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Australian **BOAT** MAG

For Tinnies, Platies, GRP,
Imports, New, Pre-Loved,
Retro, Monos, Cats & Tris!

● **FINALLY ! Butane Stoves Are**

BANNED

Banned From Use In Or On Boats

ABM March 2015 #220 \$11.95

The Latest Intel:

When The Outboard Emission Legislation Will Start



**Which Of These
8 Mainstream
Boat Types, Is
Best For You?**



**.. Plus We Present Aaron Concord's Definitive Report:
What You Need To Know To Catch WAHOO !**

Australian BOAT MAG

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Cover: Another very mixed bag this month, with a major look at hull types for our new "Back To Basics" section (P-41), an amazing report on Catching Wahoo by Aaron, Crabs by Scott Shepherd, and a significant Retro platey by PW - and all the regular columns.

• Australia's Only Outboard Prices & Specs Database

Australian BOAT MAG • FINALLY! Butane Stoves Are BANNED

For Timbers, Plastics, GRP, Impacts, New, Pre-Loved, Fibreg, Motors, Cans & Ties!

The Latest Intel:
When The Outboard Emission Legislation Will Start

Which Of These 8 Mainstream Boat Types, Is Best For You?

... Plus We Present Aaron Concord's Definitive Report: **What You Need To Know To Catch WAHOO!**

MESSAGE STICKS

As we are such a small team, we are often tied up on the 'phone, or on the water - but please don't waste the opportunity to communicate. Send us an email, and we'll get back to you ASAP - usually within 24hrs.

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Peter Webster's Comment

NSW Shooters & Fishers Party

With the elections in NSW only a few days away from when this is published, once again fishermen and boatowners in NSW are going to go to the polls with the opportunity of making a difference in the way their pastimes are conducted.

One of the major differences between the NSW's parliamentary system and that of the one we have just gone through in Qld, is that whilst Qld still allows preferential voting for the House of Reps, it doesn't have a Senate, and so we have the odd situation we've just witnessed, of how the Coalition easily won the first 'past the post' voting majority (ie they easily received the most votes as a single party) but the fact is, the Greens formed an alliance with Labour and according to various pundits, the Greens

“ . . . with three seats in the upper house, this Party could well hold the balance of power in NSW. . ”

preferences added approximately 12% of the votes to the Labour ticket, pushing the Labour team across the line on the back of the Green bloc.

How this is going to play out in the future is anyone's guess, but it's not a good look for fishermen and boatowners in Qld, that's for sure.

In NSW, the system is a bit different because they have still retained two houses – a Lower and an Upper House, which is not unlike the Federal system,

so that when NSW voters go to the polls they have the option of voting in the lower House for their local area member of parliament from any of the parties they prefer. Be it Coalition, Labour, Greens, whatever, so their 'main' vote is thus locked in as per normal, but then they have the interesting ability to be able to vote on a second level, without affecting the outcome of their main parliamentary party vote.

This means that splinter groups such as the Shooters & Fishers Party, who already have two members of the Upper House (the Legislative Council) have the ability to make a quite powerful impact on NSW legislation – especially if they get a third MLC across the line.

Needless to say there's a pretty big push on to get that third Shooters & Fishers Party member into the NSW parliament, because with three seats in the upper house, this Party could well hold the balance of power in NSW. Wouldn't that be interesting? After all the brouhaha about the grey nurse sharks, the Marine Parks up and down the NSW coast, it would be fascinating to see some sensibility, not to say genuine science, returned to the table insofar as the organisation of fishing in NSW is concerned.

We have an inset on page 11 for you to read about Pete Johnson, the guy that's won the pre-selection for the third ticket in the Shooters & Fishers Party, and we urge readers in NSW to look at this carefully and take it onboard when they head for the polls next weekend.

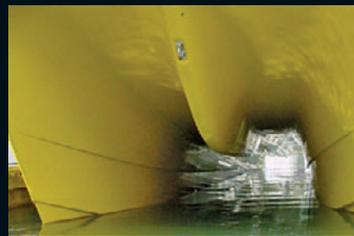
Boating . . . As We Get Older

Neil Dunstan, ABM's favourite contributor with readers across Australia, has written a very personal and very thoughtful column this month dealing with something we blokes just don't talk about nearly enough – and that's about how we are all getting older by the day.

