Sealegs 777: The All-Terrain RIB

I walked down the dock in Newport, Rhode Island, and there she was: a rugged-looking rigid inflatable with ... four wheels? Meet the Sealegs 777.

The concept is simple and ingenious: You press a button, raise or lower the four 25-by-12-inch wheels via marinized hydraulic cylinders, and drive the 777, compliments of power steering and all-wheel drive, in and out of the water at a boat ramp, a beach or even the backyard of your waterfront home.

On land, the 777 (25-foot-5-inch length overall) motors down the road at about 5 mph thanks to its 24 hp Honda four-stroke inboard engine. At this speed, the RIB avoids a motor-vehicle designation, so it doesn't need numerous other equipage or seat belts, turning lights, etc.

My RIB was powered for the water with a 150 hp Evinrude E-TEC outboard, and moving across the bay's short chop at 28-plus knots was comfortable thanks to its heavy-duty construction and deep-V (21-degree aft deadrise) hull form.

The Sealegs 777 is built of 5083-grade aluminum with a 5 mm-thick hull bottom and six Hypalon inflatable tubes. Seven stringers add backbone, and there's a bulkhead set every 18 inches. Suffice it to say, it can take whatever you dish out. Price: $169,000. 781-740-0002, sealegs.com. — *Patrick Sciacca*

◀ CALL ME ANYTIME There's a laundry list of features to check off for the Cobra MR HH500 FLT BT handheld VHF: It's waterproof; it floats, has a noise-canceling microphone and a BURP feature that clears water out of the grille via vibration. But here's what I liked best: I could connect to my smartphone via Bluetooth and make phone calls through it. Sure, I have a protective case for my phone, but most times I still feel the safest place for it is in my pocket. I linked the Cobra VHF to my cell in about 30 seconds — it's that easy — and it immediately solved a problem all cellphone users face on board: It's much easier to hear and speak, thanks to the more robust microphone system a marine VHF demands. $149.95; cobra.com — *Pete McDonald*