

worth a look



HELM POSITION

Adjustable and supportive wraparound seats give an excellent driving position.



PERFORMANCE

This is a vessel designed for high performance, with a top speed of 50 knots.



CABIN

The interior has a good standard of fit-out for any sports cruiser, especially rare for a RIB.

Scorpion 10m Sports Cruiser

This RIB is designed to offer cruising comforts. But it also offers the kind of performance that has attracted a speed record chaser.

REPORT BY JOHN WOOD



If you want a boat to attempt a Round Britain speed record, you choose a RIB. The design of its rigid hull and the added cushioning of its inflatable tubes will handle long distances in rough conditions while giving the crew the most comfortable ride that is practicable.

So far, so good. Now, when you already own an 8.75m RIB that has held the Round Britain record, and you want to chase more

records, what do you do?

If you are Mike Deacon, you commission a bigger RIB, with more power, from the same builder. Only, this time, it comes with berths, a sink and a toilet.

And this is it! Despite its name, the Scorpion 10m Sports Cruiser we tested is fitted-out for a specific performance function: it is Deacon's *Hot Lemon IV*, which will soon be looking to claim the

Drambuie Trophy just like her smaller predecessor (see MBM Dec 01 p40).

DESIGN & LAYOUT

Even though there is a cabin under the foredeck, there is no denying this is a rigid inflatable. The tubes are at the heart of the design, as is the long thin hull for good sea handling and the twin-straked deep-vee form with a hard nose for

accommodation

Access to the cabin is through a lift-up tambour door, an Italianate design touch.

With long side windows and a deck hatch the interior has plenty of natural daylight, and reasonable headroom of 1.5m. The standard of fit-out is good, within a very simple layout.

The galley to port has a two-burner hob which can also act as a heater. A stainless steel sink, with mixer tap, is set in a Corian worktop, but a fridge is optional.

In the moulded toilet compartment to starboard, again there are few frills, but good quality materials and high construction standards are apparent. You get 1.75m headroom here, and a manual toilet.

cabin The dinette table drops down to make the infill for a good-sized double berth. There are three lockers underneath, one of them being lined, and a hanging locker is an option.



toilet compartment The sink has a stainless steel mixer tap attached to a wander lead, which doubles as a showerhead.



galley Workspace is at a premium if the hob is in use. An infill for the sink would help.

decks

The collar for the tubes allows for a reasonable width of side deck, providing the only route forwards. The radar arch and deck rails offer handholds.

At the bow is a hatch for the anchor chain and the optional electric windlass. At the stern, a short bathing platform tidies up the design. There are six cleats and heavy-duty lifting eyes.

The self-draining cockpit is supplemented by twin 'elephant trunk' draining tubes.



improved wave penetration.

All this does impinge upon the room available in the forward section for any cabin space. In any case just 2.8m of the hull's 10m length is given over to the accommodation, and this is obviously in the narrower part of the hull.

On our test boat, the cockpit was rigged for racing. In an excellent forward configuration, the wraparound seats have electrically adjustable squabs which hinge up if you prefer a lean-back driving position. Even the aft seats offer the same facility, with well-placed handholds.

A wide walkway to port, with ready handholds, offers easy access to all parts of the cockpit, and there are fabric pockets for stowing oddments. There has been no effort to integrate the aft enginebay to eke out extra seating space, the engines simply being located for the best weight distribution.

Alternative layouts are available for buyers intending more recreational use.

The Scorpion has a purposeful presence

on the water, with long low lines. The yellow tubes follow the owner's personal theme, and will not be to everyone's liking; indeed a different colour could enhance the styling.

Hardware is restricted to necessities, such as handrails on the cabin roof and a forward-reaching radar arch to carry aerials and a GPS receiver.

POWER OPTIONS

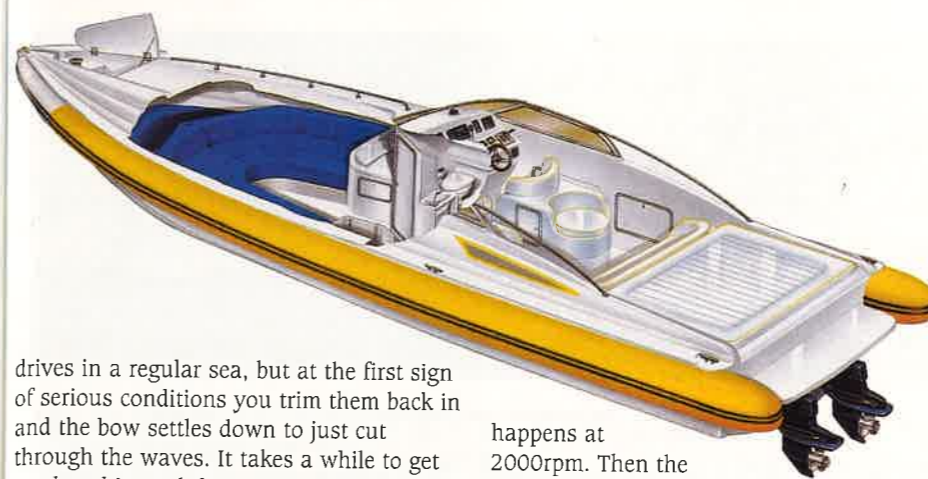
The Scorpion was built around twin 300hp Yanmar 6LPSTZE diesels, which are the preferred option, combined with Bravo I drives and stainless steel propellers.

