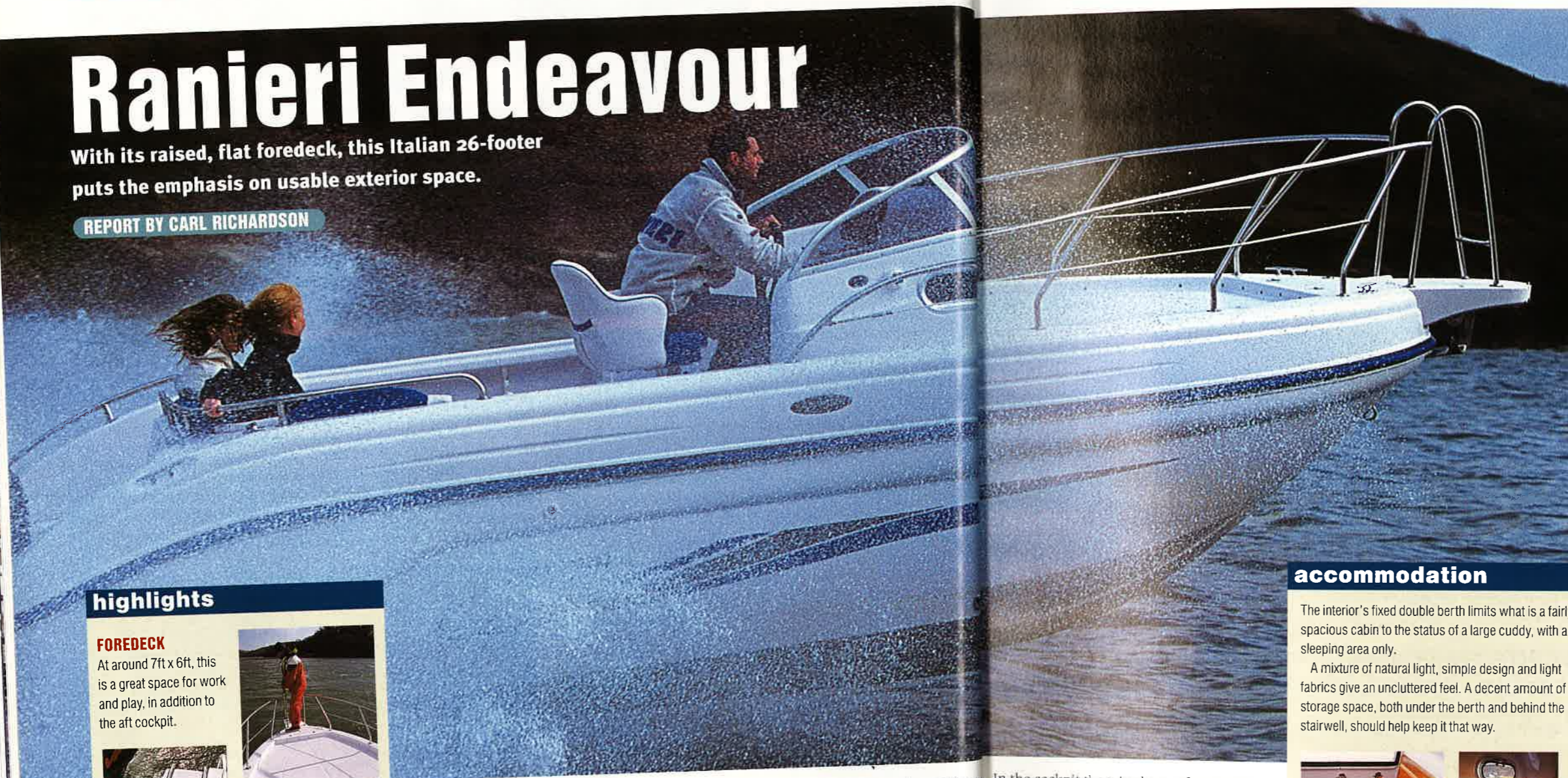


Ranieri Endeavour

With its raised, flat foredeck, this Italian 26-footer puts the emphasis on usable exterior space.

REPORT BY CARL RICHARDSON



highlights

FOREDECK

At around 7ft x 6ft, this is a great space for work and play, in addition to the aft cockpit.



