



## Boat Report BRAVO 31

*This thoroughly modern riverboat has a good pedigree, thanks to its derivation from a classic sea boat. We tested it on the Broads.*

The new 31-footer unveiled at January's London Boat Show by Moores of Wroxham has an interesting pedigree, being directly descended from one of the most popular motorboats of the 1980s, the Princess 30DS.

With its simple but practical layout, sturdy seakindly hull and classic styling, the 30 was the ideal first sea boat for many families. What is not so well-known is that it was also the backbone of many hirefleets on the rivers of the UK, Ireland and the Netherlands.

In inland form it had an insert planted in the mould, which gave it a substantial tunnel underwater, providing protection for a single propeller driven by an inboard diesel engine.

The first of these boats were moulded by Princess builders Marine Projects themselves. But they subsequently allowed the mould to be used by Moores to make their own shells, which they then fitted-out to their own requirements, for hirefleet purposes only. This arrangement continued even after the 30 was deleted from the Princess range.

Finally, 12 months ago, Moores bought the moulds outright. They set about updating the superstructure, rounding off the windows, adding 1ft (0.3m) to the transom to make a small bathing

platform, and revising the interior layout.

The result is the Bravo 31, moulded for Moores by Bridgeland Moulders in Wroxham, and fitted out and marketed by JPC Powles, part of the Moores group. We went to the Norfolk Broads to test this craft two months after its launch.

### Exterior

The reasonable-sized cockpit has seats on both sides, with lockers beneath, the starboard one housing two 4.5kg gas bottles.

A large hatch in the sole gives access to the lazaret, where you find the stainless steel fuel tank forward, plus twin engine cooling-water strainers. These show the hireboat heritage of the Bravo, giving valuable protection against overheating from a blocked filter.

Also here are the battery box, with three 105Ah batteries, and the masterswitches, plus good access to the rudder stock. You can clearly see the outline of the propeller tunnel, underneath which the prop is protected by a skeg carried on three sturdy struts.

A door in the transom gives access to the integral bathing platform.

Moulded steps lead from the platform and the cockpit out onto the side decks, which are 7in (175mm) wide, with raised outboard lips and a moulded non-slip surface. Walking forward is easy and safe, helped by inboard handrails along the cabin top and coachroof, and by a pulpit.

Four fender-eyes are fitted on each side, and mooring is taken care of by 7in (18cm) aluminium cleats aft, plus one 9in (23cm) cleat forward.

### Interior

A sliding door leads from the cockpit into the wheelhouse/saloon, where a settee to starboard can be arranged to convert to a berth if owners

request. Opposite is a sideboard with lockers, plus a serving pier with a pull-out table underneath.

Forward to port, the helm position has a generous single seat, whose squab hinges down to allow you to drive standing if you prefer. The attractive walnut-veneered console features an engine instrument panel, ready-use switches and a Morse MT single-lever control.

Sliding windows port and starboard allow the helmsman to talk to the deck crew. Further ventilation is provided by a large GRP sunroof.

Headroom in the saloon is 6ft 2in (1.88m), and the overheads are in suspended, sewn vinyl, giving a bright feel and a luxury touch. Joinery here, and throughout the accommodation, is in ash,



*Above: based on the Princess 30 hull with a revised superstructure, the Bravo 31 is very much at home on the Broads. Right: the interior is well finished in ash joinery, with an attractive helm station and plenty of natural light. Above right: the galley is forward to starboard, and the boat comes as standard with a single separate cabin to port supplementing the bow cabin with its vee-berths. Top right: the toilet flushes into a holding tank.*



although other woods can be specified.

Three steps lead down forward to the galley, to starboard. This is equipped with a Vanessa cooker with a two-burner hob, oven and grill, plus a small Electrolux fridge and a stainless steel sink/drain. Storage is provided by two small lockers and three shelves.

