



Classic Orkney

The Fastliner 19 maintains the traditions of this established boat-building company



BASED ON THE FACT THAT many Orkney boats, and especially sea angling classics such as the original Fastliner 19, are used day in day out by commercial fishermen, it is testimony to the excellent sea-keeping, build quality and structural integrity of the Sussex company's products.

As is always the case with any Orkney boat, a quick glance is all that is needed to confirm the incredible attention and effort that goes into ensuring that each of its boats is perfectly finished before it leaves the factory in Arundel. You will not find a more impressively turned out boat anywhere.

Renowned for its long-standing principles of producing a robust, seaworthy design with uncompromised sea-keeping skills, Orkney describes the latest Fastliner 19 as being an ideal harbour launch for the family, but equally as comfortable running offshore in more challenging conditions. The company states that the boat's easily-driven hull "ensures excellent performance and economy with modest-sized outboard engines".

Its marketing information suggests this latest addition to the Orkney range "will be a first choice for keen fisherman and cruisers alike, who will benefit from the spacious open plan self-draining cockpit and the option of either tiller or remote steered engines."

Like the smaller Longliner 16, this model is easily customised with a wide choice of seating

configurations tailored to your requirements. It is available with either a fixed GRP cuddy for protection from the elements or an easily foldable spray dodger for more occasional use and protection from the occasional shower or when running offshore.

Having recently had the opportunity for a ride aboard a cuddy version of the new Orkney Fastliner 19, I agree with all the claims.

TAKE THE TOUR

Stepping aboard, I noticed the large amount of deck space, an essential feature for any angling boat. With a 7ft 5in (2.26m) beam and overall length of 19ft 5in (5.92m), the amount of deck space really has been maximised with gunnels that fall vertically to the main deck. With 28 inches of inboard freeboard as standard, ▶

Putting the boat through her paces



stainless steel gunnel rails have been added to even further enhance onboard safety. The deck has Orkney's signature hardwearing, non-slip finish, and there is built-in buoyancy incorporated between forward and aft seating.

A choice of hull colour options are offered and, of course, like all Orkney boats, you get that lovely traditional clinker finish that really does add a touch of tradition and character.

Available with a number of optional layout configurations, including tiller or remote steering, along with several different seating modules, the Fastliner 19 layout can be tailored to meet your exact requirements.

The cuddy version features a large, top-hinged access hatch at the forward end, which is plenty big enough to comfortably manage the anchor from within the security of the cuddy. Key features include a spacious sunken foredeck within which the anchor, chain and warp can be temporarily stowed. A large locker within the bow provides secure stowage, while excellent forward visibility is afforded through large windows, which are cut oversize and bolted outboard for maximum strength.

The steering console is located to starboard, and will take a typical multifunction display unit. Two GRP moulded pods with seats on top are provided for the helmsman and crew, and these incorporate useful dry locker stowage space. Additional seating is provided within each quarter, where, once again, safety has been enhanced with the inclusion of stainless rails.

An open space beneath the transom seat incorporates a standard five-gallon fuel tank plus battery. The transom is wide enough to install an auxiliary engine alongside the main power unit, and I was pleased to note that the boat I reviewed was fitted with a boarding ladder.

The hand-laminated hull includes woven reinforcement areas, and is stiffened below the waterline by a GRP girder system, with the hull

and deck being bonded together, resulting in a high strength-to-weight ratio structure. All necessary deck hardware is fitted as standard, including a manual bilge pump, and tough PVC fendering strip outboard complete with fitted stainless steel end caps, to help protect that beautiful hull.

ON THE WATER

Sea conditions within Poole Harbour, where I tried out this boat, were fairly good, with a slight wind pushing against the tide combining to create a gentle chop.

During the brief time I spent aboard the Fastliner 19, I pushed her hard through all of the usual twists and turns, while trying to assess her handling qualities. In the few areas where we did encounter more testing sea conditions, I found that, driven sensibly, she provided a smooth, slam-free ride. Thrown into the highest of turns at speed, she responded beautifully without any hint of cavitation or throwing any spray aboard.

Speeds of up to 26 knots have been recorded with outboard engines up to the maximum of 80hp; 23 knots with a 60hp engine and 12 knots have been achieved with just a 30hp engine. The hull displaces 1,500lb (670kg) and has been classified as conforming to CE Category C. ■



INFORMATION

■ Starting price for an Orkney Fastliner 19 Cuddy package, as tested, fitted with the Mercury 60hp EFI, is £23,405 including VAT. For more information on boats manufactured by Orkney, tel: 01243 551456. Web: www.orkney-boats.com Email: sales@orkneyboats.co.uk

Top: The transom is wide enough for the main power unit and an auxiliary engine

Middle: Visibility is excellent from the helm seating position

Bottom: Shaken... but not stirred