



## Southern XP756

The Southern XP756 - fitted with Yamaha's grunty new 300hp Offshore V6 - offers a ride and finish to rival fibreglass trailerboats.

Words John Eichelsheim Photos Will Calver/oceanphotography.co.nz

There's no getting away from it, the Southern XP756 is a good-looking beast. Yamaha-blue and smoke-grey paint with eye-catching graphics certainly help, but the key is the excellent balance between the hardtop and the rest of the boat. It can be easy for a hardtop to overwhelm, but that's not the case here, the designers integrating it nicely with the 756's sleek lines.

There are a number of evolutionary changes that set the XP756 apart from previous Generation II Southern boats. The portofino-style stern treatment is

slightly different – curvier and sleeker – and there are changes to the hardtop design too. The robust rubbing strip, a half section of 5mm aluminium tubing that wraps around the boat where hull and decks join, has been polished to good effect, and there are changes to swages in the hardtop and topsides.

This boat features a vacuum-bagged fibreglass hardtop roof. It weighs just 35kg but is strong enough to walk on. The lightweight lid means improved stability, less heeling over in turns and a more sculptural look. An aluminium rocket launcher-handrail module with mounting

plates for GPS and radar domes bolts straight onto the roof.

The boat sits on an overbuilt Southern aluminium trailer that's 20% stronger than previous Southern trailers. It's an evolutionary development combining the best from Southern Boats and Lazercraft trailers. It's rated for 2.5 tonnes, more than robust enough for the 2150kg XP756.

Features include tandem axles with over-ride brakes (both axles) and Kodiak stainless steel callipers and rotors, LED lights and an up-rated winch post. It's a keel-loaded design with rollers supporting and guiding the boat onto the trailer, and

the weight of the boat supported by the keel rollers. The low centre of gravity also improves towing dynamics.

### Solid construction

We slid the boat into a calm Lake Wakatipu in overcast conditions. Queenstown Marine had fitted out the boat and set up the new 300hp Yamaha. They warned us, "She goes like a rocket!" They were not wrong.

Steve Lange, the owner of Southern Lazer, manufacturer of Southern and Lazercraft aluminium boats, was our host for the day. He's a boating enthusiast and

racer, who ably demonstrated his boat driving skills later in the day.

The XP756 hull is solidly constructed from 5mm aluminium plate. It has a drop-in frame system incorporating longitudinal stringers, cross-members and bulkheads. Five sealed underfloor compartments provide buoyancy.

During construction, Southern Boats tack L-section strips of aluminium to the outside of the hull to stiffen the plates before welding the internal framing. The outside stiffeners are then removed and the tacks ground back. This technique results in a beautifully fair hull with no rippling

or unsightly creases. In fact, the hull and topsides are so smooth they require virtually no filling before painting.

Southern Boats' hulls have changed subtly during 10 year of development, becoming wider at the chine and shallower in the forefoot. The entry has become slightly deeper at 44° but the 20.5° deadrise has been retained at the transom. The wide reverse chine sections that provide stability have also undergone modification with this model, directing even more spray away from the hull.

The boat's sides are 4mm aluminium, as is the chequer plate cockpit sole and parts

of the decks. Hull and deck joins are seam welded inside and out. The superstructure is also 4mm, with a 4mm beaching strip welded to the front third of the hull.

Firing up the big Yamaha produces a whole range of whirring noises, but once the engine catches and settles into a smooth idle, it is serenely quiet and almost without vibration. Yamaha has achieved 300hp by enlarging the engine's capacity to 4.2 litres, reducing its weight at the same time. It is the world's lightest 300hp four-stroke.

Clever technology extends to the 'fly-by-wire' electronic controls, digital instruments and feather-light Sea-Star

At a glance    loa x beam 7.5m x 2.5m    cruise speed 27 knots    max speed 47 knots    engine Yamaha 300hp V6 four-stroke outboard    price as tested \$148,500

Test conditions    Lake Wakatipu, Queenstown, light winds, flat water, 2/4 POB

**Ovlov Marine Ltd**  
Established 1978

**Yamaha in the City**

**NEW**  
**4.2LTR FOUR-STROKE**  
**225 - 250 - 300HP**

**YAMAHA**

**OVLOV MARINE LTD**

- A parts team ensuring quick response & parts dispatch.
- Full workshop with six mobile vans.
- Genuine Yamaha parts.