Neil has looked at this very carefully, because at 76 years young, our favourite pensioner loves his fishing with a passion, and delights in taking either his upgraded 1974 6.4m Dehavilland Trojan wide offshore from Sarina, Qld out amongst the islands, or staying closer to home in his Quintrex 455 Dory. For different reasons, both craft present a physical challenge for somebody working on their own.

Neil is unabashed at admitting he's had several "frights" whilst he's been fishing on his own, and over the time, with the quiet support and insistence of his wife Dorothy, has worked out the protocols he





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needs to ensure his safety at sea when he's fishing alone as he gets older.

This is a subject that's very near and dear to me because apart from the obvious fact that I too am getting older, and especially since my episode with the acoustic neuroma left me with much reduced natural balance, I've been very mindful that I'm not as young as I used to be (*funny that!*).

And I keep doing stupid things where the brain goes ahead of the body, and keep doing things I have done all my life - which just don't work anymore as well as they used to!

Just recently, I jumped down off the bow of the 515 Makocraft Frenzy we were testing, onto the sandy beach (as I have done probably a hundred thousand times) and promptly went A over T because I lost my balance, rolled over and down into the water's edge. It was all a bit of a hoot, no harm done, I just became very wet and sandy. Lesson learned: I can't leap off boats like I used to, even if it's a sandy beach landing.

And writing of balance and stability, the sketch below is the drawing we've supplied to Alf Stessl concerning the new 5.2m Cuddy single engine cat we're planning to have built in the near future - when the 515m Frenzy is sold. Inspired by the highly successful and very appealing 485 Makocraft Cuddy and runabouts (pictured here) the new craft is based on the 5.2m hull being built (and featured last month, and again on Page 46 this issue) for Ingham, Qld ABM reader, Rob Harpur. The hulls are identical, but after much debate, we've opted to stay with the tried and proven Cuddy formula, with its greater weather protection for Mary and I, and security for our cameras, fishing gear, etc.

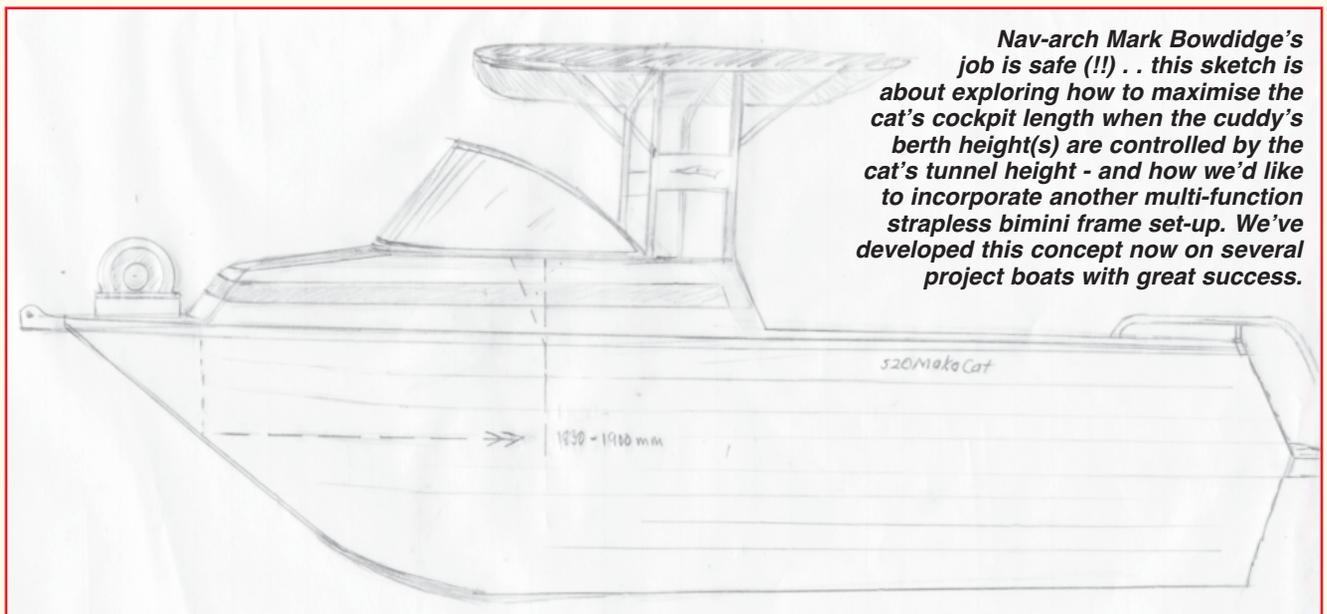
It was a typical case of PW not thinking about what he was actually capable of doing, possible consequences, and just wading in with the brain in neutral

