



FIRST DRIVE

Seaward 19

New model opens door for fans of tough, all-weather trailboats

Is this the boat that Seaward fans have been waiting for?

Isle of Wight-based Seaward has launched its new 19 model, which, at less than £50,000, undercuts the previous entry-level model, the 23, by a good £25,000. In doing so it has opened the brand up to a whole new market and placing the 19 right in the cross hairs of Jeanneau and Bénétéau.

The 23 and 25 are popular with those that want big boathandling without all the added costs and responsibility. The 19 is available with two inboard engine options, a 30hp for inland users, and 110hp for coastal boaters.

The round-bilge semi-displacement hull tops out at 16 knots, although pull back to 12 knots and it feels far smoother and less dramatic.

Out in The Solent – but with a Force 5 gusting – there is no doubting the 19 is from the Seaward family, it feels well balanced in the rough stuff. An overwhelming feeling of buoyancy adds to the control, leaving you confident of its ability to go places.

The hull deflects the spray efficiently, with only a mere splattering hitting the screen, and more importantly, try as we might,

FACTFILE

PRICE FROM	£49,878-£58,867
LOA	20ft (6.1m)
WEIGHT	2.1 tonnes
ENGINE	Yanmar 30hp and 110hp
TOP SPEED	17.5 knots
SHOW STAR RATING	4/5
WHERE TO SEE IT	Southampton
ENQUIRIES	www.seawardboat.com

we couldn't manage to get any over the wheelhouse. In fact step into the wheelhouse and shut the full-size door behind you and any remaining engine noise is massively reduced.

The plastic helm seats do feel a little cheap, but do the job perfectly. The white GRP helm has an assortment of switches laid out in an orderly fashion, with the throttle control to the top right, annoyingly a little too far for easy reach while

sitting. The model we tested had an optional Raymarine E7, which was used for speed display, fitted to the centre of the screen. When helming, looking at the bow through the screen is like looking at the bonnet of a Ford Transit, as it seems to only protrude a few inches, mainly because that's all it does.

It is sold as having a berth, but despite a couple of fill-in sections, it will be used only in emergencies. In reality it will become a large and handy storage area, for which it is perfect. It also houses a portable toilet to starboard, but again this will only really be used in emergencies.

The cockpit is a very simple affair, with nothing much more than four sides and a centre block, which hides the engine. Seaward has kept it basic, but there is a surprising amount of space, be it for fishing or for a picnic. Access to the engine is good, although any substantial work could prove challenging.

The 19 is the smallest and cheapest boat made by Seaward, a name revered for its quality and British build. It may be a little basic and more expensive than its Jeanneau or Bénétéau rivals, but you won't regret spending the extra money when the going gets tough.



The throttle is too far from helm seat



Berth doubles as a useful storage area



With the 19, Seaward has produced a no-nonsense entry level model