

MOTOR BOAT & YACHTING

SAXDOR 270



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MOTOR BOAT & YACHTING

SAXDOR 270 GTO

The Finnish brand's latest model is one of the most hotly anticipated sportsboats of the year but can it live up to the standards of its siblings? We test the V6 and V8 versions to find out

We're always excited to test a new boat but on this occasion we're positively fizzing, partly because the Saxdor 270 is one of the most hotly anticipated sportsboats of the year but also because we've got two examples to play with. The first is powered by the entry-level 225hp Mercury V6 and costs from £89,857 inc VAT, the second by the 300hp Mercury V8 for £6,750 more. In almost every other respect they are identical, meaning we can see exactly what difference that extra 75hp makes to speed and fuel consumption and test the theory that a bigger engine can actually be more economical than a smaller one.

First up though, a quick recap on why there is so much excitement surrounding this boat. Like Axopar, Saxdor is a Finnish brand that builds its boats in Poland so it can offer a premium Scandinavian design at a mass market price. However, with Axopar already firmly entrenched as the market leader in this segment, with newcomers like Ryck and Quarken snapping at its heels, Saxdor has had to try doubly hard not just

to undercut the opposition on price but also to deliver even more bang for your buck.

Its first offering, the 200 Sport, was a 20ft bundle of fun that performed far better than its diminutive proportions would suggest, while its follow up model, the 320 GTO, wasn't just bigger and better equipped than its direct rivals but came with folding side platforms as standard.

This new 270 slots in neatly between these two siblings. At 27ft 9in long and 8ft 6in wide it is usefully bigger than an Axopar 25 but significantly shorter and narrower than an Axopar 28, meaning that it just scrapes in below the UK and European road legal towing width limit of 2.9m. It also comes with a very impressive array of standard and optional features for a boat of this size including a two-berth cabin, heads, T-top, sunbed, wet bar, ▶

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LEFT: Foredeck sunpads are great for lounging but you wouldn't want to sit here at speed
MIDDLE: Custom made thru-hull anchor system is slick but pricey RIGHT: Cool glass transom is a must

walkaround decks and a twin-step vacuum-infused hull with cutting-edge styling. In short, it is trying to outsmart the competition on every level. The question is whether it can do this while still delivering a safe, fun, comfortable driving experience.

COCKPIT CHOICES

The first impressions are certainly promising enough. With its clipped vertical bow, slender forefoot, sharp 20-degree deadrise angle and two deep steps cutting into the underwater profile, this is a hull that means business. It's the same story above the waterline with plenty of arresting details like the laser-cut backlit stainless steel Saxdor logos, glass bulwarks and black powder-coated windscreen and T-top supports adding an air of sophistication well beyond its relatively modest price point. The effect is of a taut, modern, perfectly proportioned sportsboat that looks as fun to hang out on as it does to drive. It should work well as a watersports platform too, with a good-sized bathing platform on either side of the engine and a folding bathing ladder as standard, although the water ski pole is a £420 option.

Another option we'd definitely recommend are the glass transom gates. They're not cheap at £2,121 but they look superb



ABOVE: The wet bar option includes the sink and drawers but the fridge and hob are additional upgrades

BELOW: The standard seating layout has five individual seats but there is an option for two bench seats



Despite the slender hull there is room below for a surprisingly decent two-berth cuddy cabin

and add significantly to the safety of those on board, particularly younger children. The wet bar is more of a nice-to-have than a must-have, given that it costs £3,642 and can only be ordered if you've already ticked the fresh water package – another £3,835. Even then you still have to add the fridge (£1,695) and hob (£600) to make it worthwhile. More essential items include the foredeck sunbed cushions (£1,500), bow thruster (£3,740) and teak cockpit table (£2,565). You can see how it all adds up.

