

# RINKER FIESTA VEE 240

*The price is right, so what about the underlying quality?  
We test an American-built sportscruiser which is  
setting out to undercut all its rivals.*

American manufacturers Rinker have ruffled some feathers in the UK. Represented by Dyfed-based Rinker Direct, who sell straight to the public, with no dealer or middleman involved, they are aiming for volume sales through low pricing.

The disadvantage is that there is no convenient network of dealers to rush to if you break a part on a Friday night before the hottest weekend of the summer. But the advantage is that you get a competent craft for a very competitive price indeed.

Typical of this approach is the Fiesta Vee 240 mid-cabin sportscruiser, which we took for a test drive in sheltered Milford Haven.

## Design

There is no ground-breaking styling here, but Rinker have come up with sporting lines. These are more angular than those of many of their contemporaries, particularly at the stern, where the transom

treatment is best described as abrupt, although a bench seat hangs out and over the bathing platform to break up the lines.

The screen and the truncated topsides make the 240 seem rather tall, an impression accentuated by the bow rails. The striping on the 20°-deadrise hull and the minimal use of graphics help to elongate its lines and dispel any feeling of bulkiness.

## Interior

The cabin has a familiar layout, with the vee dinette/berth forward, a galley to port and toilet compartment to starboard. Maximum headroom is 6ft 0in (1.80m).

You have plenty of space to get in and out of the seating, because the circular table is quite small. In fact there is room for only three people at a time to eat, with recesses to take those three plates and glasses, so with more on board you will have to



**Left: the lines are sporting but angular, although the bench-seat helps to break up the abrupt transom. Above: the driving position is a back-to-back double seat which can be folded down into a sunlounger when at rest.**

employ a shift system or have some crewmembers balancing plates on their knees. The recesses mean there is no flat surface to work off if you want to do some chartwork.

Stowage in this forward section is found in three lockers under the seat cushions, the larger ones being lined with carpet, and open lockers all the way around behind the seat-back cushions.

Tinted portholes offer privacy, but only the deck hatch allows full daylight in. However the light cushion covers and headlining, plus the mirror on the bulkhead, make the best of what is available. That mirror hinges up to give access to the bow locker.

There is ample standing room at the tidy galley, which features a stainless steel sink with mixer tap, a single-burner alcohol/electric stove and a fridge, the latter being located on the other side of the cabin but still within easy reach. The worktop's cutaway shape means you can cook without blocking the walkway, and the stove has a chopping-board cover. Good stowage is available in two cupboards in the base units, and there are two shelves outboard.

The lower section of the WC has a fibreglass lining; the upper section does not need it because there is no shower. What you do get is a marine toilet, a sink with a cold tap, a large grabhandle, and a mirror with a tray underneath.

Designers are always up against it when trying to make something of the mid-cabin on this size of sportscruiser, but Rinker have made a good effort. Its specification is simple, with a double berth comprising a mattress on the floor in a fully lined compartment which can be curtained off for some privacy. It gets some daylight through the hatch to the cockpit, and there is a spotlight for night reading as well as an open locker at the end of the berth.

## Exterior

The cockpit is a complete moulding, for a clean appearance, and is self-bailing.

Seating comprises a back-to-back double arrangement forward, including the helm seat, and an aft bench which wraps around the port side. The whole of the former arrangement can be folded flat to create a fair-sized lounger, although of course this means that sunbathing while underway is out of the question.

The helm seat offers some fore-and-aft adjustment but feels a bit tight even if you prefer to stand while driving. In fact there is little inclination to stand, as the helm position is high enough to give good visibility all-round when seated. Side support is limited.

Dash layout is plain and simple, displaying the fairly comprehensive instrumentation well. Lit rocker





## Rinker Fiesta Vee 240

**Loa**  
24ft 0in (7.30m).  
**Beam**  
8ft 6in (2.48m).  
**Draught**  
3ft 0in (0.91m) with drive down;  
1ft 10in (0.55m) with drive up.  
**Air draught**  
6ft 3in (1.90m).  
**Displacement**  
4800lb (2177kg).  
**Fuel capacity**  
62gal (283lt).  
**Water capacity**  
22gal (102lt).  
**Engine**  
210hp Mercruiser 5.7L petrol.  
**Price**  
£22,085 ex VAT; £23,957 with trailer.  
**Builders**  
Rinker Boat Co, 300 West Chicago Street, Syracuse, Indiana 46567, USA.  
Tel: (1) 219 457 5731.  
**Suppliers**  
Rinker Direct, Unit 9, Brunel Quay, Neyland, Dyfed SA731PY.  
Tel: 01646602445.

switches flank the gauges, and the specification runs to a digital depth-sounder and a compass atop the dash. A VHF set is also standard, which is a bit of a bonus, but of course there is the obligatory stereo radio/cassette unit which blasts forth in both the cockpit and the cabin.

There is plenty of stowage around the cockpit, including a big pocket under the throttle, an open locker in the walkway through to the cabin and a tray under the aft side seat.

The bathing platform is the most convenient place to board, via a swing-down boarding ladder and the transom door. Fittings here include a tow-ring and a shower, which partially makes up for the lack of one in the toilet compartment, even if it has just a cold water supply.

Access forward is via a hinging stainless steel step to the left of the dash and through the opening centre section of the screen. At the bow there is an anchor roller and deck pipe.

### Engine

The cockpit sole lifts up for access to the 210hp Mercruiser 5.7L V8 petrol engine which is fitted as standard. The alternative is a 2.8LDB3 diesel, or you can opt for a Bravo 2 or Bravo 3 leg as an upgrade.

The installation is competent, though strangely not as tidy as that on the smaller Rinker 212 (see WS&T, with MBM Aug 97). You can get to all engine ancillaries easily, though not to the battery masterswitch, which really should be in the cockpit.

Two batteries come as standard, as does shorepower.

### Performance & handling

The 210hp engine delivers adequate performance for sports-cruising and watersports purposes. We recorded a top speed of 35 knots, with the engine pulling 4650rpm. Acceleration is fair for a boat of this size and weight, and our radar gun recorded 0-15 knots in 5.3sec and 15-25 knots in 9.8sec.

Handling has a sportsboat feel about it, being

nimble at the wheel and responding quickly to driver input. It performed a series of tight S-turns without complaint; tighter turns did reveal some propeller ventilation, but this can be controlled by the throttle.

In the sheltered surroundings of Milford Haven we found no rough water to test the 240's seakeeping, and with few other craft around we had to resort to driving through our own wash to try to get some kind of feel for this. The hull brushed aside our best efforts, but we have to reserve full judgement.

### Conclusions

If you choose a Rinker 240 you will be saving around 20% on the cost of similar craft from some other manufacturers, which is not to be sniffed at. Despite this, the boat does not have a skimpy specification, coming with such goodies as shorepower, refrigerator and VHF as standard.

In fact what it lacks more is styling, with lines that are more cruiser than sports. But the Fiesta Vee is a competent craft, and its build quality is of the same standard as some which are rather higher up the price scale. □



Top left: wakes offered the only challenge in placid Milford Haven. Above: the WC is basic, with no shower. Below: there is ample headroom in the cabin, and a cutaway worktop ensures the galley does not cause a blockage.

