



Our speedo registered only 67 mph but there's probably another 8-10 mph waiting for the person willing to spend as long as it might require to dial it in just right.



The XT's dash, while not particularly snazzy, is both functional and accessible.

## Hydro-Stream Venus XT

*The Performance  
Cuddy Cabin  
Cruiser*

**H**ydroStream falls among those boat companies that were born and bred from racing roots. Ex-racer Howard Pipkorn's company began in 1967 and for a long time thereafter enjoyed the luxury of not having to worry about the competition in the high performance outboard boat manufacturing business. The market at this time was not yet diluted with a large number of boat companies trying to fill this niche. In fact, back in 1978 HydroStream had a banner year, selling more than 1400 boats out of two different facilities.



The company that had a hold on the outboard performance industry in the 1970's now has a performance cuddy cabin cruiser for people interested in comfort as well as speed.

But those energy crunch days back then affected everybody including HydroStream and while many companies fell by the wayside during this shake-down, HydroStream wasn't ready to toss the towel in yet.

Moving into the 1960's they've diversified into other kinds of boating, such as bass boats and family cruisers. One consumer that they're interested in with the Venus XT, is the young, urban, profess... you know, the "Y" word.

Realizing that there was a need for a performance cuddy cabin cruiser, they took the bottom design off of their successful Vegas XT and added a new deck.

They, of course, weren't about to let performance wane with their newest creation and the numbers show it. When we buzzed our radar gun the red numbers said 67 mph but over in the boat, I was looking at a calibrated speedo that indicated a solid 70. The question may be academic because the boat is actually capable of going faster than both of these speeds. If one spends some time getting a solid feel for the performance characteristics and takes care to dial it in just right, you'll be looking at speeds up to 77 mph. This is what Mercury Marine was capable of achieving when conducting their own performance testing. This was with one person in the boat, we sealed two

during our test.

The Venus was pushed by Merc's 200ELPT and planed at 18 mph. At this speed, visibility over the deck is somewhat limited. The boat achieves its plane in 4.27 seconds. At low speeds, the boat maneuvers through the slalom course with a sure grip on the water. At higher speed ranges the Venus makes tight turns as well. If you make a very sharp high speed turn there is a tendency for the boat to slide but this is a beneficial stabilizing effect on your nbc.

The Venus was originally introduced in 1979 and they adopted the Vegas XT bottom design in 1985. Essentially it's a Mod VP with a flat pad going back and designed to perform in conjunction with various strakes, setbacks and steps. They invested several years in developing this, rather complex bottom and stuck with it when they got it to work correctly.

The topsides, while not exactly Spartan, may appear so if you're used to that West Coast flash. This isn't to say that, for example, the dash is not good looking, except to say that they probably didn't go to sleep at night worrying about which famous designer they should hire to turn it into some bold style statement. The controls and instrumentation are laid out in a functional and accessible manner as perhaps should be the concern in a performance boat such as this.

The interior is comfortable and is matched well with the exterior. The plush headliner is fitted carefully but the carpeting and electrical installation, while done well, was not, in our interior inspectors estimation, falling into the exceptional categories.

The Venus had a nice gelcoat design and execution. They used an effective base color and managed to make it shine particularly well.

For skiing, the Venus comes in with a clean wake great for slalom skiing. The bottom hugs the water and keeps it on track. Trick skiers might like this boat's performance as well.

All in all the Venus XT is an excellent performance outboard with good handling characteristics and a price that's hard to overlook, and you can make it to your favorite skiing cover faster than you can call an eye.

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**SPEC SHEET**

<b>Length</b>	20'
<b>Beam</b>	80"
<b>Weight</b>	1200 lbs.
<b>Fuel Capacity</b>	20 gal.
<b>Engine (test boat)</b>	Mercury 200 ELPT
<b>Seating Capacities</b>	5
<b>Seating Plans</b>	2
Includes: four benches	
<b>Type of Propulsion</b>	Outboard
<b>Hull Builder</b>	HydroStream
<b>Bottom Specs</b>	Turner V
<b>Base Price</b>	
<b>Including Trailer</b>	\$19,995
<b>Standard Equipment</b>	Two-tone color scheme, color coordinated interior, dual sleeping, warning lights with switch panel, low profile windshield, cabin windows, push headliner, cabin release, light, cabin address, locking, forward storage area, deck hardware and railings.
<b>Optional Equipment</b>	Multiple
(300) top, set down, (500) cabin hatch, (500) gauge, panel, (32) by high windshield, (3) cruise with curved top, (4) (52) polyethylene top, (2) top curtains, (3115), air curtain, (3113) 70 gallon fuel tank, (52) vinyl flooring, (50) berths, steps, (514)	
<b>Optional Equipment Used on Test Boat</b>	Multiple
(1) 1/2" custom gauge panel by (500) (32) cabin hatch, (300) high windshield, (3) cruise with curved top, (4) (52) polyethylene top, (2) top curtains, (3115), air curtain, (3113) 70 gallon fuel tank, (52) vinyl flooring, (50) berths, steps, (514)	
<b>Performance Data</b>	
<b>Radar Top MPH</b>	67
<b>Calibrated Speedo</b>	70
<b>Top MPH</b>	70
<b>RPM at Top End</b>	6900
<b>Average Time to Reach Plane</b>	4.27 seconds
<b>Minimum Planing Speed</b>	18 mph
<b>RPM at Planing Speed</b>	2900