

Orkney

Day Angler 24

BOAT REPORT



The biggest boat in Orkney's range of rugged small cruisers offers an extra turn of speed, thanks to a new fully planing hull. We were pleased to find some testing sea conditions when we went aboard with the designer.

Although manufactured just about as far from the islands that share their name as you can get in the UK, near Arundel in Sussex to be precise, the Orkney line-up of seaworthy small cruisers has always endeavoured to capture the spirit and ruggedness their nomenclature implies.

To this end, recent models have all been commissioned from Arthur Mursell of TT Boat Designs, best known for his

work on the Nelson marque.

When the new Day Angler 24 hit the water last year, replacing the existing 23 model as the largest in the range, we were delighted to be able to accompany Arthur for some taxing sea trials on the first of the new breed.

Design & layout

Mursell's brief from the builders was a tall order.

For one thing, the new design had to comply with category B of the European Union's Recreational Craft Directive, certifying it as

suitable for offshore conditions, as well as with the Maritime & Coastguard Agency's Code for Commercial Craft, bearing in mind that it would likely be of interest to harbour authorities and commercial operators.

These parameters alone would set major safety constraints, but Orkney also wanted a decent turn of speed out of the boat, and comfortable cruising accommodation within its 24ft length, without compromising what should be a usable cockpit.

The Day Angler 24 appears to

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successfully, but not without diverging slightly from one or two of this range's traditional hallmarks.

A key difference is its higher than usual beam-to-length ratio, which makes it a large boat for its length, and gives it a more effective planing area.

It also distances itself from the somewhat round-bilge form of the 23 by moving into the hard-chine category, with a deadrise of around 15° from amidships back to the transom and only the merest suggestion of a central keel. The underwater sections are quite convex, however, to add strength and a softer ride, with two sprayrails over the forebody in an attempt to keep spray at bay.

But perhaps the most noticeable change is above the waterline, where the topsides are devoid of their usual simulated-clinker 'planking', which has been done away with so that more flair (and hence more buoyancy) can be incorporated into the bow area.

All this adds up to a planing boat

which can operate in equally well mannered fashion at lower speeds, rather than what might previously have been thought of as a semi-displacement boat which can be pushed hard if required.

This distinction is borne out by the engine options on offer, giving operating speeds in the upper half of the 20-30 knot range. The least potent is a four-cylinder 170hp Volvo Penta outdrive, whilst the test boat had the largest single installation, a 200hp Volvo Penta AD41P. A further alternative is twin 105hp units.

The standard layout follows Orkney's usual Day Angler cockpit-to-accommodation ratio of 40:60. Besides the helm position, the wheelhouse also boasts a neat, serviceable galley, while a couple of steps down is the vee-berthed cabin with a separate toilet compartment.

We understand that a Cruiser version, featuring an extended wheelhouse, is currently on the drawing board.



Decks

The side decks are nice and wide at 10in (25cm), especially given the size of the craft. The builders' standard fitment as handholds are pilot rails, but buyers can opt for full guardrails.

At the stem are a bow-roller together with a purposeful-looking 12in (30cm) bollard, just the job for handling the anchor warp which is stowed

in the adjacent locker.

Deck hardware also includes a pair of 10in (25cm) cleats astern, and slightly smaller ones amidships to take springs. Fender beackets are thoughtfully provided along the topsides, to save fenders from being left to dangle from a spare rail or cleat.

A hinge-down mast on the cabin-top takes care of the vessel's steaming lights, and provides a landing for any antennae.



Cabin

The way the wheelhouse superstructure has been pushed quite well forward lets plenty of light into the dining and sleeping area, which is just a step away. A couple of side ports and a deckhead hatch also make a contribution.

There is good sitting headroom at the dinette, whose moulded and fiddled

table stows in the toilet compartment when not required. As if to return the compliment, the table top is fashioned with a much curved after end to ensure the WC's door can be opened without hindrance when it is in place.

The vee-seat/berths measure 6ft 4in (1.93m) long, with a useful depth of shelving running behind them. Lifting the mattresses reveals three painted-out lockers.

Cockpit

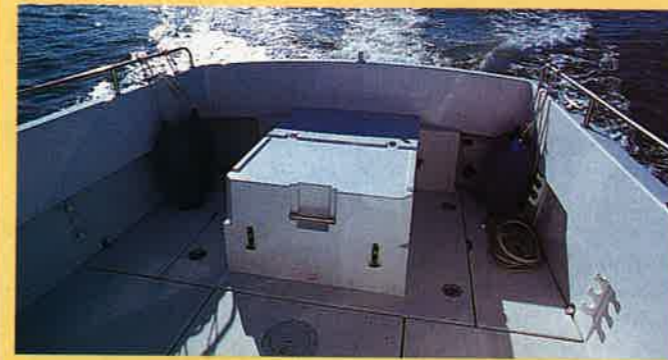
The fully moulded and self-draining cockpit is clear of encroachments except for the enginebox, which is elevated to a useful height for perching on or working at when sorting out fishing tackle or a picnic.

Let into the cockpit sole are a pair of large drained lockers, and there is further stowage within the moulded steps leading up to the side decks; the port one houses the gas bottles, while the other will take fenders, warps and cleaning gear.

The transom has no



walk-through gate or integral bathing platform. A stainless steel and teak arrangement is available as a bolt-on extra, accessible via a set of steps over the coaming.



Toilet

Our test boat's WC had a few modifications still to undergo, not least in that future models will benefit from a fully moulded compartment.

