

Manitou 22 Oasis SHP Pontoon

Model Introduction

Like all of the builder's models, the Manitou 22 Oasis SHP Pontoon is offered with the triple-log Sport Handling Package (SHP), which basically means it has a large centerline pontoon and two smaller outer pontoons. The increased volume, buoyancy and dynamic lift of the center tube, and the fact that it's mounted a little lower than the out tubes, helps the boat to heel in a hard turn, rather than remaining on an even keel as most multihulls do. The

transverse framing on the bottom side of the plywood deck is covered with aluminum sheeting (underskinning), which decreases drag and turbulence from water and spray under the boat. SHP models also get power-assist steering, which is appropriate for the large engines these high-performance models are usually powered with. SHP models are available with both sterndrive and outboard power.



One of several Manitou pontoon lines, the Oasis series are upscale models with fiberglass helm consoles, stainless steel steering wheels and 4-speaker, AM/FM/CD stereos. The 22 Oasis is available in four deck plans, including a full sunpad aft, aft entry, and various forward seating configurations. The Manitou 22 Oasis SHP Pontoon is also available without the SHP package, with twin or triple tubes, in both 8-ft. and 8-ft. 6 in. beams, and with a capacity of up to 10 passengers and 1,605 to 1,740 lbs of gear.

Construction

The Manitou 22 Oasis SHP Pontoon is built on 3 aluminum tubes that support a framework of aluminum cross members. The tubes are .01 gauge aluminum, with slightly heavier aluminum used in the nose cones in the bow, which are beefed up to better withstand beaching and dock-impact loads. The tubes have 5 separate compartments for improved seaworthiness in the event one is punctured. The deck is supported by extruded aluminum transverse (crosswise) cross member frames bolted to the tube channels.

The outboard motor pod, made of .16 in. aluminum, is attached to the cross members with 20 stainless steel bolts. The 3/4 in. thick, 7-ply pressure-treated plywood used in the deck is covered by a lifetime limited warranty by the manufacturer (10 years full coverage, followed by a 10-year prorated warranty). Heavy marine-quality carpeting is glued to the plywood flooring. All of the seats have double-wall roto-molded plastic seat bases, which are rot proof and don't retain moisture. All fasteners used to build the boat are stainless steel, and the railings in the deck walls

are all made of anodized aluminum. The overall effect of Manitou's construction methods and materials is to create a high-quality, long-lasting, low-maintenance and rugged structure.

Hull

Design

The Manitou Oasis 22 SHP Pontoon hull has a 27-in. diameter center tube and 23-in. outboard tubes, (25-in. outboard tubes in heavier sterndrive models). Running strakes on the outboard sides of the three tubes, or hulls, add lift at speed and deflect spray for a drier ride. The outboard motor pod on centerline in the stern is also designed to add buoyancy at rest and lift at speed.

The Manitou 22 SHP Pontoon hull, and its ability to make the boat heel in a turn, is worth a little background information. Most catamarans and trimarans (2- and 3-hulled vessels, which is what pontoon boats are) heel away from a turn because of the lateral forces acting on the multiple hulls, and because of the considerable form stability inherent in the design. This level ride is very disconcerting for anyone used to planing monohulls (at least those without keels) which bank into the turn. That's because turning flat, or banking away from the turn tends to make passengers and other objects go flying across the deck. Think of a car on a race track—banking the track in the turns transfers much of the centrifugal force downward rather than outward, allowing the car to go much faster. Imagine what would happen if the track was flat, or even banked in the other direction—that's what one gets with most pontoons.

So, when the boat is heeling into a turn, passengers are more comfortable and safer during the maneuver. While all one feels in a flat turn is centrifugal force throwing one outboard, when the boat is heeling, much or all of the centrifugal force is directed downward to the deck, so it's much easier to stay on one's feet, or seat, as the case may be. The more the boat heels (up to a point, which is not reached by these pontoon boats) the less one feels the centrifugal force as outward, and the more it is felt downward force. With 40- and 50-mph pontoon boats becoming more common, this ability to heel is increasingly important, not only for comfort but also for safety. As a result of this design, the SHP pontoon handles more like a standard, hard-chine mono-hull planing hull, which is a wonderful thing indeed.

