



Boat Test Report

Series 452

Total Sea Magazine

BOAT TEST:

ORKNEY 452

TSF got behind the wheel of the Orkney 452, a small cuddy boat that offers the inshore boat angler a good degree of shelter in a compact package.

The range on offer at Orkney Boats offers something for everyone, from the company's diminutive 13ft Spinner right through to the offshore capability of the brand-new Orkney 27 wheelhouse. Adding to its already comprehensive selection, it recently introduced the Series 2 range, of which this 452 is the first that TSF has tested. It's a traditionally styled boat in keeping with the original

Orkney concept of simulated clinker hulls with a full-length keel that gives the boat a strong centreline and safe beaching ability for those who have to launch from a shingle beach, such as at Hastings.

The 14ft 10in 452 is a handy size for anyone needing a compact boat that they can keep at home but still tow anywhere in the country, or abroad, as it's light enough to be towed behind a standard family car without the need for a heavy, braked trailer. For

SPECIFICATIONS

LENGTH	14FT 10IN/4.52M
BEAM	6FT/1.83M
DRY WEIGHT	805LB/365KG
MAX HP	30HP
MAX PERSONS	5
CE CATEGORY	C

The Orkney 452 is a traditional-looking boat with plenty of cockpit and a small cuddy for shelter.

PRICING

As tested with the Yamaha F30 outboard: £14,995, inclusive of VAT
Boat only: £7,992

storing in a club dinghy park, a lightweight launching trolley is all you would need.

The Orkney comes with a long pedigree, the company having built boats of this type for more than 40 years. Some of those original 1974 boats are still in service, providing a clue as to how well built the Orkney boats are, and they're still hand-laid by experienced laminators. The construction is very rigid, with a main keel hog backed by a system of stringers and bulkheads below the bonded deck, while the voids are filled with foam to prevent moisture through condensation from collecting. The foam provides in-built buoyancy and makes the boat quieter, both for the occupants but also so that less sound

is transmitted through the boat to the water from people moving around.

The 452 is a great family boat with 26 inches of internal freeboard to make it a safe environment for taking the children out and introducing them to the delights of fishing. For stowage there are various lockers within the seating arrangements, with the fuel tank and battery housed in the aft seatboxes with their hinged lids. There's some room in these areas for other gear, too. The helm seatboxes have plenty of room in them and the seats have proper bottoms, so things stay dry inside.

Unusually there isn't any stowage under the cuddy seating, but there is a forepeak as well as the open anchor >



The cuddy is easily big enough for two anglers. The seatboxes form the stowage facilities.



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well on the bow, where your anchor, chain and warp can remain without bringing mud and weed into the boat every time you weigh anchor. Working the ropes is done through the opening hatch window, which provides enough room to get your head and shoulders through and puts the bow in easy reach.

