

This brand new sportscruiser has a number of interesting features, both above and below the waterline. We tried boat number one, hot off the production line, in Mediterranean waters.

BOAT REPORT

Fairline

Targa 40

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Fairline's Targa 39 and Targa 37 models have been extremely successful, but that has not stopped the builders making some changes when it came to updating what they offer in this important mid-range market niche.

Indeed, on the Targa 40 they have taken the opportunity to introduce a number of features usually reserved for somewhat larger craft, most notably an integral 'garage' for a mini-RIB tender.

We flew to Mallorca to test the very first model off the production line, out of Cala d'Or.

Design & layout

Rather than simply a modification of the 39, the outdrive-powered 40 is an all-new design, from the keel up. The hull lines and naval architecture are by Bernard Olesinski, with Fairline's own design office taking care of the layout work,

engineering systems and myriad design details which make up a modern motor cruiser.

The hull is a medium-to-deep vee of 19°, adorned with three pairs of sprayrails, the two inner sets fading as they run towards the transom so as to ensure a cleaner stream of water to the propellers. Together with the chine-flat, the sprayrails are heavily radiused into the hull sections, and the outdrive legs find themselves well tucked under the fully integrated bathing platform.

There is nothing surprising in any of

Helm



The single helm seat is nicely supportive, and adjustable fore and aft, allowing plenty of legroom and ensuring the wheel and throttles fall comfortably to hand. It is also designed with a flip-up squab, to give just that little extra bit of height and enable the skipper to stand when manoeuvring and peer over the screen.

A large cave locker is located within the seat's plinth, with the emergency fuel cut-offs adjacent to this.

The console immediately around the

wooden wheel takes care of the ready-use switches, together with power-trim and tab controls, and has space for navigation instruments besides the combined log and depth-sounder which comes as standard. A perspex-covered chart area lies ahead of this, plus a wet-card compass.

The main engine instrumentation is relegated to an angled fascia further away, still viewable but not exactly under the skipper's weather eye. Rather better positioned is the standard VHF set, on a nicely angled coaming return next to the skipper's right hand.

Cockpit

Running through entirely at one level, the cockpit offers plenty of space whether you want to be sunbathing, dining al-fresco or accompanying the skipper at the helm.

The backrest to the main U-shaped dinette flips over to give extra length to the sunpad, while the table can be hinged in half to make it easier to lounge around between meal times. Both seat-base lockers are fully moulded and have hinged lids.

Just behind the helm seat, the bar unit incorporates a sink and a

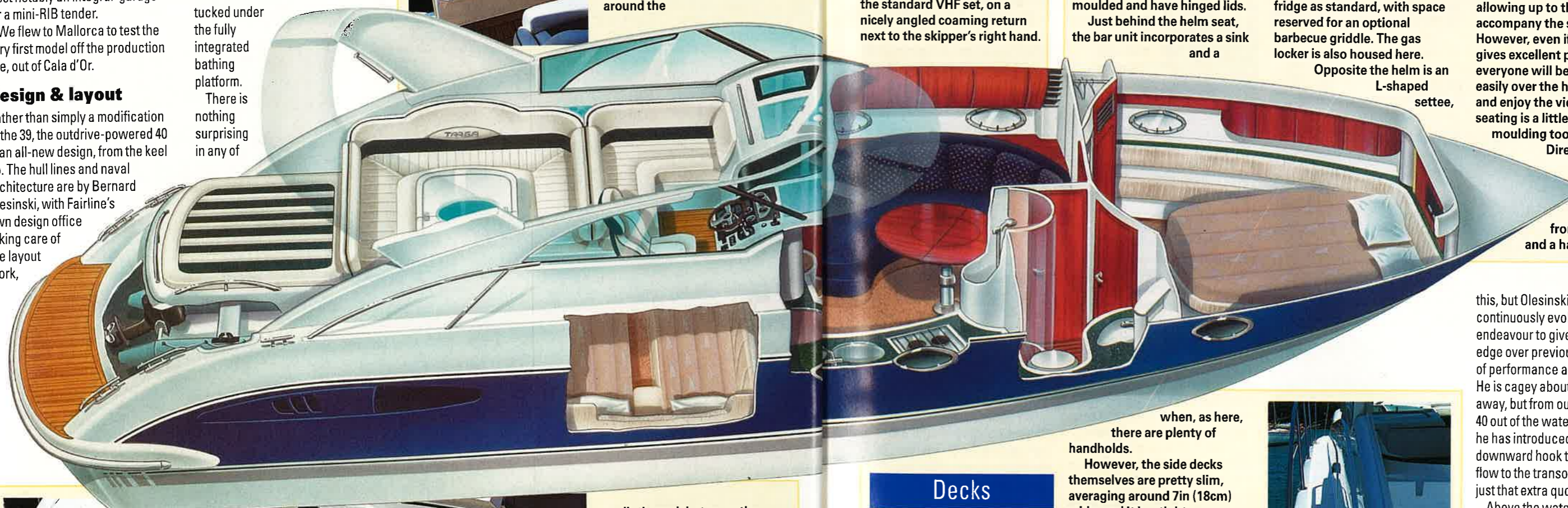


fridge as standard, with space reserved for an optional barbecue griddle. The gas locker is also housed here.

