

ATLANTIS 26 CC

Simon Everett has been finding out why you get more boat for your money with the new Atlantis 26 CC.



For many people the desire for a bigger boat has to be weighed against the cost. The Atlantis 26 CC addresses this quandary by being an amazingly affordable boat for her size and, despite her simple interior, she possesses all the other benefits of a longer boat. There is more room on her deck than

her 21ft sister has and with the extra length comes more kindly seakeeping, not just due to the added five feet either, but because her prow is given added freeboard too.

The high prow and deep Vee hull combine to provide the ability to run nasty, short seas at speed and remain totally dry. Her home waters around Guernsey are some of the shortest, steepest seas you will find anywhere in the world, and it is this proving ground that has led to the development of the Atlantis hulls and has given rise to this new, bigger Atlantis.

A DESIGN THAT WORKS

Patrick Wheeler, the designer and builder of the Atlantis boats, recognised a need for a fast, ultra seaworthy, open decked boat for the fishermen and exploring boater to use, primarily around his home waters of Guernsey. When the spring tide runs against just a mild breeze of force 3 to 4 the waves that build up in the run out from St. Port to the north can easily reach six feet or more. The Atlantis 26 has been designed to allow people to go out in much worse conditions and make the run across to Herm even in force 8 winds. The smaller Atlantis has proved the design works and that boat has found favour all around the British Isles, especially where there are severe conditions and open coasts.

The Atlantis boats are built with massive strength to withstand the battering that they will undoubtedly suffer in the conditions they will be used in. Running through a big sea at anything between 25 knots and 30 knots puts incredible forces to work on the hull of a boat. The Atlantis 26 uses 4x2 longitudinal stringers just for the chines. The main keel hog is a huge, 12" beam with additional 4" full depth stiffening in critical areas. The total thickness of the hull is over ¾" and the hull sides are of 1" honeycomb. The deck is then given 1½" honeycomb to provide rigidity and strength without adding weight high up. Despite this massive strength the Atlantis is very light on the water and moves about easily by hand and belies the fact that she actually weighs 1,700kgs as a bare boat.

