

**For:**

*Excellent standard of construction  
Good interior trim  
Doorway access to engine room  
Good seakeeping qualities  
Neat fender stowage*

**Against:**

*High price  
Poorly designed pulpit  
Clumsy flying bridge seat/bed  
Difficult steering switch-over control*

THE Royal 40 is the largest boat in the range of Storebro Royal Cruisers from Sweden, though there were larger models in the days when they were built in wood. The wooden Royals had a reputation as solid seagoing cruisers and their glassfibre successors seem to be built to the same high standards.

The smaller boats in the range, with their wooden wheelhouses, retain something of the appearance of the older Royals, but the new 40, although based on the old 38 hull, looks very different.

We spent two days and one night aboard a Royal 40, based in Poole, putting the boat through her paces in Poole Bay and out past Swanage to Durlston Head, where we encountered some quite big seas in the Force 5 wind blowing against the tide. We were keen to see whether the Royal 40's standards of construction and fitting out, and her seakeeping qualities justified the hefty price tag.

**Construction**

The bottom is slightly rounded in section with a fine entry and fairly flat run. The substantial chine and the spray rails (two on each side) are carried right forward and spray deflection is further effected by the wide flare in the bows. There's a shallow keel running aft to a maximum depth of 13in (0.33m).

The superstructure, all white and with a rakish cabin top, wheelhouse and flying bridge, is very much in the conventional styling of the fast modern cruiser. The wheelhouse and flying bridge are quite high but their lines don't give the appearance of topheaviness. The strange half 'roll bar' is not unattractive.

**Hull form**

The Royal 40 is undoubtedly a very strongly built boat. The basic glassfibre lay-up is heavy enough but what the construction drawing on page 98 can't show is that the forward half of the topsides has an extra 2 oz/sq ft (0.6kg/sqm) of glassfibre mat and the forward half of the bottom has an extra 4 oz/sq ft (1.2kg/sq m). There are four deep stringers inside the bottom (doubling as engine beds) and two smaller ones along each side. In addition there are transverse frames at about 1ft 6in (0.46m) centres.

Hull and deck are joined along a vertical flange, screwed and heavily bonded

**continued overleaf**

# Royal 40

## BOAT REPORT





together, with a rubber gunwale strip along the outside. Where there are fittings in the deck, teak blocks are inserted in place of the balsa core. The superstructure is of Divinacell polystyrene sandwich construction. The gel coat finish looked first class throughout the boat.

Interior trim looked very good too, mostly mahogany with eight coats of matt varnish giving an attractive finish and with reasonable heat-proofing qualities for shelves and galley work-top. There are also areas of suedette and deckheads are lined with vinyl on ply panels. The Draylon soft furnishings looked vulnerable to salt water and muck, but this material is in fact surprisingly easy to clean. There are one or two nice touches like the padded covering over the wiper motors which should save a few bumps on the head.

You can get to most parts of the hull from inside the boat (a basic requirement neglected in many modern boats) although the panels that make up the cabin sole would be easier to lift if fitted with finger holes.

## Engines

Standard installation is a pair of 225hp TAMD 60B Volvo diesels, but the boat we had was fitted with the more powerful option of two TAMD 70Ds, which generate 270hp each. They drove two 4-bladed, 26in x 24in (660 x 610mm), contra-rotating props. The engines are flexibly mounted on one-piece steel bearers bolted on to deep beds which run the full length of the boat.

The engine room can be reached through a doorway leading down and forward from the wheelhouse/saloon. So running maintenance can be carried out without the bore of lifting up carpet and flooring, although with the bigger engines there was only just enough clearances over the oil and water fillers.

The installation was on the whole a very neat one. The fuel pump and filter on the port engine, tucked down the side of the boat were difficult, but not impossible to reach. The fuel line filters were also difficult to get at and these and the water traps were at the after end of the engine room, the far end from the doorway.

The wheelhouse/saloon is spacious and airy with its large windows and glass sliding door which gives access to the after deck. A U-shaped settee on the starboard side seats five or six in comfort round a table. The standard table wasn't fitted in our boat; it will be of adjustable height but not fixed to the floor; no matter how heavy and stable it will surely be in danger of being thrown about in a big sea. Along the port side are various cupboards with a wide shelf over, and a wet bar with a small sink and another, smaller Engel Electric fridge. Two of the cupboards are for drinks and have cut-out holders in some familiar shapes. Presumably the sink and



Top, looking forward in the saloon. The table will be replaced by a dual height affair for future boats. The wet bar and stowage for bottles and glasses is opposite the settee. The helmman's seat slides fore and aft and will seat two. Above, the well equipped galley is finished in timber with a polyurethane finish. There is ample space for preparing food and all the stowage is within easy reach of the cook. A gas cooker can be fitted if preferred.

secondary fridge have some connection with liquid refreshment too.