Ahead is the WC, with its Mansfield toilet flushing into a holding tank. Lined in Formica, the compartment has a sink, three lockers, a moulded GRP shower tray, and 5ft 11in (1.80m) headroom.

The boat we tested had a small private single cabin to port, opposite the galley and WC, although most customers have asked for a more conventional dinette instead.

If you specify the cabin, it has a 2ft 6in (0.75m) wide berth and 6ft 1in (1.85m) headroom. Storage is provided by a stack of drawers, a half-height hanging locker and further lockers under the berth. If the area is laid out as a dinette, the table and settees will convert into a double berth, albeit a less private one, and as a by-product there is more room in the saloon, as the table there is not needed.

Either way, a hatch in the aft bulkhead gives access to the back of the helm console.

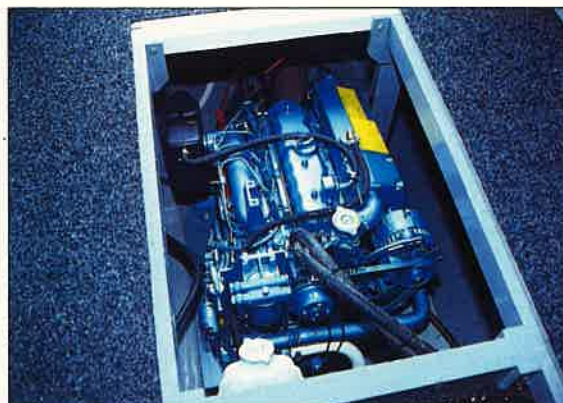
Right forward is the master cabin, which is entered through double folding doors which cleverly take up minimal room. The two vee-berths have an infill which allows them to be converted into a double.

In addition to narrow three-quarter-height hanging lockers on each side, there are lockers under the berths and full-length cave locker/shelves outboard. Light and ventilation come from small side windows and an opening hatch overhead; additional windows can be specified in the forward coachroof.

## Engine

Power is provided by a single 43hp Nanni diesel, mounted under the saloon and driving through a conventional shaft and coupling.

Two hatches in the saloon sole give good access to all the necessary service points. A calorifier is located to port, with two stainless steel water tanks either side, and ahead of the engine is a large area for storage.



The compartment is lined in pegboard-style noise insulation, which gives reasonable results.

## Performance & handling

We took the Bravo out on the River Bure and found it handled well, with the engine giving easy power for the inland waterways.

The steering was positive and quick, with the boat turning easily under rudder alone in most places, helped by reverse gear in tight spots.

The top speed we recorded with our trailing log was 6.5mph at 3000rpm, but a comfortable cruising speed was 5mph at 2200rpm. Many areas of the Broads are restricted to 4mph, and this figure came up at 1600rpm.

Noise levels were acceptable at the lower speeds, registering 68dB(A) in the wheelhouse and 70dB(A) in the cockpit at 4mph. At 5mph these figures increased to 73dB(A) and 75dB(A) respectively, and at full speed they went up significantly, to 78dB(A) and 81dB(A), which is higher than you would want to put up with for long.

## Conclusions

Neatly engineered and well finished, with a good interior fit-out and excellent GRP work, this a good boat for the river. A practical, uncomplicated craft, with a sensible all-weather layout, it is a worthy successor to earlier Princess 30-based designs for inland use.

**Left: the 43hp Nanni diesel engine is located under the saloon sole, with two hatches giving good access for servicing. Below: the integral bathing platform has a gate leading through to the cockpit, and steps up to both side decks.**

## Bravo 31

**Loa**  
30ft 6in (9.33m).  
**Beam**  
11ft 0in (3.35m).  
**Draught**  
2ft 6in (0.79m).  
**Air draught**  
8ft 9in (2.69m).  
**Displacement**  
3.5 tonnes.  
**Fuel capacity**  
50gal (225lt).  
**Water capacity**  
80gal (360lt).  
**Engine**  
43hp Nanni diesel.  
**Price**  
£55,250 ex VAT.  
**Enquiries**  
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