

SPORTS BOAT & RIB MAGAZINE

December 2004 £3.20



NEW **BOAT SHOP**

Over 50 pages of boats for sale

Celebrity columns
Curtis Donohue Priddy



In the Edge

Jason Ellis
Clive Wilsdon
Jodi Fisher

Top 25 Gifts for Christmas



Zapcat Champs
Wet Willy on fire



On Test
Ballistic 6.5
Ranieri 17
Ribeye 650

For and against
The pros and cons of the leisure RIB



TWICE AS BALLISTIC

“And the great thing about our marketing strategy is that you can have any colour so long as it’s grey.” So went the sales blurb. Some might say that Henry Ford has a lot to answer for, but, if you’re a serious RIB owner, you will know that grey really is the only sensible RIB colour. It doesn’t fade, it doesn’t show every footprint, it’s easy to keep clean and it’s totally ageless. If you fit a gun on the front it really looks the part and then people start to take you very seriously. What more can I say?

Words and photographs | **Robert Avis**



Usually this boat test had to be completed over two separate days because of the ballistic weather that caught us out on the first attempt. I think it was the dying remains of Hurricane Baggery or something else cooked up by the Met Office that spoilt our day. Our lovely ladies, who were determined to smile their way through the photo session regardless of how wet they became, only had four sets of clothes with them. Once all four were drenched, what could we do? Boat testing is not always quite as glamorous as many would like to make it out to be.

Our first RIB was a gentle shade of grey with a 175hp Evinrude Ficht two-stroke engine. But in the intervening few days while we waited for ‘Baggery’ to pass through, the first boat was sold. Luckily, nearby Ballistic dealer Kevin Mole

Outboards from Cowes stepped into the breach with his new Ballistic 6.5 which had literally been dragged out of the box the night before. For a range that’s available in any colour so long as it’s grey, it turned out to be rather a turquoise shade. To add to the confusion, Kevin is a Yamaha main dealer so needless to say it had a 150hp four-stroke Yam on the back. With conditions improving we were back on.

First Impressions

They say that all RIBs look the same but the Ballistics do have their own very individual handwriting. The underbelly is a prime example. With its rows of pronounced rails, it ought to cling quite aggressively when under way, so I’m already looking forward to a good bash. The console sits high and wide so the chances of getting

salty wet are pretty slim. The jockey seats will comfortably seat six and there’s still the sunbed forward as well as a seat in front of the console.

The five-section tubes are well protected with a perimeter rubbing strake and, to lift the greyness, flashes of contrast colour add to the designer look. The sunbed area can be changed to a dining area if you really want to impress your friends and bring out the champers and smoked salmon. And by RIB standards, storage abounds. All the seats and the console have plenty of storage nooks and crannies. I guess the only problem is remembering where you put what.

On the water

I’ve already mentioned the individuality of the bottom of the boat. Well just take a close look at our front cover this month and



you'll see what I mean. I've been testing RIBs for a few years now and there have been a tidy few. I've written about deep vees, deadrisers, spray rails, inverse sheerlines, stepped hulls, hard chines, reverse chines and inverse chines but this is the first mention you've had from me about reverse scallop chines. No seriously, 'reverse scallop chines'.

Well the claim is that the strangely shaped spray rails give the boat immense lift and speed and, when combined with a deep vee, produce an exceptional ride plus an unsurpassed ability to carry heavy loads at pace. Well I have to say they might just be right. The speed trials we conducted in the turquoise-grey 6.5 with a four-stroke 150hp Yam on the back bore out those claims. With three hefty blokes together with their kit and Kevin Mole's wallet on

board we were off like a rocket and on the plane within five and a half seconds. We reached a top speed of 42.2 knots with very little effort despite a brand-new and far

**Forget spray rails,
inverse sheerlines, stepped
hulls, hard chines, reverse
chines and inverse chines -
we're talking 'reverse
scallop chines'**

from run-in outboard. This was good stuff.