Neil and I have discussed this at some length and sadly, the statistics support the notion that as we get older we are definitely putting ourselves at greater risk - although "risk" is probably the wrong word.

'Risk' implies that you've taken something onboard and considered the implications, and thus decided there was a downside to the action ie, *a risk*.

In fact, I think it's almost the opposite of that as we get older - because I don't think we even think about the "risk" and that's the whole problem. Certainly, in my own case, it's not what I think about that creates the problem - it's the action I take ***when I don't think about it***, and this is what I'm having to train myself to learn all over again.

So when Neil talked about writing something about boating as he gets older, I couldn't encourage him enough, because I think it's something we all have to look at very, very carefully and the more knowledge,



Nav-arch Mark Bowdidge's job is safe (!) . . this sketch is about exploring how to maximise the cat's cockpit length when the cuddy's berth height(s) are controlled by the cat's tunnel height - and how we'd like to incorporate another multi-function strapless bimini frame set-up. We've developed this concept now on several project boats with great success.



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ideas and techniques we can share with each other, the better.

To that end I'd love to hear from more of our older readers about how they're dealing with getting old, losing some of the physical prowess that we had when we were much younger, and how we've gone about coping with boating in our older years.

I know we've published some wonderful material over the years on this subject, but I just think it's time that we looked at the issue with renewed interest.

Murray Pass Goes Around Australia

Some years ago, we published an issue of *Australian Boatowner* concerning an exquisite 32 footer that the team at the Wooden Boat Shop in Sorrento, Victoria had built – one of a number of fine craft that had emerged from this outstanding facility in Victoria.

It was the Cheviot 32, a gorgeous, round bilge, composite build, wooden craft powered by a Yanmar diesel in classic sedan styling, designed by international ocean racing naval architect, Andrew Dovell.

The story aroused considerable interest because it was almost the polar opposite to 32 – 36 foot Rivas in the same magazine, but I think if a poll was taken of our readers at that time, about 99% of them would have chosen this Cheviot 32 as their craft of choice. There is just something about wooden boats that makes them special, and this craft had exquisite lines, an exceptionally high build standard and of course being a composite build, today it has virtually no more maintenance than any ordinary

white GRP boat.

So when I learned recently that the builder and CEO of The Wooden Boat Shop, Tim Phillips had trucked this craft (named *Murray Pass*) across to Perth for a yachting championship they were involved in, I pricked up my ears with interest, because that was an unusual move. What became even more interesting was that Tim and his wife Sally, once they were in Perth, decided there was a better way of getting *Murray Pass* back to Melbourne.

Instead of putting it back on the truck, they decided to steam it back home the long way – right around the top of Australia and all the way down the East Coast to Port Phillip Bay. *As you do!*

Of great interest to the writer was the fact that they developed a voyaging system which is very contemporary, and in line with something we've advocated for a long time.

You see, Tim and Sally steamed *Murray Pass* through to Exmouth WA, in nor'western Australia, before flying back to work for a few months until the weather, time, finances and business allowed them to escape again . . . where they re-joined their craft in Exmouth, and steamed through to Broome. Back home again to Melbourne - before flying back to Broome and then steaming through to Darwin, via the Kimberley, mark you!