Opposite the helm is an L-shaped settee,

allowing up to three people to accompany the skipper. However, even if the screen gives excellent protection, not everyone will be able to see easily over the helm moulding and enjoy the view; either the seating is a little low or the moulding too high.

Directly ahead of the seating, the moulding benefits from a perspex-fronted glovebox and a handrail.



Bathing platform & garage

The integral garage design works very well. The 'boot' opens manually, with the aid of a hydraulic ram, to accommodate an 8ft 9in (2.7m) mini-RIB, complete with its outboard in place. A

remote-controlled winch helps to pull it into its GRP tray.

Bearing in mind the amount of activity that will come with manhandling the tender, it is good to see plenty of handrails around. The designers have also

been quite canny in incorporating a large stowage bin for fenders as well as a liferaft locker within the garage moulding.

The bathing platform itself, finished in teak as standard, comes with a concealed bathing ladder and a shower. There is an easily negotiated transom

walk-through between the platform and the cockpit.

An electro-hydraulic passerelle can be fitted as an extra if required. If you are berthed alongside, though, boarding is facilitated by steps incorporated into the aft coaming; these also lead to the side decks.



Decks

As is common with sports cruisers, the cockpit is protected and enclosed to such an extent that access to the side decks involves nipping aft, and around via the bathing platform and steps in the aft coaming. This is no problem, especially

when, as here, there are plenty of handholds.

However, the side decks themselves are pretty slim, averaging around 7in (18cm) wide, and it is a tight squeeze past the radar arch. Fairline tell us they hope to improve matters by relocating the grabrail, to gain a bit of extra space, but much of the awkwardness lies in the hip-high bulk of the arch, which calls for a careful shuffle by.



Further forward, the coachroof has the full sunpad treatment and the decks are quite flat and easily worked. We especially like the way a step has been included just below the windscreen on each side, so as to provide an easier working height when you are attending to the canopy.

The ground tackle is handled by an electric windlass, and feeds down into a chain locker which is accessed via a good-sized hatch. Three sets of 12in (30cm) cleats take care of the mooring lines.

this, but Olesinski's hull designs are continuously evolving in an endeavour to give just that extra edge over previous models in terms of performance and ride comfort. He is cagey about giving too much away, but from our inspection of a 40 out of the water it appears that he has introduced a slight downward hook to the lines as they flow to the transom, perhaps giving just that extra quotient of lift?

Above the waterline, the cockpit is sorted into three areas, but these are highly sociable with each other. The sunpad, with the dinghy garage beneath, is very much cheek-to-cheek with the dinette, not least because the latter's backrest hinges forward to make a headrest for recumbent sunbathers. Similarly, the helm station, with its cross-bench settee, does not feel cut-off from the main seating area, principally because both are on the same level, with no step in between.

Down below, the format is conventional, with cabins fore and aft, and a saloon and galley in between.

The forward cabin has the ablution facilities en-suite, while the midships one, which has been given as much room as possible, is

fitted out with a small settee and sink unit. The berths here can be left as a pair of singles or, with a clever infill, made into a double.

There are two ways for builders to treat an open-plan saloon/galley arrangement; either they tuck the various domestic services within a pseudo-sideboard, with the aim of

hiding them from view, or they show them off. The Fairline design team have plumped for the latter approach, with an interesting mix of brushed stainless steel and lacquered joinery offset by a curved sweep of marble-effect work surface.

Engine options are based on

Volvo Penta units, with a pair of 260hp KAD 44/DPs being the standard fitment, although Mercruiser and Yanmar packages of similar horsepower can be stipulated if required. The engines lie beneath the garage, readily accessible via a lift-up portion of walkway.

Galley

Galleys nearly always lack two of the simplest things: somewhere to hang drying-up cloths and a decent-sized rubbish receptacle. But this boat has both (the bin is designed into the stairwell from

the cockpit), with added bonuses such as a handrail neatly sculpted into the deckhead, and an extractor.

Style-wise, everything is in interesting shapes and contrasting materials, as well as being pretty practical.

The work surface is formed of a marble-effect material called



Marlan, and besides the inset two-burner hob and twin-sink arrangement there is a roundel of brushed stainless steel to

enhance the boldly curved fridge front.

Adjacent is a small bar locker, while overhead the circular theme continues by way of the housing for the television set, facing across to the dinette. The good array of storage provision is completed by a mixture of large and small fiddled cupboards, plus a couple of drawers and dedicated crockery stowage.

