

Sea Ray SLX-W 230 (2017-)

Brief Summary

The Sea Ray SLX-W 230 is a luxurious family bowrider that can become a towsports machine with the push of a button on the dash-mounted touchscreen. She comes standard with three ballast tanks and the Dynamic Running Surface with Wake-Shaping tabs that turn the boat into a serious towing platform. An unusual option on a boat this size is the Mercury JPI system, combining the main propeller with an electric bow and stern thruster for precision handling not only around the dock but for retrieving those in the water.

Price

Base Price\$113157.00

Prices, features, designs, and equipment are subject to change. Please see your local dealer or visit the builder's website for the latest information available on this boat model.

Key Features

- Carry-on cooler with designated storage
- Lockable wakeboard and surfboard storage with vinyl matting and gas-assisted fiberglass lid with stainless steel latch
- Bow storage
- Wireless Bluetooth stereo with JL Audio speakers and iPod/MP3 functionality
- Swim Platform with SeaDek matting
- Manual gas-assist tower with Bimini, tow point and nav light

Test Results

RPM	MPH	Knots	GPH	MPG	NMPG	STAT. MILE	NM	dBa
600	3.1	2.7	1	3.3	2.8	147	127.7	67
1000	4.9	4.3	1.7	3	2.6	134	116.2	70
1500	6.5	5.6	2.7	2.4	2.1	110	95.2	81

RPM	MPH	Knots	GPH	MPG	NMPG	STAT. MILE	NM	dBa
2000	7.6	6.6	4.1	1.9	1.6	84	73.4	79
2500	8.3	7.2	6.3	1.3	1.2	60	52	86
3000	11.3	9.8	9	1.3	1.1	57	49.1	84
3500	23	20	10.1	2.3	2	102	89.1	88
4000	29.3	25.4	13.1	2.2	1.9	101	87.7	89
4500	33.3	28.9	17.6	1.9	1.6	85	74.1	91
5000	37	32.2	23	1.6	1.4	72	62.9	91
5500	40.2	35	29.5	1.4	1.2	61	53.3	94

[View the test results in metric units](#)

[searay_slx230w_chart_17.jpg](#)

Specifications

Length Overall	20' 8" / 6.3 m
BEAM	20' 8" 6.3 m
Dry Weight	5,525 lbs. 2,506 kg
Tested Weight	6,105 lbs. 2,769 kg
Draft	34" 86.3 cm
Draft Up	

Draft Down	
Air Draft	
Deadrise/Transom	21-deg.
Max Headroom	open
Bridge Clearance	
Weight Capacity	1,750 lbs. 794 kg
Person Capacity	13
Fuel Capacity	53 gal. 201 L
Water Capacity	5 gal. 19 L
Length on Trailer	
Height on Trailer	
Trailer Weight	
Total Weight	6,105 lbs. 2,769 kg
Aft Deck	
Salon Inside Width	
Salon Fore & Aft	
Salon Height	

Salon Volume	
Galley Volume	
Master SR Width	
Master SR fore & Aft	
Master SR Overhead	
Master SR Volume	
Eng. Room Volume	

Acceleration Times & Conditions

Time to Plane	5.5 sec.
0 to 20	
Ratio	2:01
Props	16x18.75 Acme LH
Load	3 person, full fuel, no water, 50 lbs. of gear
Climate	85 deg., 79 humid.; wind: 5-10 mph; seas: light chop

Sea Ray SLX-W 230

The Sea Ray SLX-W 230 is designed to be equally effective as a towsports boat and family bowrider.

Mission Statement

Sea Ray designed the SLX-W 230 to be a luxurious family bowrider that can become a towsports machine with the push of a button on the dash-mounted touchscreen. She comes standard with three ballast tanks and the Dynamic Running Surface with Wake-Shaping tabs that instantly turn the boat into a towing platform that should impress serious wake surfers.

She's an inboard boat, which keeps the style consistent with the best in the industry. But here she's got the engine in the traditional spot, under an aft sunpad rather than in a large box taking up the center of the cockpit. In this manner the family bowrider concept remains intact.

Sea Ray SLX-W 230

With the open-bow seating and wraparound lounge in the cockpit, the SLX-W 230 has an official passenger capacity of 13.

More to the point, however, is the fact that while most builders tout the family day boat/water sports crossover, Sea Ray managed to take it to another level with this boat. She truly is a qualified blend of both worlds.

