



# Time Flies

*This Humber Ocean Pro 6.3m RIB has had the toughest of long-term tests. She has been used as a workhorse by the MBM team over a 10-month period, in conditions up to Force 8.*



**T**o say that MBM's Humber Ocean Pro 6.3m rigid inflatable has been well used during its time in our hands is an understatement akin to suggesting that a former first lady of the Philippines liked to have several pairs of shoes to choose from.

We took ownership of *Time Flies* at a midnight rendezvous in Southampton in late October last year. By 0900 the next day we were halfway to the Channel Islands on her maiden voyage.

Since then, over 100 hours have

been clocked up, and some fairly interesting sea conditions overcome. Not least of these was a delivery trip around North Foreland in a Force 8 — we and she came through intact, although this kind of passage is not recommended!

### Built for fun

The Ocean Pro 6.3m was built in three different versions: Commercial, Leisure and Dive, all featuring a distinctive ski-jump bow. MBM's long-term test boat came in Leisure mode, with single-file jockey

seating running along its centreline.

Jockey seats are a sensible idea on a boat of this type, allowing you to absorb the ride through your knees without having to stand all the while. The seat-bases double as storage areas for the twin fuel tanks; when you need to fill or switch tanks, the seat cushions simply lift off, allowing quick access.

A one-person helm console incorporates a compass and basic engine instrumentation, leaving enough room for the mounting of extra equipment such as a log, VHF or GPS. Access panels at the front would make the fitting of any of these straightforward.

The driving position offers fair protection behind a short screen. An angled throttle control is usefully set up so that the throttle arm is around vertical at fast cruising speeds, allowing easy adjustments to be made when you need them most.

Moving around on the non-slip

sole is easy and safe, aided by the five sets of grabhandles fitted to the tubes on each side and by the stainless steel rails around the console and seat-backs. The knee-high tubes give you the feeling of being in rather than on the vessel.

A step in the foredeck houses the bow's singular locker, enough to house an anchor and warps. At the stern, a wide stainless steel A-frame extends right outboard, incorporating stainless steel baskets designed to hold canisters for emergency equipment or general storage.

The maximum horsepower rating was 200hp. *Time Flies* came with a 115hp Suzuki four-stroke outboard.

### Mixed use

*Time Flies* has been used in many different roles: as a taxi and fast-response vessel on our Cruising Club events, as a photoboot during any boat tests, and generally as a means of flying the MBM flag on a great many events and regattas.

She has been loaded to her maximum carrying capacity, and she has been taken to the ends of her fuel range. But she has never let us down.

Underway, she has displayed all the traits that make RIBs such a popular choice for dayboaters and watersports enthusiasts alike.

From a standing start, she moves effortlessly onto the plane, eagerly pushing until the throttle can go no further. The 115hp Suzuki gives her a maximum speed of 40 knots at 6000rpm, consuming 1lt per mile.

At her cruising speed of 25 knots, she has a range of about 150 miles. Handling is excellent, with good directional stability and fast turns undertaken without fuss.

We have a few criticisms, such as the placement of the cleats and the width of the A-frame (both of which are retro-fitted options).

But the boat's sheer usefulness and ability has burnt through any such clouds, making *Time Flies* a very valuable addition to the MBM flotilla. □



Jockey seats mean a one-man helm.



The anchor locker will also take warps.



There are lockers built into the console.



Twin fuel tanks are in the seat bases.

## Suzuki DF115

It is by no means intended as a slight to the boatbuilders to say that an outstanding feature of this RIB package has been its engine.

The 115hp Suzuki four-stroke outboard has never missed a beat, starting on the button and delivering smooth power through its rev range.

The 1950cc block with its four cylinders and 16-valve double overhead camshaft produce its peak horsepower between 5000-6000rpm. Its internal electronic management system regulates the correct fuel flow and acts to

safeguard against problems such as over-revving.

Graphite paintwork and a sculpted profile make this motor look menacing, but it is far from bulky. Its compact dimensions



are helped by an innovative drive system featuring an offset shaft and two-stage cam.

To keep the elements at bay, it has a protective coating of chromate and a double dose of melamine resin primer.

Standard specification includes a tachometer, a freshwater flushing system and remote controls. The price of an engine alone is £8152 inc VAT, including delivery. Enquiries Suzuki GB plc, 46-62 Gatwick Road, Crawley, West Sussex RH10 2XF. Tel: 01293 51800. [www.suzukimarine.co.uk](http://www.suzukimarine.co.uk)

## Humber Inflatables

Formed in the early 1960s, Humber have been at the core of rigid inflatable boat construction in the UK ever since, and have been a contributing factor to the rising popularity of the modern day RIB.

Initially focusing on the commercial diving sector



of the market and its need for stable, seaworthy craft, Humber soon expanded into the mainstream of the leisure market.

In the 1970s, a 5.3m Humber RIB became the first boat of its kind to cross the Atlantic Ocean, promoting the company name as well as RIB capabilities in general.

Today's Humber boats have features such as unsinkable airtight hull compartments and hypalon tubes, combined with a range of layouts and engine installations, including inboards.

Enquiries Humber Inflatable Boats, 246 Wincolmllee, Kingston upon Hull, East Yorkshire HU2 0PZ. Tel: 01482 226100. [www.ribworld.co.uk](http://www.ribworld.co.uk)

## Time Flies

### Model

Humber Ocean Pro 6.3.

### Builders

Humber Inflatable Boats.

### Length overall

21ft 0in (6.30m).

### Beam

7ft 8in (2.34m).

### Displacement

664kg including engine.

### Fuel capacity

34gal (153lt).

### Engine

115hp Suzuki four-stroke outboard.