



Tom Pringle, Sales Manager Kawasaki Watercraft UK and the iconic Kawasaki 550SX, celebrating 50 years of the Jet-Ski®.

Mar 24, 2023 12:33 GMT

Kawasaki Watercraft UK celebrates 50 years of Jet-Skis®

For immediate release

Friday 24th March 2023 - Kawasaki Watercraft UK, a Boats.co.uk group company and the official UK Distributor of personal watercraft for Kawasaki Motors UK since 2020, announces the celebration of 50 years of the Jet-Ski®.

Kawasaki Watercraft UK's Sales Manager, Tom Pringle reflects on a product whose name is so powerful that it has become the universally accepted

generic name for personal watercraft (PWC).

From the beginning in 1973 Kawasaki has led the innovation of the PWC in the marine leisure market. The company has been at the forefront of PWC technology with over 60 models launched across the decades, most of which bear the Jet-Ski® name. Along the way the company pioneered the introduction of many safety, technological and performance features.

Kawasaki's first watercraft, the stand up two-stroke single person WSAA 400 and WSAB 400 were introduced in 1973. As the concept of a personal watercraft for pleasure caught on, mass production began in 1976 with the introduction of the stand-up solo ski watercraft, the JS400.

By the mid-1980s the level of refinement and control took another step forward with the introduction of adjustable trim controls that made it possible to change the attitude of the Jet Ski on the water much like a high specification speed boat.

Kawasaki Watercraft UK's Sales Manager, Tom Pringle comments, 'Essentially Kawasaki helped refine the basis for all PWCs with water entering via a hull mounted grate and then being forced out rearward by the engine acting as a high-pressure pump via an integrated impeller propelling the craft along.'

1986 was a pivotal year for Kawasaki and the wider PWC market as the world's first two person craft, the X-2 was launched. Its introduction broadened the appeal of personal watercraft as a value for money way of getting on the water. A few years later Kawasaki introduced operational improvements in the joystick-controlled Jet Mate, followed by the revolutionary two person sit down PWC, the TS. Both models further cemented the PWC's position as a standalone watersport vehicle as well as a crucial 'water toy' for larger vessels.

Tom Pringle continues, 'The 1990s was a key decade for Kawasaki and the Jet-Ski®. Engine power and capacities increased, and the popular solo ski option led to the creation of a PWC racing circuit. The 100 horsepower three-cylinder two-stroke 900 ZXi further broadened the market as it offered water ski pulling power. The introduction of the three-seater Jet-Ski®, the ST firmly positioned the PWC in the family watersports market.'

At the end of the 1990s the 150 horsepower Ultra 150 was launched.

The year 2000 saw further technological innovation with the arrival of the fuel injection model 1100 STX D.I and three years later the inaugural four-stroke Jet-Ski®, the STX-12F was introduced featuring a marinised engine based on that of the Ninja ZX-12R motorcycle.

In 2007 the company moved over to a wholly four-stroke model line for all multi-seat craft and launched their first supercharged PWC which by 2011 was the highest specification Jet-Ski® with 300 horsepower.

Although the solo PWC dropped out of the range line up between 2012 and 2017, the stand up made a big comeback in 2017 with the advent of the SX-R boasting four cylinders and a rating of 160 horsepower.

The recent expansion of the Ultra series of craft has steered Kawasaki into a new era for personal watercraft, culminating in the launch of the new 2023 model, the Ultra 160 LX.

Tom Pringle concludes, 'Kawasaki Jet-Skis® are *the* original personal watercraft and we are proud to be celebrating their 50 years with them. Backed with an unrivalled heritage of technical innovation, the championship-winning Kawasaki Jet-Ski® is perfect for those wanting to take to the water for the first time and makes the perfect addition to the aft deck of a motor yacht.'

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About Kawasaki Watercraft

Founded in 2020 as part of the Boats.co.uk group, Kawasaki Watercraft UK is the exclusive UK distributor for the Kawasaki Jet-Ski® range. The company is based at Boats.co.uk HQ at Essex Marina, Wallasea Island.

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