This is, to my eyes, one of the sweetest, most elegant hull shapes in production today. Its voyage around Australia has also confirmed (in spades) that the traditional values of naval architecture that determine seaworthiness and seakindliness have in no way diminished over the years. "Murray Pass" re-boots those standards.



Of course, they didn't do any of this in a hurry – they stayed for a week or so in the Monte Bellos, another week or so in the Abrolhos, 4-5 weeks in the Kimberley and thus slowly developed one of the most rewarding cruise programs over an 18 month period, we've seen or heard about in a long time.

Again, in Darwin, they tied their little ship up to the marina, and flew home to Melbourne for another stint in the office, before once again returning to the vessel and continuing their cruise, this time right 'over the top' around to Hinchinbrook, Qld, all the way from Darwin. Then Hinchinbrook down to the Whitsundays, before getting serious about going home to Port Phillip Bay.

You got to give it to these two – they lacked nothing by way of vision or courage.

Remember, technically, this is the wrong way to go around Australia, because for most of the time they're working against the prevailing winds and currents.

What an extraordinary and inspirational experience they've enjoyed, and a wonderful endorsement of this Yanmar diesel powered 'little ship'. There can be no doubt about this craft's seaworthiness, can there? It has now steamed thousands of miles (putting over 2,000 engine hours on the Yanmar diesel) around Australia in all sorts of weather and conditions without putting a foot wrong in the entire journey.

Tim and Sally's only comment about the boat was that if they did it again they would like to have a larger cruiser, so they could share the trip with friends and relatives in different 'legs' along the way.

Over the next couple of months, starting with this month's re-introduction of this wonderful wooden cruiser to today's ABM readers, we are going to share the view from Tim and Sally's *Murray Pass* as they cruise around the top of Australia.

We thank them very much for their words and photographs, and as we join them aboard *Murray Pass* over the next few months, we trust you will derive as much inspiration and enjoyment from this remarkable adventure as we have had assembling

the words, pics and logbook.

Fishing . . . and Back To Basics

Fishing Editor Aaron Concord has been very busy this month, with the major re-write and upgrade of his classic wahoo story which we first published in its original form 8 or 9 years ago.

Aaron has completely re-vamped the report, and fleshed it out to nearly twice the original size, to embrace today's brave new world of tackle, techniques, lures, etc.

Coming Home . . .

Black Rhino 660 WalkAround



Black Rhino Boats has teamed up with a top NZ designer to build a unique range of plate boats between 6.10m and 8.10m LOA, utilising the customer's choice of outboard(s), diesel or petrol sterndrives.

Tony Bramich heads Black Rhino production on the Gold Coast, one of the few plate ally teams regularly building boats in Survey for commercial work. Featured here is the stunning Black Rhino 6.60m Walkaround powered by the smooth and 'torquey' 150hp Mercury Four Stroke - the complete package. Terrific performance, blue water capability, real fuel economy, exc finish - all in a mind-blowing, 'outside' fishing platform. Book a test run, today.



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This is a technique that we'll be doing more of in the future.

We're also doing a similar re-write and assemble upgrading Scott Shepherd's outstanding crabbing piece that we also published back in the mid-2000's.

These articles are very much in vogue today, because when a really complete article is written about something such as crabbing, or catching wahoo, spanish mackerel, flathead or sailfish (etc) the reality is that if we do a really comprehensive report in the first place, the article can be republished with the same integrity or more than it had the first time round.

The key is to get the original author involved and in both cases here, we've had Aaron and Scott working very hard to upgrade their articles to 2015 standards tackle and specifications.

For Scott, there was an additional incentive – in the original photographs, his son Josh was only 8 or 9 years old – and these days, he's a university student and about twice the size!

As Scott explained "I couldn't publish those original pictures again; Josh would probably thump me for embarrassing him with all his mates. So we had little choice but to re-photograph those bits and pieces featuring him as a youngster!"

Scott's new crabbing report is a *'must read'* for all those people who are currently exploring the world of boating and fishing for the first time. See it on Page 66 in the new *"Back to Basics"* section.

