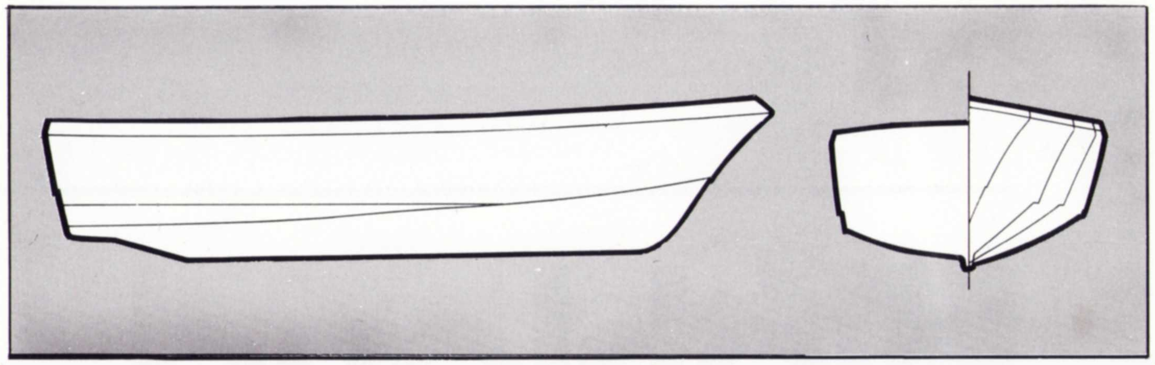




BOAT REPORT

boat report
Motor Boat and Yachting

Highland Admiral

For:

Extremely spacious accommodation
Good deck space
Many speed and engine variations
Tough construction
Spacious galley

Against:

Difficult access to saloon table
Cramped forward toilet compartment
Lack of upper deck seating
Inadequate fuel system

OUR trials of the Highland Admiral were delayed by the aftermath of the lorry drivers' strike. This caused delays in materials reaching the builders, Orcantic, who are based in the Orkney Islands. We also had to go to the builders to try the boat, but this was in some ways an advantage, as we were able to get to know the boat during the delivery passage of the first of a number built for Caley Cruisers' hire fleet based at Inverness on the Caledonian Canal.

We took the boat from Scapa harbour on Scapa Flow in the Orkneys, across the Pentland Firth and down the Moray Firth to the start of the Canal at Inverness. We also negotiated a number of locks on the canal and finally had a run on Loch Ness to round off an interesting and eventful trip. The weather ranged from calm and sun to a windy run in a beam sea at night when the waves rolled across the North Sea from Denmark, building up to decidedly unfriendly proportions by the time they reached us. Our total run spanned some 20 or more hours of motoring and two nights aboard.

Due to fuel system difficulties with the boat we used, we were unable to take our usual series of fuel consumption, noise trim and speed readings. The problem is explained in the engine section.

There are a number of different versions of the basic boat — and special versions can be built to order, but most of our time was spent aboard the charter version, which is also available for private buyers, with only a shorter period aboard the luxury boat that was displayed at the 1979 Earls Court Boat Show.

As usual we were looking for the virtues of high quality building, comfort and economy and additionally we were interested to see how this, the first pleasure craft from a previously commercial builder, would measure up to the competition of Far Eastern built American trawler yachts.

Hull Form

Basically a hard chine hull, there is a considerable amount of arc built into the bottom turning into a well rounded form at the transom, but divided from the topside by a prominent chine lip. The hull is a fairly classic semi-planing form, but the beam is greater than most of the semi-planing boats available today, giving a higher speed potential, if perhaps detracting slightly from her ultimate seagoing abilities. The narrower hulls, pilot boats for instance, have to go out in all weathers, however, but the private owner will be picking his weather more carefully and will be content to slow down in rough waters, when the boat should be perfectly comfortable.

There is a choice of keels depending on the use of the boat and the choice of engines. We tried both the outdrive version with its shallow keel and the conventional shaft boat with the deeper keel. See the Handling section for further comment.