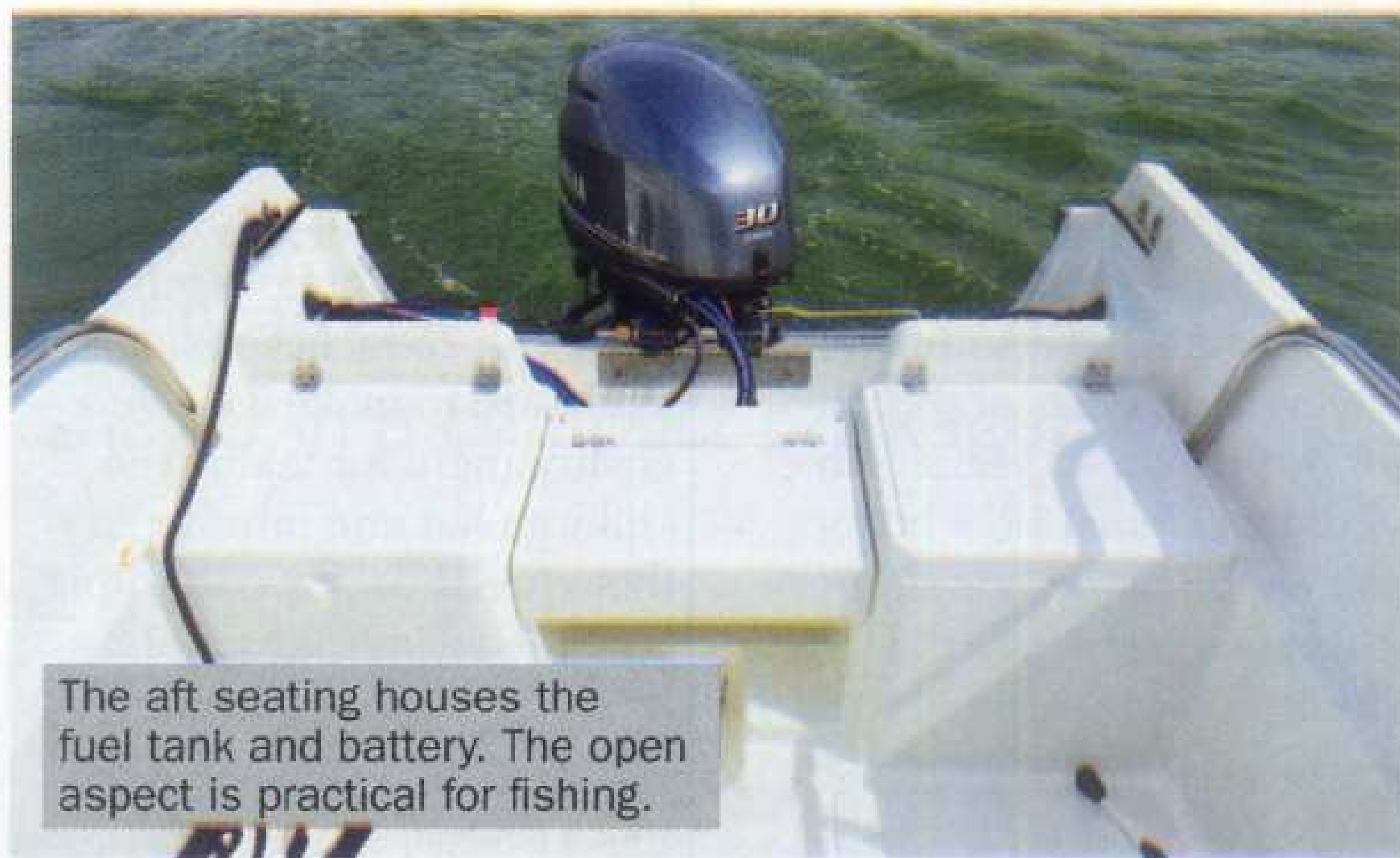
The console is bonded to the side of the boat and the seat moulding in the cuddy. The fascia is plenty large enough to flush-mount fishing electronics, the Yamaha gauges and the switch gear. Some stowage is available within the console itself through a watertight door in the side. Within such a confined space compromises have to be expected, but the design has even allowed space for an optional Porta Potti. If that option isn't taken up then the space can be utilised for a stowage box or somewhere to put spare fuel or your tackle bag.

The 452 has big-boat features on a small-boat scale. The cuddy provides shelter for two with sitting height and legroom, although the helm is a bit cramped with the solid back to the console preventing any leg stretch. The wheelhouse does a good job of protecting the occupants while they're seated and provides

greater wave-punching ability by shedding water. There's still plenty of cockpit to fish from, though, even though the boat is only 15 feet in length.

The cuddy is kept small enough to not overwhelm the whole boat, while there's plenty of room to fish, either from the stern seats or from the seatboxes under the canopy, and is fine for two anglers, but three would be a squeeze unless you were very organised. Extra rails along the sides give support but also provide somewhere to prop rods or clamp rod rests.

The stability and sea keeping from the traditionally shaped hull, which provides a blend of displacement and planing attributes, combines the best of both worlds, albeit with some trade-offs. The rounded chines allow the boat to ride beam waves without the fast slap of a hard chine hull. As with many semi-displacement hulls, there's a tendency for stern squat, which lifts the bow and presents more of the bottom to the sea; this is something that can make for a hard ride because more of the hull is presented to the sea rather than the bow. At a more modest speed the boat maintains a level trim and the ride comfort is increased, even if the speed isn't.



The aft seating houses the fuel tank and battery. The open aspect is practical for fishing.



The anchor well is left open and drains overboard. Sturdy fittings are a sign of a well-found boat.

With the throttle pushed all the way forward we managed a very respectable 17.8 knots with the Yamaha F30 not reaching full revs due to an oversized propeller being fitted. But this is what sea trials are all about and with this boat having only just been rigged, the prop was a trial size; with a prop fitted of the next size down

she will top 20 knots easily. Despite the big prop, the 452 accelerated cleanly from a standstill and only started to bog down as the hull squatted at higher speed. For normal boating, where maximum revs are rarely used, this will hardly be noticed, but the sea-keeping and stability qualities of the boat will be used every trip. **Sea**

The 452, when fitted with a 30hp motor, is fast enough to get you out among the fish.



The helm position is sheltered by the cuddy and is simple but adequate. The seatbox could do with a cushion, which is an option, or you could just use an inner tube!



*BUILT IN BRITAIN
SINCE 1973*

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