However, the builders will fit other makes on demand. The minimum recommended power is twin 250hp engines, and the maximum is twin 425hp units.

PERFORMANCE & HANDLING

We have never tested a craft that deals with the sea quite so well in a straight line as this RIB.

For maximum effect you trim out the



drives in a regular sea, but at the first sign of serious conditions you trim them back in and the bow settles down to just cut through the waves. It takes a while to get used to this, and the temptation is to throttle back, but in fact the hull is capable of running flat-out in fairly extreme conditions.

When turning, the boat banks and comes round smoothly, though it is now that you remember that it is a 10m craft designed for straight-line speed. Its turning circle is average, rather than tight.

From standstill, it is a slow-ish response from the turbo diesels until the extra kick

happens at 2000rpm. Then the Scorpion moves smoothly onto the plane. We saw a top speed of 50.2 knots at 3900rpm, and the boat is as happy flat-out as it is cruising at 2500rpm, jogging along at 25 knots.

At speed in a rough sea, we were still able to hold a conversation, such is the assurance of the hull through the water and the very acceptable noise levels in the cockpit. We measured 82dB(A) at a fast cruise of 42 knots, with the engine pulling 3500rpm.

This will help to ensure that long-distance passages (like the British circumnavigation planned by the test boat's owner) can be made in comfort. So, too, will the helm station.

Left-handed gearshifts and throttles are close to the steering wheel, and the engine trim controls are duplicated both on flick switches at the back of the wheel and on floor switches. The floor controls worked the best for us, allowing constant trim adjustment for optimum performance and handling.

The steering wheel is not adjustable, but the wraparound seat is, and you get plenty of weather protection. Our test boat's helm was tailored specifically for its owner, so we did suffer a few bruises in extreme conditions, but this would not be the case if you had it built to fit you.



console Trim tab controls and the rocker switches are above the wheel and throttles, whilst engine gauges are set in an upper level against a burr wood backing, with the Raymarine navigational package.

engineroom



A power lift raises the aft sunpad to reveal what is a very well presented enginebay.

The fuel fillers are located just inside, and all the other ancillaries are very accessible. The standard of engineering is high, with plenty of thought given to the location of regular service features.

The engine mounts have been specially engineered, and the whole emphasis is on durability and reliability in extreme conditions.

There are two 1000gph automatic bilge pumps, plus manual back-ups. A cleverly engineered Dorade intake system ensures a continuous air supply to the engines, however heavy the going gets.

specifications

BUILD	glass reinforced plastic hull with ORCA/Hypalon/Neoprene/polyester tubes
RCD	design category B
LENGTH OVERALL	32ft 9in (9.98m)
BEAM	9ft 8in (2.95m)
DRAUGHT	2ft 7in (0.80m) with drives up; 3ft 11in (1.20m) with drives down
DISPLACEMENT	3.95 tonnes
FUEL CAPACITY	200gal (910lt)
ENGINES	twin 300hp Yanmar 6LPSTZE diesels
BUILDERS	Scorpion RIBs, Haven Quay, Mill Lane, Lymington, Hampshire SO41 9AZ. Tel: 01590 677805 www.scorpionribs.com
PRICE	from £149,813 inc VAT

conclusions

LAYOUT

Internal accommodation plays second fiddle to exterior space. The cabin is really just there for convenience, but it is a great working cockpit.

BUILD

Build quality is excellent, but without frills. The accent on performance means details such as handholds have not been forgotten.

PERFORMANCE

This boat gives one of the best rides at high speed that we have ever experienced, but it is still easy to control. Its turning circle is a little restricted if you start throwing it around.

mbm verdict

For £127,500, you can buy an awful lot more boat, but it will not have the capabilities of this Scorpion RIB, nor will it be built to such an exacting specification.

This is a craft for buyers who want optimum performance and can afford it, and for those who look for a GPS on the dashboard rather than a CD. It will enable them to undertake long, fast passages, whatever the conditions.

the rivals

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