**YAMAHA** **YAMALUBE**

**BUY THE WORLD'S MOST POPULAR OUTBOARD**

- REPUTATION
- RELIABLE

**YAMAHA**

**No1 for Customer Satisfaction**

THE REASONS ARE SIMPLE:

- CHOICE OF 2-350HP 2 STROKE, 4 STROKE and HPDI
- PERFORMANCE - PERFECT BLEND OF SPEED, SMOOTHNESS AND QUIETNESS

**Ovlov Marine Limited** Est 1978

Ph 09 377 4285  
Fax 09 377 9665  
Email info@ovlov.co.nz  
142 Beaumont Street, Westhaven  
[www.ovlov.co.nz](http://www.ovlov.co.nz)



**Performance data**  
Speed, fuel and noise as tested  
Raymarine GPS; noise level @ helm

RPM	Speed (knots)	Fuel (lph)	noise (dB)
idle	3.76	N/A	60
1000	4.9	4.8	78
1500	6.8	8.2	76
2000	8.5	11.8	79
2500	15.3	16.3	79
3000	22.0	22.7	80
3500	26.3	27.7	85
4000	30.6	39.2	91
4500	35.0	52.3	92
5000	40.0	69.0	92
5800	47.0	76.0	93



Tournament power steering. The absence of clunking as the engine is slipped into gear is a revelation, the result of Yamaha's new 'shift dampening' system.

### Big on the inside

The Southern XP756 is a big boat on the inside. High coamings mean plenty of freeboard which translates into 'offshore capable', and there's excellent toe-room. Wide coamings are covered with neoprene non-slip and the full-length side pockets are lockable. Dive bottles can be stowed inside the fibreglass seat bases, there's a wet locker under the floor forward, and fuel lives in a 250-litre baffled underfloor aluminium tank with a non-return breather.

This boat has a non-slip walkaround panel behind the outboard and two walk-throughs with pullout doors either side of the transom island. The island features a glass-fronted livebait tank. Batteries are housed in a locker in the lower part of the transom to keep the weight low down, but mounted on a platform off the floor so water can flow to the sump and bilge pump.

Twin dive ladders are unusual, as are king and queen bucket seats. Both front and back seats swivel, which means rear passengers can swing their legs under the hardtop. Seat bases and the dash console are fibreglass, which is also new.

The cockpit is fully lined, but the Frontrunner doesn't quite touch the cockpit sole to allow it to properly dry out. Washable marine carpet can be removed in a matter of moments.

A locking sliding door closes off the front cabin's plush interior with its Alcantara suede upholstery. There is provision for either a portable or plumbed toilet. As this boat is headed to Australia, it lacks a few features normally present in an XP spec boat, including a galley module inside the

seat base, a toilet and Maxwell capstan. Access to the ground tackle is good, either through the forward hatch or by sidling around the hardtop. Bow rails are standard and there's a deep anchor locker.

### Ripsnorter

The XP756 belies its considerable size with its performance. As we had been warned, it's a ripsnorter, reaching a top speed of 48 knots. If we'd been at sea, or had a bit of ripple on the water, it might have touched 50 knots.

At high speed the boat feels totally composed. The hull likes plenty of engine trim out and grips like fury in high-speed turns, although with so much torque on tap, it's possible to 'spin-up' the propeller by over-enthusiastic application of the throttle in slower turns. Trim the motor in a bit and it's no problem.

Unusually, Southern has mounted extra-long trim tabs to the trailing edge of the gull-wing instead of further inboard.

The big Yamaha is wonderfully willing. Acceleration is stunning and the 4.2-litre V6 will pin you back into your seat from anywhere in the rev range. When I'd finished at the helm, Steve took over, really throwing the boat around to demonstrate its amazing performance and vice-free handling.

