

PRODUCTS IN ACTION

Chinook RV - A complete sandwich composite approach



The Chinook Baja demonstrating its off-road capabilities.

Chinook RV is recognized not only as the 'quality' manufacturer of Class C motorhomes but also as the pace setter in terms of design and development. Chinook is one of the few companies to produce a motorhome with off-road capability. One of its vehicles also holds the land speed record for an RV.

Based in Yakima, Washington, USA, Chinook has pioneered the use of composite bodies to reduce weight and increase strength and durability.

Its latest development, which was closely supported by technical personnel from DIAB Inc, is a sandwich composite, single piece shell manufactured using vacuum bagging and resin infusion techniques. Previously these floor, side walls, rear panel and roof sections were produced using plywood members and single skin construction that were subsequently installed in a fabric mat-core following lamination. The additional material costs have been more than offset by the savings in handling time and labor.

In addition the ProBalsa-cored floor and Divinycell sandwich sides and roof have resulted in a marked improvement in the strength and rigidity of the unit while the weight reduction has been significant. Chinook also reports that the thermal and acoustic insulation properties have been improved. The process has also resulted in a marked reduction in emissions in the plant.

Such has been the success of the new process that plans are well advanced to adopt this manufacturing method across the entire range of Chinook motorhomes.