There is nowhere handy to put wet clothes when you come inside from the aft deck.

Access to the after cabin is via a short companionway on the port side. The conventional doors at the top of the steps make them rather narrow but a sliding door will be fitted on later boats, leaving more room when open.

The after cabin is very comfortable with a large double berth, plenty of floor space and two gigantic hanging lockers. The lack of any drawer storage is perhaps the only criticism. On the port side is a narrow dressing table beneath a big mirror. To starboard is a solid escape hatch, leading up to the after deck.

The cabin has its own toilet compartment with Raritan sea toilet, vanity unit and, again, wooden loo roll holder. The shower compartment is separate, an excellent feature, separated from the wc half by plastic curtain. However, as in the forward compartment there is no permanent ventilation.

There are twin fuel tanks with the usual cross-over arrangement. Four 12V, 160amp/hr batteries (two reserved for engine starting but all four can be coupled) are installed, rather alarmingly, under the double bunk in the aft cabin. However, the batteries are vented through a connecting plastic tube to an outlet in the transom. The plastic water tank is also fitted under this bunk.

Our boat was fitted with a 4.5kw G&M generator (an extra), very well insulated and with a well silenced exhaust. A 7½ gallon (35 litre) calorifier provides some hot water from the engine heat (a bigger one would be more useful on a boat this size) and, with the generator installed, is fitted with electric heating, either from the generator or via the shore line, which is a

standard fitting.

The deckhead and bulkheads of the engine room, together with the fuel tanks, are lined with foil-faced foam sound insulation.

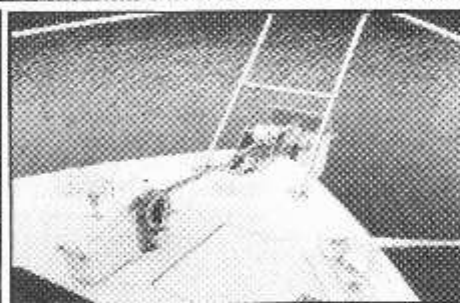
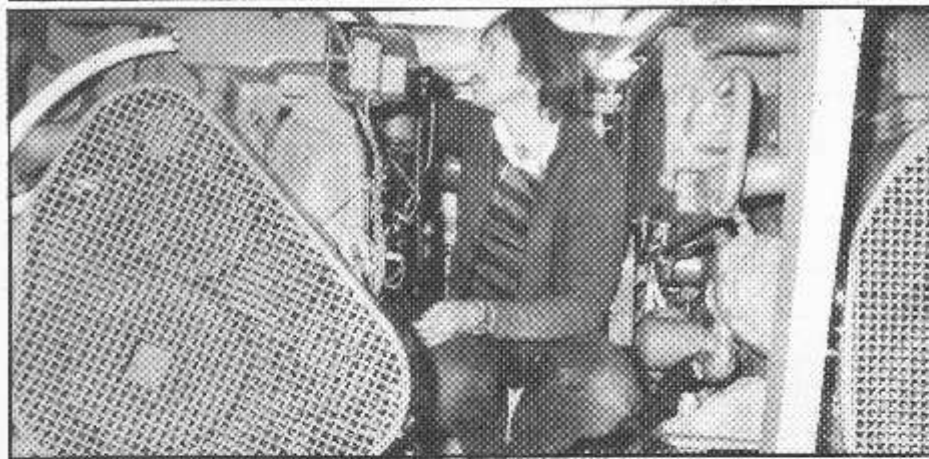
## Accommodation

The standard layout has six berths with two separate cabins and a dinette/double berth opposite the galley. The alternative layout, as in our boat, has a third cabin in place of the dinette with two bunk berths. You gain some privacy, but lose the convenience and sociability of having an eating area near to and on the same level as the galley. Also, the long bulkhead of the cabin is not very attractive.

