

SCORPION 10M

Few RIBs cost this much, but then few drive as well. Greg Copp reports on the latest incarnation of Scorpion's 10m Sting ...

PHOTOS: GREG COPP

If the big RIB is the boat that scratches your itch, then you will have heard of Scorpion. Arguably the most iconic brand of British RIBs, this company has been building some of the most capable big-sea rigid inflatables for the best part of three decades. The heritage of the 10m Sting stretches back to the 7.5m RIB of the 90s, whose legendary seakeeping set the stage for Scorpion. As they got bigger, not surprisingly they got even better, and were favoured by

THIS IS ONE OF THE UK'S MOST EXPENSIVE 10M RIBS BUILT, BUT ALSO ONE OF THE BEST, BOTH IN HULL DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION.

the hard-core RIB brigade – many of whom set offshore records in them. Since then, the Sting, like most big rigid inflatables, has

undergone the RIB revolution. Sporting super-sleek consoles, comfy shock-mitigating seats, heads compartments and even sunbeds, these boats are no longer the reserve of serious men in drysuits. That said, this craft is still built to deal with harsh conditions, has a CE rating of B for 15 and several endurance race wins to its credit.

Constructed at the Scorpion facility at Lymington in Hampshire, this is still a purely British-built product. The only

change is that all Scorpions are now sold through the Ancasta network, under the direction of Andy Andrews at Port Hamble. The open 10m Sting, with its non-stepped hull, has been with us a while, but the latest incarnation has a few subtle changes over its previous forms: all decking is now EVO (a high-quality synthetic decking) and there are more seating choices and, most importantly, new engine options in the form of twin 350hp V10 Mercury Verados. These naturally



As published in Issue 186
Powerboat & RIB
www.powerboatandrib.com



Click play icon above or scan QR to watch our video on the Scorpion 10m on show at the Southampton Boat Show





YOU JUST NAIL THE THROTTLES, HANG ON AND STEER – CUTTING TIGHT ONE-HANDED TURNS AS THE NEED ARISES.

aspirated 5.7L V10 motors have become a game changer for boats like the Sting. More than capable of handling the relatively modest 316kg (lightest version) weight of each engine, the balance and poise of the boat is unaffected, while the performance gain is significant.

Lifting the aft bench seat gives an accurate impression of the build quality, as the standard of the internal mouldings and system engineering is impressive. There is easy access to the batteries, electrics and hydraulics, and it also houses a large DC-powered

SPECIFICATIONS

- LOA:** 10.45m
- Beam:** 3.05m
- Draught (max.):** 1m
- Transom deadrise angle:** 24 degrees
- Displacement:** 2500kg (dry with twin 350hp V10 Mercury Verados)
- Mercury power options:** Twin 300hp V8 Verados, twin 350hp V10 Verados
- Fuel capacity:** 900L
- RCD category:** B for 15 and C for 20
- Test engines:** Twin 350hp V10 Mercury Verados

PERFORMANCE

- 60.2 knots (2-way average), sea conditions F6 with 80% fuel (700L) and two crew
- 0-40 knots:** 6 seconds

