



# KIRBY NAIAD 5.8 RIB

BY MIKE BROWN

Western Australian government departments are coming close to standardising on RIBs for their smaller patrol boats, and even closer to standardising on Kirby Marine Naiads for their RIBs.

The Rottneest Island Board had both attributes in mind when specifying their new boat to replace a smaller RIB. Rottneest, of course, is WA's premier boating and casual holiday destination, and can have hundreds of boats (the dearest of them cost \$20 million) moored, anchored or on the beach at any one time. Any amount of damage potential from a hard hull.

The preferred length was 6.8 metres but available funding said 5.8 metres, so Kirby worked hard at putting the wanted abilities into the smaller package. This vessel is used for DGPS checking of mooring positions, laying buoyed barriers for swimming areas, dive tendering, compliance checking, and occasional towing of grounded boats.

There needed to be space for carrying a lot of gear, easy access all round the boat and provision for towing, and the level of sun and spray protection had to be significantly higher than that given by the retiring boat's centre console layout.

Kirby chose a layout similar to the bowrider leisure boat style. There is a full beam midships console and windscreen with a lift out centre section to giving a 600 mm wide access to the forward cockpit. The canopy, also full beam, stretches right aft. The structure supporting it there is carried on strong points mounted on the transom that also carries a high mounted box housing the batteries well clear of the water, and provides a mounting for the life ring.

The forward cockpit can be weather proofed by a slide in tonneau cover. The gap between windscreen and canopy is sealed with Kirby's trademark slide in clear screens, forward raked to deter spray leaking through.

The ideal container for the buoyed lines is a model of simplicity: a domestic wheelie bin. This sits in the forward cockpit leaving ample working room around it. The need for a lot of general storage is taken care of by lockers within the port and starboard sub consoles, reached from forward, and more lockers under the two bolster seats.

The seats are non-suspension models, but the after cockpit deck is covered with the same shock absorbing membrane as the larger Naiads. When standing, this provides an astonishing level of cushioning for the crews' bodies.

Power is provided by a pair of 37kW Yamaha four stroke outboards delivering a top speed of 30 knots. These are mounted with a full splash well ahead of them, giving the ability to reverse in heavy seas. They are protected by a collision bar, plus a bar above them carrying clear tow lines run from the tow post.

Kirby's standard side boarding and dive ladder hinges down from a point near the port side leg of the canopy's gantry. When not in use this looks like part of the gantry's structure, and has to be the neatest arrangement afloat as well as giving extra safety by placing the boarding point well away from the propellers.

The hull is massively strong, well beyond USL scantlings and able to take the occasional nudges and bumps of Rottneest's abundant reefs in its stride. It is

foam filled, to obviate the requirement for a life raft, with the best foam Kirby could source: SOLAS approved Microlen. All the published tests, plus Kirby's own tests, show that this material absorbs absolutely nothing.

Although much of the vessels work will be within the shelter of the island itself or its reefs, there is a frequent requirement to work in totally exposed conditions, including the massive swell often met at the island's west end. The Naiad, with its unrivalled offshore pedigree, is finding itself completely suited to its mixed tasks.

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## 'Kirby Naiad 5.8 RIB' SPECIFICATIONS

Type of vessel: RIB patrol boat

In survey to: DPI Western Australia

Home port: Fremantle, Western Australia

Builder: Kirby Marine

Owner: Rottneest Island Board

Length overall: 5.8 metres

Beam: 2.5 metres

Hull construction material: Aluminium/ RIB

Main engines: 2 x 37kW Yamaha 4 stroke outboards

GPS: Raymarine C80 DGPS

Radio: VHS 27MHz

Fuel capacity: 200 litres