

RIBEYE PLAYTIME 550 LOA 5.50M ■ PRICE AS TESTED £25,068 ■ TOP SPEED 35.5 KNOTS



If there was one RIB on this test that could be described as a driver's boat then this is it. The Ribeye, which sits right in the middle of our starter RIB size parameters but at the top of the



Great grab handles on the forward seat

price list, rode the water as if she was on rails and offered an excellent driving position that made us feel like we were part of the boat.

This confidence on the water came from its forward-mounted console, which pushes the centre of gravity forward and the hull down. This boat features our preferred layout of twin jockeys and a bench seat aft. The jockeys give you the security to throw the Ribeye around at speed, and stainless steel handles on their backs allow crew aft to cruise standing up,

By having the console so far forward, you pay in terms of useable foredeck space, but are given decent lounging room if sitting on the rear bench seat. These three seats sit hard against the tubes, giving the crew protection in turns. The helm console is perhaps the boat's one failing, being small with a screen that offers little in the way of protection. It's also tricky to see the gauges when standing at the helm.

The forward console seat benefits from two good grab handles, and sits on top of a good-sized locker.

The perfect driver's RIB, the nippy Ribeye 550 Playtime does exactly what it says on the tin

Since the seating is so good, the need for handles on the tubes isn't so important, which is fortunate as this boat has so few of them. Just two rubber grabs run down each side of the boat. The rope grab handles on the outside should make it easier to get back on the boat from the water, however.

For such a good driving boat, the RIB lacks the vibrant looks of some of the others, but appearance isn't the issue here, ability is, and both veterans and new boaters alike will find the Ribeye fits their needs perfectly.



Twin jockeys at the helm are a winner

LOMAC 600IN LOA 5.95M ■ PRICE AS TESTED £23,513 ■ TOP SPEED 36.1 KNOTS



This boat, a snip under 6m long, is clearly designed for Med use, and perhaps didn't find its most favoured conditions when MBM took it out into



Anyone for a picnic? Not on our test day

a very choppy Solent. The angular Lomac offers ample space for lounging but comes across as more landing craft than luxury starter RIB, with its vast foredeck and flat bow.

For the price, we expected a better ride, and were disappointed when pushing the RIB to its top speed of 36 knots. In fact, in the conditions we found, it took three attempts to get the RIB to maximum revs as it pitched uncomfortably at high speeds. In tight

turns, the Lomac failed to bite, but it felt fairly forgiving at low speeds when running into a head sea.

The lack of stability at high speeds wasn't helped by the RIB's unprotected driving position. Despite the close distance between leaning post and helm we felt vulnerable in the chop, largely due to a lack of side support on the seat and the low tubes. The rear bench seat suffers from the same problem. However, it should

be noted that different seating setups are available on request.

This RIB does benefit from rope grab handles that run the length of the tubes, and might make for an ideal big boat tender with all that flat surface area. If you want a boat for easy cruising and need lots of storage, then this boat would suit, as long as you're a fair-weather boater and don't like challenging conditions.

The Lomac 600IN benefits from plenty of storage, seating and flat surfaces for lounging



Great flat surface on the console