

ELECTRONICALLY REPRINTED FROM DECEMBER 2006

# Powerboat

The World's Leading Performance Boating Magazine



[ VECTOR V280-R ]

[ 07 PERFORMANCE TRIALS PART I ]



# BAT BOAT RETURNS

THE LATEST INCARNATION OF A UNIQUE DESIGN, VECTOR'S V280-R MIGHT ALSO BE THE GREATEST.

**L**AST TIME I SAW AN OCKE MANNERFELT-designed “Bat Boat,” it was up close and personal—and underwater. Allow me to explain. About six years ago, Bob Teague, this magazine’s lead test driver, and I were running a canopied 24-footer off Hawk’s Cay in the Florida Keys. We launched off the back of a 4-foot swell and punched right into, and through, the gut of the 6-footer behind it. It was not an experience either of us would care to repeat.

That was then. Now we were standing at the launch ramp on a cool September morning and the “Bat Boat” before us was the stunning V280-R. Built by the Canadian company Vector Powerboats, the 28-footer was pure sport boat with a wraparound windshield, four bucket seats and a 625-horsepower engine from Ilmor Marine.

Newer members of the POWERBOAT crew had never seen a “Bat Boat” beyond the pages of the magazine, and they circled around it with wide eyes. Even those of us familiar with the stepped-hull design, which features wing-like extensions aft for stability, were captivated.

## WORKMANSHIP

Though Vector is a new outfit, the company has veterans working under its roof. Among them is Rex Jardine, previously one of the top people at Champion Boats. Experience is a very good thing to have for a company trying to build a boat as difficult, particularly when it comes to tooling, as the V280-R.

Devoid of flat surfaces, the V280-R is one tricky curve after another. Its deck is completely rounded—its arched wings are actually additions to the deck. Not only did Vector completely redesign the deck of the boat to accept a wraparound windshield with the Vector name engraved in the center billet support, the builder pulled the deck from its mold without so much as a dimple.

The hull and deck were capped and seamlessly bonded together with fiberglass. The boat was laid up with vinylester resin and knitted fabrics. No wood was used in the construction. Penske foam was used as the core of the stringers and transom.

The striking graphics were done in paint.

Like the boat’s tooling, they were flawless.

“This is one of the nicest ‘Bat Boats’ I’ve ever seen,” Teague said.

Space in the V280-R’s engine compartment wasn’t abundant, but it was quite accessible thanks to a pair of manually opening fiberglass hatches. Vector used solid-mount feet on polished L-angles through-bolted to the stringers to hold the Ilmor MV-10 in place. Billet boxes secured the boat’s two batteries to the engine compartment sole, which was finished in smooth yellow gelcoat.

## PERFORMANCE

With its swept, wing-like hull and deck, the V280-R doesn’t present a whole lot of surface for the wind to grab. It doesn’t create much drag—it’s what designers like to call “slippery.”

The 625-hp Ilmor engine was the biggest power we’d ever seen in a Mannerfelt hull, and we wondered how the boat would respond. At 3,800 pounds without fuel, it wasn’t exactly heavy for a 28-footer. Would the power be too much for it?

Not even close. At 90.1 mph, the boat's top speed, the V280-R was rock steady. Reading the water ahead, we could "see" gusts of cross-wind, and yet we never felt them. The hull rode easily over 1-foot river chop. Propeller selection, which came in the form of a 28"-pitch Mercury Bravo One wheel, was ideal, as was the drive height for the 1.5:1 ratio Teague Custom Marine Platinum XR drive.

That assertion isn't based solely on top speed—far from it. Acceleration was excellent. The V280-R came on plane in 3.3 seconds and reached 84 mph in 20 seconds. It got "right with the program," in the words of Teague, in midrange acceleration drills, running from 30 to 50 mph in 3.7 seconds, 40 to 60 mph in 4.3 seconds and 40 to 70 mph in 6.7 seconds.

Among the most pleasant aspects of the Mannerfelt hull has been its ability to swoop gracefully through turns. That hasn't changed. The V280-R was a pure and steady carver, making it a kick in the pants to drive.

From every seat in the boat, the wraparound acrylic windscreen proved effective. That's a big plus in a 90-mph offering.

Without question, the unique deck shape and lack of a rubrail did not make the V280-R the easiest boat to dock. But once you're there, tying up should be easy thanks to Accon Pull-Up cleats on the bow and each side of the windshield.

## INTERIOR

Built with a sole liner, the V280-R had four bucket seats. For access to the cockpit, the builder incorporated step plates and molded steps into the gunwales. We found the bucket seats to be supportive and comfortable, yet there were no grab handles for the rear bucket passengers or co-pilot. There was, however, a billet footrest in front of the co-pilot that folded down for access to the cabin.

Instruments, as well as the throttle and shifter, at the starboard-side helm were from Livorsi Marine. The steering wheel tilted, and rocker switches for the accessories were to the right side of it. Though the stereo itself was located by the driver's right knee and difficult to reach, there was a remote control for it in a center podium.

