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AXOPAR

24 T-TOP

ON TEST

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& INNOVATIVE
SPACIOUS
DESIGN

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**PBR
TEST
REPORT**

AXOPAR

24 T-TOP



Greg Copp test-drives the latest model to emerge from the Axopar production team and discovers a craft capable of bringing the joys of fast Scandinavian boating to those on a budget ... **Images © Graeme Main**

Looking at Axopar's latest 24-footer, I can't but help think we Brits may have got it wrong. The RIB industry aside, our yards, keen to balance their books, seem forever focused on bigger and

better. The Scandinavians, on the other hand, keep to a proven formula, which they just tweak here and there as technology permits. Size is never an issue, but in all senses performance is always paramount.

Following hot on the heels of its bigger sibling, the Axopar 28 T-Top (PBR issue 132), the Axopar 24 T-Top is barely any less impressive. Its radical looks, vertical stem and innovative, spacious design are a trademark of this Finnish yard, as is a tempting, fully specified price tag of just over £60,000. Like its bigger sibling, the 24 T-Top is no less eager to pile on the knots the moment you pile on the power. Weighing just over



ON TEST

Axopar 24 T-Top



Specifications

LOA: 7.60m
Beam: 2.55m
Transom deadrise angle:
20 degrees
Displacement: 1510kg
(with engine)
Power options: 150 to
200 hp
Fuel capacity: 220 litres
RCD category: C for 8
Test engine: 200hp
Mercury Verado
Price as tested:
£62,013 (inc. VAT) (euro
exchange rate of 1.15)

Price

From £52,800 with
200hp Mercury Verado

Performance

37.2 knots (2-way
average), 70% fuel, 1
crew and moderate sea
conditions

Contact

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*[it] has equal appeal for the white-knuckle
powerboater as it does for the family man.*

1.5 tons (dry with 200hp Mercury Verado), the 24 T-Top is both fast and exceedingly quick on the wheel, and like all Axopars it has a twin-stepped deep-vee hull. Whether you like stepping or not, you can't ignore how well it works with this boat. She pops quickly up onto the plane around 16 knots and then reaches mercilessly for the 6000rpm redline.

Fast cruising is 28 knots, which actually does not feel that fast. True to form, the engine is blissfully

smooth and relatively quiet at this speed, made all the more serene by the oily, calm conditions of the day. At this speed she was burning 44Lph at 4800rpm, which equates to about 2.9mpg. You certainly get the feeling that you can eat some sea miles in this boat, especially as the T-top either keeps you dry or, as I found, perfectly shaded. However, she is more Sports than Gran Turismo and capable of the most reckless tight turns. Some stepped hulls have been known to



Below: Waterproof Silvertex upholstery is of a high standard.

Reprint courtesy of Powerboat & RIB Magazine - www.powerboatandrib.com

... she made light work of cutting her way through the choppy narrows at wide-open throttle.

lose the stern with overenthusiastic use of the wheel, but not in this case. Try as I might, this boat grimly hung on in the turns, even at well over 30 knots with the outboard leg trimmed out.

When I first throttled the Axopar up onto the plane, it was evident that this boat has little bow-up attitude, which helps when you throw her about. Subsequently pushing the boat towards its maximum speed of 37.2 knots requires just a small amount of trimming out, and then only once past 30 knots. If you trim her too much, which is easily done, you will lose a few knots – it is a case of coming to terms with just a quick dab on the trim button. Alternatively, for the sake of 2 knots, you can just leave the leg.

With the flat calm sea state of the day, true testing conditions were unfortunately not really an option. That was until the tide turned and proceeded to funnel through the narrows of Hurst Castle. I hit this patch of choppy water at 35 knots and instinctively backed off a touch. This was a mistake, as at 25 knots the Axopar is just that little less stable in her aft quarters in rough water than at 30 knots, which I would credit to the extra lift provided by her twin-stepped hull. With such a sharp forefoot and a 'wave-piercing-like vertical stem', she made light work of cutting her way through the choppy narrows at wide-open throttle. Likewise, running through the wake of the photo boat at full chat was an easy point and shoot affair that left you in no doubt about the 'creak-free' build quality.

Though it is a very lively drive, I will say that the 200hp Mercury Verado does not really do the boat justice, as it can easily handle another 50hp on its



ONBOARD THE AXOPAR 24 T-TOP...



The helm layout is simple with a row of stainless switches under the displays.



The T-top works a treat keeping either the sun or rain at bay.



A sink sits on the port side.

Stainless work is of the highest standard.

Reprint courtesy of Powerboat & RIB Magazine - www.powerboatandrib.com

ON TEST

Axopar 24 T-Top



transom. It is blatantly obvious that the hull is hugely capable of pushing deep into 40-knot territory, but at the moment this is the most powerful engine option.

Helm ergonomics are slightly mixed as the normal seat height is on the low side if you want a perfect line of sight over the bow. The option is to flip up the seat bolster and sit on top of that, which worked well

When you consider what you are getting for your money, the Axopar 24 T-Top is a no-brainer ...



HIGHS

- Great seakeeping and handling
- Rapid steering
- Solid build quality
- Practicality/safety
- Good weather/sun protection

LOWS

- Just one engine manufacturer on the options list.
- No 250hp engine yet?
- Long extras list, some of which should be included as standard items.

Below: The forward area is a squeeze for four but with the infill it makes a great sunbed.

Below right: Discreet fender/warp lockers are located on each quarter.



for me at 6ft. The throttle position is absolutely spot on thanks to a padded rest for your forearm, and the wheel comes easily to hand. The instrumentation is a simple affair consisting of a plotter and a touch screen engine display panel, mounted on a dark-grey, tough composite dash. The cockpit has been well thought out as forward of the helmsman and navigator's seats are two single berths that tuck discreetly under the forward coaming beneath the windscreen. Alternatively, they provide plenty of storage for water sports kit.

You could easily be forgiven for wondering where to store fenders, lines and a boathook until you look carefully around the stern quarters. Behind the rear seats runs a slim full-beam locker just wide



ON TEST

Axopar 24 T-Top



Above: Deck access is on the port quarter via the bathing platform. Note the beam-length locker behind the seat. Below: Twin berths give this boat an extra dimension.



Reprint courtesy of Powerboat & RIB Magazine - www.powerboatandrib.com

enough for fenders and long enough for boathooks. Complementing this are two stern-quarter lockers discreetly built into the cockpit coamings on either side. Under-deck storage runs the length of the boat in no less than three internally lined deck lockers. The upholstery throughout is Silvertex, which is a fabric-like, tough-wearing waterproof material in much the same vein as Sunbrella.

The forward seating area, though designed for four, would be a squeeze with that number of adults. Alternatively, with the table dropped it provides a great sunbathing area, or with the forward cover fitted, an extra berth – albeit with limited headroom. Decking is courtesy of Flexiteek 2G, which I can confirm holds its cool in the midday sun and looks the part covering the deep half-beam bathing platforms that flank the engine.

Verdict

The GRP-built Axopar 24 T-Top brings the joys of fast Scandinavian boating to those that do not want to remortgage their house, and/or want a boat light enough to trail. It also provides a comfier option to a RIB with the ability to overnight, which for those that do not live near to their boat can make a world of a difference. When you consider what you are getting for your money, the Axopar 24 T-Top is a no-brainer, which has equal appeal for the white-knuckle powerboater as it does for the family man. If you want something more conventional than the T-Top, there is also an open-boat version. **PBR**