There's very little hull noise, except from the spray curling away on either side, and the wake is exceptionally clean. Engine noise is also minimal, but it never lacks a certain 'bite' – you know there are plenty of horses strapped to the transom from the quality of the sound filling the cockpit, and that's as it should be.

The XP756 turns plenty of heads, is a lot of fun to drive, and very comfortable as well. Most of the time, you need to remind yourself that it's made from aluminium.

FREE UPGRADE  
FROM 2 YEARS TO

# YEARS WARRANTY

ON NEW RAYMARINE  
EQUIPMENT PURCHASES

**Raymarine's commitment to excellence in performance, service standards and customer support is now further extended with its new three year Extended Warranty Programme.**

All new products sold are now eligible for a three year warranty at no extra cost. Simply register your new products online and your normal two year warranty is automatically extended by a further 12 months\*

See Lusty & Blundell at the Hutchwilco Boatshow, Hall 2, Stand 297 for more information and check out their show specials while you're there!  
(Show specials are also available through all authorised NZ Raymarine dealers)

\*Extended 3-year Warranty offer is subject to terms and conditions

# Raymarine®

...world leaders in marine electronics.

For more information contact your nearest Raymarine dealer, or call Auckland 09 415 8303, Whangarei 09 438 6353, Tauranga 07 927 9270 or visit [www.lusty-blundell.co.nz](http://www.lusty-blundell.co.nz)

0511207

## OUR VERDICT

The Southern XP756 is a beautifully-finished bluewater trailerboat with sports boat performance. It rewards a good driver, yet at the same time exhibits no handling quirks to catch out the inexperienced.

We had flat conditions, but Southern Boats have an excellent reputation in rough water and the XP756 is unlikely to disappoint. The XP746 I reviewed a couple of years ago certainly didn't (BNZ June 2009).

The evolutionary improvements Southern Boats has made to its Generation II models have been for the better, and the XP756 is as fine an example of a New Zealand-style aluminium boat as you could find. It's a premium quality product that delivers fibreglass-like performance and finish.

# Southern XP756

technical

## PROS

- z striking looks
- z well-built with awesome performance and predictable handling
- z high coamings
- z large cockpit and useful cabin
- z top-quality aluminium trailer

## CONS

- z cabin entry a bit tight (also available in an enclosed hardtop with open bulkhead)



## Southern XP756

loa 7.5m beam 2.5m (2.2m at the chine) draft approx 0.4m at rest weight 2150kg (on trailer, light trim) engine Yamaha 300hp 4.2-litre V6 four-stroke, 19-inch pitch stainless steel propeller fuel 250-litre alloy underfloor tank cruising speed 27 knots max speed 48 knots (fresh water) price as reviewed \$148,500 packages from \$125,000 (200hp HPDI two-stroke) designer/builder Southern Lazer Boats enquiries Southern Lazer Boats 03 453 3194 [www.southern-lazer.co.nz](http://www.southern-lazer.co.nz)

# "THE PREDATOR"

## Game Chair

- Constructed from high quality stainless steel components.
- Teak footrest option.
- Revolutionary designed drop-down backrest.
- Flush mounted pedestal.

0511337

**Coast Marine Stainless Ltd**  
PO Box 394, Silverdale, Auckland • Ph/Fax: 09 426 8856  
[extreme\\_fishing@hotmail.com](mailto:extreme_fishing@hotmail.com) • [www.extremefishing.co.nz](http://www.extremefishing.co.nz)

## HMB Marine Electrical

For all your marine electrical needs

### MARINE ELECTRONICS / ENTERTAINMENT

- All major brands
- Competitive pricing
- Expert advice
- Professional installation
- Maintenance / refits
- Refrigeration, heating

LOWRANCE SIMRAD B&G Raymarine NEXUS

Visit our website for great deals:  
[www.hmbe.co.nz](http://www.hmbe.co.nz)  
Call Scott (09) 537 0502 or 021 394 393

0511331