



NOT SINCE A VIKING CAPTAIN NAMED MAR THE BONELESS GAVE HIS OARSMEN A SWIFT CLIP BEHIND THE EARS, THEN SPURRED THEM ON WITH THE PROMISE OF PILLAGE, HAS A VESSEL SEEN SUCH A RADICAL PERFORMANCE BOOST.  
By Mark Rothfield

# RIVIERA 5000 SY



ABOVE: The tender garage was a must-keep feature from the 4700, plus the designers have made room for a 3.1-metre Zodiack between the Zeus legs.

It's a better shaft-drive guise, the Riviera 4700 had a top speed of 29 knots with 575-horsepower Caterpillar C9 engines. Now renamed the 5000 SY and sporting twin Cummins MerCruiser QSC 600s driving Zeus pods, it achieves an impressive 31.9 knots.

Mid-range cruise figures are significantly better again, while the vessel's fuel economy is enhanced by 12 to 15 per cent and in some conditions, up to 30 per cent.

Naval architects would sell their gummies for that kind of improvement, coming at a time when buyers are watching their bucks and some owners are questioning their long-term commitment. It's a revolution – a 'Revolution' if you like.

A few years ago, the 4700 was deemed good enough to win the AMF Marine Awards Australian Boat of the Year and Modern Boating magazine's Cruiser of the Year titles. Changing it was risky, but to call it a new model, even with the 5000 badge, is stretching the truth somewhat.

Rather it was a relatively easy conversion candidate, for it had existing hull tunnels and sufficient cockpit floor height to fit the drives underneath.

The 4700 was already 54 feet (16.46 metres) long once the platform and bowsprit were factored in, and actual hull length remains 50 feet 9 inches (15.51 metres), so it really just brings parity between the dimensions and the model designation.

It also brings the 5000 in line with Riv's other pod-driven SY models. In this case, Riv's designers chose Zeus over Volvo IPS because the pods are a little more adaptable. There are other integrated attributes, such as automatic trim, autopilot and a GPS-inspired Stihook system that holds the vessel's position.

Moving the motors aft demanded some juggling of fuel tanks and bulkheads to balance the weight distribution. Tank capacities are unchanged, though the greater fuel efficiency means a longer range. Also, more people fit destinations so they're not carrying around too much dead weight in water.

In a bid to lighten the displacement, the binion schedules were reviewed. It resulted in the use of a foam-cored timber veneer for drawers and cupboard carcasses, reducing weight without compromising the aesthetic appeal of the cherry, teak or beech facia.

The hull now sits appreciably higher in the water, and because the



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THERE'S AN APPETITE FOR LIFE SPENT WITH A RIESLING, NOT A REEL, IN HAND, SO ALONG WITH THE OPTION OF A HEIGHT-ADJUSTABLE TABLE THAT CONVERTS TO A SUNBED, THERE'S NOW AN AFT-FACING SEATING AND A TABLE.

Pods provide direct push, the bow lifts a little higher. The ride is drier, especially at displacement speeds – the old 4700 tended to be nose-heavy.

At the opposite end, the tender garage was a must-keep feature, and the designers managed to include room for a 3.1-metre Zodiac in between the Zeus' legs. The lid opens electrically and the hydraulic boarding platform lowers about 450 millimetres, so it's a very easy launch and retrieval process.

Feedback from owners suggested that more seating was needed around the cockpit table. There's an appetite for life spent with a rieling, no ta reel, in hand, so along with the option of a height-adjustable table that converts to a sunbed, there's now an aft-facing seating and a table.

Sacrificed for the new seating were a fridge and sink to port. The ice maker has been shifted to starboard, and the galley sink and fridges are close enough to service the cockpit. Amico flooring in the saloon can stand up to wet feet.

Galley upgrades include Vitafigo drawer fridges secured by stainless-steel catches and a 30mm wider benchtop, plus space for an optional dishwasher and microwave.

The dashboard is sized and redesigned to accommodate two optional Raymarine C140 widescreens as well as the Cummins/Zeus Vessel View gauges. Sporty yacht customers are doing long trips so they needed the additional navigation screen.

The dash is rendered in dark grey leather, which looks serene to real and is non-reflective. The high-backed helm seats are the same colour, unless you choose to have them covered in the same material that's been used on the lounge.

It's the mid-cabin that has gained most from having pods. Where previously, there were only double bunks, a lateral double berth now occupies the former machinery room. The Riv5000 also has a single berth.



FACT FILE: RIVIERA 5000 SY

LQA:	16.69 metres
Hull length:	15.46 metres
Beam:	4.76 metres
Fuel:	2,300 litres
Water:	750 litres
Power:	2 x Cummins 600hp diesels with Zeus drives
Top speed:	31.9 knots
Cruise speed:	24 knots
Price:	\$1,095,000 base



TOP: Entertain your guests in true Riv style. ABOVE: The dashboard is rendered in dark grey leather, which looks sensational and is non-reflective.

The forward cabin's lateral double berth was more than two metres, so taller people can have a comfortable night's sleep. It also has a spacious ensuite with separate shower stall.

To starboard is the third cabin housing bunk beds, though there's the option of reconfiguring it as a bayer with leather lounge.

A mid-aisle cupboard can be used as either a laundry/linen cupboard or a pantry, with washer/dryer combo or a fridge. The former engine room is now the perfect resting place for the Onan EQD 11 kW genset, the air-conditioning units, electrical components and more.

The saloon also becomes a restful place for passengers now that there are no engines underfoot. With the beautifully framed door and the peerless, pillar-less hopper window closed, it drives very quietly. At slower speeds, the engines emit a faint whir reminiscent of the sound of a passenger jet; manoeuvrability, meanwhile, is almost like that of a jet boat.

Compared to the conventional 4700, the Riv5000's performance almost defies imagination. There's no parking transition, just smooth acceleration. If you're in a hurry – or you're a loon – its out-of-hole acceleration is brilliant.

At full stick in to a 1.5-metre sea, the ride softness and noise suppression were apparent. To chew only 50 litres per side at 16 knots is pretty darn good, while to use 180 litres total at 28 knots is exceptional for a 50-plus-toner weighing 18 tonnes.

As we passed a special purpose cruise ship on Sydney Harbour, which had the words BIG LIFE emblazoned on its topsides, it occurred to me that the Zeus pods had elevated the 5000 SY hull to new heights in performance, handling and space utilisation.

The 5000 SY's finish and fit-out remain, as ever, stylish and sophisticated. ●