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LIGHTWEIGHT ENGINE

The F-RIB 360 can be used with outboard engines up to a maximum of 20hp, will carry a maximum load of 700kg (1,540lb), or four persons, although, in essence, this is a one, or possibly two-person angling boat.

I was told that she will plane with engines as small as 9.9hp, and that when fitted with a maximum 20hp engine, will achieve speeds in excess of 20 knots. However, for the purpose of my demonstration at Hamble Point Marina, the boat was fitted with a new ePropulsion Spirit 1.0 electric 3hp outboard.

This neat, lightweight engine weighs just 10.4kg-22.9lb, and the incredibly quiet outboard features a floating battery, which, when fully charged, will provide up to one hour’s running time at full speed, but in practice, at varying speeds, usually lasts three to five hours.

Maximum speed with this little engine was in the region of fast walking pace, perfect if you fish inland waterways, though I suspect most saltwater anglers would prefer a larger four-stroke outboard capable of making sufficient headway against a pushing tide.

Conditions outside of the Hamble were rough, courtesy of a 30mph south-westerly gale. If pushed, and fitted with a more suitable outboard engine, I am sure this superb little RIB would have safely transported us across Southampton Water to Calshot. Suffice to say, I was hugely impressed with what I witnessed and experienced within the sheltered Hamble.

I feel that the Foldable RIB range of boats really is the answer to a lot of anglers’ problems, notably stowage, transportation, ease of launch and recovery, a safe and practical fishing platform for inshore waters and, perhaps most of all, cost.

The F-RIB 360 retails at £2,795. Even with the addition of a couple of extras such as those mentioned, this really is a very affordable and amazing little boat.

All boats are supplied with a pair of oars, two thwarts, an air pump and stowage bag. The F-RIB range come with a three-year warranty covering normal, recreational use. ■

SALES POINT

- For more information on the F-RIB 360 and others models within the range, contact Steve Bruce, tel: 02380 988782.
- Email: frib@foldablerib.com
- Web: www.foldablerib.com



1 When packed in its carrying bag, the F-RIB 360 weighs just 48kg, just over 105lb



2 Once unpacked, you find the rigid GRP v-hull is in three parts, with inflatable sponsons



3 One person can slot the three parts of the rigid hull neatly and perfectly together



4 Two stainless steel bolts are used to make sure the hull is completely secure



5 A pair of lightweight oars lock securely in place on the top of the sponsons



6 Prior to inflation of the high-density PVC sponsons, the thwarts are slid into place