

PREDATOR 660



LIKES

- Loads of storage and cubby holes
- Substantial construction
- Classy looks
- Large sunbed

DISLIKES

- Helm perch
- Configuration of nav lights
- Noisy engine

SPEED TESTS		
Mercury 150hp Optimax Outboard Sea State: 0.0-1.5 metres From forward gear engaged to planing: 4.53 secs (with two adults on board)		
ENGINE SPEED	IMPERIAL	NAUTICAL
1,000 rpm	4.5 mph	3.9 knots
2,000 rpm	7.5 mph	6.5 knots
3,000 rpm	17.7 mph	15.4 knots
4,000 rpm	32.8 mph	28.5 knots
5,000 rpm	43.3 mph	37.6 knots
5,200 rpm (max)	46.3 mph	40.2 knots

These speeds were taken using a Garmin 12 channel GPS measuring two (or more) equal and opposite runs

MERCURY 150hp OPTIMAX SPECIFICATIONS:

HP @ prop:	150
KW @ prop:	110
Max RPM:	5250-5750
Cylinder/Configuration:	V-6 (60° V)
Displacement (CID/cc):	153/2507
Bore & Stroke (in):	3.50 x 2.65
Bore & Stroke (mm):	89 x 67
Cooling System:	Water-cooled w/ thermostat & pressure controlled
Ignition System:	PCM 038
Starting:	Electric
Gear Ratio:	1.87:1
Gear Shift:	F-N-R
Steering:	Remote
Alternator Amp:	60 (belt-driven)
Alternator Watt:	756 (belt-driven)
Trim System:	Power trim
Exhaust System:	Through prop
Lubrication System:	Electronic multipoint oil injection
Recommended Oil:	Mercury OptiMax/DFI Engine Oil
Fuel Induction System:	2-stage direct fuel injection
Shaft Length (inches):	20/25
Shaft Length (mm):	508/635
Dry Weight (lbs.):	431
Dry Weight (kg.):	195
Warning System:	Overheat, low oil level
SmartCraft:	Yes
CARB Star Rating:	2

Robert Avis tests the Predator 660 - a no frills RIB with more frills than many of its competitors!

First Impressions

There is no doubt that when the Italians make a RIB, they nearly always manage to include that secret ingredient of a little extra sexiness! Italboats' Predators introduced to the UK as more of a standard, than luxury range, have done it again. This 6.6 metre Predator, a great size for most people, although being aimed at the 'no frills' part of the market, has still managed to include a list of interesting and useful features that you'd be unlikely to find in a 'no frills' British RIB.



Layout

Like other models in the range, this boat starts with a square bow with a hard anchor chain roller, not my personal preference, but useful for those who anchor on a regular basis. The tubes are big and bold with heavy fendering, grab handles and a splash guards down the forward half. The white tubes are reinforced with grey patches around the boarding area and there are three conventional chromed cleats in the bow and two quarters. The bow has a covered anchor locker and aft of it a huge mattress spreads across the whole boat. Under are two cavernous storage lockers which should remain dryish unless you take a serious stuffing. I cannot imagine them ever being full. The ultimate challenge for the 'other half'! The helm console is tall and narrow with a small settle set into its front face. The tinted screen is effective for spray coming from ahead but its narrowness is not very efficient in cross-wind conditions. The helm position is well appointed with a range of Navman equipment including a plotter, fish finder and VHF radio. They have even included a Sony fm radio with waterproof control panel. So much for a 'no-frills' boat! The helmsman is given a perch to lean against and whilst this may be fine in good conditions, I'd prefer something I could get a grip on in case of one of those 'British' days that seem so much to be becoming the norm. There's more storage in the back of the console and under the perch. Across the stern is a full width bench seat which again has plenty of storage space. There's a single column 'A' frame and the nav lights on the test model need re-locating as the all-round white is on a short stalk on the port quarter and below the level of the side lights which could get



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confusing to the professionals! I suspect that by the time you read this, it will have been sorted!

Sea keeping, handling and performance

The boats we've recently been testing have nearly all been state of the art two strokes and desperately quiet four strokes that you have to check the odometer to check if it's still running, and therefore it made a change to try a boat again with a Mercury Optimax. The maximum power rating on this boat is 198 hp which does seem a strange figure to come up with, but there it is. Our test model had a two-stroke Optimax 150 hp which proved more than up to the task.

At slow speed (2000 rpm) the engine was very lumpy but settled down as the revs were increased and it roared that two-stroke roar that I haven't heard in a while, as it accelerated up to 5,200 rpm at which stage the increasing sea state started to make it a bit flighty. I suspect we could have squeezed a little more but my natural instinct for self-preservation clicked in, and in any case more than 40 knots in a boat of this size and type



in these conditions is very creditable. The ride was comfortable as you might expect with a 22° deadrise and, from a standing start, it was planing in less than five seconds which is equally satisfactory. Having got used to super silent four strokes, this Optimax seemed somewhat throaty but I guess that's still what loads of ribsters crave.

Value for money

I started this report by indicating that this boat was from Stingher's 'no frills' range but as you can see and have read, this boat's got loads of frills and too many to detail here. Its price sits very fairly in the market place and in fact offers lots of boat for not much more than 'no frills' money.

Summary

The Italians are very good at turning 'yet another RIB' into something that little bit special and this Predator deserves a closer look if you're considering the 6-7 metre market. It would serve well as a working boat in addition to being ideal for the family.

Robert Avis

PREDATOR 660 SPECIFICATION

TECHNICAL DATA	IMPERIAL	METRIC
Length overall	21' 8"	6.60m
Internal Length	19' 7"	5.98m
Beam	8' 10"	2.69m
Internal Beam	4' 9"	1.45m
Weight	1323lbs	600kg
Carrying capacity	12 people	1100kg
Fuel	55 gallons	250 litres
CE Category	'B'	
Maximum approved power	198hp	
Sponson material	Hypalon	
Sponson diameter	Tapered from 50cm to 60cm	
Chambers	5	
Transom deadrise	22°	

FEATURES

Hand laid deep vee hull	Moulded engine well with diving platform
Centre console with S/Steel steering wheel, screen, handrails, and double console seat with storage	No feedback steering
Raised bow sundeck with cushions	Moulded handles on tubes
Lockable deep under-deck storage	Front Anchor locker
3/4 Seater stern seat with storage	Moulded VTR Anchor Guide
Double helm seat with storage and moulded lifebelt carrier	Navigation lights
	Finest stainless steel fittings
	8 Storage compartments and lockers

OPTIONS AS FITTED

Mercury 150 HP XL Optimax Engine with Smart Craft	Navman Fish 4350
250 litre Stainless Steel Fuel Tank	Navman VHF 7100 DSC with Smartcraft connection
Stainless steel 'A' Frame	Steering Compas
Navman Tracker 5500i with internal antenna	

PRICES (INCLUDING VAT)

Price (as tested)	£23,400 incl. VAT	With Mercury 150 hp Optimax two-stroke
Price (from)	£15,257 incl. VAT	Without engine

FINANCE OPTION

Finance example supplied by the Bank of Scotland
Cash Price: £23,400
Deposit (say 20%): £4,680

Number of monthly payments (e.g. 5 years is equivalent to 60 months) 60
Amount to be borrowed: £18,720 (Marine Loan)
8.5% APR typical

Monthly Payment: £379.57
Subject to offer and acceptance

Bank of Scotland Marine Finance
T: 02380 333 467 www.bankofscotland.com/marine/

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