The boat's main electrical panel is located on the after bulkhead, behind a protective perspex screen.



Saloon

A set of four stairs takes you down from the cockpit into the spacious open-plan main cabin area. The moulded steps have a ridge to each tread,

thoughtfully provided to help guide you up and down, but unfortunately these are quite uncomfortable for bare feet.

With its dinette in a shallow U-shape, the saloon is cosy and comfortable. It is actually more accommodating than it first

appears, not least because the settee can be supplemented by a pair of stools that tuck way within its base.

Still, the folding table is really not big enough to cater for more than the four people that the settee itself will take, and larger parties will be better catered for by the cockpit dinette.

Above, at chest height, is a useful array of lockers, and further stowage is found in the seat-base. A large hinged hatch in the sole will swallow larger items, even if this is straight onto the hull sides and bilge: a moulded removable liner might be better, even if it would reduce the capacity slightly. A smaller hatch ahead of this space gives access to the shower pump and seacocks.

Headroom is 6ft 3in (1.91m) across the saloon and the adjacent galley.



Performance & handling

Unsettled weather in and around the Balearic Islands provided us with sun and a fair chop, ideal for putting the largest of the outdrive Targas through its paces.

In terms of out-and-out performance we clocked a steady 33 knots flat-out. This is a couple of knots shy of what the builders say they achieved in the UK during engine trials, but this is to be expected as engines run in warmer climates experience a slight shortfall in power due to the air being less dense. Fairline expect to add an extra knot or so once they have refined the modular parts of the fit-out to find weight-savings.

We were quite happy to settle for 30 knots, which the hull appears to relish as much as the skipper and crew, giving a commendably smooth, soft ride over any waves we could find. The boat carves round quickly and easily once the helm is put over, the steering being light but not over-sensitive, and the hull responding smartly with well-mannered turns.

Nudging back a bit to conserve fuel, a cruising norm is likely to be 3000rpm, which gives a wholly easy 24-25 knots and keeps sound levels down to unobtrusive levels. Only the cockpit still suffers to some extent, the cavernous size of the engine compartment being a factor, perhaps.

The boat runs commendably flat, with the legs set at 0° trim, which perhaps has something to do with extra lift generated by the slight downturn we noted on the underwater sections. This might also be the reason why the hull will plane quite readily down into the mid-teens, handy if the going gets rough and a more crew-friendly pace is required.

Marina and river speeds can be adhered to at something just over tickover, which is nice because you can still slow down further without nudging in and out of gear and thereby messing up the vessel's steerage. With the gearshift being smooth and quite immediate, the boat is easy to position. To help matters further, a bow-thruster is fitted as standard.

The driving position is most

Forward cabin

The sleeping cabins have had a similar amount of design detail applied to them as the rest of the boat. In the forward cabin, for instance, the full-length dressing mirror and optional CD-player are given greater interest by being dressed up, rather than treated as purely functional.

The double berth is a good size at 6ft 3in (1.91m) long by 4ft 6in (1.37m) at the shoulder. Although at first glance it appears to become pinched

towards its head, it is actually quite wide enough.

Clothes storage is provided by a pair of deep drawers set in the foot of the berth, plus two sets of lockers outboard and an adequate-sized hanging locker. For squirreling away extra bedding, there is a moulded compartment beneath the berth, accessed simply by lifting part of its base on a gas strut.

At the other end of the scale, the countertops running along both sides of the cabin have small vanity lockers let into them, for jewellery and other small items.



Toilet/shower



Access to the WC can be gained either directly from the saloon or from the forward cabin.

A good size overall, the compartment features a circular shower stall but this leaves room for someone to make use of the well-shaped sink, which is a moulded affair set into a contrasting work surface.

The mirrored bulkhead behind is actually a reverse cupboard, in that it is the bulk of the moulding that hinges, rather than simply the door.

There is plenty of room here for tucking away toiletries.

Beneath the sink is a perspex-fronted cupboard, an odd design given that spare loorolls are not the most attractive things to look at!

Midships cabin

The builders have concentrated on getting as much light into the midships cabin as possible, with no less than three ports and — the clincher — an overhead skylight. All this gives a good-sized cabin an even more spacious feeling.

Two 6ft 6in (1.98m) by 2ft 2in (0.66m) single berths are fitted, but a neat infill piece, which is actually part of the sole between the bunks, can be slotted in to make a 4ft 10in (1.49m) double. There is plenty of sitting headroom here, while the voids within the bunk bases are used to secrete the water tank, as well as providing some general stowage space.

There is plenty of dressing room, and as an option the moulded dressing table



adjacent to the handy mini-settee can incorporate a basin and vanity unit if required.