A chemical toilet is fitted as standard, but this can be upgraded to a sea toilet if preferred. The only other fitment in this instance was a basin, but future boats will have a moulded shower tray.

Only a pressurised cold water system is installed as standard, but a calorifier can be added as an extra.



Performance & handling

The day of our test could not have been more useful, with a particularly fresh sou'westerly pushing up a confused sea over and around the Chichester bar. This we took on at every angle, helping us to assess the 24's handling.

The boat happily made its way across the steep-sided waves at an even 3000rpm, producing 17.5 knots, in a well mannered way considering the unpredictable

conditions. Pushing into them, we occasionally had to back off a mite further, and 2500rpm proved an ideal setting, the resultant 11.5 knots giving the bow the required measure of trim to cut through them without labouring in a trough of its own making.

Indeed, when we tried this often awkward speed in somewhat smoother water, we found the 24's hull trimmed nicely and ran quite flat. The full planing sections gave plenty of lift across the stern, in contrast to the much more pronounced trim angle of its

predecessor's modified semi-displacement hull. And the skipper's view from the helm is excellent, there being no need to make an effort to peer over the bow.

Coming back downwind, with the seas behind us, we pushed the hull harder and harder until the AD41P engine was running flat-out, at 3800rpm. In so doing we touched the 30-knot mark, something over and above the hull's predicted speed, which was along the lines of 27 knots. The latter is what we would expect once the boat is

Helm

A double seat is provided at the helm, with the squab pulling forward to enable its



occupants to sit or stand; in any case the driving position is accurately located to give a good view.

The seat-base hinges up to offer stowage for charts and other loose items. Also within the plinth is a sizable cupboard. The console itself has plenty of angled and flat areas to take additional instrumentation, over and above the engine gauges and compass fitted as standard.

Outboard, the console return for the throttle has a handy 'bits' tray designed in, and the void beneath has been made into a cupboard.



Wheelhouse

The door through to the wheelhouse is sufficiently large to make access easy, which is important as it is likely to be in constant use.

The headroom inside is also generous, at 6ft 3in (1.91m), and there is room for three or four to stand or sit without getting in each other's way. Depending upon the wind direction, one or other of the side windows could be slid open to provide ventilation.

The galley along the port side comprises a two-burner gas hob and sink, with a cupboard beneath. A fridge is an optional extra. The co-pilot's seat can be hinged up to provide a work surface.

For the most part, the interior is based on mouldings rather than joinery. As a result it is easy to clean, although it lacks the snuggler feel of wood, which can also fare better when put to hard use.

A lifting panel in the sole gives access to the seacocks and water tank.





Orkney Day Angler 24

BUILD

glass-reinforced plastic

RCD

build category B

DIMENSIONS

LOA

24ft 2in (7.37m)

HULL LENGTH

23ft 7in (7.21m)

BEAM

9ft 2in (2.80m)

DRAUGHT

1ft 7in (0.47m)

AIR DRAUGHT

7ft 3in (2.20m) with mast down

DISPLACEMENT

2.5 tons

FUEL CAPACITY

80gal (365lt)

WATER CAPACITY

17.5gal (80lt)

aded with a full cruising inventory, and our test figures indicate that a fast cruise setting of 500rpm should give 24-25 knots.

All-in-all, the Orkney handled the tricky conditions very competently, with a surprisingly cushioned ride and rarely a complaint or hard knock from the hull. Certainly there was plenty of spray about, but the ripers did a good job and little found its way into the cockpit.

The driving position is comfortable, with the benefit that the seat can be nudged back to allow the helmsman to stand if referred. The controls fall easily to hand, and the stowage spaces thoughtfully provided around the console make you feel at home.

Backing off to harbour speeds revealed that the hull tracks well for an outdrive boat, no doubt helped by that slight suggestion of a keel.

Noise levels were well within acceptable bounds. Our soundmeter gave a reading of 80dB(A) in the wheelhouse, with the door open, at what is likely to be the boat's most economical setting of 3000rpm.

Conclusions

Orkney's decision to design an out-and-out planing hull has paid dividends on what is now the largest craft in their range. Whilst the 21 and 23 could always be pushed hard, the 24 makes it all the more easy to find that extra turn of speed.

That said, neither has the

Enginebox

For day-to-day checks it is simply a matter of lifting the top hatch on the enginebox. For maintenance work the whole moulding can be lifted clear after you have undone a couple of turnbuckles, so that everything can be got at.

The installation is tidy, with the interior surface of the box lined with loaded-foam insulation. The battery box lies to the rear of the compartment, as does the isolator. An electric pump services the bilge.

The fuel cock is accessed via a small independent hatch in the cockpit sole.



ENGINE

single Volvo Penta AD41P
6cyl 3.6lt diesel
200hp at 3800rpm

PRICE

from £42,700 ex VAT

BUILDERS

Orkney Boats Ltd, Unit 1, Ford Lane Business Park, Ford, Arundel, West Sussex BN18 0UZ. Tel: 01243 551456.

latest model lost the chunky, ready-to-use feel that people associate with this make. And it will just as happily potter as perform.

The layout certainly offers enough cabin room for comfortable weekending, with good use made of awkward little spaces, and the standard of fit-out is well geared towards leisure boating rather than simply providing a few creature comforts for hardy fishing enthusiasts.

If you want some additional interior space again, hold out for the stretched-wheelhouse version that is promised. □