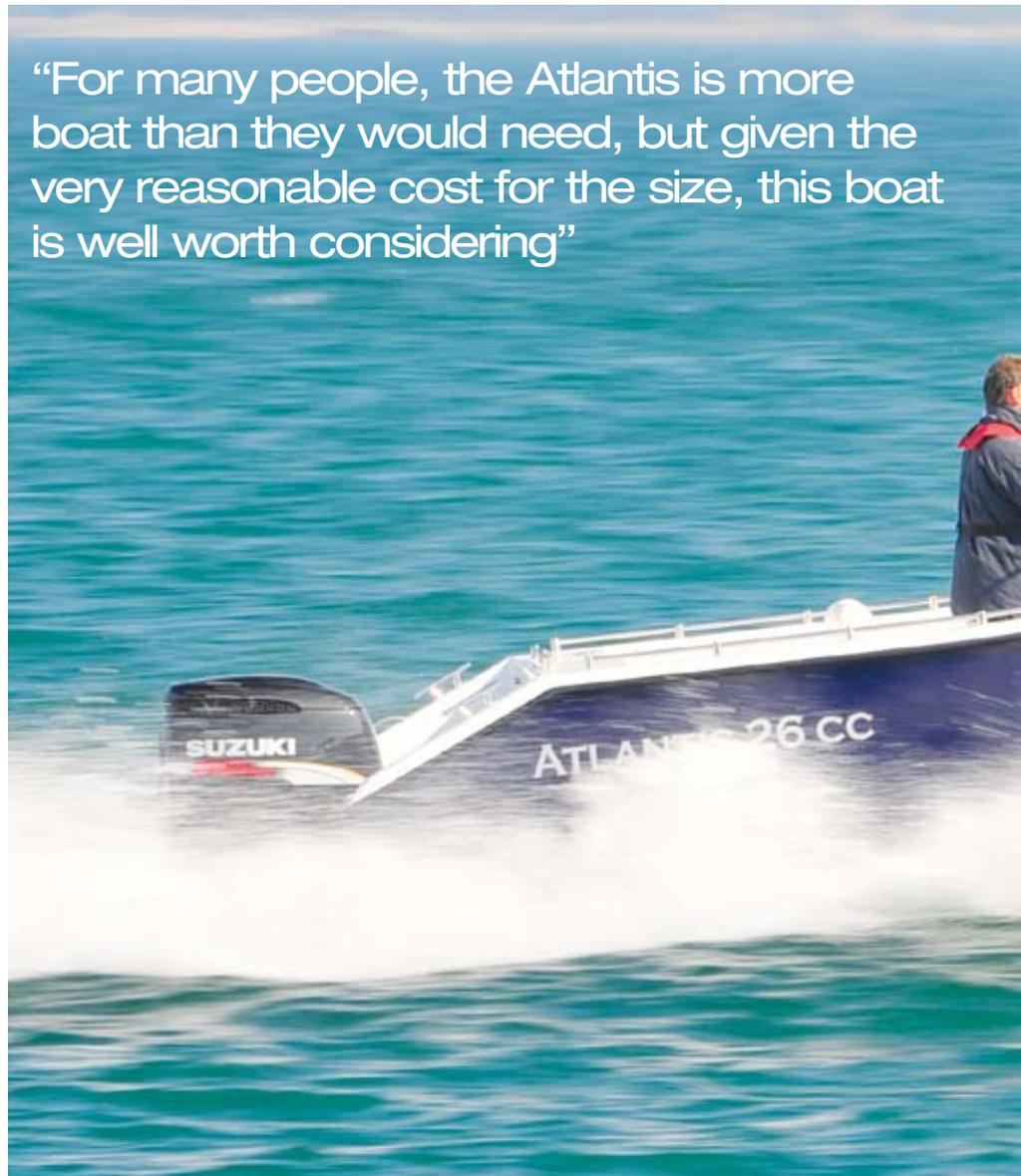
SIMPLE INTERIOR

The interior design has been deliberately left clean and simple for the demonstrator, so prospective purchasers can add whatever they like in the way of additional seating, diving bottle rack or fishing additions. Patrick likes the completely uncluttered deck, which allows ease of movement all around the boat. The bulwarks are high giving great security for those onboard and they are slightly angled outwards to provide a secure leaning support ▶

IT'S ALL IN THE DETAIL



“For many people, the Atlantis is more boat than they would need, but given the very reasonable cost for the size, this boat is well worth considering”



if you have to lean overboard, such as dealing with a mooring buoy, anchor or landing a big fish. Small, practical considerations like this have been incorporated to many facets of the boat. The stern bench, for instance, folds flat to allow unfettered access over the stern, for access to the water or climbing back aboard. The enclosed compartment in the centre console has full standing headroom and takes a portable toilet facility to make the open boat concept more appealing to the female outlook on boating.

The volume of space in there means it will also take all your loose gear and keep it safe. The front opening panel door of the console is supported on gas struts, those on the test boat were just not quite strong enough to hold the lid up against the breeze and it just dropped to a point where the wind could flow over the top. Patrick has said he will look at this as it may have been those units had leaked a bit of gas.

The shape of the console has been carefully considered too. It provides excellent wind protection for the helm. I would like to see a standing board provided, which of course, if you want it, can be. The vast expanse of

the console dash area still makes it look minimalist even with the chartplotter and other accessories already fitted.

ON THE DECK

The deck is deliberately positioned higher than the waterline, by some margin too. There are drains into the after bilge and all compartments under deck are linked by limber holes to allow free drainage of water into a strumbox where it is then pumped overboard. Patrick doesn't believe in making holes in a hull; all transducers are fitted on protected brackets aft rather than drilling through below the waterline. This is something I am in agreement with him over.