Above is a pair of shallow

cupboards, while the main clothes stowage is by way of a large hanging locker plus three deep, fiddled shelves.



Engineroom

Unlike on a shaft-drive craft, a garage can pose something of a problem for engine access on an outdrive-powered boat, as the installation lies directly beneath it. However, Fairline have got this well organised.

A generous gas-strut supported hatch in the walkway from the bathing platform to the cockpit allows you to drop down into a large, clear area ahead of the engines. An extra step is to be included on subsequent Targa 40s to make it less of a stretch to get in and out.



In this way, access to and around the engines is wholly adequate for most maintenance jobs, such as day-to-day checks and filter changes. There is sufficient room between and down the sides of the engines to get at everything, the only exception being the port engine's dipstick, but this has a separate hatch over it so that it can be more easily inspected.

The fuel tanks are set outboard, and the fuel/water filters, complete with a tank changeover manifold, are positioned on the forward bulkhead to starboard, with the batteries to port. All are easy to reach.

A further plus-point is that belts and pulleys are shielded by specially moulded covers to ensure that clothing, feet and fingers cannot get caught in them.

There is plenty of free space to the front of the engines, and the moulded treadplate would simply require further boxing-off to make an excellent storage area. Cut-outs have been incorporated into it to allow access to the bilge.

For any really serious servicing, the deckhead formed by the bottom of the dinghy bay can be freed and manhandled clear, after undoing half a dozen turnbuckles.



comfortable on the whole, although it suffers to some degree in that, whilst it is quite possible to see over the console, you have to really peer over it when seated. Everyone who drove the test boat preferred to have the squab raised, to give a few inches of extra height.

The engines' electronic throttles are well positioned on the console,

as well as being correctly set up, giving no excess delay.

The screen offers good protection, but because of its pronounced curvature just ahead of the driving position we have slight misgivings as to whether the wipers will be able to keep the full width of it clear in adverse conditions; the hull's

spray-deflecting qualities meant this potential shortcoming could not be fully assessed in the Med.

Conclusions

This 40-footer certainly appears to meet all the criteria required of a quality sports cruiser. It offers well-proportioned, comfortable accommodation and a convivial cockpit area, with the definite bonus that the tender's garage provides, without short-changing other important areas such as engine access.

Performance is certainly up to what one would want from this type of boat — punchy but not alarming — and the Olesinski hull makes sure this is all done as comfortably as possible.

The Targa 40 we tested was the first off the production line, and Fairline were keen to listen to ideas and comments both from their own dealers and from the European boating press. All this bodes well not just for the model in question

BUILD

glass-reinforced plastic

RCD

build category B

DIMENSIONS

LOA

41ft 6in (12.67m)

HULL LENGTH

38ft 10in (11.86m)

BEAM

12ft 0in (3.66m)

DRAUGHT

3ft 2in (0.96m)

AIR DRAUGHT

13ft 2in (4.02m)

DISPLACEMENT

7.5 tons

FUEL CAPACITY

164gal (746lt)

WATER CAPACITY

66gal (300lt)

ENGINES

twin Volvo Penta KAD44/DPs
6cyl 3.6lt diesels
260hp at 3900rpm

PRICE

from £163,524 ex VAT

SUPPLIERS

Port Fairline Spain,
Port Petit 316-317, 07660 Cala d'Or,
Santanyi, Mallorca, Spain.
Tel: +34 971 65 90 44.

BUILDERS

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Tel: 01832 273661.



but for the range as a whole; boatbuilding is a complex affair, and Fairline clearly want to get it right.

Our two main concerns were the awkwardness of moving along the side deck and the slightly hindered view from the forward seating. The first point is likely to be improved to some extent by the modified handhold, while the second could simply be addressed by an extra inch or two on the seat height.

We hope our observations will enable Fairline to make what is a well designed, exciting boat just that little bit better. □

Fairline Targa 40

PERFORMANCE & FUEL CONSUMPTION								sound levels dB(A)			
rpm	knots#	gph†	lph†	mpg†	range*	trim	saln	fwdcab	helm	cockpit	
2200	12.3	9.0	41	1.37	179	—	70	68	76	82	
2500	16.4	13.0	59	1.26	165	—	74	70	78	83	
2800	20.5	14.9	67	1.38	180	—	75	71	79	84	
3000	24.4	16.8	76	1.45	189	—	78	74	79	85	
3200	27.1	18.1	82	1.49	195	—	78	75	80	85	
3500	31.4	20.5	93	1.50	196	—	79	76	81	87	
3750	33.0	25.0	113	1.32	172	—	79	76	83	88	

Measured by radar gun. † Calculated from engine manufacturers' figures. * Allows 20% margin.

ACCELERATION 0-20 knots, 9.8sec

CONDITIONS wind southwesterly Force 3, sea slight

LOAD fuel 50%, water 25%, crew 3