

# MAN vs. WILD

80

BOAT LIFE

Photographer – David Goldman

## Pump it up

Bear Grylls on a dinghy? But this speed demon comes with a performance rating. Buckle up for safety



"No instructions necessary," was the promise, and it was actually very easy to put together

### ACTION MAN

Bear Grylls is the youngest-ever Chief Scout to the UK Scout Association and honorary Colonel to the Royal Marines Commandos. He has authored 14 books including the No.1 bestseller *Mud, Sweat & Tears*. He hosts hit TV show *The Island with Bear Grylls* on Channel 4 in the UK and *Running Wild with Bear Grylls* on NBC in the US.

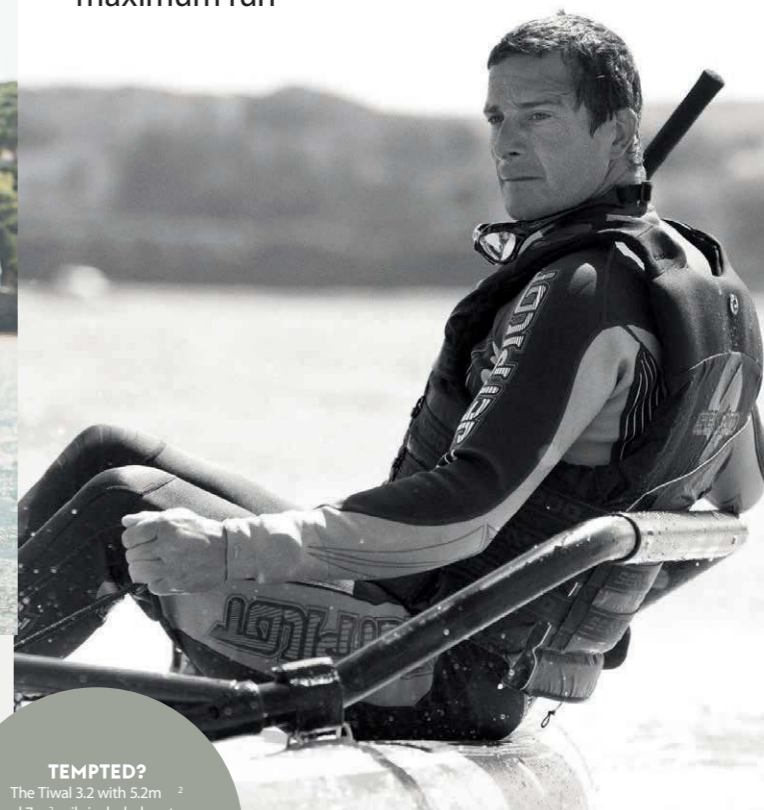


In a decent wind, the Tiwal 3.2 skims and planes across the sea, more like a windsurfer than a sailboat

81

BOAT LIFE

The whole experience is one of minimum fuss, minimum rigging and maximum fun



**T**he Tiwal 3.2 comes with some pretty big claims, which I was very keen to test for myself.

The words "high performance" and "inflatable sailing dinghy" don't often appear in the same sentence, but if Tiwal wants to offer me "the thrill of speed and glide", bring it on!

The other claim for this little runabout is how compact and easily assembled it is. The 3.2 metre, 50 kilo design means it can fold away easily into any tender garage, or even the boot of a car if you want. Nice touch.

So: an inflatable, dynamic, fast, one- or two-man sailboat that is also easy to put together. "No instructions necessary," was the promise – which I loved, naturally. In fact, the battery powered mini air-pump (a cool bit of kit in itself) made short work of the base, and the frame was quickly assembled and clicked effortlessly into place. Good so far.

Then to launch. Already the Tiwal 3.2 looked cool, and eager to get on the water: sleek, fast, exciting and with no nasty fibreglass edges to smack your head on if you capsize. It was very windy – blowing 35 knots – and all the main sailing races had been cancelled, but this just seemed tailor-made for me. The dinghy would be fun to test in these conditions.

And it was! The Tiwal 3.2 took off at a rate of knots. The last time I felt such a surge of raw power under sail was with Ellen MacArthur in her Open 60 yacht *Kingfisher*. We bore away from the wind in a reach and experienced the surge of adrenaline and power as we just took off. Now, here I was in the Tiwal 3.2, and it was amazing! I bore away too

### TEMPTED?

The Tiwal 3.2 with 5.2m<sup>2</sup> and 7m<sup>2</sup> sails included costs €6,530 inc VAT. Extras include the electric pump and battery, at €315 inc VAT. [tiwal.com/tiwal-3-2](http://tiwal.com/tiwal-3-2)

fast from the wind, the nose dipped – and wham – we pitchpoled like a catapult.

But once I figured out that I had to really shift the weight back to stop the bow nosing into the waves, it was awesome, skimming and planing across the big sea more like a windsurfer than a sailboat. I loved it. And like a windsurfer, the craft is pretty easy to right when you do capsize. Once the boat is faced into the wind, just push the underwater wing down with your feet while pulling on the daggerboard. The strengthening rods at the base of the mast give you something to grab to get on the front of the boat.

Later on, when conditions offshore had calmed down a bit, it felt safe enough to let my 11-year-old son have a go (the Tiwal 3.2 can accommodate two adults, or one adult and two children). That's the joy of this little craft: the V-shaped underbody means you can make it work for you, whether you want a thrill-ride or a cruise around the bay; switch the sail size for lighter winds – just like that windsurfer – and off you go. The whole experience is one of minimum fuss, minimum rigging and maximum fun.

In truth, awaiting the delivery of an inflatable performance dinghy, I wasn't sure what I was going to get. But this little baby surpassed my expectations by a yardarm. It's a cool, exciting, but forgiving toy.