



JONATHAN EASTLAND / AXA NEWS



Review

Her overall 10.97m (36ft) length and more than 3.66m (12ft) beam provide ample volume for separate quarters fore and aft in the first Grand Tourer model we took for an afternoon's spin in lumpy waters off the eastern end of the Isle of Wight. Performance, even with the boat a third of a ton over design weight, was impeccable, striding from one wave crest to another in the onward rush to find equilibrium among fluids.

Surfing effortlessly downwind across the front edge of a crest, I could feel the chine biting as I eased the helm and the pressure came off the rudders, helping to keep the level running attitude so essential in big seas. Sir Mark Norman, *Flying Sword* and Supermarine's first owner, was a happy man. 'It's the only thing I've ever bought off the drawing board', he grinned.

Supermarine commissioned Ken Freivokh of KF Design to develop the interior layout and assist with refining the superstructure styling which David Skellon had initially blocked out on the foam model. The idea was to get away from the traditional thinking used for so long in partitioning small motor yachts, and produce an interior with optimum use of space.

The open plan result is formed out of a series of circular, oval and semi-circular modules constructed as a monocoque glassfibre 'drop-in' which is secured on the centre floor bearer and chines well away from hull panel areas which are subjected to most deflection when running at speed. The modules form beds or settees swathed in seven grand's worth of Connolly leather trimmed with a continuous band of lacquered walnut veneer – two grand's worth – from the suppliers of Aston Martin dashboards. The hard furnishings are moulded from plyfoam laminates lacquered with 21 coats of an Awlgrip-based paint to give a 'pearlescent' finish.

The cabin overheads throughout are upholstered in white suedette cleverly integrated with glassfibre moulded margins and solid side-deck linings recessed to accept tiny German-made halogen spotlights activated with conveniently placed switches mounted in the walnut veneer surround.

The galley has an Alpes 'Inox' three-ring stainless calor cooker with large oven and electronic grill. A sliding/lift-out top covers the cooker when not in use while next to it at the rear is a smaller rounded unit housing the concealed television, VCR and CD stereo. All fittings and taps in both shower units are from the Arne Jacobsen-designed 'Vola' range. The shower foot tray inserts and steps leading to the centre cockpit are covered with white non-slip rubber, highly visible in just about every major airport around the world. Visible, because it collects dirt quickly. The shower trays should have teak gratings and the steps a Floatex-type carpet set in chromed brass rings, perhaps.

The forward and aft cabins open through



Ken Freivokh's interior is full of curving lines, formed out of a series of circular, oval and semi-circular modules constructed as a glassfibre 'drop-out'. There is over £7000 worth of Connolly

leather in here – and it feels like it. Walnut sets off the leather and it comes as no surprise to learn that the same people who make Aston Martin's fascias are responsible for the lacquer-work

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All the fittings and taps in both shower units are from the Arne Jacobsen designed Vola range. The hard furnishings throughout are treated to 21 coats of an

Awlgrip-based paint to give a pearlescent finish. Below: the Swordfish at speed. Have we at last found a rival to the Riva?

SWORDFISH

sliding contoured smoked perspex doors onto the central cockpit where capacious seating is trimmed in a soft leather-look waterproof vinyl fabric. An aircraft-type joystick wheel is an integral part of the thinking behind the at-a-glance instrument console and helm control position which is complemented by a fine Italian-made stainless-steel-framed wrap-around wind 'n' spray screen moulded from tinted polycarbonate. The protection offered by the screen to both lower and upper deck is good, but visibility is curtailed when steering by the anti-glare glass and the rim. A drop-down grating for the helmsman would be useful. A thick-walled, twin-tubed stainless steel mast mounted on heavy rubbers supports the radar scanner, other aerials and steaming lights and provides a useful hand-hold.

Under the powered (overridable) lifting hatch are housed the twin 320hp Sabre diesels. They drive conventional shafts through ZF 1:1.53 hydraulic gearboxes. This package enables the Swordfish to cruise happily for 400 miles on full tanks at speeds of between 28 and 33 knots. The kick in the pants as the throttles are opened from idling to an easy 2200 revs is a feeling you don't forget; a surge of power that lifts the boat cleanly onto the plane where sea-keeping performance will immediately give confidence to the newcomer and a hot flush of nostalgic pride to those who have longed to be back in the driving seat of a classic. □



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OPTIONS

Grand Tourer

Wide sidedecks, large forepeak, protected centre cockpit with full wrap-around screen.

