

MBY NEWS **QUICK SPIN**



## C-Boat

James-Bond looks, starting pace and one of the lightest carbon-fibre hulls on the market. We threw the 45-knot C-Boat around the Thames to see what it was really made of. **Text:** Rob Peake **Photos:** Lester McCarthy

There are many ways to get around London. You can drive and expect to get stuck in the Embankment if you know how long. You can take the tube, with the same fate. You can take the Tube, but you wouldn't want to do that... Or you can jump in a carbon fibre sportsboat with 402hp in the back and get from Chelsea to Tower Bridge in less than ten minutes. Zooming down the River Thames at 40 knots in the middle of rush hour, the new C-Boat turned the heads of so many just-as-tired-based commuters I wondered if the smug look on my face was going to get me into trouble.

But then, the C-Boat is that kind of craft. It lets you slip from the crowd, whether it's on the

Thames or off the coast of the South of France. It is a status symbol, and quite a rare one at that. Step on board and the half-a-million Euro price tag begins to make sense. The hull is full carbon fibre, with a look foredeck carrying a lovely swoop down towards the nose. The fit out is immaculate, with maroon-coloured hand-stitched English leather on all the handrails and ergonomic prep-top seats. There are also special flat fenders, which click on and slide under the bulwark rails when not in use. Down below in theuddy cabin, boasting a small double berth and galley, there is that essential of all the finest motor yachts nowadays – the carbon fibre too. The sink and cabin door are also carbon fibre, as is the flagstaff

outside. It is the kind of touch that makes good pub chat, but it does not feel absurd or out of place on the boat. Quite the contrary, it feels and looks fantastic. The layout from bow to stern is so manoeuvrably uncomplicated that it has an aura of classy minimalism that only the most beautifully finished designs can get away with. I can't help wondering to myself why more boats aren't built like this. However, the C-Boat is far more than just a good looking. Turn the ignition on the wonderfully simple dashboard and the bubble from the twin Steyer diesels, running through jet-drives, is barely audible. Out in the river, pushing forward the throttles, we are up to 40 knots and 4,000rpm within seconds. The

acceleration is lightning quick, with the benefit of all that lightweight carbon fibre making itself felt. The team behind C-Boat are pleased by a growing number of comparisons to Riva runabouts, but they say Rivas are significantly heavier. The other comparison, of course, is to a Wally, but perhaps the C-Boat has a more practical, seam-free edge to it. Putting the boat into a full lock turn at 40 knots, the spray on the water from the hull is phenomenal. I still feel a holler of exhilaration as we career round in tight, 360 turns at 3,000rpm barely slowing at all as London flashes around us in a blur. And despite the blistering performance, the C-Boat has a remarkable range – up to 800 miles all more than 20 knots.



A C-Boat through the capital – the only way to travel.



Waterjets power the C-Boat to 40 knots.

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*Pushing forward the throttles we're up to 40 knots in a flash. I throw in a full-lock turn and stifle a holler of exhilaration as we career round 360° at 3,000rpm, barely slowing at all.*



Simple boat controls: the punchy twin Steyers.



Hand-stitched leather seats and steering wheel.

A substantial 580-litre fuel capacity and a wide range of engines and drive options let you configure the boat as you want it. So who is behind this extraordinary machine? Surprisingly, the man with the initial concept is Jason Cunningham, one of the world's leading professional sailors. Jason's CV boasts many top race campaigns, including the prestigious Volvo Ocean Race. His is not, though, coming at the motor boat world cool. His father used to race in Class 1 and Jason was brought up on powerboats from the family home in Lymington. Jason recruited another Lymington name, Humphreys Yacht Design, to design the C-Boat. To this thoroughbred boating heritage is added a layer of urban club culture, through interior design guru Jonathan Guyer-Smith. Jonathan is best known for designing several big-name nightspots in London. It's a heady combination of personalities and skills, and one that is ideally suited to take on the glitzy world of leisure boating.

The C-Boat team have made only one model so far, but have interest at last year's Monaco Yacht Show and other Moby shows, since they have convinced them that low-volume customised production is viable. If it were me, I'd take the prototype. But not on the Thames, in Monte Carlo. **Contact:** C-Boat. Email: info@c-boat.co.uk Website: www.c-boat.co.uk

**AT A GLANCE:**  
LOA 32ft 6in (9.30m) | Beam 8ft 11in (2.70m)  
Displacement 1.2 tonnes | Engines Twin Steyer 402hp | 230hp drive with Axiom propellers | Top speed 45 knots | Fuel capacity 580 litres | Range 500 miles  
Price as tested £300,000 ex tax



White leather and carbon detailing make the most of the smalluddy cabin.