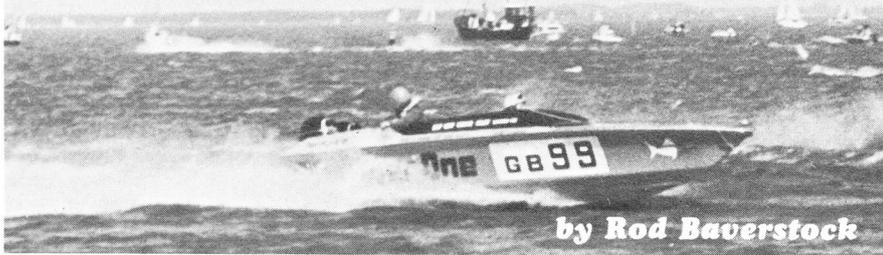


THE TIGER SHARK 65

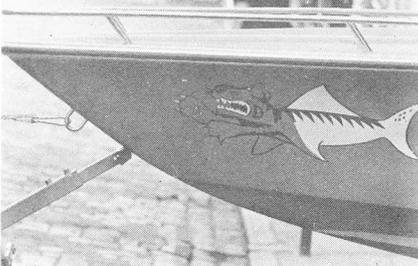


by Rod Baverstock

What ever happened to Avengers? This question has been asked many times since the demise of Avenger Boats (1971) Ltd. The moulds were bought by Marine Design Products, part of East Kent Marine, in December 1973 and nothing more was heard of the boats, although one was built for Ski Racing for the Tiger Shark Racing Team (the racing side of East Kent Marine).



The Tiger Shark 65



Note the different bow shapes

Little has been heard of the Avenger boats (now called Tiger Sharks) because John Hoiles (technical director) with the aid of the boat's original designer Don Shead, has been re-designing the hull and decks.

The problem with the 21ft Avenger (now the Tiger Shark 65) was that although it was a good sea boat, she was inclined to dip her bow about every third wave, dumping about the top 12 inches of the wave in the driver's lap. Apart from being uncomfortable, it was inclined to put one's neck in 'jeopardy'.

John Hoiles has raised the bow 10 inches, increased the bow's flair and done away with the sloping decks. In fact the Tiger Shark 65 looks similar to a scaled down 'ABO. It might not sound a lot, but it has altered the boat out of all recognition, especially as far as handling is concerned.

For a start, the boat is very dry and although she is still a narrow boat, she corners far better and seems to have lost her tendency to want to roll on a tight, fast turn. The one I tested was the new ski racing boat, Tiger One, powered by twin 150 Mercurys with contra-rotating props. It was about a Force 3-4 with quite a swell running off Folkestone when I tried her, and she behaved extremely well in the following sea where I was able to run flat out (60+ at 5,300 revs) without feeling as if she wanted to bury her nose. This was without using the power-trim, which was left

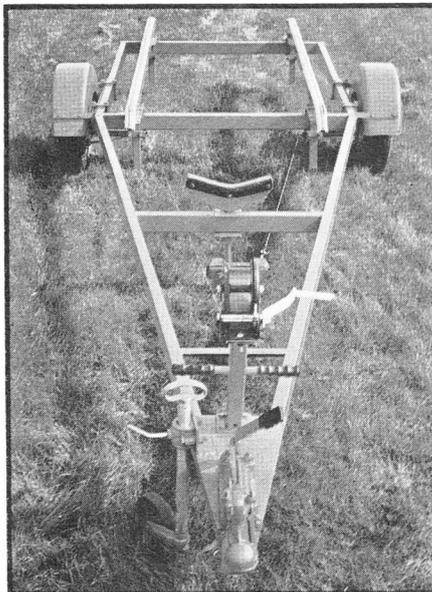
in the 'normal' position. With the trim in the same position, I ran into the head-sea and she performed very well and never tried to stick her nose under. On the couple of occasions that she seemed as if she might nose-dive, the extra flair of the bow lifted her enough to prevent nothing more than a drop of spray aboard. How she will perform against other racing boats, only time will tell, but she won both races in her first outing over the bank holiday and in conditions reaching Force 7 to 8.

On a personal note, it was a refreshing change to arrive to test a boat and find that the outfit was completely ready to test and that the manufacturers did not have a list of 'things wrong which we were going to fix but there wasn't time before the test.'

The fitting out of Tiger One can best be described as immaculate, and if I was going to field a racing boat, I would certainly go to the Fisherman's Stores, (part of East Kent Marine) at Folkestone, who did an incredible job in setting up and fitting out this boat. The Tiger Shark 65 is not a cheap boat at about £2,000 plus VAT, but if you are after a fast, safe sea-going boat then it must be on your short-list.



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