There's also a decision to make about the cockpit layout. The standard arrangement is three forward facing rear seats and two swivelling helm seats that rotate to join the table between them. These are all admirably stylish and comfortable but do limit the number of people you can sit in the aft cockpit to a maximum of five. The alternative is to opt for the twin sofa solution which should increase this to six or even seven at a pinch, but as we haven't yet seen this in the flesh, it's hard to know how satisfactory this will be.

What we can tell you is that the current arrangement works very well, numbers permitting, but we wouldn't want to sit anyone forward of the windscreen at speed, although it is a lovely spot to catch some sun at anchor. A deep walkway to port of the centre console provides a safe and easy passage forward and the combination of the T-top support, windscreen surround and internal bow rails means there is always something to hang onto.

TOP SHOP

Talking of the T-top, the standard arrangement of metal supports with a GRP frame and canvas panels seems to us a pretty ideal solution with none of the awkward flexing that can affect bigger GRP mouldings and less hard plastic to reflect the sound of the engine. You can upgrade this with plexi-glass panels or even swap it for a rigid GRP one with glass panels, which can then be enclosed using see-through canopies, but we'd be inclined to give it a miss for the reasons already mentioned. You can also order a fully open GT model if you prefer.

An anchor locker in the bow has enough room for a manual anchor and chain plus a fender or two but our test boat was fitted with the much fancier and more expensive through-hull anchor system. Twin coaming lockers on either side of the cockpit take care of the aft fenders and lines.

Despite the slender looking bow and deep port side deck, there is room below for a surprisingly decent two-berth cuddy cabin. Multiple skylights overhead and a side window in the deck moulding let in plenty of natural light while soft white lining and pale oak cabinetry ensure it looks cheerful but never cheap. The one compromise is the sink and toilet (hidden under a lift-up box seat) that live in the corner of the cabin rather than in a separate heads compartment.



The cabin is compact but nicely finished and flooded with natural light

V6 OR V8

The helm position is pretty much perfect for this style of boat. Fore and aft sliders on the seat and tilt adjustment on the wheel mean it works just as well whether you are seated, leaning on the bolster or standing up. The wraparound screen provides a good level of protection from the breeze and a clean dash layout with a single 12in MFD as standard and a double row of neatly labelled and illuminated buttons for all the major controls like nav lights, horn, wipers and pumps save hunting around on touchscreen sub menus. Twin cupholders double as handy receptacles for sunglasses or mobile phones and there's a map pocket under the wheel for charts, paperwork and other paraphernalia. The Mercury fly-by-wire throttle is exactly where you want it to be and unlike some other digital throttles does have a manual detent button to stop you accidentally knocking it into gear.

Both the 225hp V6 and 300hp V8 engines are close to silent at idle but have a satisfying induction growl when accelerating hard. The V8 has noticeably more torque at low revs and a ▶



Powering through the turns, the boat behaved in a secure and predictable manner

beefier mid-range that carries on accelerating well past 35 knots, by which point the V6 is starting to run out of steam. The V6 never felt breathless or underpowered and went on to clock a respectable two way speed of 36.6 knots flat out but you are aware of it having to work harder and rev higher particularly when punching into a headwind. The V8 felt notably more relaxed at speeds over 25 knots and maxed out at 41.4 knots. It's a little more nuanced when it comes to fuel consumption as the V6 was around 10% more fuel efficient at speeds below 25 knots, but from 27-35 knots the V8 was actually more efficient, burning 47 lph at 30 knots compared to 51 lph for the V6.

As for the hull, it performed beautifully in a straight line; riding nice and flat at speed, cutting comfortably through the chop, staying dry and feeling commendably safe and solid. Powering through the turns, it behaved in a secure and predictable manner with good grip and just the right amount of lean. However, it did scrub off quite a lot of speed in tighter turns and didn't pick up again until back in a straight line with the propeller fully immersed. This wasn't a problem as such, and it didn't sound like the propeller was cavitating, but it did take some of the fun out of throwing it around. The dealer was still experimenting with different propellers to try to find the perfect match so a simple swap for a four-bladed prop or even an engine height tweak may be all that's required. Either way it's not a deal-breaker but it feels like the hull has more to give if you can find the perfect set-up.