Our tour of the SLX-W 230 shows a cleverly laid out bowrider with the luxury of Sea Ray's SLX lineup and a high freeboard that translates into the safety of a deep cockpit that families with small children will be especially keen on. But hidden in all that luxury and comfort is the heart of a wake surf generating machine bent on competing with the best in the crossover industry.

Our test boat also had a feature that Mercury Marine rolled out recently... Joystick Piloting for Inboards or JPI. This put a fascinating twist on the inboard wake boat concept by making it joystick maneuverable for close quarters. Let's go over that again... a 23' (7.01 m), single engine, inboard bowrider with joystick functionality. Impressive indeed.

Distinguishing Features

Joystick Capability. The Sea Ray SLX-230 that we tested was one of the first to be introduced with JPI, Joystick Piloting for Inboards and it worked flawlessly. It combined the power of the main shaft-driven propeller with an electric bow and stern thruster for precision handling not only around the dock but for retrieving the person in the water.

Features Inspection

Total Control. To make the driver's job as easy as possible, the 12.5" (31.75 cm) Dynamic Display touch screen at the SLX-W 230's helm has three modes. All the captain has to do is choose among Cruising,

Wakeboarding or Surfing and the computer takes over. Choose Surfing and then touch L or R for Left or Right and the aluminum surf fins mounted on the boat's transom abaft the propeller and rudder in the V-drive propulsion system adjust. Then the driver simply advances the gunwale-mounted shift/throttle control to full forward and steers where he wants to go.

Sea Ray SLX W 230 factory

Touch a button at the dash and then it's time to catch some waves

Sea Ray SLX W 230

The advanced screen lets the driver customize the wake and ballast settings.

Sea Ray SLX W 230 steering wheel

The steering wheel is wrapped in leather and mounted on a tilt power-assist helm.

JPI Joystick

Mercury's JPI or Joystick Piloting for Inboards remarkably innovative and equally functional. With the shift lever in the neutral position, the joystick becomes self-activated and a green LED ring around the base of the joystick provided the verification. We still have regular control with the shift lever, and moving it out of neutral deactivates the joystick again.

Now with the joystick activated, we have linked connectivity with the single-engine shaft driven inboard propeller and the two electric thrusters. Move the joystick to move the boat in any direction desired, just as we've now come to expect from any boat with joystick functionality, only now it's without pod drives.

The joystick is progressive. The further it is moved, the more power is applied to *the main engine*. The bow and stern thrusters are single power only, they're either on or off. But our tests showed that adding power by advancing the stick will provide the kick you're looking for with just the single-engine providing the added power. It works.

Now as is the case with electric thrusters, these will only take so much before they heat up and go into a protected shut down mode to cool off. However, we messed with this feature for well into the better part of 45-minutes with no such effect so this is a non-concern. Normal operations will never come close to that much of a workout.

Sea Ray SLX W 230

The optional JPI joystick from Mercury Marine comes with bow and stern thrusters that make it easy to maneuver the boat at slow speeds. Notice the green ring that shows the stick is active. It also changes to show direction of control.

The indicator ring around the base also shows direction of thrust. When we move the stick to the side, the green ring turns yellow and lights to the side. If we rotate the joystick the light rotates in the corresponding direction. Now is this just a gimmick? Perhaps, but truth be told, our test captain found himself glancing at the colored ring to ensure that his hand was controlling the stick as desired. It's a fine line between straight up and slightly rotated so we did come to embrace this feature.

The Handling

So is it as simple as moving the joystick in the desired direction? Yes, it is... and then some. A few minutes of messing with the stick allows for a touch that gives surgical precision to the handling. For example, we found that when moving the stick to the side, the two thrusters activate. But if wind or current affect the boat slightly and the bow or stern move ahead of one or the other then a slight opposite rotation kills power to the desired thruster and we can then straighten out the sideways slide to present the whole side to the dock at once.

Furthermore, we rotated the boat in between two slips that were spaced only inches beyond the length of the boat. With slight fore and aft motion of the stick, we were able to achieve the precision that allowed us to pull off this maneuver. It's a flawless control system that will go a long way towards making even beginners look like pros.

The Helm

Because engine data is also monitored by the Dynamic Display, there are no additional instruments at the helm. The SLX-W 230 has Digital Throttle and Shift, and power-assist steering. There's a remote for the stereo, which has Bluetooth, iPod and MP3 connectivity and the accessory switches are backlit stainless-steel models. The driver's seat swivels and adjusts fore and aft and has a flip-up bolster.

Sea Ray SLX-W 230 helm seat

The helm seat is reflective of the luxury seen throughout the premium level SLX lineup.