Though the boat's tiny cabin did have a V-berth, it was primarily designed as an open stowage space. To let a little light into the space, which will be useful when it comes time to find gear, the builder included a deck hatch.

## OVERALL

With just four seats, a miniscule cabin and "wings," the V280-R isn't your average 28-foot sport boat. But for those with a taste for the extraordinary, it's a compelling choice, especially given the build quality and performance. Vector has taken this proven design to the next level. **P**



### TEST RESULTS: VECTOR POWERBOATS V280-R

#### TEST CONDITIONS

Temperature/humidity	92 degrees/32 percent
Wind speed/water conditions	1 to 2 mph/1' chop

#### HULL INFORMATION

Deadrise at transom	NA
Centerline/beam	28'/10'
Hull weight	3,800 pounds

#### PRICING INFORMATION

Base retail with MerCruiser 496 Mag HO engine	\$150,500
Price as tested	\$171,250

#### ENGINE & PROPELLER

Engine	Ilmor MV-10 625
Cylinder type	V-10
Cubic-inch displacement/horsepower	505/625
Lower-unit gear ratio	1.5:1
Propeller	Mercury Bravo One 15 1/4" x 28"

#### OPTIONS ON TEST BOAT

Upgrade to Ilmor MV-10 625 engine (\$20,750).

#### ACCELERATION

5 seconds	.....33 mph
10 seconds	.....60 mph
15 seconds	.....76 mph
20 seconds	.....84 mph

#### MIDRANGE ACCELERATION

30-50 mph	.....3.7 seconds
40-60 mph	.....4.3 seconds
40-70 mph	.....6.7 seconds

#### RPM VS. MPH

1000	.....7 mph
1500	.....13 mph
2000	.....25 mph
2500	.....34 mph
3000	.....43 mph
3500	.....52 mph
4000	.....65 mph
4500	.....75 mph
5000	.....83 mph

#### TOP SPEED AT RPM

Radar	.....90.1 mph at 5,550
GPS	.....90 mph

#### PLANING

Time to plane	.....3.3 seconds
Minimum planing speed	.....16.5 mph

#### FUEL ECONOMY

At 20 mph	.....NA
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#### FUEL CAPACITY

	55 gallons
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#### TEST CONDUCTED AT (ELEVATION)

	Parker, Ariz. (450 feet)
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#### MANUFACTURER

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FOR MORE PHOTOS VISIT [WWW.POWERBOATMAG.COM](http://WWW.POWERBOATMAG.COM)

**WHAT WE LOVED:** Immaculate tooling—the best we've ever seen on a "Bat Boat."

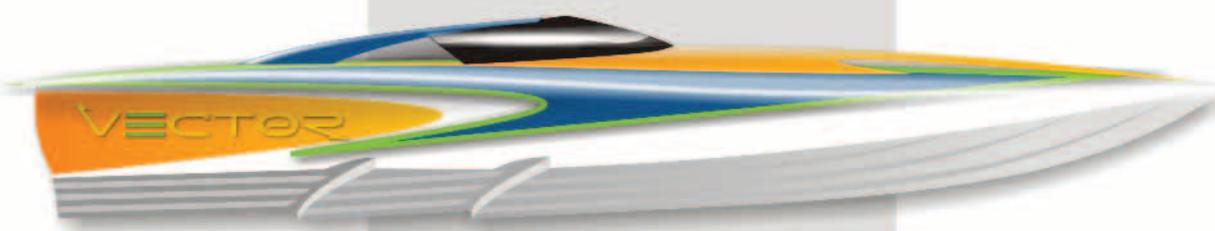
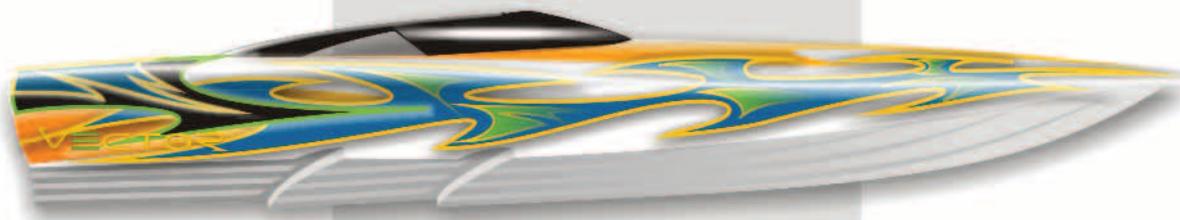
**WHAT WE'D LIKE TO SEE:** Grab handles for the co-pilot and passengers.

Clockwise from top left: Built with a sole liner, the V280-R had four comfortable bucket seats. A unique billet footrest for the co-pilot folded down for access to the cabin. Ilmor's MV-10 power plant filled the engine compartment nicely. At the helm, Vector installed a tilt steering wheel and a Livorsi Marine throttle-and-shifter unit in the center-console.





CUSTOM GRAPHICS



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Let our team of talented In-House designers  
craft a custom graphic to your own taste  
and style.

The Vector V280-R can be as unique  
as you are

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Your Dealer:

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