



Cougar (Honwave) R10

Cougar is a name that will send a shiver down the spine of anyone who has ever had an interest in powerboating. And if it doesn't, then you haven't got one - a spine that is. Hailing from the famed stable of the world's most famous racer, Steve Curtis, you couldn't ask for a more perfect pedigree. Building craft for both commercial and leisure use from 5.5 to 25 metres in length, Cougar has a talent for really bringing out the driver in you. My last experience was on the fabulous (if rather challengingly styled) R8 and R10, teamed with Honda to produce the famous 'Honwave' name. It might have been a couple of years ago but my memories of that event on the Isle of Man remain crystal clear to this day. The R10 sports a stepped hull, electric bolster seats, a super smooth helm and extremely luxurious (and supportive) seating. Capable of 56 knots, the Cougar/Honwave does most of the work for you. It might come from a bonafide racing stable, but if you miss a beat and cock it all up, the hull is astonishingly forgiving. Just get in, drive hard and let it show you how good you can be...

Contact:

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Hunton 1004

Known for their sleek, thoroughbred British sports boats, Hunton is now well and truly ensconced among the RIB builders of the world - and happily, the pronounced pedigree of the hulls has not been lost in the transition from sports cruisers to RIBs. The purposeful lines are graceful, rather than hard or aggressive and you know right from the outset that this will be a craft that enables fast, comfortable transit over long distances - exactly as the Hunton heritage suggests. The 904 and the 1004 are beautifully turned out, with optional heads, hot and cold water, inboards, outboards and a list of options so long it would take another couple of pages just to list them. With speeds up around the 65-knot mark, these boats can certainly deliver the goods as out and out adrenalin machines, but the build quality and the fitments are so sumptuous that you will have no trouble coaxing even the most timid of family members to step on board. The layouts are well proven, the materials are first rate and the badge carries as much kudos as even the most ardent label addict could want. It's an utterly beautiful piece of boat building.

Contact:

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Hysucat 210

The South African Hysucat offers a very novel approach to sports RIBs. Utilising a catamaran design, the Hysucat puts a hydrofoil between the two hulls, creating an effect quite unlike anything else on the market. As an ex-helmsman of commercial hydrofoils, I often wonder why this technology is not more widely used in the marine industry, so it is a joy to see Hysucat applying it with such an expert hand. The Hysucat hops up onto the plane with ease thanks to the foil, and once there, it is very easy to match the trim to the sea height and direction. And the ride is unlike any other. With the load shared between the two hulls and further supported by the foil, progress is disarmingly gentle and smooth. I have driven one from Southampton to Lymington and at no time did I drop below 65 knots. Even at these speeds, the ride was incredibly smooth. In fact, I will happily stick my neck out and say she has the softest ride of any sports craft I have ever tested. She also requires less power than similar sized craft, which carries major savings in ownership costs - and the twin hulls give you far more space on board for an authentic leisure boat experience than you will ever see on a monohull of the same length. Take just one test drive and your cheque book will be in immediate peril.

'THE HYSUCAT HAS THE SOFTEST RIDE I HAVE EVER SEEN ON A LEISURE BOAT'