Back To Basics

Scott's crabbing feature is the first of a new Series of "Back To Basics" we are going to publish

through 2015-16, highlighting *what you can do with your boat.*

Every other month we will try and have a major report set-up to give new readers (especially) a comprehensive over-view on how to go crabbing, (for instance) or prawning, diving, tubing and social skiing etc, because I fear there is a real need for us to go back to some of the basics in these issues.

I believe we need to recognise there's a whole new generation of people coming into boating (or who are thinking about it) who have absolutely no idea about fishing, prawning, diving, crabbing, etc.

We all tend to forget that approx 40% of the Australian population were not born in Australia; they didn't grow up paddling home made canoes across Brown's Dam; didn't go 'down to the beach' with their Mum and Dad in the 1960s in the family's FB Holden wagon; didn't learn to swim as soon as they could walk; in the main, they are people who believe that catching fish is something a handful of salty, bearded commercial fishermen do in their boats in bad weather for a living *so where's the fun in that ?*

For so many of these people, now learning to embrace Australia's wonderful coastal lifestyle, 'pleasure boating' is an entirely foreign experience.

With the ABM Sea Library now coming back up to speed, the plan is that we'll progressively archive all these major 'doing' reports in a special new (free) community section headed **"Why Go Boating?"**

The new section will have the specific mission of helping people new to boating learn about all the great things they can do in their boat and really enjoy - stuff that most of the older hands just do in their sleep - and dare I say it, take for granted.

That's why Scott's article is so important, and we

Our Man In Hervey Bay . . . ace F&B/ABM reporter, mud crab (and big Reds) devotee, Scott Shepherd with a pot full of succulent muddies ready to cook-up for the family.





Pete Johnson, Shooters and Fishers Party

Peter Johnson has always been an avid fisher. Since his first Bream that he caught at the age of 6 in Berowra Creek with his Dad, Fred, up to the current day when he is catching a few Teraglin, or a good bag of Whiting, or better still, teaching someone some of his techniques to improve their skills, Peter, or Pete as he prefers to be called, is thinking of fishing, its benefits, and unfortunately, its threats.

Pete has been vocal on Fisher's rights for over twenty years, and with a strong recreational background, including being a past President of the NSW Fishing Clubs Association for two terms, Club Captain of his beloved Warringah Anglers Club for eight years, and Fishing Branch Chairman of the Shooters and Fishers Party for the past four years. His passion for fishing saw him buy a Trap and Line Commercial Licence back in the Nineties, where he hand-lined, fish and crab trapped for several years.

It is these past experiences and vast knowledge that has seen him become so disillusioned with the way NSW fishers are treated by Governments, both current and past, that has seen him get involved in ensuring fishers get heard all the way to the top.

"Back when the current NSW Coalition Government was in the Opposition seats, they promised anglers there would be no new Marine Parks, they would oppose any extensions to existing Marine Parks and ran a campaign to get elected by anglers. Fast forward to them getting up, and nothing eventuated about their plans. I got involved with Robert Brown, MLC from the Shooters and Fishers Party, and he took up our petition that raised 17,000 signatures to implement the Marine Park moratorium, that the Government Elect threw in the bin after they got into power. That was the day I joined the party, when Brownie tabled the motion and got it passed." Johnson recalls.

Ever since, Pete has been advocating for a fair go for anglers, and trying to overturn the restrictions placed on anglers. When SFP instigated the 5 year moratorium, quickly followed by saving Oily's Wharf in Port Kembla from being off limits to fishers, NSW anglers started to see that SFP were there for them. They saved Gaden's Trout hatchery from being sold to private investors, by getting money allocated from the Recreational Fishing Trust Fund to keep it open and providing fingerlings for release into the recreational fishery across NSW.

"I must admit, sometimes it's a struggle trying to get my head around the inane reasons Fisheries departments give for their restrictions, and I've been known to be belligerent on air to the Minister at times where there has been no known scientific reason behind their decisions. The Hi Tide Fishing program on 2SM has been a great sounding board for what anglers have to deal with, and each week we hear on the show of how people are finding it too hard to enjoy fishing due to over regulation"

The North Harbour Aquatic Zone ban on taking squid is one such stupid rule that has no data to support the ban, yet anglers are prevented to catch a few squid for bait, because of "public concerns" of the resource. Pete says that public concerns should be read as "Government rolling over to the Green groups to keep it in Parliament".

