

• Humber 8.5 Ocean Pro

Our resident RIB man Paul Mahy dons his dancing shoes for a fling with the North of England's finest, the Humber 8.5m Ocean Pro.

Humber have been around since the informative days of RIB manufacture and boast that they have built over 8000 craft to date. Humber originally started with craft designed for divers and moved on to the leisure and commercial worlds. They have an extensive client list, ranging from military and enforcement to survey and exploration vessels, working in climates that are challenging to nature, let alone a RIB.

Back in 1985, in a Humber Attaque 5.3, an Irishman called Enda O'Coineen successfully crossed the Atlantic single handed using sail and a 55hp Suzuki outboard, surviving the tail end of hurricane Hannah along the way. Enda started his

journey on July 17 and arrived in the UK on August 21, another feather in Humber's cap.

Showtime

Their latest models are two 8.5 metre Ocean Pro Offshore RIBs, one powered by twin 225hp Digital Mercury Optimax, the other a 250hp Mercruiser D-tronic turbo diesel.

These two craft were on the water at the recent RIBEX show. The outboard model looked particularly fresh with the bright blue tubes setting off the crisp white of the hull.

The interior is striking as Humber have designed their own seating. This is a cross between a straddle jockey and a bucket seat, which grips the butt and supports the back

Rhumba on the Humber



Specs • 8.5 diesel

	Imperial	Metric
Length	27'8"	8.5m
Internal length	22'6"	6.9m
Beam	9'21"	2.9m
Internal beam	5'7"	1.75m
Tube size	1'7"	0.53m
Weight	4409 lbs	2000kg
Engine	Mercruiser D4.2L 250hp Turbo Diesel	
Fuel capacity	400L	
Price as tested	£34,986 inc. VAT	



Engineering feat...moster power in the Mercruiser D4.2L 250hp turbo diesel.

nically by scalloping the seat slightly. It also changes the lines, which, combined with the upholstery, make her very look very tidy. The console is the dual cruise version with a screen and front grab rail. The throttles are mounted to the right of the driver and essential instrumentation at the top of the module. Storage on this craft is to be found in a forward locker mounted in a step in the bow, in the console and under the seats. There is also a deck locker on this model, however, it is an optional extra.

Diesel Power

Treadmaster matting offers good non-slip surfaces, which will obviously not always be dry thanks to our wonderful British summers. Should any water find its way aboard, an elephant bailer in the transom will take care of any necessary scuppering.

The diesel RIB was almost identical to her petrol powered sister, but has a single A frame, yellow upholstery, a bit more nav' gear and no locker in the deck. The diesel engine, although extending 1.4 metres inwards, still affords walking room either side of the cover, both for access to warps etc' and for the all important drainage.

“My favourite was the diesel, possibly because of the extra weight and economy...”

Space Man

With the central aft space taken up by engine there are two bailers port and starboard. A high interior deck on these craft makes maximum use of the internal space and thanks to a generous beam there is plenty of room to walk around inside them. Both craft have D-section fendering along the vulnerable tube areas, as well as a double vertical section to protect the nose. Safety lines are positioned along the straight sections.

These RIBs drive well, the outboard version more lively than the diesel naturally but both were nimble and gripped well. My favourite was the diesel possibly because of the extra weight and economy, but the outboard version was an exciting drive. Both craft get up out of the hole well, the outboard rig seeming almost instant. Being equipped with twin ram hydraulic steering makes light work of the handling of these craft and they possess an encouraging balance between heel and speed when turning.

Downside dealt with

During the test I did express a couple of points of criticism about the RIBs. But, I'd only confirmed what Humber already new and had planned to change. The first was the

Humber 8.5 Ocean Pro •



Seek and you shall find.
Places to store your stuff.



Simple, but comfortable helm position.



Hull Design

The hull is multi-chined. This is not only to achieve a quick planing attitude, but also to resist sitting down when carrying a full load through a large sea. I am also informed that these are an exceptionally dry

craft, but I cannot confirm or deny this as the weather was more suited to a day in the Med' than the Solent on our test day.

With high build quality and in house production, Humber are extremely proud of their achievements. These are well turned out craft with a lot of experience behind them relating to all aspects of the RIB world. So if you fancy a look at these or any other of Humber's products, give them a call and they will be only too happy to help. **SB**

“These are well turned out craft with a lot of experience behind them...”

Specs • 8.5 outboard

	Imperial	Metric
Length	27'8"	8.5m
Internal length	22'6"	6.9m
Beam	9'21"	2.9m
Internal beam	5'7"	1.75m
Tube size	1'7"	0.53m
Weight	3858 lbs	1750kg
Engine	2 x 225 XL Mercury Optimax	
Fuel capacity	400L	
Price as tested	£37,994 inc. VAT	

and achieved impressive results. On completion of the event Humber redesigned the driver and navigator positions.

Raising the seating positions has nipped the visibility problems in the bud, while with a re-shuffle of the screen and rail Humber assure me that there is no longer a danger.



Twins!! A pair most anyone would be proud to have.

► windscreen and surrounding steel rail. Seated or standing, I felt that if either craft twitched or bucked sharply, I'd receive the full impact of the afore mentioned. In addition to which, both the craft have a very high sheer to the bow and I found that my vision was hindered.

Like I said, Humber were already aware of this and right after their exhibiting at RIBEX, the diesel 8.5 was altered and took part in the Round-Scotland cruise, which was a great trial for her. She is reported to have handled well

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