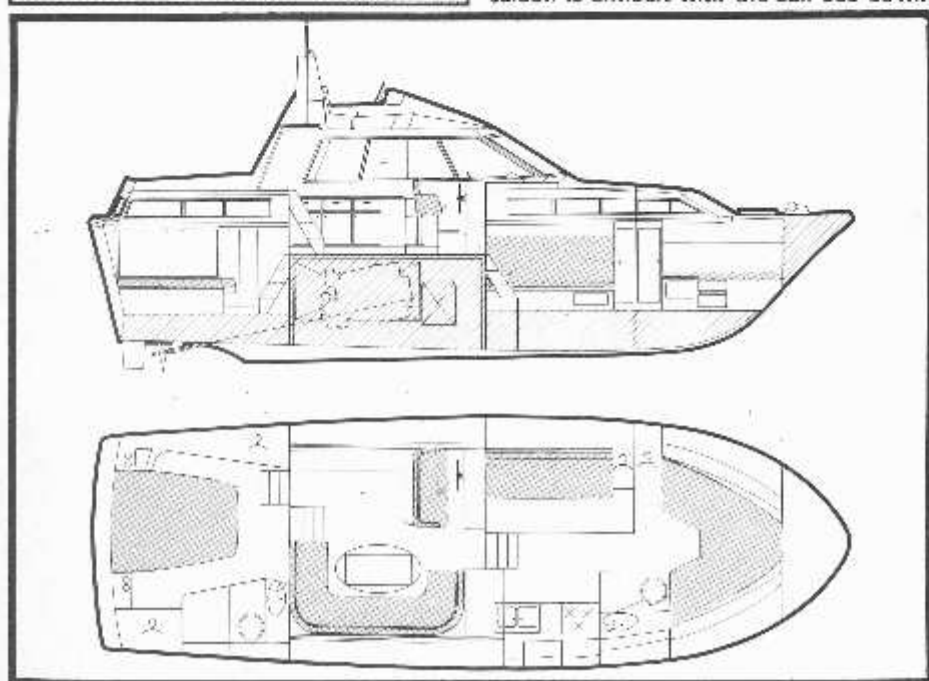
Working from bow to stern we have a forecabin with two vee berths with an effective length of about 6ft 1in (1.84m). There is a central filler to convert the space into a double berth. There's a hanging locker, big storage space under the berths and wide shelving up above. The fore-hatch, of slightly tinted Perspex, is easily worked. It tightens down on a rubber seal and can be fixed open at any angle. The only natural light is through the hatch and through two small windows in the door so this cabin is rather dark.

Just aft, on the starboard side, is a decent-sized toilet compartment with a Raritan sea toilet, a shower, vanity unit, big mirror and — *pièce de résistance* — a mahogany paper holder. The toilet has an opening window, but no other ventilation.

The galley, next aft on the starboard side, has an electric cooker with two rings and an oven. You have to run the generator to operate it. With no generator a gas cooker is fitted and, frankly, this might be more convenient anyway. There's a two-sink unit with a swivelling mixer tap and also a spray rinser on a flexible hose.



Top, the spacious after cabin with its big double berth. The striped timber becomes boring to look at after a while. Centre, the engine room is cramped and servicing at sea would be difficult without taking up the saloon floor. Topping up water and oil is almost impossible. Above, good foredeck with ballista for launching the anchor. The locker is deep and holds plenty of warp as well as the shore power line. Left, looking up to the flying bridge with its awkward sun bed and unusual half mast. Access to the saloon is difficult with the sun bed down.



The area of work surface is adequate, or indeed generous with the covers on the sinks or cooker. The cooker cover folds down into its special slot behind it. Another little refinement is a pull-out chopping cum bread board. Storage space is plentiful, some of it designed to take the full set of glasses, crockery and cutlery which is supplied as standard. An Engel electric fridge is also standard equipment.

The galley is open to the wheelhouse/saloon on the higher level. Even so, with the third cabin arrangement the cook is rather isolated from the rest of the crew. Food can be passed up via a shelf on the half bulkhead between the galley and wheelhouse.

The cabin opposite the galley has two over-and-under bunks. The upper bunk can be lowered to form a backrest for the lower bunk, turning it into a settee but being rather long and narrow, with not very much floor space, it's a cheerless place to sit. There's a hanging locker and a small amount of storage space, nowhere big enough to put a case.

## Deck layout

The foredeck features a Lofrans electric windlass with a 48lb (22kg) Danforth-type anchor held against the stemhead fitting by a spring-loaded device enabling it to be fired three or four feet clear of the bow (this can be done from the wheelhouse). There are two substantial cleats fixed near the edge with metal strips protecting the gunwale.

A locker for bow warps also houses the connection and lead for the shore line. Although the locker looked waterproof one wonders about the wisdom of having the connection right up here.

The pulpit could do with a central rail for safety although as it overhangs (a feature we are never keen on) this would make access over the bow more difficult than it is and it might also snag bow warps.

The guardrails, which do have a central rail, are the right height and the stanchions feel secure. There's a teak grabrail along each side of the wheelhouse but, surprisingly, none along the cabin top.

Midships cleats are fitted for springs and also along the sidedecks are lockers each holding three large fenders — one of the neatest ideas for fender stowage we have come across. One not-so-good feature was the stowage for the boathook, low down outside the wheelhouse, just right for savaging bare feet.

Teak steps on each side of the after deck assist access to it without going right aft, where there are no outer guardrails. After cleats are on the raised deck coaming, but the small locker intended for stern warps on the narrow lower stern deck, which has no guardrail and is partially obstructed by the ensign staff can be difficult to get at. There are steps down to a teak bathing platform (an extra) across the transom.

The raised after deck, with its coaming and solid guardrail is a nice lounging area. Seats and a table can be bought as extras.

