



Chaparral Jet Boat - 223 VRX

Boat Test #1329

Twin jets power this family bowrider.

There is no question when you hear the word Chaparral you think luxury and quality. Well, the 223 VRX is no different.

While I was at Evinrude dealer meeting this past summer in Milwaukee, I could not wait to get the 223 on the open water of Lake Michigan to see what she could do. I had only heard from others how well she handled, but I wanted to see for myself what everyone was raving about.

As I boarded, the 223 it was clear that there was something about this boat that made her stand out from the crowd. She stood with poise and confidence and was ready and eager to show me what she could do.

Once behind the wheel, it was hard not to notice the clean and sleek, yet sporty, leather-wrapped dash. The main digital display was strategically placed to provide me with the engines vital signs and the two combination gauges on either side provided updates on engine temps and voltage levels. Immediately below the gauges were the recessed lighted rocker switches, a 12v plug and the ignition switch.

As I turned the ignition key and pushed the starter buttons, the purr of twin 200hp Rotax Supercharged engines came to life. Gripping the digital shift, I placed the 223 in gear and pulled away from the dock. I was amazed at how quiet the twin engines were. If I wasn't in gear, I may have had to check under the sun pad to see if they were running.

Reaching the open water, I tightened my grip on the steering wheel and dropped the

hammer. Normally I am not one to just hammer down the throttle, but this was no normal boat. As I pushed the throttle to the floor, the twin engines grabbed the water and pushed me to the back of my seat. In less than 2.4 seconds I was on plane and reached a top speed of 53 mph at 8,000 rpms in less than 4.3 seconds.

Moving the steering wheel from side to side, the 223 reacted flawlessly and made the 2 foot chop part waves with no evidence of chime-walking that you find in other boats with a 20 degree deadrise. She did however spin out as anticipated in tight performance turns which are typical for jet power vessels – not to mention fun!

Returning to the dock, to my surprise, the 223 handled quiet differently than I was expecting. I actually had control of the boat mainly because of the reverse bucket design. The reverse bucket is not mounted directly to the steering nozzle like we have seen in the past. When shifted into reverse, the specifically engineered bucket gave me lateral thrust control rather than limited or no control around the dock. This was pretty slick.

Besides the performance of the 223, there are several unique features that set this boat apart from others currently on the market. The most noticeable is the oversized swim platform and rear facing seats. The second is the easy walk through from the swim platform into the cockpit. The third is the well designed passenger seat on the port side. The seat can be positioned for forward facing or for rear

facing when a spotter chair is needed. I can't forget to mention the abundant amount of storage throughout the boat.

Completing the cockpit seating is the U-shaped bench to the stern of the boat and the combing pads that adorned the high gunwales. Moving forward to the bow, the spacious area provided room for 2-3 adults comfortably and offered the optional filler cushion. A four-step stainless steel board ladder was positioned on the bow.

When the engineers and Chaparral started the design process they wanted something bold yet stylish. Something that accounted for all of the needed amenities and offered a few more not offered anywhere else. When they finished, they developed a pleasure craft that is years ahead of its time and a boat that anyone considering a family bowrider needs to take for a ride before making their final 'short list'.

By Chris Kourtakis

SPECIFICATIONS

LOA w/ Swim Platform:	22' 3" / 6.78 m
Beam:	8' 6" / 2.59 m
Deadrise:	20°
Fuel Capacity:	50 gal / 189 L
Draft:	13" / 33 cm
Dry Weight:	3100 lbs / 1406 kg
Capacity:	10 Persons

For further information:
Chaparral Boats
www.chaparralboats.com