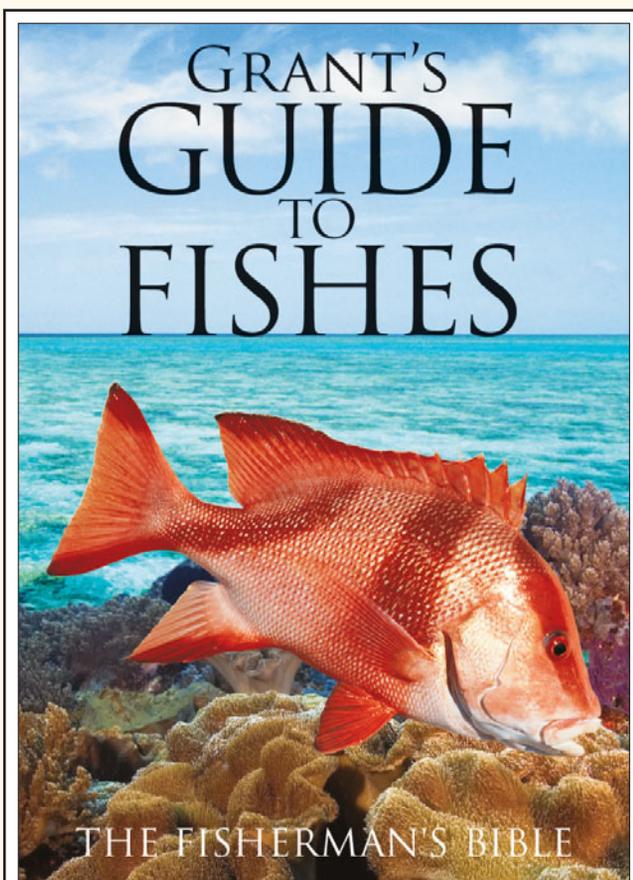
"If I can get elected as the third SFP Member of the Upper House, it would give us the outright balance of power, and would stop the Government from sticking anymore stupid acts and regulations into the anglers of NSW", Pete said.

He would also like to keep pressure on the government to see a Recreational Fishing Statutory Authority set up to manage the Recreational sector, run by appointed members by the fishing community, and let NSW Fisheries manage the Commercial sector."

It works in other countries, let's do it here!"

ABM





Ern Grant's Twelfth Edition Of The "Bible"

One of the Oz fishing world's 'living treasures' author, ichthyologist, story teller, 'Reef expert, boatie and fisherman, Ern Grant might have turned 90yrs young recently, but he's just upgraded and re-organised his most famous legacy work "Grant's Guide To Fishes".

Together with his marine biologist son Morgan, the Grants are continuing a legacy Ern started in 1965. Since then, 116,500 copies have been produced, making it arguably the longest-running and best-known book on fish identification in Australia. Although originally Queensland-centric, it now covers all commonly-caught fish across Australia. It has 1078 fish, sharks & rays, and 1007 colour photographs. A wonderful, memorable gift.

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thank him (and his wider family) for all the help they've put into the report with new regulations, new techniques, new photographs, but retaining the original fun attitude that Scott embeds in everything he writes.

If he wasn't so busy as the CEO of BMX Australia, Scott would make one hell of a good outdoors writer, but we're grateful that we get his work from him when we can, because it's always first class.

(Thanks, mate!)

Sea Library Upgrade – At Last

I'm feeling very virtuous tonight – I've just finished converting the last article from #217 (December, 2014) for the Sea Library.

We have finally brought it up to date, and over the next week or two, I will be uploading no less than 266 articles, tests, reports and features into this magnificent resource.

Working with the material, all the way back to #185, certainly gave me the opportunity of reviewing every single magazine and every single article that we've published in the intervening 30 issues, that had not been entered into the Sea Library.

