

TESTED | EZYBOAT 4.4

› Test report and pictures by Dave Lewis

Open Sesame!

On the road it looks like a tiny caravan, but on the slipway you open it up into a handy inshore dinghy. Bass and estuary anglers will love it...

This boat is quite possibly the most innovative, original and thoroughly versatile boat I have seen in over 20 years of testing new vessels. In fact the EzyBoat ticks so many boxes it could revolutionise the way many anglers fish our inshore waters.

The concept of a boat that you transport to the water in sections, then assemble to launch, is not unheard of, but the simplicity of the EzyBoat is, in my experience, something totally new. Indeed, when you look at the ease with which this boat can be towed, assembled and then launched, the

question that springs to mind is this: why hasn't anyone thought of it before?

How it works

The pictures accompanying this article will probably give you a much better idea of the EzyBoat concept than any written description, but in its stowed, ready-for-the-road format and covered with its tarpaulin the boat appears to be little more than some form of box trailer. And indeed this is exactly what it is, as it can be used to stow and transport up to 200kg of fishing gear or possibly camping equipment.

Further, when it is stowed it takes up minimal space, so it could be kept secure in any domestic garage or tucked away in the corner of a private driveway or garden. It is light and easy to handle, can be towed

legally with virtually any car, and makes trailerable boating about as easy as it gets.

Once you get to the water you remove the tarpaulin and then extend the spine of the galvanised road trailer, which actually forms a rigid keel. Next you fold the bow section of the boat forward and lock it securely into place using a stainless steel bolt. The engine is kept locked

securely on the transom, which folds neatly forward into the aft end of the cockpit for road transport, but then easily swings outboard ready for use prior to launching.

When it comes to launching, the EzyBoat is easily manageable by hand. Excluding the engine it weighs only 250kg, which, as Chris Lambert, UK sales manager for EzyBoat demonstrated, means launching is pretty much a one-man job, even on

The bow folds forward and is locked in place



The boat has tiller steering and takes an outboard engine up to 25hp



TESTED | EZYBOAT 4.4

a sloping slipway.

Once it is in the water the forward section of the road trailer with the jockey wheel and tow hitch is quickly unbolted, and the road wheels and suspension units are retracted up into the hull using a lever located amidships at the aft of the cockpit.

Of course the saltwater integrity of the wheel bearings is an issue, as it is on any trailer that is used to regularly launch a boat into saltwater. Regular inspection and maintenance of the bearings is recommended, but Chris informed me that the EzyBoat is available with waterproof, sealed hubs that protect the wheel bearings from the ingress of saltwater.

Key features

Feature wise there's not a lot to say, other than you get a small stowage locker at the bow, and I was told they are looking into providing suitable stowage for an anchor and warp.

A single thwart opens to reveal further stowage space, which on the test boat contained the oars. Removable plugs drain any excess water that collects in a sump, and that's pretty much it other than to add that a Bimini top is available as an optional extra, along with a sailing pack; yes you can, if you so choose, also sail the EzyBoat.

Under power the boat is tiller steered and is rated for use with outboard engines up to a maximum of 25hp. The test boat was fitted with a 20hp Mariner four-stroke that gave a top speed of 23.2mph, with an optimum cruising speed in the region of 14mph. I was told that with a smaller 9.9hp engine you could expect to run up to 9.1mph, or cruise at about 6.5mph, which considering the inshore, sheltered waters applications this boat is intended for might be sufficient for many anglers.

The EzyBoat is 4.4 metres (14.4 feet) long when ready for the water, but folds up to just 2.5m, (8.6ft). She has a 1.7m (5.7ft) beam and draws just 10cm (4in). Built entirely of fibreglass she is rated for carrying four adults, though of course for fishing we are looking at a single or two angler boat.

In the water

My trial took place in Cardiff Bay, and once we were out on the water it became apparent that the inboard freeboard is much lower than I generally consider ideal for such a small boat.

Were I reviewing a normal one-piece hull designed exclusively for fishing I would consider this a major negative. However, with the EzyBoat concept, and again considering the settled water



The lever amidships raises and lowers the road wheels



Left: Locking the bow with the stainless steel bolt



Right: The engine folds up into the aft end of the cockpit

applications this boat is suitable for, I concede that while the freeboard is still not ideal, it is acceptable.

Actually the EzyBoat is rated at CE Category C, the same most 20-plus footers with lockable cabin and an inboard diesel, and while this should not be considered as a licence to venture offshore, it does endorse that the EzyBoat has passed the same rigorous tests as many larger boats, and if you do get caught out in rough seas it is safe enough to get you home.

I suppose I can best describe the hull design as being a shallow gull wing, and it is this that gives it its high amount of lateral stability, both while drifting and running at various speeds on the plane. This factor alone means the boat is perfect for casting a lure or fly from, while obviously it is equally as versatile a

boat for fishing baits either at anchor or on the drift.

On the day the vast expanse of water that is Cardiff Bay was subjected to a brisk westerly breeze that created a shallow, choppy sea. The location and prevailing conditions were a fair test for those I'd consider the EzyBoat suitable for fishing under. While underway there was no hiding the fact that she threw a lot of spray aboard, but this was easily reduced to acceptable levels with a sensible reduction in speed. Yes I could, if I tried, make the hull slam but similarly matching her running speed to the prevailing conditions soon solved that.

In summary, this is an impressive little fishing boat that given its unique selling points should appeal to many sea anglers. If you regularly fish the expansive estuaries and

Info

The cost for an EzyBoat, excluding engine, is in the region of £7,950, with the optional sailing kit adding £1,590.

Obviously there are many engine options available, which are priced accordingly, but expect to pay £10,999 for a package fitted with a 20hp Yamaha.

Contact

For more details, call EzyBoat, tel: 0845 6532095

Email: clambert@ezyboat.com

Web: www.ezyboat.com

natural harbours found around our coast, occasionally venturing a short distance offshore when conditions allow, then this could be the boat you have been waiting for. **SA**