Walkthrough

Cockpit

The test boat had a pair of lounges forward, the one to port a little shorter to accommodate a boarding gate in the side of the boat. There was another boarding gate in the bow on centerline. The helm console is to starboard, just aft of the long lounge seat. Opposite is an L-shaped lounge to port, with a stanchion socket in the deck for the portable table. All of the lounge seats have storage below, and the plastic storage bin liners and the seats' wood-free construction will eliminate many of the mildew problems experienced on older pontoon models. The seat cushions also have dual-density foam for added comfort. The test boat's deck plan made it feel roomy and accommodating, with plenty of seating for a crowd, but didn't feel crowded by the furniture.

Aft of the lounge was a sunpad with engine access and a fuel compartment below. The pad lifts up easily on boosts for access to the outboard motor and battery on centerline and the fuel compartment to port. The test boat had an optional 35-gal. built-in poly fuel tank with fill and vent accessible from the outside of the side railings. Aft to starboard is a third boarding gate

leading to the boarding ladder. The ladder was well designed, with big, wide steps, and an extension, similar to a swimming pool ladder at its top end, made it comfortable to climb. The test boat also had an optional ski tow bar, an impressively rugged and nicely finished component made of heavy polished stainless steel piping.

All the door latches on this boat worked very well—nothing should be coming loose out on the water, which is especially important for these family boats. Railings are 27 in. tall all around the boat, so little ones will be kept safe and secure, given prudent boat operation. The bimini top, with a square-stock frame, was easy to set up and take down, with a well-designed frame and hardware. Cleats were readily accessible and large enough for their purpose.

Helm

The Manitou 22 Oasis SHP Pontoon fiberglass helm console comes with power steering (which is certainly welcome with any 200-plus-hp outboard), basic engine instrumentation, a lockable glove box, standard JBL stereo, a courtesy light and a thickly upholstered helm seat. A fishfinder, reclining helm seat, double helm seat, engine trim gauge (which is recommended on any high-performance boat) and burlwood steering wheel are optional.

The console itself had a low profile and a small windscreen, which makes it suitable for use in clement weather, and it's ergonomically designed with comfortably angled steering wheel and throttle. There's also storage room below accessed through a side door.

Engine and Propulsion

The Manitou 22 Oasis SHP Pontoon is available with Evinrude, Honda, Mercury, Suzuki or Yamaha outboards of up to 225 hp. MerCruiser sterndrives to 300 hp are available on 24- and 26-ft. Legacy models.

Sea

Trial

The test ride took place on a small Michigan lake near the Manitou plant with 2 passengers and full fuel onboard. Power was a single 225-hp Evinrude ETEC outboard. The engine was quiet and could hardly be heard running at the dock.

The engine rocketed the boat up on plane, and even from 3500 rpm on up to full throttle, the acceleration was very strong. These triple pontoon hulls create very little drag when coming up on plane, with very modest bow rise and a flat wake at all speeds. It's a big advantage being able to operate efficiently and comfortably throughout the speed envelope, including the 8 mph to 16 mph range where the deep-vee monohulls are hard at work digging a hole in the water. This boat planed very nicely at just 2500 rpm, which is just 13 mph, so it is possible to run slowly and efficiently if preferred, or if it's a little rough, to take it easy coming home.

On the 22-ft. test boat, the engine trim was very effective at adjusting, or bow rise. Tucking it in when starting up kept the bow well down while coming up on plane, while trimming it out to just short of ventilation maximized speed quite predictably.

The SHP triple-tube design was intended to add buoyancy and dynamic lift on centerline, lessening buoyancy and lift outboard, and thereby coaxing the hull to heel into a turn. On the test ride, the SHP performed as advertised, heeling (banking is the aeronautical term) into a turn, especially when the wheel is hard over, making it a delight to drive. While the SHP does not heel as much as a mono in a hard turn, the sense of balance and security is much better than in a conventional pontoon. Starting out at 3600 rpm, the wheel was put hard over, with engine rpm slowing to 3000, and the boat took just 13 seconds to turn 360°, which is very respectable for any boat of this size and power, even compared to a monohull.