CONTACT

Ancasta Port Hamble
www.ancasta.com

UK PRICE (INC VAT)
As tested: £347,000

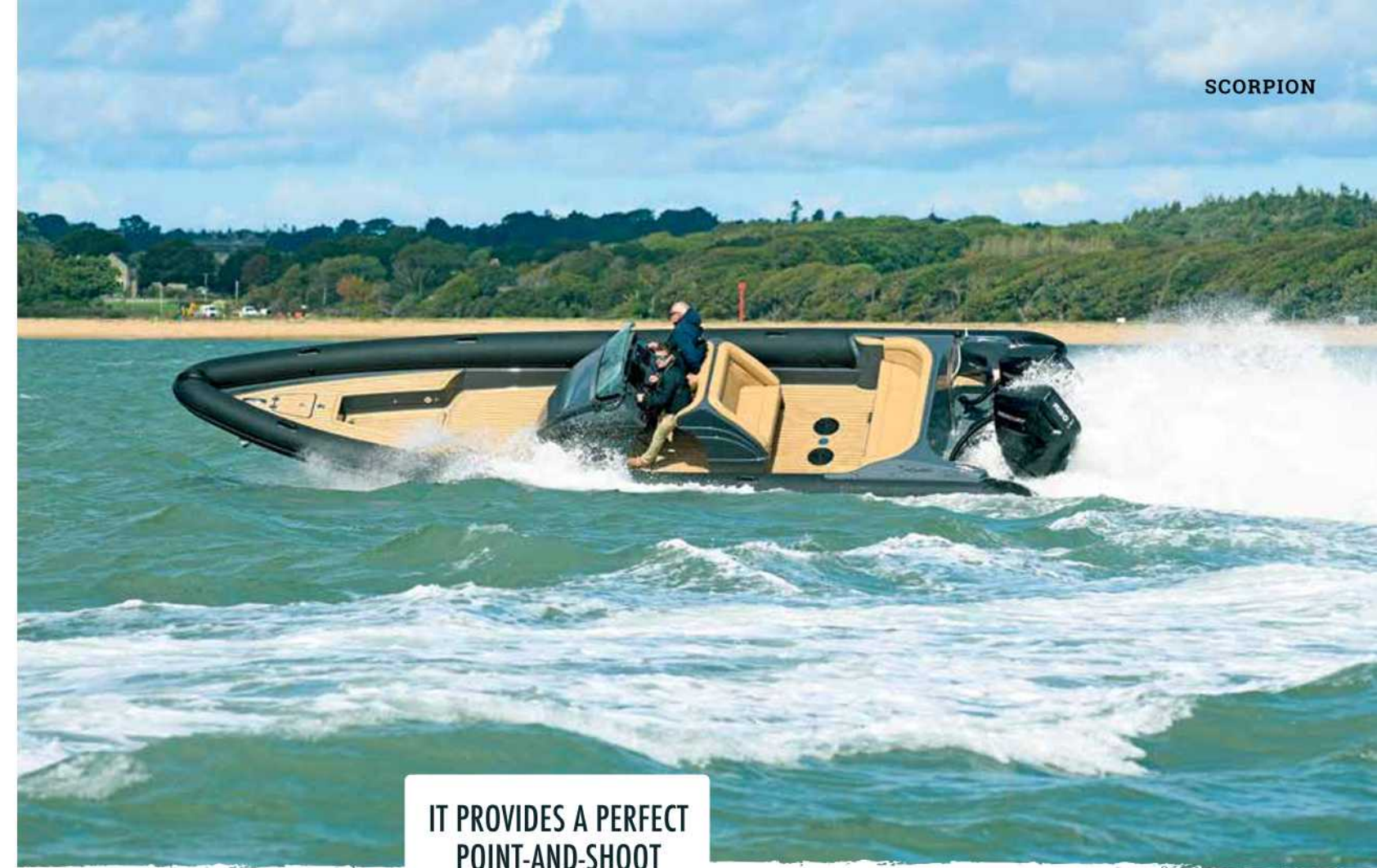


top-opening fridge, while a curved stainless bathing ladder sits to starboard. The ladder can be locked into position on the port quarter, neatly wrapping around the sponson. Alternatively, you can have a conventional ladder on the port bathing platform, and there is a deck/transom shower served by a 100L water tank. The aft bench seat can easily seat three, and it shuts with clinical precision under the control of two sturdy gas struts. Pontoon access is provided on the starboard quarter by a handy EVO-covered step – removing the temptation to tread on the tube. Strangely, this simple and effective feature is not fitted on the port quarter. Sitting on the back of the helm seats is a wide armchair-like seat, which hinges up to reveal the cockpit teak table, as well as plenty of storage. You could sit four comfortably around this table for a spot of lunch. However, with the bespoke nature of Scorpion, you can opt for an alternative rear-seating U-shaped design. This provides more seating and the option of a wide sunbed infill section, and a fridge under each side of the seating.

The forward section of the boat has two under-deck lockers: the first primarily provides access to the toilet pump, while the forepeak locker houses the windlass – controlling the anchor through an aperture in the stem.

- 1: The helm design works well, sitting or standing. 2: The wrap-around seats hold you in place no matter what. 3: Easy storage behind the helm. 4: The big V10s trim clear of the water.

- 5: The heads is a sitting-down affair.



IT PROVIDES A PERFECT POINT-AND-SHOOT DRIVING EXPERIENCE.

There is an infill for the raised forepeak deck section, which can be covered with sunbed mattress sections. The all-important heads compartment sits on the front of the console. Like the aft bench seat, the door lifts up in a precise and controlled manner, held open by a substantial gas strut-supported rotating frame. The toilet is mounted as low as possible, but it is a case of sitting use only. Conveniently, circuit breakers are located on the heads'

aft bulkhead, as is a large access panel should you need to get to the DC systems inside the console.

