

# VICTOR

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EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

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# Sea and be seen

Vector is the world-class powerboat  
– and brand-new brand name –  
you're about to see a lot more of.  
Stephanie Drax reports





Until four years ago, there was a gap in the marine performance market exactly the size of a Vector 40R.

There was no superbrand, no aquatic powerhouse, no Ferrari on water. But the alliance of Malcolm Crease, a media-savvy entrepreneur, and Peter Dredge, a powerboat racing champion, changed everything.

In 2014, when their V40R competed for the first time at the prestigious Cowes Offshore Classic Powerboat Race, it finished over four nautical miles ahead of its nearest rival. That meant travelling at an average speed of 94mph for the 194 nautical miles of the course. The team – with Peter Dredge and Simon Powell at the helm – smashed the record, won seven trophies, and then did it all again the next year with a 19-minute lead. In 2016 they're intent on the hat-trick and are taking delivery of a new boat with an extra 500hp to see it through.

As if unbeatable performance wasn't enough, Vector has partnered with the glamour of Martini – an iconic name renowned for its sponsorship of motorsports in the 1970s and 80s. The striped livery is emblazoned across the two state-of-the-art V40Rs – aptly named Rosso and Bianco – that compete under the banner of Vector Martini Racing. And to keep things suitably classy, Porsche, Bowers & Wilkins, and Henri Lloyd are also sponsors: "We provide many of the benefits associated with the partnership of a Formula 1 team," says Crease, who is Vector's CEO as well as cofounder. "I simply wanted to assemble a better group of partners than any Formula 1 team in the process."

The genesis of the V40R is in the design of the infamous B28, crafted by the world-leading powerboat architect Ocke Mannerfelt and developed by Vector Powerboats Inc. The B28 was the first to feature a stepped hull, which had a remarkable effect on efficiency and performance: it was banned from competitive racing for five years because no other manufacturer could

match its prowess. Today, the futuristic frame of the V40R comprises of carbon fibre and Kevlar, and is propelled through the water by a pair of mighty 1100bhp V10 engines. Under the closed canopy, the vessel's bucket seats can carry four team members, each strapped into a reassuring five-point harness.

If you'd like to know what it feels like to skim across the waves at high speed, the iRace programme offers VIPs, corporate guests and partners a day out that turns the notion of pottering along with a fishing rod on its head: for £50,000, you can sit in the V40R alongside the team as it rattles up to 100mph. With 30 years of racing experience under his belt, plus 14 years as head of powerboat safety at the Royal Yachting Association, Dredge acts as pilot. Backed by an unparalleled competitive record, Vector Martini Racing claims to be the only professional powerboat racing team in the world insured to allow such antics.

Like Formula 1, Vector uses high-octane competitions as a testing ground for its retail offerings. "The credibility is borne out of the race-winning and performance," explains Crease. "We won't put a product to market until it's tried, tested and we know that it works. We want to be perceived globally as a multidimensional performance brand." With that in mind, the company now boasts two ranges: Vector Powerboats and Vector Performance Yachts.

Manufactured in Canada, the Powerboat range is developed from the racing models but designed to offer the ultimate in comfort, style and safety. The V28R features the "batwing" carbon fibre and Kevlar hull of the B28, which keeps it steady when the turns are tight and fast, and enables it to reach speeds of 95 knots (109mph). At 31ft with an outboard motor, the V28R coolly delivers more power and torque than a McLaren MP4-12C supercar – making it a rather nippy little superyacht tender. The V40GT, on the other hand, is a grand tourer version of the racing prototype, and features a unique

