

Rock the Boat (Don't Rock the Boat, Baby) Seakeeper 3 can stabilize 30-footers

By Tyffani Hoff  

The Hues Corporation has been telling us since 1974: “Don’t rock the boat, baby.” Well, Seakeeper finally listened, and they made the rest of the world listen, too, when the Seakeeper 3 won the NMMA Innovation award for mechanical systems at IBEX this year.

“The Seakeeper 3 is our smallest model released just under a year ago,” explained Alison Anuzis, communications coordinator. “This is really the first product that is engineered to stabilize boats in the 30- to 35-foot range. No one else has been really effectively able to stabilize boats that small, so that was why it’s such a big deal. There are a lot of technical developments that set it apart from the rest of our products.”

How It Works

Have you ever played with a gyroscope as a child? Or even as an adult? You can see that it works because the inside spins so fast that the force disables it from leaning to any one side. That’s how the Seakeeper works, too. The inside is basically like a gyroscope—a really high-tech, complicated, intricate gyroscope. A heavy flywheel is spinning inside of a vacuum-sealed fuel sphere, and it’s spinning so fast that it resists change in plane of movement. As a result, every time the boat rolls, the gyroscope reacts by counteracting that force and applying force to either the port or starboard in order to right the boat.

“Back at the beginning of the 1900s, people started experimenting using gyroscopes to stabilize boats, but they were never able to get them compact enough and light enough to actually be able to stabilize the boats they were trying to stabilize,” said Anuzis. “So that’s where our vacuum sealed sphere came into play. Because of that vacuum seal, we’ve been able to get a greater amount of stabilizing power from a smaller lighter unit, so we’re able to get better results on a given boat because it packs more power into that smaller size.”

Though the Seakeeper 3 is specially designed to stabilize smaller boats, Seakeeper has several models that allow larger boats to receive needed stabilization as well.

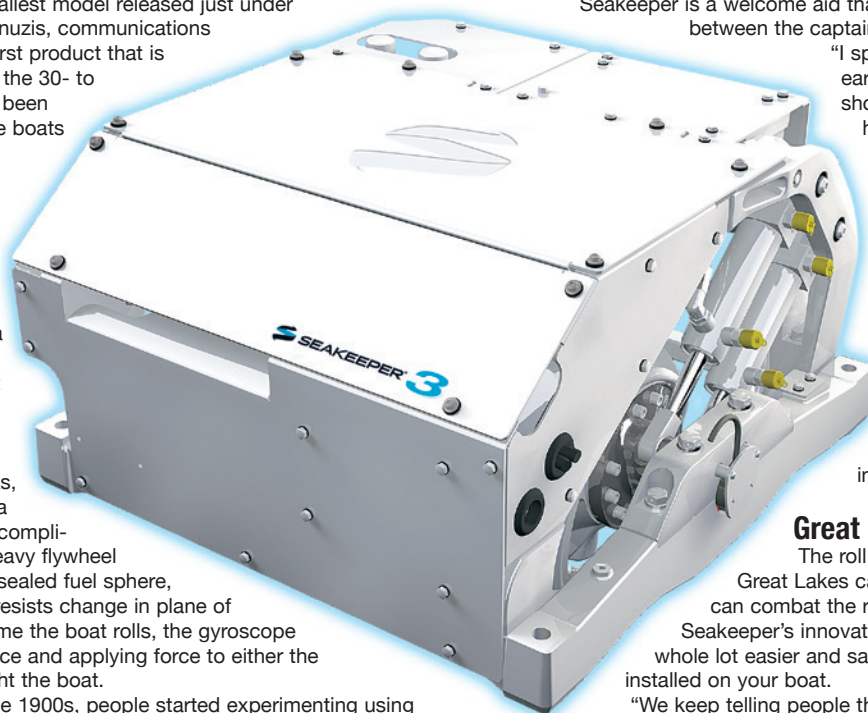
The Need

Anuzis says that the Seakeeper, “keeps the boat level and creates a land-like experience on water.” That may lead one to question: why would

I want a land experience on water? I can get an on-land experience all the time when I’m on land.

Well, seasickness has long been a nemesis of land dwellers, and keeps even the most passionate boaters at bay sometimes. In these cases, the Seakeeper is a welcome aid that can reignite the love affair between the captain and the lake.

“I spoke with one of our customers earlier this year who loves going off shore fishing with his dad, who’s in his 70s or 80s, and they would go out for these weekends off shore,” said Anuzis. “They went out for this really rough weekend and his dad said, ‘I don’t know if I can do this anymore because I’m getting older and I’m not as tough as I used to be.’ Then they found out about Seakeeper and that made all the difference. So even though it’s a year later, his dad is still going out for trips with him and having the time of his life.”



Great Lakes Need

The roll of the ocean-like waves on the Great Lakes can get choppy, and not much can combat the rough nature of the tides. But Seakeeper’s innovative products can make life a whole lot easier and sailing a heap smoother when installed on your boat.

“We keep telling people that we can describe the experience for people time and time again, we can show videos, we can show pictures—any number of ways to try to communicate what it is and what it does,” says Anuzis. “But the thing is: no one is ever going to understand really what a difference it makes until they get on a demo boat.”

They take demo boats to national and international shows, but they also have units installed in multiple boats all over the country. All you need is to visit www.seakeeper.com and go to the take a ride webpage where you can coordinate a demo with someone in your area.

Rolling waves and knocking winds can really turn a trip sour. The Seakeeper is an overdue solution for sea stabilization; that’s why they call it “the biggest small thing yet.” And because of its compact size that doesn’t require an onboard generator, it’s ideal for a lot of mid-sized boats found on the Great Lakes.

www.seakeeper.com ■