Waves were kicked up manually to ride through on the small test lake, but all indications are the Manitou triple-tube hull delivers a very smooth ride. This is the nature of most needle-hulled trimarans and cats. The upturned strakes minimize slamming on wave impact and also allow the stern to slide sideways in a turn more readily, which is needed to bank properly. Running in a straight line, the right-hand propeller torque induced a degree or two of port heel, so the boat heels slightly more in a port turn than when turning to starboard. This torque, of course, would be cancelled out by a sterndrive with counter-rotating propellers.

A top speed of 49.8 mph on GPS (just over 43 knots) at 6000 rpm was recorded. At a leisurely 3000 rpm cruise, engine noise could hardly be heard at just 73 dBA at the helm. Even at 4000 rpm, and almost 32 mph, the engine was barely discernable above the wind noise—this Evinrude was a pleasantly quiet engine. Keep in mind that the speeds recorded were with a clean bottom and a light load, including just 2 passengers, so to be safe figure on going a few mph slower with a typical passenger and gear load onboard.

The tilt wheel was comfortably positioned for seated or standup operation, and the power assist steering was easy to operate and quite responsive at 4 turns lock to lock—one may drive this boat with their fingertips. There's also room to stand and drive, thanks to the flip-up helm seat bolster.

Back at the dock, with 1500 rpm in reverse, the engine provided plenty of backing power, and the 3 hulls with their hull strakes tend to keep the boat from blowing around as much as older twin-tube pontoon boats.

Manitou Oasis 22 SHP, 225-hp Evinrude, 2 pax, full fuel

rpm	mph	knots	dBA
600	2.1	1.8	57
1000	4.5	3.9	61
1500	6.2	5.4	67
2000	7.9	6.9	71
2500	13.1	11.4	72
3000	19.7	17.1	73
3500	26.6	23.1	78
4000	31.8	27.7	84

4500	36.4	31.7	85
5000	40.7	35.4	86
5500	45.8	39.8	89
6000	49.8	43.3	92

Manufacturer's Comments

The versatility of an Oasis lets you satisfy a full range of interests in complete comfort, plus it will impress you with how well it handles. The Oasis furniture is newly designed with comfort and style in mind. Dual density foam seat pads and radius back rest set this boat apart from the competition. The Oasis features a unique all-fiberglass helm with a stainless steel steering wheel and standard JBL CD Player with 4 speakers. All Oasis furniture is covered with the most durable non-woven vinyl in the industry.

Conclusions

The Manitou 22 Oasis SHP Pontoon is a well-built, family-friendly design that is expected to give many years of reliable, enjoyable service. It's a great cruising boat, can easily tow a skier, wakeboarder or tuber, is ideal for beaching for a picnic, and can even be used for a little fishing (However, those who enjoy fishing should consider one of the builder's fishing models with seats, livewell and other features designed for the angler).

The SHP hull design is a real bonus for anyone looking for a high-speed (30-mph-plus) pontoon boat, as the comfort and security provided by the boat's heeling in a hard, high-speed turn is very beneficial, giving this boat a strong competitive advantage. The 225-hp Evinrude provides superb performance—very strong acceleration, low noise levels, and economical, reliable operation. The pontoon design in general has a number of benefits compared to a monohull, assuming one boats in calm, protected waters—pontoons are not rough-water boats. For lakes and rivers and even in inshore, protected saltwater, it's hard to beat a pontoon for its efficiency, huge deck space, stability, safety, versatility and bang-for-the-buck economy of ownership. There's also the pontoon's ability to cruise comfortably and efficiently and with very little bow rise through the mono-hull's hump-speed region of 8 to 13 mph.

The Oasis can be set up more fully for cruising, fishing and watersports, with options, including a barbeque grill, filler bed, galley with sink and storage, ski tow bar, livewell, trolling motor and a 35 gal. built-in gas tank.

Company Introduction

Manitou Pontoon Boats is a 20-year-old, privately owned, builder of quality pontoon boats. The company is located in Lansing, MI. The builder produces 6 lines of pontoon models in a variety of cruising and fishing layouts, with both twin- and triple-tube, sterndrive- and outboard-powered models available. Manitou is at the high end of the pontoon market in terms of product quality and dealer sales and service delivery.—*Eric Sorensen*

For More Information, review [Boat Ratings](#)

Specifications

Length Overall:	22 ft.
Beam:	8 ft. 6 in.
Dry weight:	2,405 lbs.
Fuel capacity:	35 gal.