Sea Ray SLX-W 230

The glovebox in the port dash has space for convenient accessory storage and a 12-volt power plug.

Crowd Control. Part of the fun of wake surfing is showing off for friends so the SLX-W 230's cockpit is designed to accommodate a crowd with seating that wraps around from the port console all the way to starboard. The backrest for the seat adjacent to the helm can be converted for forward or aft-facing seating making it comfortable for the legally required observer when towing. There's a cutout in the center of aft sun lounge that makes it easy to head aft to the swim platform. The standard tower has a towrope attachment

point and an integrated Bimini top with space for up to four speakers.

Sea Ray SLX-W 230

The cockpit has plenty of space for friends to hang out and watch the action.

Sea Ray SLX-W 230

The backrest to port can be adjusted for forward- or aft-facing travel.

Sea Ray SLX-W 230 backrest

The contoured backrest for the aft cockpit lounge makes it an ideal place to get up close and personal with the action. Notice the multiple tones to the upholstery along it's the contract bead welding and diamond-stitching.

Sea Ray SLX-W 230 tower

The tower has space for up to four optional speakers to keep the tunes cranking.

Cockpit Storage. Having space for 13 people means storing all their gear. Because she only has a single center-mounted ballast sack, there is nothing to take up space under the seats. This leaves the space beneath the port and starboard cockpit lounges wide open for storage, including a dedicated spot for a carry-on cooler to starboard. There's also an in-floor board locker between the driver's and companion's seats.

Sea Ray SLX-W 230

Sea Ray provided storage beneath all the cockpit seats and in the large under-deck ski locker.

The Stern. Small sunpads on each side of the center pass-through are comfortable to sit on when the boat's not moving. For convenient storage of boards and towlines, there's a large trunk locker on the boat that opens on a gas strut. This means that we don't have to travel all the way into the cockpit to do a quick board change.

Sea Ray SLX-W 230 surfing

The stern compartment makes it easy to store gear when it's time to take a late-day cruise.

Sea Ray SLX-W 230

The extra swim platform is removable, which makes it easier to store the boat in a garage or other small building.

The Bow. The bow is laid out in the usual configuration of a bow rider for more traditional family cruising. It includes angled backrests on the front of the consoles, stainless steel grabrails integrated into the deck for more comfortable use and there are speakers in gunwale inserts. There is storage beneath the seat bottom cushions, behind the backrests and a dedicated anchor locker in the foredeck.

Sea Ray SLX-W 230 bow seat

The starboard bow seat has good depth and notice that Sea Ray recessed the grab rails to put them in more comfortable reach.

Sea Ray SLX-W 230 bow storage

There's storage under the bow seats and behind these cushions on the front of the consoles.

Power Choices

Sea Ray powers the boat with a 370-hp MerCruiser 6.2L ECT TowSport V-drive inboard with Digital Throttle & Shift and a ZF 63 IV transmission geared at 2:1. The advantage of the inboard is that the propeller is far forward of the transom so there is little chance of coming in contact with it. The disadvantages are in the close quarters maneuverability that, as we've clearly demonstrated, are negated with the optional JPI system.

Sea Ray SLX-W 230

The 6.2-liter V-8 inboard has plenty of grunt for towing watersports and it's raw-water cooled.

Performance

Top speed was reached at 40.2 mph. Best cruise was measured at 3500 rpm and 23 MPH. At that speed her 10.1 gph fuel burn translated into 2.3 mpg and a range of 102 statute miles, all while still retaining a 10% reserve of the boats total fuel capacity.

Handling

As for handling, she's consistent with the rest of the Sea Ray lineup in that she's got both a nimble and agile feel to her. While we had calm conditions on test day we did get a sense of her ability to cut through chop with no hull slap or pounding as we crossed the wakes of our chase boat. We also failed to get spray onto the boat in spite of our best efforts.

Warranty

- Five-year bow-to-stern warranty.
- Five-year engine warranty from Mercury and Brunswick Product Protection.

Options to Consider

Full solid color hull gelcoat.

Observations

This isn't just another bowrider with a surfing package. The Sea Ray SLX-W 230 was drafted and built for wake surfing and boarding with a bottom that was designed for the surf fins and triangular trim plates. Sea Ray committed to the boat with the touch screen control for all the on board systems that will appeal to millennials who don't want to mess with a bunch of different switches for the ballast, surf fins and trim plates. The fact that the boat still has v-bottom with a 21-degree transom deadrise means she'll ride better than many other wakesurfing boats when the winds and waves pick up.