STYLING

Intricate GRP mouldings add extra interest to the design.

below A 250hp Yamaha VMAX two-stroke outboard gave our test boat 42 knots.



Ranieri Cantieri Nautici have been building boats for over 30 years in the Golfo di Squillace on the southern coast of Italy – think of it as the sole of the Italian boot.

Their business has expanded into a range that now boasts 12 models, including a RIB and even a jetboat. But the majority of the family-owned yard's production line is given over to bright, outboard-powered sportsboats that ooze sunny, Mediterranean-style dayboating.

How would one of their latest offerings, a 26-footer, suit British boating needs? We travelled to Salcombe in Devon hoping for some honest Endeavour.

DESIGN & LAYOUT

So far in the world of sportsboat design we have had the RIB, the deckboat, the open boat, the walkaround and the centre-console boat, not forgetting of course the good old cuddy and bowrider.

Now it seems we have amalgamations that confuse our minds further, such as the walkaround, centre-console cuddy. But marrying the practicalities of a deckboat with some sort of cabin can and does work well in UK waters.

The Ranieri Endeavour is, if it has a type, a raised-foredeck cuddy. From the open, no-fuss cockpit, steps either side of the helm console lead up and forward to a wide foredeck area with a treaded sole, protected by a short toerail and sturdy guardrails. When cushioned it becomes a large sunpad, perfect for lounging on.

The boat's exterior looks deceiving, as at first sight it appears to be a standard centre-console design, with the helm sited just forward of midships.

Sitting squarely in the water, it sports a level sheer. The softer curves and mouldings of the topsides contrast well as the hull is finished into them, with a pronounced chine and sprayrails giving it a purposeful look.

In the cockpit there is plenty of space, as only an aft L-shaped bench seat and moulded wet-bar intrude. Perhaps a little more thought could be given to additional seating here, but the layout is nice and clean.

Beneath the expanse of foredeck, the boat's cuddy cabin does not quite allow for standing headroom. There is 5ft 6in of height in the entranceway, accessed via a sliding door and some narrow, single-tread, teak steps.

A fixed double berth is laid on, together with a moulded storage unit and a toilet compartment.

POWER OPTIONS

The boat is able to take up to a single 300hp outboard or twin 150s, and the choice will be very much down to the owner's requirements and intended use.

If you are trailing, a single engine might suit more for reasons of weight. If you want to cover greater distances at sea, twin motors could be the answer.

To our mind, a single 200hp or twin 100hp motors would suffice for most needs.

Our test boat was fitted with Yamaha's 250hp HPDI VMAX two-stroke, giving it a performance edge, albeit with a little more thought needed with transom set-up.

That this is a precision instrument is emphasised by its shorter leg, for a semi-surface-piercing propeller action, and wing-like skeg, to counter torque-steer.

Across the range, Ranieri transoms are both low and angled, with a gill-bracket position for the outboard. This allows the engine to sit away and above the waterline, which is theoretically perfect for the surface-piercing concept.

HANDLING & PERFORMANCE

At rest and at very slow speeds, vibration feels a little harsh, due to the Yamaha's stiff engine mounts, which are designed to deal with high performance but dampen less effectively at lower revs. Once you up the speed, the picture smoothes over.

Conditions on our test day were building up some useful seas just outside the protection of Salcombe's entrance channel. The wind was such that any spray pushed

accommodation

The interior's fixed double berth limits what is a fairly spacious cabin to the status of a large cuddy, with a sleeping area only.

A mixture of natural light, simple design and light fabrics give an uncluttered feel. A decent amount of storage space, both under the berth and behind the stairwell, should help keep it that way.

Standard equipment includes a refrigerator in a cabinet which can also house an optional sink.

A separate toilet compartment is set to starboard, behind a teak door. Within its usable confines, a sea toilet and teak-fronted cubbyhole are provided, together with an opening porthole. An optional fold-out hand basin can be included.



above The cuddy cabin has stowage behind the steps, a separate WC and a fixed double berth.

decks



above Steps lead forward.

A major plus to this style of craft is the ease with which you can get around.

Two gripped steps either side of the helm console take you up and forward, your journey aided by stainless steel guardrails which ring the forward sections of the boat.

Aside from its sunbathing potential when bedecked with cushions, the sheer size and level design of the foredeck make it a great place to work from.



above Practical foredeck.

cockpit

Under stiff competition from the forward deck, the self-draining cockpit may seldom be used, at least when at rest.

