

Savage 385 Big Boy

FMG

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but the standard features are practical and cover everything you may need. things out of the way from any water that may find its way into the boat.

SPECIFICATIONS

Length Maximum:	3.90m
Hull Length:	3.85m
Beam:	1.85m
Depth:	0.87m
Bottom/Top sides:	3mm
Minimum hp:	15hp
Maximum hp:	30hp
Number of People:	4

Entry-level packages or packages put together with a budget in mind are almost a dime a dozen these days. But how many brands can claim over 100 years of manufacturing experience and knowledge in producing boats that are suitable in meeting the customers needs?

Savage Aluminium Boats have been around since 1898, providing fantastic quality boats and I had the pleasure of spending a few hours on Lake Narracan in Victoria getting to know one of their entry-level options - the Savage 385 Big Boy.

There are a few must haves when it comes to start off packages. These boats should be able to be towed by a small vehicle, you should be able to launch and retrieve them with one person, the floor plan needs to be simple and practical and they should allow room to take you and a mate or you and the family safely out on the water.

TOWING

Coming in under 500kg including boat, motor, and trailer, the Savage 385 Big Boy can be easily towed by most 4-cylinder vehicles available today. I was at Lake Narracan with David Garcia and he assured me that the launching and retrieving would be easy - in fact "one person, one hand" were his exact words! This proved to



Lots of fun and practical too, the Savage 385 gave us a great time on the water.



the 385 will deal with the inevitable bumps you are likely to come across.

The 385 Big Boy is rated for four people, but I would suggest it is ideal for two people or three if required. This would also depend on the motor on the back. The boat we tested had a Mercury 30hp 2-stroke on it and would cope easily with 3 people on board.

PERFORMANCE

There is a quality I hope I can convey when I write about the performance of the 385 Big Boy on the water. It's not about the blistering speed that it got out of the hole or how it turned on a knife-edge or even how stable it was at rest. I will get to that shortly. What I want to express is the joy that a small boat can provide. Here were three middle-aged men - some of us older than others - having a run in the Savage 385 Big Boy at Lake Narracan. Every time one of us set off, it was like drinking at the fountain of youth. Zooming around inspired an instant smile that made me realise there a boy still existed in all of us. I always thought when I was young, that it was only me who enjoyed getting out in dads tinny, I now realise he enjoyed it as much as I did.

Having said that, the 30hp 2-stroke Mercury motor, which is the maximum horsepower for the 385, provided plenty of low-end grunt to get it out of the hole and plenty of zip to get you from A to B. It did handle well and stability at rest wasn't an issue.

FISHABILITY

There are some true advantages to having a tinny like the Savage 385 Big Boy. Firstly, access to small waters is important, the boat draws very little water and is ideal to get into those little tidal creeks or into those back waters situated along the Murray and similar waterways.



Top Left: The Mercury 30hp 2-stroke is the maximum horsepower for the 385 Big Boy. **Top Right:** There is enough storage at the front of the boat for your anchor and to keep things out of the way. **Above Left:** Launching and retrieving was easy and could be done by one person. **Above Right:** The low floor that comes with the package is a great standard feature.

be correct, as we had no trouble getting the 385 in and out of the water.

THE LAYOUT

As you would expect with a package like this, there are not a lot of bells and whistles in the 385 Big Boy,

I loved that it came with a carpeted low floor. Not having a floor was one of my pet hates in my first tinny and now I have a family it is also practical to have a level surface for when children are in the boat. It also keeps

The fuel tank and battery are both on raised and carpeted platforms at the rear of the boat. Another very practical set up as these items tend to be quite heavy and not having to reach into the hull to lift them is gold.

There is also an anchor shelf provided to store your anchor in the bow, as well as ample storage room. The bench seating is practical rather than comfortable but nothing a cushion couldn't fix. There are also two

transom and bow grab rails - it's always nice to have something to hang onto when you are zipping around.

Tough is a good way to describe the Big Boy's construction. The 3mm through construction means



Left: The Savage 385 Big Boy is a great entry-level package that will tick all the boxes for anybody looking for this style of boat. **Right:** We all had a smile on our faces when we went for a run.

As it is easily launched, there is nothing to deter you from heading out on your own and the simple floor plan gives you plenty of fishing space whether you are casting, trolling lures or soaking a bait.

LAST WORD

The Savage 385 Big Boy ticks all the boxes you would expect it to for this style of boat - including price point. The boat we tested was fitted with a Mercury 30hp ELH electric start motor and had a few optional extras including extruded side decks, a bow cleat, rod holders and a transducer bracket and still



The Savage 385 Big Boy was really a lot of fun to drive, handling well and getting on the plane easily.

came in under the magical 10K mark at \$9,500.

To find out more about the Savage 385 Big Boy or the other boats available in the Savage Aluminium boat range you can visit www.aluminium.savageboats.com.au for the full list of dealers.

Quoted performance figures have been supplied by the writer in good faith. Performance of individual boat/motor/trailer packages may differ due to variations in engine installations, propellers, hull configurations, options, hull loading and trailer specifications.



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