

BOMBARD RIBS AND BOMBARD INFLATABLE BOATS ARE THE SECOND LARGEST BRAND NAME OF THESE TYPES OF BOATS IN THE WORLD.



They came about after a wonderful Explorer Dr. Alain Bombard, who was in the 1950s, a French Naval officer and biologist was the first to combine the outboard engine, a rigid floor and a boat shaped inflatable.

The former airplane-manufacturer, Zodiac, built a boat which a friend of Alain Bombard, the diver Jacques-Yves Cousteau began to use.

He set himself to sail alone across the Atlantic in a 15ft Zodiac dinghy in order to show that a human being can survive for weeks if not months by drinking seawater and juice pressed from the flesh of fish.

He left Casablanca, October 19 1952 and Dr. Alain Bombard sailed across the Atlantic Ocean in this inflatable in the hope of proving that any survivor of a shipwreck could survive on fresh water and fish. The fish that he found contained between 50%-80% fresh water which was salt free.

Dr. Alain Bombard achieved worldwide fame with this venture which although a scientific experiment showed foolhardy audacity.

65 days after leaving Casablanca he landed on a beach in Barbados. He was emaciated and anaemic but still able to walk the two miles to the nearest police station. He had endured terror, solitude, despair, storms and shark attacks. His belief that humans can survive drinking small quantities of seawater was forcefully vindicated. But even more important than water or food, he

said, was mental attitude: “The survivor of a shipwreck, deprived of everything, must never lose hope.”

His triumph in December 1952 did wonders for the sales of the Zodiac dinghy which became a popular recreational craft.

After more than a century, the firm of Zodiac started by Maurice Mallet in 1896 has become a major international enterprise. It owes its success, first and foremost, to its original shareholders.

Even during the most critical periods or when faced with cash-flow problems, they kept their faith in the family business.

Zodiac has also drawn on the talent of inventive engineers, particularly the turn-of-the-century balloonists and Pierre Debrouette, father of the modern inflatable boat. Lastly, Zodiac owes a great debt to world-renowned ambassadors, defenders of safety at sea and the environment-Captain Jacques-Yves Cousteau and Dr. Alain Bombard in particular.

Hence Zodiac are still manufacturing this diverse range of boats under the name Bombard