Interior: forward cabin – double bed, galley, toilet and shower, settee dinette convertible for two, hanging locker, lined and shelved storage bins; aft cabin – double berth, armed seat, toilet and shower, hanging locker, lined stowage spaces

Sportsman

Aft: step down from cockpit to horseshoe seating. Interior forward: as per Grand Tourer.

Corniche

Interior as per Sportsman. Step up from cockpit to removable sunbed and mattress.

SPECIFICATION

LOA 100m (36ft 0in)
Beam 3.66m (12ft 3in)
Draft 1.07m (3ft 6ins)
Speed 28-38 knots cruising (depending on power pack)
Range 400 miles
Engines 2 x Sabre 225L engine room extractor fans
Radar Raytheon

Auto Pilot Cetrek
Decca Mark IV Navigator (or Loran)
VHF radio-telephone Skanti 3000 cockpit handset
Helm position indicator Cetrek
Electronic compass Cetrek
Log VDO
Magnetic steering compass Rigel/Poseidon

Supermarine's long-awaited prodigy makes its debut. The Swordfish 36, a fast, seaworthy sports cruiser with a pedigree based on more than 25 years of high performance design experience, is destined to become a thoroughbred classic. *Boat International* has an exclusive first look by *Jonathan Eastland*.

SUPERMARINE SWORDFISH

36

THERE CANNOT BE MANY AFICIONADOS of 'motor boating' who are unfamiliar with the fast all-weather Fairey motor cruisers of the previous two decades: the Huntress, Huntsman and Swordsman; the Spearfish and the Fairey Fantome, much sought-after classics today which excelled in the kind of angry conditions the British coastal waters throw up from time to time.

How these boats managed to stay on an even keel and maintain their high speeds, giving their owners an exhilarating but not uncomfortable ride in all weathers, was the stuff of which legends were soon made. They were race-bred performers, and the basis for high-speed commercial craft which came to be in demand from navies and ancillary services throughout the world – all drawn by Alan Burnard, who gave 25 years of his life to perfecting the deep-vee hull.

When Fairey stopped production of these leisure boats and chief designer Burnard left the company in 1982, it seemed to some that the end of an era had come to pass. A world of fast motor cruising, breakfast in Yarmouth, lunch in Cherbourg or Alderney and back to Hamble for tea ... ah, those were the days!

Enter stage left one David Skellon, he who had persuaded a large part of a boating generation that one day there would only be two kinds of boat owners: those with a Fairways Fisher motor sailer and those without. That highly successful concept evolved from an afternoon's musing on an old wooden MFV.

Five years ago, the ex-airline pilot was

parked in Yarmouth harbour aboard his own Fairey Swordsman. The seeds for another concept were germinating. Today, David Skellon is founder and chairman of the Supermarine Motor Yacht Company whose aim it is to make the world's finest small motor yachts. He went to see Alan Burnard armed only with a styrofoam model of the boat he hoped to create and put on the market. Naturally, Alan was only too pleased to be involved.

When Burnard showed Lloyds the plans and lay-up specification for the new boat, they asked him, 'What are you building here, a battleship?'

'With the Spearfish I thought I had reached the ultimate in hull shapes for this kind of vessel' he says. It was without a doubt the best sea-keeping motor cruiser of its day. David wanted to stretch the design, make it a little longer. But that wouldn't have worked well in practice. This new boat was completely redesigned to give a similar aesthetic appeal while increasing the length/breadth ratios at different stations.

That old pedigree is evident in the new Swordfish. It is indeed a classic design: a mixture of elegantly flared forward sections and soft riding deep vee which fulfils the functional intention of a comfortable high-speed ride in adverse sea states, culminating in a fully rounded sloping transom. The superstructure is equally curvaceous, moulding the two parts into one. The Spitfire aeroplane, the Jaguar motor car ... The 'Swordfish' ... lines of outstanding distinction.



The look is familiar, the ride confirms that this is indeed a successor to the famous Fairey motor cruisers. Designed by Alan Burnard, who has given 25 years of his life to perfecting the deep-vee, and styled by Ken Freivokh, the new Swordfish is 36ft of class. Right: Supermarine is the name associated with Spitfires and apt for a motorboat that similarly combines form with function. Far right: the steering position features an avant garde handlebar steering wheel