

Bikes and boats

Mike Cowton finds a tent ideal for watersports enthusiasts – and it was designed with motorcycle campers in mind

THERE IS no doubt that some of my friends think I am rather sad when I start getting excited about a tent, and I attempt to divert the bar-room conversation in favour of outdoors living. Well, I am not ashamed to admit that, yes, I do occasionally go overboard and wax lyrical, particularly when I come across a tent that is ideal for my needs. Editor Clive and I set eyes on SunnCamp's MX Tourer Plus when it was first shown, and when he asked me subsequently to offer an overview, I was more than happy to do so.

Manufactured principally with the touring motorcyclist in mind, the first thing you notice about the tent is the large separate vestibule in which you can store the bike. The next plus point to note is the headroom, with a living area and bedroom high enough to stand up in.

Weighing in at 15.9kg, and with a packed size of 58cm, the tent is not too cumbersome to carry on a motorbike, although I do not actually own one. Ah, but here comes the rub. Being a water baby at heart, I do own an assortment of boats, and that is where the tent's versatility shines through for me.

But let us rewind to the beginning. Erection is simple if you follow the red, blue, black and grey colour coding for the shock corded, light but sturdy aluminium poles and their respective sleeves. Each of the three poles for the dome section is held captive by a pin on a ring fitted to the end of an adjustable webbing strap. The tent is then brought into the correct shape via pole clips. Two more poles support the vestibule. It is then time to erect the inner tent via standard clips and toggles, and spreading



SUNNCAMP MX TOURER PLUS

out the groundsheet for the living area, which comes as an extension of the bedroom.

With no one else around at the time, I must admit that I did struggle at first as I single-handedly tried to erect the tent in blustery conditions, and the whole operation lasted around 40 minutes. Some time was added on as I managed to easily bend three of the steel pegs as I tried to insert them through the luminous guy lines and into the hard ground. Fortunately, the tent comes supplied with a bagful. Anyway, with two people, you could easily shave 10 minutes off the erection time.

The living area has three triangular shaped roof windows with internal covers, which act as curtains, and a vented 'O' door to the bedroom complete with storage pockets and mesh ventilation at the rear. Bags of light is let in through the side entry door and the open access to the vestibule which, when you add that space to the living area, looks more like an elongated tunnel, slightly tapering towards the end. A

large 'L' door allows access to the vestibule for easy storage.

As to the vestibule itself, well, this can be used for a multitude of goodies. My first thought was a kayak and the storage of wet gear. But how about using it as a separate dog pen? Or a lounge area, as it is big enough to house table and chairs? Then again, if you fall out with your partner, you could always go and sit in your kayak in the vestibule and sulk all night.

Camping says Pitching is simple, and once erected, you can fully appreciate the amount of room available. The bedroom will accommodate three, but if you are using it for motorbike touring, there will

only be two of you anyway. If you happen to fall out with the pillion, you can always relegate him or her to the vestibule. As a three-berth tent, the MX Tourer Plus certainly makes for a roomy two-berth, and is definitely one to consider for convenience, flexibility, and storage solutions.

As far as annexes go, this is one of the best I have seen. It allows easy access through the living area or the outside via the large door. If you need to do any repair work on your bike under cover, then you can use it like a garage. Talking of mending things, the MX Tourer Plus also comes with repair kit. For a tad under £160, you will not go far wrong. **MC**

MORE INFO

Price £159
Packed size 62cm x 29cm x 29cm
Materials
Outer Polyester 75D 190T 2,000mm Fire Retardant
Inner Breathable Polyester
Groundsheet 120gm/sq.m PE sewn into inner tent
Poles Fibreglass (three of the poles have dual diameter to aid the correct curvature)

Pegs Steel
Dimensions
Outer Overall 717cm x 270cm
Main tent 377cm x 270cm
Inner 180cm x 240cm
Motorcycle vestibule 340cm x 270/150cm
Height 210cm

CONTACT
Tel 01245 329933
Web sunnflair.com

