together with the sliding roof hatch, will put the crew more in touch with the outside world.

The good news is that even closed up it doesn't feel cramped in here. Enormous 6ft 8in headroom combines with the generous glass area to ensure that the boat feels surprisingly spacious. Indeed I'm inclined to think that the boat was designed by Brunswick's basketball team, as concessions to the very tall run deep. The forward cabin island berth (a real coup in a sub-30ft boat), for example: 5ft 11in long in its normal state, it extends easily by pulling the base and dropping in an extension cushion to a whopping 6ft 6in. At the foot of the bed the headroom is huge too, and large

skylights mean it's well lit. As well as a hanging locker there are drawers beneath the bed, and the whole base will lift to access further storage. The mid cabin is the usual double berth slipped transversely beneath the saloon, but even here those basketball players have eked out plenty of headroom at the head end of the bed to avoid the slightly claustrophobic coffin feeling that blights some mid cabins. It's also possible to remove a centre section to create two single berths, a godsend if you have children. Storage space is limited though, as is floor space, with just enough room to get changed, not helped by a door that opens inwards. I guess basketball players are slim as well as lofty. On the starboard side is a small toilet compartment with a sea toilet and basin, the central section of the tap pulling out to double as a shower.



SEE IT AT THE  
**DUSSELDORF**  
BOAT SHOW



PHOTOS: Nick Burnham

## From the helm

At the helm those big windows and sloping forward cabin roof afford excellent visibility. It is possible to drop the floor and tilt the helm seat into a bolster to stand and drive, but there's no need. The instrument console will accommodate a 12in display and the whole area is finished in dark grey to minimise windscreen reflections. My favourite feature is the large sliding door alongside the helm. Great for opening the driving experience to the elements (when it's conducive to do so), it's also an absolute boon for short-handed berthing, allowing instant access forward or aft.

In the cockpit an L-shaped seating area features a large drop-in table for dining, or slot in shorter table legs and cover with an infill cushion for sunbathing. You can even wind the whole seat base forward to tilt the twin Mercury outboard engines that grace the transom of our test boat.

## Performance and handling

Mercury Verado 150hp supercharged outboards are big meaty engines, and there are two of them on our test boat. But there's no getting away from the fact that this is a big meaty boat, so performance is sufficient rather than electrifying. The 855 tops out at 30 knots but the hull is working hard at this speed and you'll need calmer water than the rolling swell of our test day to be comfortable any quicker. Drop back



Cornering is confident and comfortable rather than inspiring and zesty



to 20 to 25 knots and the hull feels far more into its comfort zone, better able to punch through the chop without wincing. It's the same story with the handling. Cornering is confident and comfortable rather than inspiring and zesty, but just like the performance and seakeeping it's entirely in tune with a boat that sets out its stall as a practical family cruiser, not a hot rod. That said, Quicksilver claims 40-knot potential for the twin Verado 200 engine option. Ultimately the boat goes and handles exactly as you'd expect from looking at it. No disappointments, but no surprises either.

### Specification and value

The base boat without engines comes in at £59,999. Quicksilver quotes £15,999 apiece for the Mercury Verado 150hp outboards on our test boat, bringing the total to a shade under £94,000 fully rigged. My guess is that dealers will offer package prices incorporating boat and engines that should shave a little from that. Alternatively you can opt for a single 300hp Verado for about £83,500. Single inboard

sterndrive petrol engines are also available and, unless you're hellbent on twin engines, arguably better value; £69,999 will put a boat on the water with a Mercruiser 5.0MPI 260hp engine, a lot of boat for the money. And you can upgrade to a 350 Magnum producing 300hp for an extra £4000. Finally, a single

“Even closed up it doesn't feel cramped in here”

diesel sterndrive unit is available. The Mercruiser TDI 3.0 HO DSL B3 offers 265hp and takes the price to about £95,000.

Whichever option you go for, figure in another £10,500 for the "Smart Edition" package of goodies that bundles everything from hot water and shore power to an electric anchor winch into an affordable suite of optional extras. The Navigation Pack of bow thruster and trim tabs is also worth its £3500.

It is worth noting that the twin Verado 150 engines fitted to our test boat are available in the UK to special order only, and are priced the same as the Verado 200. So for the UK, if you do want twin outboard engines, either opt for the 200 version for the same money or save yourself £7000 by specifying the more economical (but still 150hp) F150EFI option.