All around the boat the moulding is very nicely carried out, with no ripples or print through anywhere and all edges are rounded to ensure there are no sharps or wayward strands of glass mat. The standard of finish is something Patrick is very proud of, and rightly so. This is something that can only be done by individual boat builders on a small scale. The mass production of boats doesn't leave time to attend to detail in the same way.



AND THE PERFORMANCE?

We took the boat for a spin round Herm and a chance to try her handling out at speed. The hull grips the water in such a way that she follows a true line and without the usual grip and slip of conventional chines. Patrick has developed his chine profile very carefully, and although there is only the one strake it stops about three-quarters aft, allowing the stern to slip in a controlled manner during the turn. The result is a boat that you can put hard over at 30 knots plus and she sets on her heel and just goes round. I was waiting for the build up and release of water, but it didn't come, because the hull shape manages the water flow so efficiently.

An additional benefit of this sure footedness is that the prop doesn't lose water and continues to bite throughout the manoeuvre. The Atlantis 26 will go about at full throttle so hard that even being at the wheel you have to brace hard to counter the G-force generated. Looking back the wake showed just how hard we had gone round and it was only about two boat lengths. Extraordinary. Anyone at the wheel will need to temper their enthusiasm ▶





otherwise the devil might get the better of them! Coming back from Herm the ebb had started, so we ran out through the channel to the open sea against the building waves. This is where the Atlantis really comes into her own. That high freeboard, purposely given for situations just like this, provides the ability to counter dropping into an unexpected hole. The height of the bow keeps her head up and prevents stuffing, even running down steep waves into a trough. The sharp angle of deadrise allows a much faster passage in the rough stuff too, so keeping her head up and giving her the reigns will let the boat skip across from one wave to the next and even without a foredeck or cuddy to deflect any of the spray, the boat remained completely dry. Even the aft bench was devoid of even a single drop of spray.

TREAT YOURSELF

Getting to know the boat over a period of a couple of weeks would allow you to gain the confidence to venture out in conditions that other boats simply could not tolerate, not comfortably. It isn't just the ability to get out though; you can actually still run at planing speeds and make passages that should be out of bounds to a 26ft boat. That, of course, was the whole idea, not just to make it possible, but to make it possible and still be comfortable.

There is a slight trade off, and that is with the height of the bow giving her the seakeeping, it does reduce your forward vision. Seeing that great prow rise up over a

steep wave is a little disconcerting at first, but you get used to it and recognise that without it, you would now be standing in a cockpit two feet deep in water.

For many people, the Atlantis is more boat than they would need, but given the very reasonable cost for the size, this boat is well within the budget of those looking for a smaller boat, based purely on the economics,

so they could treat themselves to the luxury of a boat that will see them through anything and have the extra room in the boat without going over budget.

That is a major attribute of the Atlantis boats, buying direct from the builder has major cost saving implications as well as the ability to fine tune your build specifications to suit your own preferences. ■

FACT FILE

VERDICT

For the size of boat, this is a very cost effective option

SPECIFICATION

- Bare boat starts at: **£23,000**
- Boat as tested with Suzuki DF200: **£36,455**
- Length: **7.9m**
- Beam: **2.6m**
- Draft: **1.0m**
- Engines: **150 - 300hp**



FOR A SIMILAR BUDGET

- Zodiac Pro-Open 650 ■ Karnic 2265
- Ahoy-Boats Catamaran

WHO TO TALK TO

- Atlantis Marine, Guernsey
- Tel: 07781-158-514
- E-mail: info@atlantismarine.biz
- Web: www.atlantismarine.biz

TEST FIGURES (with Suzuki 200hp running 16" x 19" propeller)

Revs	Speed in Knots
600	3.4
1,000	4.9
2,000	7.3
3,000 (plane)	14.5
4,000	21.6
5,000	29.6
5,900 (maximum achieved)	37.0