

PARKER 1000 BALTIC

Built for the pro-market and valued by serious offshore cruisers... **Words: Paul Lemmer**



PARKER 1000 BALTIC: Price (INC VAT) £70 - 150,000 **AS TESTED:** £100,000
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It was only 12 months ago that I was aboard one of these fine vessels when on the 'Lords of the Isles' cruise last

April, and although that was a twin diesel version, the same excellent dynamics are evident on the model tested here with twin Mercury 300hp Verado outboards.

This 10m started life as the Baltic 9m, and in its smaller guise it proved a formidable vessel, equally capable when lightly or heavily laden, and unusually for most RIBs its performance was not adversely affected by weight distribution.

Many Parker 9m RIBs were sold as passenger-carrying 'safari'-style craft and they proved very popular thanks to their broad beam which provided a generous amount of internal volume for 12 passengers and 2 crew. However, as the popularity of the 9m increased it became obvious that many commercial users wanted to use inboard

diesels and, in particular, engines around 300+ horsepower, and while the 9m could cope with the considerable weight of these heavy motors, it was obvious that the internal space was significantly compromised and that simply adding a metre to the overall length would restore the status quo to the interior volume/carrying capacity of the craft.

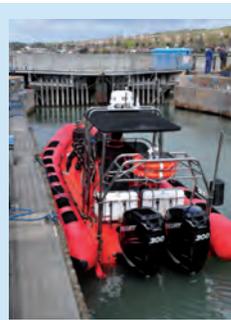
Simply adding a metre to an existing hull can often spoil the dynamics of a craft, but Parker were aware of this and went about changing a number of aspects of the hull's dynamics to

compensate for the extra length; the end result is a craft that still embodies the great dynamics of the 9m but actually improves exponentially over the smaller craft.

The hull is a true deep V from stem to stern, starting at the transom at 23 degrees and gradually increasing in angle towards the bow, until it actually goes from a conventional flat section V at the stern to a pronounced flared concave V at the bow. This variable deadrise configuration not only provides plenty of lift aft, where it is

required to carry the weight of heavy engines, it also promotes a level ride and a flat attack angle to the oncoming seas. By keeping the bow down, the ultra-sharp deep V bow tends to cut through the waves rather than riding over them, and this gives an amazingly smooth and dry ride, any spray being diverted downwards away from the crew.

So much for the hull, but how does the rest of the craft stack up? Well, Parker are justifiably proud that their craft are used extensively by numerous military and commercial operators



WHAT WE THOUGHT

Parker 1000 Baltic

POINTS WE LIKED

- Construction and finish
- Practical layout for type of use
- Soft dry ride
- Appearance
- Quality and finish of stainless steel

POINTS TO IMPROVE

- For the use intended - very little.

... for me, the most striking feature of the craft is the substantial stainless steel frame situated over the crew.

throughout the world, and one can see why these craft prove so popular for carrying heavy payloads, whether cargo or personnel. Like all Parker RIBs, the construction of the craft is of the 'bulletproof' variety rather than sophisticated, and you won't find any composites or fancy materials in any of their production boats; these are very heavily constructed tough workboats that will take the rigours and knocks of everyday commercial use and come back for more.

The appearance of the 10m Baltic inspires confidence and she certainly has presence; with her large-diameter heavy-duty buoyancy tubes, high bow, deep topsides, wide beam and twin Mercury Verado 300hp outboards, she looks very capable, and the bright-orange craft that was the subject of our test certainly cut a dash when I first laid eyes on her in Port Solent Marina. Solent RIB Safaris had acquired the craft only a couple of weeks prior to the test and understandably were not too keen to have their new RIB thrashed to within an inch of its life! They need not have worried, however, because the weather was very blowy and the seas not suitable for any high-speed jinks; besides, I had already experienced the capabilities of the Parker 10m on a number of occasions and in some pretty severe seas, so I was more interested in the fit and finish and practical nature of this latest 'safari' 12-seater charter passenger RIB.

The interior is laid out in typical sea safari style – right aft is a stainless steel double frame with built-in mooring cleats, plus a couple of life rings neatly stowed on top, and just ahead of this, a neat stainless steel frame containing two eight-man life rafts, a statutory requirement for the passengers and crew on all 12-seater charter RIBs in the UK. Just ahead of the rafts is a large well-laid-out steering console with a protective windscreen and stainless steel grab rail, and this sits on a raised deck section

to provide a commanding view for the helmsman and his fellow crewmember. Not only does this elevated position allow the crew to see over the heads of the passengers, it also provides the ideal location to keep an eye on all 12 people seated on the two rows of side-by-side jockey seats. Each jockey seat is fitted with a wrap-around backrest and a passenger grab rail, and the whole set-up is both comfortable and practical for passenger carrying, be it as a sea safari boat or a ferry.