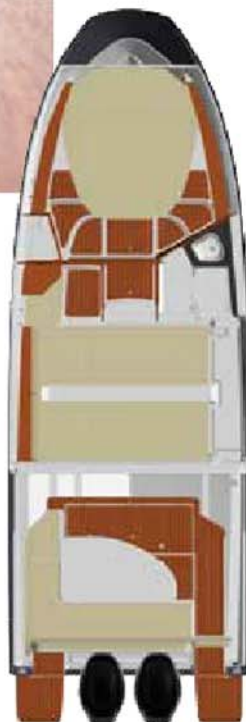
Smallest room in the 'house'



There is a sizeable second double berth



The island double berth is a real boon and has imaginative use of storage





## Enginebay

No enginebay on our test boat, just a pair of transom-hung Mercury Verado 150hp outboards. However, the 855 will be available with a choice of two Mercruiser inboard petrol engines, or a diesel engine, all options putting the power to the water via outdrives.

### TECHNICAL DATA

#### KEY DIMENSIONS

<b>BUILD</b>	GRP
<b>RCD</b>	B
<b>LENGTH OVERALL</b>	29ft 3in (8.91m)
<b>BEAM</b>	9ft 9in (2.98m)
<b>DRAUGHT</b>	2ft 1in (0.63m)
<b>AIR DRAUGHT</b>	9ft 9in (2.98m)
<b>DISPLACEMENT</b>	3175kg (7000lb) with 2 x 200hp Verados
<b>FUEL CAPACITY</b>	88gal (400lt)
<b>WATER CAPACITY</b>	22gal (100lt)
<b>HEADROOM IN SALOON</b>	6ft 8in (2.03m)
<b>BERTH FORWARD</b>	5ft 11in/6ft 6in x 5ft 2in (1.80/1.98m x 1.40m)
<b>BERTHS MID CABIN</b>	Twin 6ft 6in x 2ft 4in (1.98m x 0.69m). Infill to 5ft 3in (1.6m) wide double

#### PERFORMANCE

<b>ENGINES</b>	Twin Mercury 150 Verado outboards					
<b>CONFIGURATION</b>	4 cyl, 1.7 lt, 150hp supercharged					
<b>CONDITIONS</b>	Force 3, sea state slight to moderate					
<b>LOAD</b>	100% water, 50% fuel, 3 crew					
RPM	KNOTS	GPH	LPH	MPG	RANGE	NOISE
1000	4	1.3	6	3.1	218	71
2000	7	3.1	14	2.2	155	73
3000	11	7.0	32	1.6	113	79
4000	22	12.8	58	1.7	120	82
5100	30	25.1	114	1.2	84	85

Range figures quoted above are in miles based on standard fuel tanks and include a 20% margin. GPH & MPG refer to imperial gallons. These figures may vary due to weather conditions, air, water, engine temperature, crew numbers, hull fouling, fuel quality and other issues. Noise readings in dB(A) were taken in the saloon.

#### PRICES

**STANDARD BOAT** with twin Mercury 150 Verado  
£93,726 inc VAT

**SMART EDITION** £10,579 inc VAT – hull colour; roof hatch; foredeck cushions; cockpit lighting; cockpit shower; hot water calorifier; shore power; refrigerator and microwave; port bench seat; cockpit sun lounger and table; forward windlass; sun awning

**NAVIGATION PACK** £3449 inc VAT – bow thruster; trim tabs

**BOAT AS TESTED** £107,754 INC VAT



## Verdict

Quicksilver has set out to build on its reputation for practical, sensible, adaptable family cruisers that are weatherproof and foolproof, and the Activ 855 Cruiser does exactly that. As a family boat to be used and enjoyed it works extremely well, offering a broad spread of talents rather than excelling in particular areas at the expense of others. A consummate all rounder then, with plenty to offer the cruising family.



### MEET THE FAMILY



#### Quicksilver Activ 645 Cabin from £37,767

LOA: 20ft 9in (6.33m)

Cuddy cabin sportsboat with a surprisingly roomy cockpit.



#### Quicksilver Activ 705 Cruiser from £39,999

LOA: 23ft 2in (7.05m)

First of Quicksilver's new breed, offering similar versatility in a much smaller package.

### THE RIVALS



#### Grandezza 270C from £127,620

LOA: 27ft 2in (8.3m)

Stylish and beautifully finished, but lacks the enclosed saloon and island forward berth.



#### Jeanneau Leader 9 from £166,832

LOA: 31ft 11in (9.74m)

Slightly bigger with twin engines, open-backed hardtop and a converting dinette on lower level.