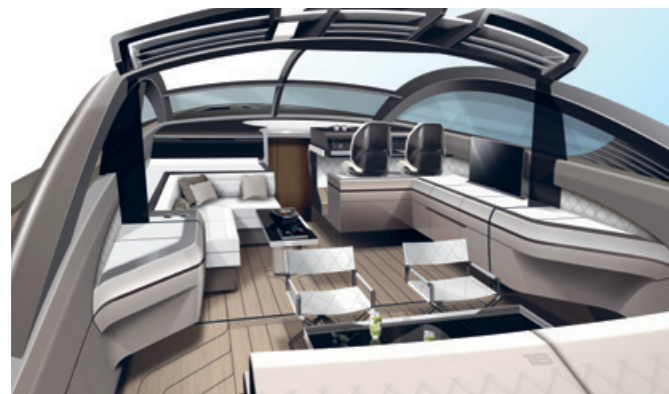
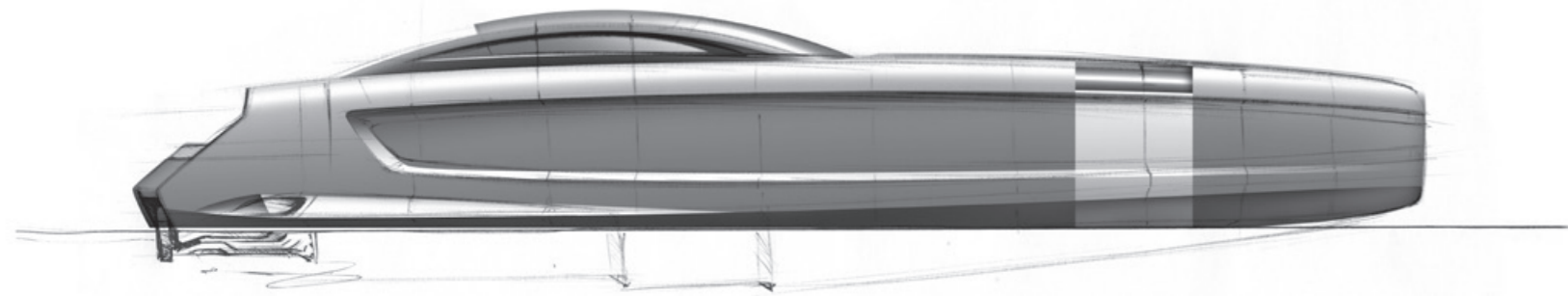


Previous spread: The V40 Bianco lifts off on Lake Como.

Top: Malcolm Crease (top) and Peter Dredge at Coniston Records Week.

Bottom: The V40 Rosso competing at the Cowes Classic.





variable aerodynamic wing system that deploys at high speed to ensure stability and performance. If you're not too busy zipping across the water at up to 120 knots (137mph) with four times the power of that McLaren, then you might have time to appreciate the wood veneers, leather upholstery, plush carpeting and bespoke audiovisual system. Luxury aside, this is a working powerboat through and through: the V40S was recently conceived for a Middle East defence firm using a variant of the award-winning V40 hull, and is essentially a high-speed interceptor on water. "We're in discussion with 11 governments off the back of that build," says Crease.

The new Vector Performance Yacht range – think both speedy and spacious – is made exclusively by Rainsford Mann Design in London, and will likely be built

in the UK. Though each one is tailor-made to the owner's specifications, hand-stitched leather, titanium trim, carbon-fibre inlays and touch-screen audiovisual technology all come as standard. Bold and stealthy, the 55ft V55GT is constructed using epoxy carbon fibre and features automotive glass technology developed for use in

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F1 cars. It comfortably accommodates four, all interiors are bespoke, and the exterior can be finished in the hue of your choice. "The V55GT costs

£4.5 million to buy, and we already have three clients who have ordered it as a fast chase-boat for an existing superyacht, or as a day-boat," says Crease. "This is our retail supercar and it's designed to be exclusive." No more than four of these boats will be built per year, and each hull will have its own unique identity to secure its rarity and resale value. Those seeking bigger models are in luck: designs are already being drawn up for the V65GT, V85GT and V125GT versions.

It's likely you'll be seeing a lot of the Vector brand on screens and in the press in the near future. The Martini Racing division is planning a TV show in which celebrities break world records in the V40R; a feature film is in development; a new racing series will be announced in 2017; and then there's the launch of Vector World, a high-end

tourist attraction-cum-design studio: "It will have a museum, an opportunity to experience boats at high speed, and a facility where you can see your boat being built," he reveals. The first site is due to be announced in the UAE in September, with China and Europe set to follow.

It's jaw-dropping what the company has achieved in the space of four years. So how did they do it? "Before I put a boat in the water I wanted to create a marine performance brand that kids could aspire to, in the same way as they would a Porsche or a Ducati," Crease says. Whatever guise Vector takes next, it all started with one thing in mind: the perfect powerboat.

[vectormartiniracing.com](http://vectormartiniracing.com)  
[vectorpowerboats.com](http://vectorpowerboats.com)

Left: Artist's impression of the exterior, cockpit, and open-plan interior of the V55GT.

Right: The V40's stepped hull is based on an infamous design by leading powerboat architect Ocke Mannerfelt.