Overall, this correctly proportioned craft looks purposeful and attractive in its bright-orange livery with contrasting black non-slip tube top patches, but for me, the most striking feature of the craft is the substantial stainless steel frame situated over the crew. On some craft this huge frame would have looked out of place, but on this 10m Parker Baltic it looked just right, and despite only being there to support a radar scanner/aerials and a bimini top to protect the crew from the elements, this shiny piece of stainless framework gave the craft an air of purposefulness.

Right forward is a deep anchor locker and a substantial stainless steel Samson post, and down the sides of the buoyancy tubes, both inside and out, are lifelines. The deck has a good non-slip surface and the generous beam of the craft allows the crew to walk down either side of the seated passengers without them having to move. There are two large-diameter 'elephant trunk' deck bailers to quickly remove any surface water off the deck, and these are backed up by an electric bilge pump/pumps below deck.

On the day of the test it was blowing quite hard and the Solent was providing an interesting sea in which to 'play', but first we had to give the passengers (non-fee-paying people from the marina) a bit of an excursion with the professional owner/skipper at the helm before handing the craft over to me for testing. With eight

SNAPSHOT *A quick look onboard the Parker 1000 Baltic*



CONSOLE: Excellent ergonomics to helm station.



ONBOARD: Note the well guarded windscreen via its hand-rail above. Lumber-support seats.



BOAT TEST | PARKER 1000 BALTIC



SPECIFICATIONS

Solent Voyager Parker 1000 Baltic

LENGTH OVERALL: 9.70 mtr

WIDTH: 3.16

WEIGHT: 3000kg

PERSONS CAPACITY: 18

MAX HP: 2 x 350 HP

ENGINE: 2 x 300 HP

DEADRISE 'V': 23 degrees

TUBE DIAMETER: 0.58

NUMBER OF CHAMBERS: 7

MAX. LOAD CAPACITY: 2000kg

TUBE MATERIAL: Hypalon ORCA

CE CATEGORY: B

WARRANTY: 12 months

STANDARD EQUIPMENT

- A Frame and heavy duty samson post
- Raised platform, Patrol console + 2 x 1 man jockey seats for the crew
- 2 x 6 man jockey seats for the passengers
- 2 x 220 ltr fuel tanks
- Twin Mercury Verado 300 HP outboard engines

EXTRAS ON TEST CRAFT:

- Stainless steel T-top + 2 x 8 man liferafts
- Simrad NSE 12, GPS chartplotter/sounder/broadband radar/AIS
- Icom 505 VHF radio
- SIMRAD Sonic-Hub music center

PRICE (INC VAT)

FROM: £70 -150,000

AS TESTED: £100,000

CONTACT DETAILS

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passengers and two crew aboard, the craft handled the waves with contemptuous ease, and barely a splash even breeched the top of the buoyancy tubes, despite the white horses kicking off the tops of the waves. If these passengers were hoping to get the odd wave in their faces, they were in for a disappointment, and the Parker Baltic range have to be some of the driest-riding RIBs around.

Having dropped all the passengers for a warm drink at the excellent Lightship restaurant/bar in Haslar Marina, the skipper and I set out to test the craft round the confused seas off Gilkicker Point. We drove the boat at up to 35 knots into, away and across the steep, confused seas off the point but could not fault the handling or the ride of this capable craft, and had we not had to get back to pick up our passengers we could have easily made our way comfortably down the length of the Solent.

As previously mentioned, I have spent many hours at sea in Parker Baltics, and this latest version just confirmed what I already knew about their solid feel and reassuring handling. We returned to the Lightship restaurant without even getting splashed – no mean achievement in the prevailing conditions – and overall this latest 10m sea safari version is a competent

all-rounder and ideal for the charter work she will shortly be undertaking.

To sum up: it is hard to fault this substantially built craft in its role as a people carrier, and the phrase 'fit for purpose' accurately describes the Parker 1000 Baltic. The increased dimensions over the 9m appear to improve all aspects of the craft's dynamics, and this very well-built, well-finished and comfortable RIB should prove equally suitable for passenger carrying or commercial use. Fitted with the latest twin Mercury Verado 300hp outboards, she can either

provide a fast, exciting 50+ knot performance or cruise comfortably and relatively economically at a steady 25/30 knots, so if your requirements are for a capable load carrier, the Parker Baltic 10m should be on your shortlist.

NB: Due to the newness of the craft/engines and the weather/sea conditions, it was not possible to conduct performance trials, but the manufacturers have a significant amount of data relating to these craft and should be contacted for further information.

Paul Lemmer

