



MOTOR BOATS TESTED

# Rodman 1040

**We were impressed with the 1250, but will the smaller 1040 deliver as well on performance as it does on looks?**

REPORT BY CARL RICHARDSON

**R**odman might be getting the hang of this fisher-cruiser business. The largest boat in the R series, the 1250, has long been regarded as a sportfishing tour de force, but will its smaller sibling, the 1040, be worthy of the flagship's calibre?

## Design & Build

The first hurdle is cleared with ease. The common-or-garden sportfisher may not always be the most aesthetically focused vessel on the

water, but the 1040 looks the business. The design delivers a performance edge and aggression that sets it alongside the 1250. The whaleback sheer that flows aft creates a meaty bow and slender stern, while the tinted windows add a bit of menace. But the main reason why the 1040 looks so good is down to the fact that the flybridge is largely made out of thin air. With a moulded coaming not much taller than your average wheelhouse sedan, the rest of the flybridge is walled in by stainless steel rails – rails that all but disappear when viewed from a few

feet away. From the outside, it might look a bit precarious and exposed for those up top, but as you will see it actually works quite well.

This style of boat usually brings with it a fairly reliable set of strengths and weaknesses. Of the strengths, you should be able to rely upon the practicalities of good decks, stowage space and plenty of boat for your money. On the minus side interior luxuries, including a decent galley, useable toilet and glamorous flybridges are rare.

Most of these factors are connected. A sportfisher's lower pricing is reflected in a

starker, less luxurious fitout. While the 1040's conventional two-cabin, galley-up interior is good for cruising, the multitude of hard moulded finishes and deck mouldings that do not change from the cockpit to the wheelhouse deliver a more functional flavour. A bit more wood and upholstery would make a big difference.

But of course these boats are expected to put up with a harder life than your average flybridge cruiser, one that includes five hairy-buttocked fishermen per square meter and all the fish guts and flatulence that come with them. To this end, the 1040 is suitably robust and hardy. Nothing looks too delicate, with mouldings and especially deck fittings beefed up.

## Design & build

Good looks and plenty of cruise-friendly brawn



The twin shaft set and keeled semi-displacement hull will appeal to traditionalists, while the solid no-nonsense build seen in the bilge area also impresses.

“With a top speed of 30 knots you can easily take on the sportscruiser brigade”

**FACT FILE**  
Rodman 1040  
LOA: 34ft (10.4m)  
PRICE: from £148,000  
TOP SPEED: 28 knots

## Exterior

The flybridge can be a mute point on fishers but their decks should be top notch, and the Rodman's are just that. Decks that measure a foot across and carry a thigh-high bulwark are precious boating stock, making it safe and easy to

move about. One and three quarter inch gauge stainless steel rails look and feel the part, and the stanchion posts that sit atop the deck bulwarks are solid and securely fastened.

Another feature is the stowage. Unlike on some boats, the cavernous lazarette, which lies under an equally spacious cockpit, is separated from the engine bay by a full bulkhead. Two big, gas strut-assisted hatches give access, and the flow-coated bilge beneath looks like it will take a real beating. With just the exhaust boxes and the fuel tank sat here, it's free to take all your cruising kit without fear of a shaft grabbing a fender line. The lazarette affords good access up to the deck fittings, and across the transom you have the option of bait wells or simple self-draining lockers.

To make the most of the cockpit area, there are no fixed seats but you do get some fold out benches to each side. They work fine as a place to take a load off but for longer term loafing, we suggest taking up some of that lazarette volume with nice foldaway chairs.





The run of side screens makes way for a light and airy cockpit

You get a ladder instead of moulded steps up to the flybridge but there are good hand holds all the way up. The hatchway is big enough to move through but small enough to wedge your back into, if the boat's in motion. There's no hatch cover – there never is on these boats – so watch your step when you're up top.



A small but compact galley setup

The flybridge layout sets its smooth looking helm aft and general seating forward. With plenty of gaps in the surround of rails, it isn't child friendly but there are grab rails for your passengers as the screen has a solid rail surround. At the helm you get loads of space for all the latest in fish hunting and course plotting, and although the seats look

“ The single-burner hob looks a bit apologetic in such a capable craft ”

basic they are fully adjustable and seem comfortable. One gripe though, is that there is nowhere to put any odds and ends. With the seat backs sensibly left open – so water cannot settle in them – there really is nowhere to put anything down for a moment. A jacket with good pockets is recommended.

Exterior

Great decks: deep wide and well dressed



Accommodation

The wheelhouse entrance is well protected by ample overhang and flanks to the side. As we are long past the point of hoping someone might

come up with a new take on internal layouts, the 1040's interior is exactly what you would expect: a forward master gets the lion share of space; a base finish of cream on cream mouldings and vinyl is only broken up by the odd dollop of well-intentioned cherry wood to doors and shelving. With an overhead hatch and two ports this all adds up to a light, bright cabin, which will benefit from an owner's possessions. The guest quarters to port make the most of the space allocated, with two bunks set in an intricate over and under L-shape. A sky light is another nice touch but the thin liner that encapsulates the cabin gives it a rather clinical aura, and the bottom bunk feels a bit too close to the luggage rack it lies next to.