The helm design works very well either seated or standing. With the electrically powered seat bolsters raised, you get a great driving position – all the better for the wrap-around seat backs keeping you where you need to

be. You can securely lock your feet on the angled footboard when the need arises, and the navigator gets an L-shaped grab handle. The throttles sitting right of the wheel are just at the correct height and distance for your arm, and the short windscreen deflects all windblast over your head. The tachometers are located under your line of sight, but you will likely have the 12in Raymarine Axiom Pro configured to show engine as well as navigation data

– giving you pretty much all you need to know at a glance. I did feel that a larger MFD would not go amiss considering the space available on the console, which is something Scorpion can no doubt supply.

Driving the Sting

I will not hide the fact that I consider Scorpions to be some of the best RIBs built. Construction quality aside, they always drive superbly. This is not the first 10m



- 1: The console keeps all windblast off the helm. 2: Easy access to the toilet plumbing. 3: A powerful windlass. 4: The bathing ladder is nicely crafted.



WE SIMPLY HAMMERED UP TO 60 KNOTS, LETTING THE SYSTEM TAKE CARE OF TRIMMING THE ENGINES.

It provides a perfect point-and-shoot driving experience. You just nail the throttles, hang on and steer – cutting tight one-handed turns as the need arises. You might think that any sports boat in this size category should do this, and to a large degree most do, but I simply can't think of any that do it quite this well. It tracks round as if on rails, even when hitting short, sharp Solent chop beam on. At wide open throttle at any point to the weather, this boat sits rock steady; all you need to concentrate on is not losing your hat. Though it is a 10m deep-vee sports RIB in the true sense of the word, it has a good degree of beam, which coupled with two substantial spray rails that curve right up to the stem means you enjoy a dry ride. This bit of extra girth also helps in terms of hull stability.

As regards passage making, for which this boat is perfectly suited, it has exceptional range for a RIB. One important aspect of the impressive mid-range power delivery of the 5.7L V10s is an efficient sweet spot – in this case, 3200rpm at around 30 knots. If you are of a mind to let the world go by at 30 knots, then the 200-gallon (900L) fuel tank will take you 370 miles with a 20% reserve, and faster cruising at 40

knots will still take you 300 miles with a reserve.

Verdict

This is one of the UK'S most expensive 10m RIBs built, but also one of the best, both in hull design and construction. Like most major RIB builders, Scorpion provide a high degree of customisation, with substantial items like T-tops on the options list, so rarely are two boats the same. Like any high-end sports car, you are paying for the name, but this brand really does drive very well, especially in conditions when you really need it to, and that is something that is hard to put a price on. **PRO**

WHAT WE THOUGHT

FOR

- Great seakeeping and handling
- Perfectly balanced steering
- Very fast
- Good secure helm set-up
- Solid construction
- Deck space
- Behind-the-scenes build quality and engineering
- Fuel efficiency
- 300-mile range with a 20% reserve at 40 knots

AGAINST

- Big price tag



FUEL FIGURES				
RPM	Speed (knots)	LPH	NMPG	
2000	15.5	36.0	2.0	
2500	21.5	42.0	2.3	
3000	27.8	55.0	2.3	
3500	34.7	74.0	2.1	
4000	40.0	93.9	1.9	
4500	45.0	128.0	1.6	
5000	51.1	180.1	1.3	
5800 (WOT)	60.2	230.0	1.2	

Sting I have driven, but it is the first with twin 350hp V10 Mercury Verados. The mid-range power delivery compared to twin 300hp V8 Verados is noticeable. From a standstill, we hit 40 knots in 6 seconds (carrying 500kg of fuel), and this was with 27in-pitch props, which will likely be replaced with 25in propellers. It appeared that our test boat was very slightly overpropped, so the performance figures we recorded will most

1: The table is stored behind the helm seating. 2: The forward deck area can convert to a sunbed.

likely be slightly higher. The pickup is instant with no cavitation, and the Mercury Active Trim system, having been accurately calibrated on commissioning (something that some dealers forget), meant we simply hammered up to 60 knots, letting the system take care of trimming the engines. The boat's composure is spot on, and though it is fitted with Bennett trim tabs, even on a windy day we did not need them. With a hull transom deadrise angle of 24 degrees, the Sting is well and truly in deep-vee territory, so on our choppy day it made light work of the seaway.



1: This is one of the rear seat options. 2: A perfect aft-facing spot for watching skiers. 3: The fridge is located under the aft seat. 4: This starboard-quarter step saves treading on the sponson.