VERDICT

The 270 GTO comes very close to being the perfect sportsboat. Small enough to trail, large enough to overnight on, fast enough to entertain, efficient enough not to worry about, and capable enough to cover distance with a good degree of safety and comfort, it really is a very competent all-rounder. It doesn't feel quite as classy or as much fun to drive as a Cormate T28 or Windy SR28 CC, but then it's significantly less expensive too. We'd need to do a back-to-back test with an Axopar 25/28 and a perfectly propped 270 GTO to see how it compares on the water with either of these, but we suspect it would be close enough for the decision to come down to personal preference and cost rather than ability. Either way, the 270 GTO is a deeply desirable boat that any of us would love to own.

CONTACT: Ideal Boat Tel: +44 (0)1758 703013; www.idealboat.com



The 300hp V8 is 5 knots quicker than the 225hp V6 and more efficient above 27 knots



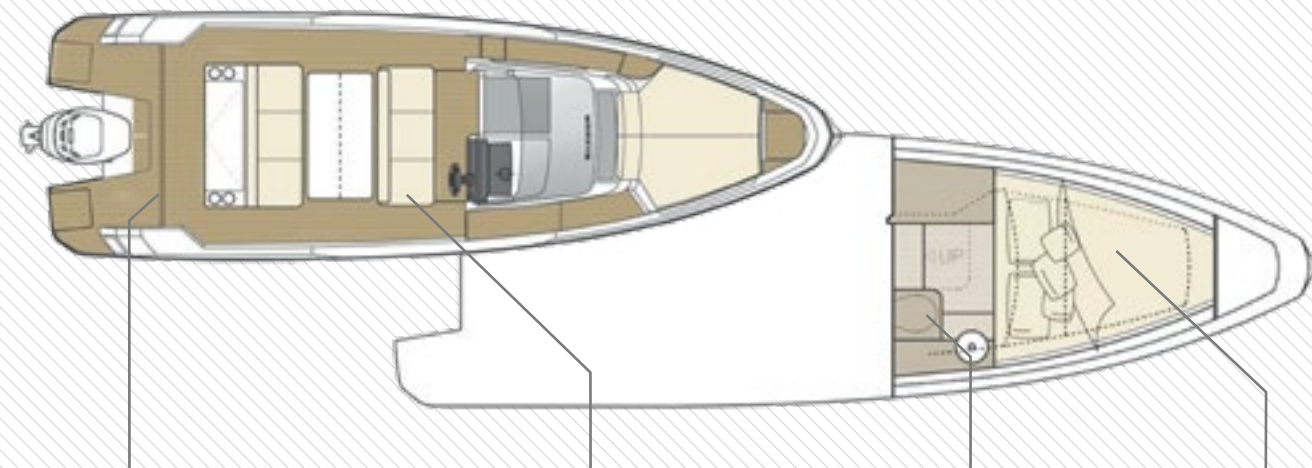
TRIM TABS
This joystick toggle is very intuitive to use but lacks a gauge to remind you how they are set

GLASS GUNWALE
These allow a great view of the water while adding extra freeboard height

DECK HEIGHT
Higher on the starboard side to boost headroom in the cabin

SPECIFICATION

LOA 27ft 9in (8.45m) BEAM 8ft 6in (2.6m) DRAFT 3ft 0in (0.92m) DISPLACEMENT 2600kg FUEL CAPACITY 300 litres
WATER CAPACITY 80 litres ENGINES Single 225-350hp or twin 200hp Mercury outboard RCD Category C for 7 people



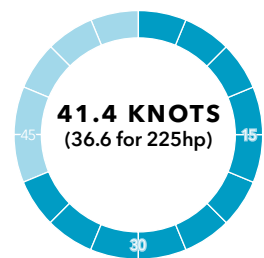
AFT UPGRADE
It might cost more than £2,000 but the glass transom is a top feature