The hydraulic steering was light and the boat ran straight as if on rails. In tight turns she avoided sideslip with as much confi-

dence as she did slamming and, all in all she put in quite an impressive performance. I've always liked the Evinrude Ficht range since I had one to test for a week a couple of years ago. I was amazed by the frugal fuel consumption and it was a shame that we couldn't compare the two but it was not to be. Our speed tests were conducted with the new Yamaha F150 16-valve engine with its dual overhead camshaft.

The new intake and exhaust system has provided improved combustion efficiency, which is of course the flavour of the month presently, and it has very smooth positive acceleration and economical consumption. The micro-computer controlled electronic fuel injection system analyses and adjusts the fuel/air mixture to ensure that fuel economy is penny-pinching and exhaust emissions are cleaner than ever before.



Summary

When you test RIBs on a regular basis, there sometimes comes a point when it is difficult to find something to say that hasn't been said before, but the reverse scallop chines have changed all that. They were fascinating to look at and they really did seem to do their stuff. The boat was sprightly off the mark and three macho guys, well OK two macho guys and me, didn't seem to make much of an impression on the

In tight turns she avoided sideslip with as much confidence as she did slamming

performance. I don't usually get excited about this sort of thing but if you're in the market for a RIB you could do a lot worse than take a serious look at the new Ballistic range and if you think 6.5 metres isn't enough, why not try the 7.8 metre model. It's bigger, beefier and equally different.

Likes

- Great ride
- Relatively dry
- Loads of seats and storage
- Excellent Yamaha 150hp four-stroke

Dislikes

- The weather on the day of the first test
- Some might feel constrained by the 'any colour so long as it's grey' philosophy but for me that's no problem. If you feel different take the FastCat over to Cowes and see if Kevin can help - it must be the Isle of Wight air that turns grey into turquoise.

Technical specification

POWER

Grey Ballistic 6.5 - Evinrude Ficht 175hp two-stroke outboard

Turquoise grey Ballistic 6.5 - Yamaha F150 150hp four-stroke outboard

Speed tests (using the Yamaha F150 150hp 4-stroke outboard)

Time to plane: 5.45 seconds (with three adults and their kit on board)

ENGINE SPEED	Imperial	Nautical
1,000 rpm	4.6 mph	4.0 knots
2,000 rpm	7.8 mph	6.8 knots
3,000 rpm	23.1 mph	20.1 knots
4,000 rpm	35.2 mph	30.6 knots
5,000 rpm	46.4 mph	40.3 knots
5,200 rpm (max)	48.6 mph	42.2 knots

THE FACTS

Ballistic 6.5	Imperial	Metric
CE Category	'C'	
Length overall	21' 4"	6.50 m
External Beam	8' 6"	2.60 m
Internal beam	4' 11"	1.50 m
Weight without engine	1213 lb	550 kg
Carrying capacity	10 people /	1500kg
Fuel Tank	33 gallons	150 litres

Standard features for the 6.5 JBT TI (Grey)

- Full width console
- 150 litre fuel tank
- Compass
- Clarion CD stereo system
- Seating for six
- Sun bed
- Double 'A' frame
- Navigation lights
- Spotlights
- Deck lights
- Icom VHF
- GPS Chart Plotter

- Multi roller trailer
- Hydraulic steering

Standard features for the Kevin Mole 6.5 (Turquoise-Grey)

- Full width console
- 150 litre fuel tank
- Compass
- Seating for six
- Sun bed
- Double 'A' frame
- Navigation lights
- Spotlights
- Deck lights
- Navman DSC VHF
- Navman GPS/Plotter
- Hydraulic steering

PRICE FROM

£22,950 including VAT

Price with Evinrude Ficht 175hp two-stroke outboard £27,200 including VAT

Price with Yamaha 150hp four-stroke outboard £28,250 including VAT

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