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Air Nautique SV-211

The 2006 model Air Nautique SV-211 Team Edition is claimed by Correct Craft to be the world's first true crossover boat, where the wake is perfectly matched for both skiers and wake boarders. Barry Thompson spent a day at the beautiful Orakei Koraka to experience first hand what was so special about this 'unique' boat.

Mid- or rear-engined ski/wake board boats don't make up a huge part of the New Zealand market but you may be surprised to learn that there are now probably in excess of 300 in the country. These are boats that due to their design with shallow vee, trick bottoms and cockpit styling are designated for calm water lakes and rivers. There are no rod holders or bait lockers in the option list, but then you wouldn't expect them anyway.

So allowing for the fact that they are not for everyone, if you are serious about your skiing or wakeboarding then there is nothing better. They are not an all-round compromise – they are seriously dedicated craft built for a purpose.



The 2006 Air Nautique SV-211 Team Edition is one such example. One of its biggest selling features is that it is marketed as the world's first true crossover boat, which offers the perfect

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wake for both skiers and wake boarders. Built in the USA by Correct Craft, a company that has been building boats for over 60 years, the fact that a boat can be sold into both mediums changes the whole concept of the industry. Until now you needed two different hull shapes to satisfy the market, but with the SV-211 that has all changed.

The secret is in a combination of the hull design and the patented hydrogate system. Simply this opens and closes the dispersion tunnel around the prop shaft so in effect you are changing the shape of the hull and thereby altering the way the water runs off and therefore altering the pattern of the wake. Previously this was achieved by an adjustable wedge, which altered the shape but in some cases also altered the handling characteristics of the boat and not always for the better. Down or up, the hydrogate has zero effect on the boat's handling.

This system is also available on the closed bow waterski boats to allow a clean wake for trick skiing, which enables that boat to be suitable also for three event skiing.

Tony Leask has been selling Correct Craft Nautiques since 2001 and to date has sold close to 70 boats with 30 of those in the last year. Sales are throughout New Zealand from family users, to serious skiers and wake boarders.



In the USA the Correct Craft carries a 20% price premium over its competition, but in New Zealand the difference is less than 10% above the competition. This makes New Zealand the cheapest place in the world to buy a Correct Craft, according to Tony. Correct Craft manufactures the Ski Nautique for skiers and the Air Nautique for wake boarders.

The basic Air Nautique SV-211 comes without a tower and ballast but both are available as an option and of course there's also the aggressive tribal style graphics.

"The new SV-211 is not just a single purpose boat that is just going to suit really serious riders, it is also a boat designed with the family in mind who may want to use the SV-211 for a variety of other uses", said Tony.





Quality Image

One of the first things I noticed was the space in the cockpit for a serious ski/wake boat helped largely by the V Drive power train, which allows the V8 6 litre PCM engine to be mounted as far up against the transom as practical. In a mid engine boat with the engine box in the centre of the cockpit you always have that to walk around or crawl over and it takes up valuable space.

There are two engine packages available for the SV-211 Team Edition, the 330hp PCM 5.7 litre Excalibur or the 375hp 6 litre PCM ZR6. Standard transmission is a PCM Power Plus with a Walter V-Drive with 1.46:1 gear ratio.

An interesting feature on the SV-211 is the way in which the engine servicing has been made easy, with everything nice and high such as the oil filter and drain systems. There's also a separate hose fitting so you can run the engine to warm it up before draining the oil.

Our test boat, the first of the 2006 SV-211 models to arrive, was fitted with the higher horsepower ZR6 and whilst top end speed is not important, the boat does around 48 mph with the ballast tanks empty. The engine package provides a huge amount of torque and is exceptionally smooth throughout the rpm range. Average speed for wake boarders is around 20 – 22 mph. At 22.5 mph the 6-litre PCM was turning over at an economical 3000rpm.



One of the new features and a first for Correct Craft is the step-up and walk-through section from the boarding platform to the cockpit. No more dirty feet on the upholstery. The composite boarding platform has been designed for boarders and skiers with plenty of flat open space to use and good non-skid surfaces. It is also removable should you require a little extra space to garage your boat.

The rear of the cockpit is divided into three separate areas, the outside two for storage and the centre for the engine. The aft ballast tanks are built-in under the outer lockers but there is still a surprising amount of storage space above. There is a third ballast tank forward ahead of the underfloor locker and all three can be filled automatically in under two minutes. The twin battery system switch panel is conveniently placed in the port locker.

When looking over the Air Nautique SV-211 the attention to detail in every aspect from the stainless spun drink holders to the double stitching on the upholstery stands out. Standard items even include a Clarion stereo system and iPod fittings so you don't need to bring aboard a bunch of CDs anymore. According to Tony, of the 80 Ski/Air Nautiques he has sold in the past five years he has never had a warranty claim, something that certainly bears testament to the company's claim of its boats being the "best in their class".