SOFA OPTION
This shows how the optional sofa layout adds extra seating

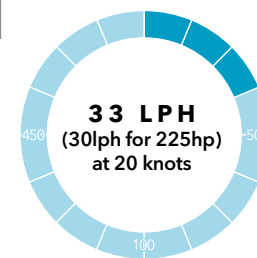
HEADS OPTION
The toilet is hidden under a seat in the cabin with a sink next to it

PROPER CUDDY
In spite of the rapier bow shape, this is a decent place to sleep

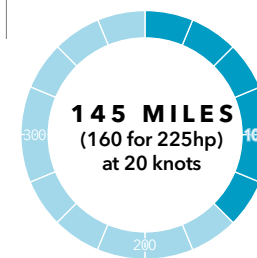
TOP SPEED



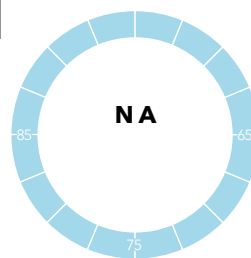
CONSUMPTION



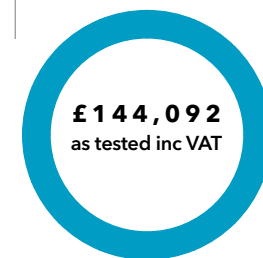
RANGE



NOISE



PRICE



COSTS AND OPTIONS

- From £89,857 inc VAT with 225hp V6
- From 93,071 inc VAT with 250hp V8
- From £96,607 inc VAT with 300hp V8
- Fresh water pack (sink, toilet, holding tank, deck shower) £3,835
- Wet bar £3,642
- Fridge in wet bar £1,695
- Hob in wet bar £600
- Bow thruster £3,740
- Thru-hull anchor windlass £6,927
- Glass transom gates £2,121
- Teak cockpit table £2,565
- Front sunbed cushions £1,500
- Soft decking £4,020
- Basic audio pack £1,275
- Manual trim tabs £1,045
- Waterski pole £420
- Webasto heater £4,060

PERFORMANCE

Test engines Single Mercury Verado 225hp V6 and 300hp V8

RPM	1000					2000					3000					4000					5000					6000				
	1000	2000	2500	3000	3500	4000	4500	5000	5500	6000	1000	2000	2500	3000	3500	4000	4500	5000	5500	6000	1000	2000	2500	3000	3500	4000	4500	5000	5500	6000
Knots																														
(225hp)	4.1	7.2	8.3	10.6	14.7	20.1	23.8	28.7	31.2	36.6	3.6	6.8	8.4	11.7	16.6	22.3	26.0	30.0	35.0	41.4										
(300hp)																														
Litres per hour																														
(225hp)	3.9	9.7	14.2	20.5	26.8	32.8	38.8	51.0	66.0	75.8	5.3	13.0	18.0	25.5	30.6	36.5	42.6	52.5	72.0	89.0										
(300hp)																														
Litres per mile																														
(225hp)	0.95	1.35	1.71	1.93	1.82	1.63	1.63	1.78	2.11	2.07	1.47	1.91	2.14	2.18	1.84	1.64	1.64	1.75	2.06	2.15										
(300hp)																														
Range nm																														
(225hp)	252	178	140	124	131	147	147	135	114	116	163	126	112	110	130	146	146	137	117	112										
(300hp)																														

V6 or V8? Fuel consumption @

	20 knots	25 knots	30 knots
225hp V6	30 lph	40 lph	51 lph
300hp V8	33 lph	45 lph	47 lph

CALCULATED FIGURES based on real-time readings, yours may vary considerably. Range figures allow for 20% reserve. All prices include VAT. 50% fuel, 50% water, 2 crew, 21 degrees air temperature, F3 and 1ft seas for sea trial