Back out in the below decks lobby, the boatiness returns as cherry wood makes more of



The forward master is spacious and comfortable, if a bit stark



Over and under L-shape guest bunks make spacial sense



An adequate toilet cubicle

an impression. The toilet/shower compartment seemed of a good size but unusually it was the plumbing that created most interest. Seeing the open end of a green pipe hanging over the bilge we traced it back towards the head, where it attached onto the shower drain. Not a pleasant thought on a summer cruise. A shower sump box would be better we think.

The sparse fit out below decks makes way for wooded detail in the wheelhouse. The carpeted cabin soles change to teak and holly, with a deck head detailed with cherry wood. The one-piece windscreen and run of side screens let light flood in, making for a bright place to spend a day.



Separate engine compartment is easy to access

By the time evening falls the formal, sit up style of the dinette seating may be getting a bit too rigid, but otherwise it works. You could always drop the cherry table down to make up the occasional double and just lie out. The galley on the 1040 is a good size with plenty of locker space and drawers, but the single-burner hob looks a bit apologetic for such a clearly capable craft. We understand that Peters Opal is demanding a better two-burner option from Rodman.

Accommodation

A little cold but spacious. Needs owner's input



Engine options and access

The clean, basic nature of the Rodman's bilge delivers a straightforward, workable engine bay and perfectly suited engine options to put in it. Volvo Penta's gutsy D4 diesels offer 225hp and 260hp power, the extra weight proving less of a problem with a more central shaftdrive installation. Although the raw four-cylinder engine may be more of a problem.

From the cockpit, the engine bay affords room for access around the engines but leaves little space to stand, or place a supporting foot. The only problem with service point access comes with the water separators, which are needlessly set at the front of the bay, and so at the furthest

Engine options & access

Clean, simple and effective



point from the entrance. Insulation and tidy cable runs and conduits keep everything in neat order. Our only real ask is for a step to help you back up to deck level.



Two hatches give access to the bilge lazarette



General lockers can be swapped for bait wells

Performance and handling

Like many of the Rodmans we've tested this one is quick to get up and go, with the 260hp D4s powering the boat to 20 knots in 12 seconds. It's not a sophisticated ride but it punches along in a confident manner, holds a course well and is intent on attacking the waves rather than move over them. As you accelerate on, the ride stiffens noticeably at 3000rpm, and with a top speed of nearly 30 knots you can easily take on the sports cruiser brigade. Don't try to out turn them though, as with plenty going on under the waterline the 1040 doesn't like to come around sharply. But into a head sea it will easily play catch up, finer bow sections giving it the upper hand.

It seems the Rodman craft either really need tabs – as with the 41 – or really don't – as with the 1250. The 1040 is one of the latter. But if you do choose to have them, a nudge of tab will bring the bow down nicely, making helm from the wheelhouse that bit easier. Having said that, the ride isn't particularly nose up, with trim at a quite acceptable +6 or +5. On a moderately windy day there was no real issue with spray coming over the flared bow. Anything that did show is easily swatted away with the auto park wipers.

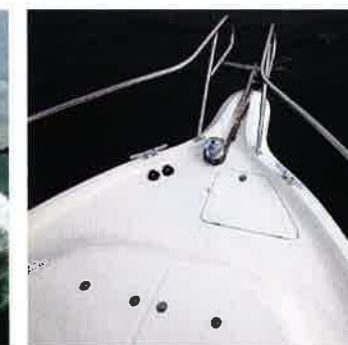
With the four cylinder engines working hard under your feet, noise levels are always going to be fairly intrusive with little change across the cruising range, hovering around 80dB(A). Dropping back to 2600rpm achieves a



A clean console on the flybridge, but nowhere for odds and ends to sit



The 1040 has excellent side decks



Foredeck is protected by a useful wall of bulwark



There's acres of cockpit space to play with, even with the optional side benches raised up

## BOAT REPORT

### RODMAN 1040

respectable 20 knots, and produces a more civilised set of acoustics. Drop back further to 2500rpm, add a bit of tab, and at 17 knots you will maximise your range to over 230 miles.

Up on the flybridge there is plenty of fun to be had, the lack of solid coaming not an issue as you sit safely within the stainless steel frame work or rails. For a fixed bench-style seat, the lower helm is also pretty good.

#### Performance & handling

Plenty of purpose and bluster from this tough cookie



Probably best not to sit out on the cockpit benches, as they rattle like hell and quite a bit of spray finds its way over the coamings. It would be better to fold them away.