There's also a huge amount of storage throughout the boat with every seat, (apart from the helm) opening to a cavernous area beneath. Skiers and wakeboarders have their own locker



under the cockpit sole, although wake boarders usually favour the tower for storage. Forget the windage factor, they look cool! A chilly-bin is fitted under the port side seating and has side access for ease of use.

The seating layout has been designed to suit the purpose of the boat, be it wakeboarding or skiing. There has been a lot of attention placed on the ergonomics of the seating as this is a boat in which you will spend a lot of your time seated so comfort is essential. In the SV-211 the comfort zone scores a perfect 10!

There's the helm seat that can change from a sit-down bucket seat to a semi stand-up bolster and along with the adjustable steering wheel means drivers can arrive at the most comfortable position to suit their size.

The port side lounge is shaped so that someone is always looking back towards the rider or skier and can instantly signal the driver of a fall. A large rear view mirror is fully adjustable and when mounted high on the windscreen means the driver has an uninterrupted view of what is happening over the transom as well. There is also a moveable seat that conveniently slots in between the helm and port lounge and is also ideal when you want to alter the weight distribution. There is an aft centre seat that can also be removed and stowed away in a locker if you require more open cockpit space.

Along with the wrap around starboard lounge the cockpit has seating capacity for about six to seven people and then when you add another couple in the open bow you can really get the boat weighed down for wakeboarding. As the interior is one big GRP inner liner there are no seating options apart from the two removable seats.

The helm area has been designed for the maximum of comfort, efficiency, safety and ease of use. The driver has everything necessary to operate the boat, all in the right places, such as the adjustable wake control lever, ballast system switches, Perfect Pass instrumentation and there's even a window demister and helm heater driven off hot air from the engine. Ideal for those who like to spend their frosty early mornings on the water.



The gauges all have full diagnostics, which include all engine systems as well as water depth and both water and air temperature. Seated when driving, the Taylor glass screen offers total protection from the wind and if the weather does pack up there is also an optional bimini to keep off the rain.

If you come back after a hard day on the water and you need to give the cockpit a clean, be it from saltwater or sand it's simply a matter of removing the clip-in carpet and shooting everything with the water blaster or hose. Drain holes are designed throughout every aspect of the cockpit to feed the water to the bilge so there's no 'puddling' anywhere.

The open bow is a feature of the SV-211, with the seating levels much like that found in the cockpit, where a lot of attention has been spent on the comfort levels. Two people can lie easily on the wrap around settee or with the infill removed there is also adequate sitting space. Storage is provided under the squabs and so you don't spill your drinks on the upholstery, there

are also four stainless drink holders and even another iPod connection, which connects to Polk Audio speakers.

A feature of any wakeboard boat is the tower and on the SV-211 it is an aluminium work of art. Correct Craft was the inventor of the modern wake tower and over the years has refined them to be stylish as well as practical. Firstly, I could walk underneath without knocking my head. The SV-211's has mounting brackets for four boards on the sides, an easy towball style hitch for the rope above, mounts for some serious speakers and most importantly, it folds down to lower the height when garaging.

The Ride

Correct Craft calls this its first true cross-over boat that can provide the right wake for both the serious skier as well as the wake boarder. The secret is in the manually operated hydrogate that simply alters the flow of the water coming off the transom, thereby changing the shape of the wake.

While it's very obvious to see the wake change shape when viewing it from the boat, does it really make a difference? We enlisted the talents of New Zealand's top woman wake boarder Andrea Fountain. Currently 2005 IWSF Wakeboard Woman's World Champion and third place getter at the recent WWA 2005 Worlds held in Australia, Andrea is more than qualified to tell it like it is.

"It was great! When you changed the wakes you really noticed the difference with the ski position being a lot mellower with no lip or kick off the top, with it more progressive which would suit skiers, said Andrea.

"Set up in the wakeboard mode it was fantastic, with plenty of ramp and a great shape for serious tricks".

Also along for a ride was Brad Smeete, current WWA Junior World Champion, who like Andrea couldn't praise the shape of the wake high enough. "I would like to see it with a lot more weight to see just how high you could get that wake".

It is important to remember that when we set up the boat in wakeboard mode for the test it was in 'production' form with the extra weight only added by the on-board ballast and passengers. If you really want to get serious then you can always add in a whole lot more weight with lead ingots or a cockpit mounted fat sack.

Overall, the Air Nautique SV-211 Team Edition is an outstanding example of a serious ski/wake boat that sets a new benchmark for the industry.

Specifications

- **Model:** Air Nautique SV-211 Team Edition
- **Base Price:** \$82000 (incl. GST)
- **As Tested:** \$98000 (incl. GST)
- **Designer:** Correct Craft
- **Type:** Ski/Wake Boat
- **LOA:** 7.04m
- **LOH:** 6.32m
- **Beam:** 2.36m
- **Deadrise:** 5 degrees
- **Trailerable Weight:** kg
- **Engine Capacity:** 330hp – 375hp
- **Power Options:** Inboard (PCM)
- **Fuel Capacity:** 143 litres

Notable Standard Equipment



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