Not exactly overspecified, it is an open area with only an L-shape bench and wet-bar to eat into its ample dimensions. We would suggest the inclusion of some teak finishing or additional upholstery to help break up



above An L-shaped aft bench leaves plenty of unused space.



above Stowage is plentiful.

the slightly stark scene, and warm it up a little.

Set deep into the boat, the area feels safe and protected, apart from the companionway leading aft to the boarding platform which would benefit from a transom gate.

Storage is very well catered for, with an area big enough to crawl around in under the aft bench.

out by the hull was finding its way onboard, which is not great on a cold morning.

Reddish Marine, our hosts for the day, are experienced in the art of outboard set-up. Their view was that our test boat needed a revised propeller to help with trim, raise the nose, reduce spray and provide greater grip.

On the day, a maximum speed of 42 knots was recorded between the troughs, at 5500rpm and with +4.5 trim, which was a little down on the expected figure.

But it is worth bearing in mind that the beefy Yamaha motor's engine management system restricts its power output during a

helm Our test boat's L-shape dash, finished in burl wood, featured the standard Yamaha digital instruments. The tachometer integrates oil, trim and battery levels as well as a log, while the speed gauge includes a fuel meter and trip. This leaves plenty of space for additional equipment, such as a VHF and plotter.



10-hour running-in period.

Cruising performance is dictated more by the elements and the helmsman's mood than by the engine's abilities. We would suggest a figure of 22 knots at 3300rpm as a usable cruising pace that keeps an eye on economy, while 31 knots at 4500rpm injects more fun.

The hull returned a soft, refined ride. Over fairly choppy seas, it lapped up all manner of high-speed manoeuvring without any slam.

For the helmsman, the throttle and steering are well positioned. However, the throttle could have been sited slightly further back, to stop it from butting up against the switches.

The screen provides decent protection from the wind, and the seat is comfortable and supportive. There is only room for one person, so the addition of some grabrails would make standing alongside the helm an easier and safer proposition when underway.

the rivals

BOSTON WHALER 255 CONQUEST

from £58,500 inc VAT

From a boatbuilder synonymous with deck boats, this model has a more contemporary vee-berth cabin with a converting dinette table.

Tel: 01202 674531.
www.bostonwhaler.co.uk

IBIZA 25 SPORT CAB

from £62,995 inc VAT

Inboard-powered, this Norwegian craft's excellent design includes a cuddy, a forward cockpit and lots of design detail.

Tel: 01202 700702.
www.scandiboatcentre.com



specifications

BUILD	glass reinforced plastic
RCD	design category B
LENGTH OVERALL	26ft 3in (8.0m)
BEAM	8ft 2in (2.5m)
DRAUGHT	2ft 9in (0.89m)
DISPLACEMENT	1.4 tonnes
FUEL CAPACITY	88gal (400lt)
WATER CAPACITY	22gal (100lt)
ENGINE	single 250hp Yamaha HPDI VMAX two-stroke outboard
BUILDERS	Ranieri Cantieri Nautici, 88068 Soverato, Italy.
SUPPLIERS	Reddish Marine Services, Island St Salcombe, Devon TQ8 8DP. Tel: 01548 844094.
PRICE	from £35,995 inc VAT

conclusions

LAYOUT

With the bias definitely towards exterior space, the outside of the craft works very well, benefiting from two social areas. The cabin still provides comfortable overnight accommodation for two.

BUILD

Very visible detailed GRP mouldings, and equally well finished work behind the scenes, give this boat a strong, capable feel.

PERFORMANCE

On a choppy test day the hull handled well, taking conditions in its stride. Stable at all speeds, the Endeavour would make an ideal craft for those new to boating.

As for the Yamaha 250 VMAX, we await the chance to explore its full potential. For our money, opting a standard, longer-shaft single or twin outboard set-up would still provide all the zip you need.

MBM's verdict

This versatile weekender brings something new to the table with its highly usable exterior.

Even though the Endeavour's roots are firmly planted in a Mediterranean homeland, on this evidence there is nothing to stop it competing well against its many American and north European rivals.

A little more effort could be put into the aesthetics of the finish. However, a highly competitive price makes this boat a real contender.