Access to the flying bridge is easy, up just three steps. A tinted, shallow windscreen, raked forward, has a tubular steel support around it which could be used as a grabrail. The helmsman's seat is to starboard and a double seat to port. The latter can be converted into a lounging bed by folding the backrest down, inserting an extra piece over the fascia and dropping down another section normally hinged up

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over the companionway. It's a rather cumbersome arrangement and the fitting that holds up the after piece looks insubstantial; if it gave way anyone passing underneath would suffer a nasty head injury.

The half 'roll-bar' takes a steaming light and an anchor light and is supposed to be strong enough to carry a radar scanner. We'd be happier if it went all the way over before carrying that sort of weight.

The port and starboard nav lights, fitted on the wheelhouse sides were crossed-eyed, i.e. the port light showed to about 10 degrees to starboard, and vice versa.

All the decking had a moulded in non-slip which didn't seem too effective. Teak laid decking can be had as an extra.

## Handling

The Royal 40 gave every impression of being a good sea boat. Motoring into a nasty head sea we throttled back from 2300rpm to 2100 to make her more comfortable, but slamming was by no means excessive. Most of the spray was thrown well clear and the pantograph wipers coped manfully with what did hit the windscreen. Going across the sea presented no problems and in a following or quartering sea we were very impressed by the way she held her course, although, as on any motor boat in such conditions,



At full speed in sparkling conditions off Poole, the Royal 40 makes light of a moderate chop.

steering called for considerable concentration. The Morse steering seemed very stiff, an impression accentuated by the fact that at any speed the turning circle was far from tight.

Slow speed handling proved quite easy, using the good Morse dual-lever controls. The high sides and superstructure are easily caught by the wind and you have to get used to the effect this has.

The helmsman's seat in the wheelhouse is very comfortable. It will seat two and is adjustable fore and aft. The foot-rest on the seat column can be lifted up out of the way when you want to stand to steer. The chart table beside the controls can take a chart folded in half and can be used by the helmsman or the passenger beside him, a useful feature. The table lifts up to reveal what could be chart stowage, but on our boat were the controls for the generator.

Standard equipment includes Boat Leveler trim tabs, Neco autopilot, Sunlog and Silva compass. In the wheelhouse the compass was over 3ft (0.9m) from the helmsman and at that distance a compass with a clearer card would be preferable. A full set of Volvo engine instruments is fitted in the wheelhouse, angled at 45 degrees and easily read.

On the flying bridge the helmsman has

a comfortable bucket seat, again adjustable fore and aft, and good all-round visibility. The only instruments are a Silva compass, partly obscured by the wheel, rev. counter, temperature and oil warning lights and engine start and stop. The lever that engages the flying bridge or wheelhouse steering wheels was, on our boat, extremely difficult to operate.

## Conclusion

The standard of construction and sea-keeping qualities of the Royal 40 are certainly better than many, if not most of the other boats around in her class. Whether she's worth the £20,000 to £30,000 that she costs over those other boats we wonder, but some prospective buyers might well think so. There are several good ideas in the fitting out, the doorway to the engine room and the fender stowage for example, and one or two which haven't worked so well, like the lounging bed on the flying bridge. We would prefer the open plan layout to the third cabin arrangement but there may be those for whom night-time privacy is higher on the list of priorities.

# Technical data

## Dimensions

L.o.a.	39ft 8in (12.09m)
Beam	12ft 10in (3.91m)
Deaught	3ft 11in (1.20m)
Displacement	24,640lb (11,186kg)
Fuel capacity	350gal (1600lt)
Water capacity	132gal (600lt)
No. of berths	6 (4 singles, 2 doubles, or 4 doubles, 2 singles)

## Engines

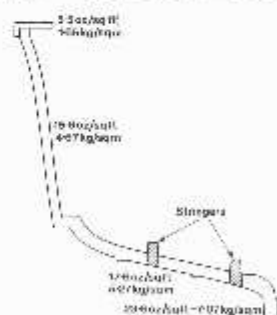
2 Volvo TAMD 70D diesels driving through conventional shafts.

Capacity	6730cc
No. cylinders	6
Max rpm	2500
Max hp	270

## Hull and deck

Material	Hand lay-up, polyester resin with chopped strand mat and woven roving reinforcement in female moulds. Balsa-core in decks.
Colour	All white or all cream.

Price	£95,000 ex VAT as inspected, with £8,150
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worth of extras including generator, swim platform and optional third cabin. £4,000 less with 225hp Volvos.

## Builders

Storebro Bruks Aktiebolag, S-530 83 Storebro, Sweden.

## Distributors

Boat Showrooms of London, 286-290 Kensington High St, London W14. Tel: 01-602 0123.

## Designer

J. Lindblom/W. H. Wilke (1978).

Fuel consumption at 2200 rpm (cruising speed) 10.97 gal/hr/engine. Range 275 miles.