#### Specification and value

Take a look at the current spread of prices for boats in this class: 34-foot flybridge, two cabins and close to 30 knots on tap. There are a few out there to choose from but when you add in the quality of build – in areas where it really matters – the net starts to get considerably smaller. We may have critiqued the 1040's slightly bland finish but it's anything but bad, especially when you consider the base price is under £150,000 inc VAT.

The options list is fairly long, and you could spend £10,000 on basics, so it's easy to get carried away. However, to ease some of the pain, Peters Opal has bundled up a great package of options

#### Specification & value

A good basic price helped by a useful options pack



for half the usual price; a 12V microwave, foredeck sun cushions, screen wash, electric toilet, hatch blinds, a cockpit bimini and fold out seating, all priced at around £1710.



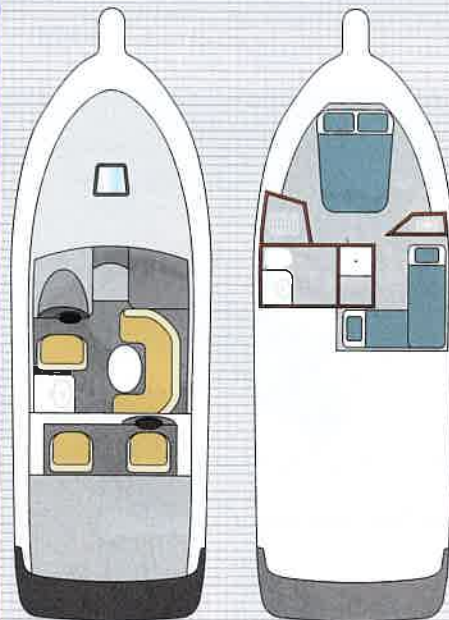
## Verdict

If, like us, you were walking around the Southampton Boat Show last year, looking at fisher cruisers between 30-35ft, the Rodman 1040 must have caught your eye. Despite a few shortcomings in the interior fitout, this is still one of the best-value flybridge cruisers around – and the heavier build and ride quality will really look after you at sea.

7/10



## Rodman 1040 technical data



### specifications

BUILD	GRP
RCD	Category B
LENGTH OVERALL	34ft 2in (10.4m)
HULL LENGTH	31ft 3in (9.8m)
BEAM	11ft 4in (3.5m)
DRAUGHT	3ft 10in (1.2m)
DISPLACEMENT	5.5 tonnes
FUEL CAPACITY	154gal (700lt)
WATER CAPACITY	55gal (250lt)
WIDTH OF SIDEDECKS	12in

### key dimensions

HEADROOM IN SALOON	6ft 3in
HEADROOM IN MASTER CABIN	6ft 3in
MASTER CABIN BERTH	6ft 4in x 4ft 3in

### performance

ENGINES	Volvo Penta D4 diesels 225hp or 260hp					
CONFIGURATION	4cyl 3.7lt 260hp @ 3500rpm					
CONDITIONS	westerly force 3/4, sea state moderate					
LOAD	fuel 50% water 0% crew 2					
Rpm	knots	lph	gph	mpg	range	noise
2500	17.2	44	9	1.9	235	79
2800	19.5	56	12	1.6	200	80
3000	21.5	68	15	1.4	170	82
3200	23.1	81	18	1.2	145	84
3400	26.0	96	21	1.2	145	83
3550	27.4	110	24	1.1	135	83

Range figures quoted above are in miles based on standard fuel tanks and include a 20% margin. GPH & MPG refer to imperial gallons. These figures may vary due to weather conditions, air, water, engine temperature, crew numbers, hull fouling, fuel quality and other issues. Noise readings in dB(A) and were taken in the saloon.



### prices

STANDARD BOAT	inc VAT
with 225hp	£148,000
with 260hp	£151,000
BOW-THRUSTER	£5052
COCKPIT BIMINI	£650
TRIM TABS	£1292
COLOURED HULL	£645
HOLDING TANK	£1984

**BOAT AS TESTED** £161,683

ENQUIRIES Peters Opal Tel: 01273 511381  
www.petersopal.com

### the rivals



#### JEANNEAU PRESTIGE 32

From £144,674  
A fully fledged cruiser, rather than a fisher, the 32 delivers on comfort. However the Prestige still has plenty in common with the sportsfisher fitout. Visit the website for more info. [www.jeanneau.fr](http://www.jeanneau.fr)



#### BÉNÉTEAU ANTARES 1080

From £131,990  
The Antares manages to squeeze in two side-by-side bunks, while the forward cabin is still of a good size and has en suite access. Tel: 01273 675755 [www.beneteau.com](http://www.beneteau.com)



#### ASTINOR

From £125,000  
Arguably a better finished boat, the Astinor piles in plenty of cabinetry and detail to the saloon and two cabins. Great side decks but basic flybridge. Tel: 023 8045 7656 [www.epsmarine.com](http://www.epsmarine.com)