To say there is a magnificent array of articles would be the understatement of the new year. Suffice to say, I'm looking forward to it all being uploaded (itself quite a job) and have made a fervent promise that we will never allow it to get that far behind again, because it's taken us *weeks* of around-the-clock work catching up.

Apologies to those people who have written in about many articles that should have been there by now but weren't, but we're not going to let it drag out (as it has this last couple of years) ever again.

There are quite a few additions in the Indexing of the Sea Library as we've added a new "Sea Digest" section, but probably the biggest change will be to see the huge uplift in the "Boat Building" section which has gone from half a dozen articles to about thirty.

We've also gone through the Library picking up on Indexing issues, typos, mistakes, etc, and whilst this is a bit like mowing the lawn (it's *never* finished!) it's about 95% better than it was.

Ultimately, it's one of the driving forces behind the need to upgrade our website, which is the next project on the agenda that we have to complete before I'll be allowed to go fishin' agin . . . but getting our house in order, with all the new systems and technology, has to be our first priority.

Interestingly, it was pointed out to me the other day, our web site, and the unique ABM Sea Library was

created in 1992. This is quite remarkable, because the internet was only invented in 1989! Needless to say, the architecture, terminology and structure is pretty much the equivalent of a model T Ford compared to the latest (*Mercedes?*) F-1 race cars, so we're looking forward to upgrading the entire website to 2015 specs this year.

But that's a big job and one that we will take very slowly, one step at a time.

Butane Cookers (FINALLY!) Banned

Just as we 'go to press' it has become clear that the use of butane cookers (often called 'lunch box cookers') are finally being banned by the individual States' consumer watchdogs for use in any marine application, as well as general applications such as camping and work place environments.

The NSW Office of Fair Trading has a long (and growing list of the manufacturers and models on their



web site, but it is reasonable to say that the bans will apply to all of these units, regardless of manufacturer or country of origin.

Many well known quality brand manufacturers are involved (including companies like Primus and Companion) with the units being withdrawn from sale by the big resellers (like BCF) immediately.

We'll have a more detailed report in April issue, but as we've been saying for years - *these cookers are just plain dangerous* as they can - and DO - blow up in the user's face.

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Australia's top PDF boating, fishing & lifestyle monthly magazine



Australian Boat Mags' 2015 Media Kit

2015 ABM Media Kit Available

After more of the inevitable agonistics, we've settled on the rates for advertising and working with Australian Boat Mag for 2015.

The short version is that we've stayed pretty much on track, retaining similar rates to those we've been using for several years now, at \$1247 for a full page colour, \$654 for a half page – and a very affordable \$343 for a quarter page. These figures include GST and are based on a prompt (7-day) settlement discount.

This year we will be consolidating many aspects of the business, including the long awaited upgrade to the SEA Library, a revamp to the way the F&B TV section is run, with a return to the emphasis on videos we'll be producing ourselves from about mid-year onwards. Manufacturers, importers, wholesalers who would like to know more about marketing with ABM throughout Australia, should drop me an email: send it to Peter, admin@ausboatmags.com.au and we will flick back the new 2015 Media Kit. It's an interesting read and very informative.

- PW

ABM's **Outboard** **World & Database**

March 2015

by Gary Fooks*



Outboard Emission Standards:

- but when, oh when . . . ?

We have been reporting for a long time now that emission standards for outboards were on the way. In fact, for so long, that like the boy who cried wolf, some villagers don't believe us anymore. Frankly we also had our doubts. But it's now firmly back on the agenda and in this exclusive report, ABM's Gary Fooks explains what, why and when.

Environment Minister Greg Hunt made an announcement in February that clears the path for a final announcement at the next Ministers' meeting in mid 2015, and then the process of drafting the laws begins.

Most industry observers are cautious about predicting the future – but what the heck, I'll stick my neck out. My best guess, dear reader, is that we will have a mirror copy of the USA regulations. After all, that's all that's been considered in the government papers since 2007.

That's a good thing. It means that Australians get access to the full range of outboards sold in the US markets, without the need for costly re-certification to some unique Australian standard.

Remember when Aussie Standard Inflatable lifejackets cost \$160 each? When the authorities allowed the sale of PFDs certified to the identical EU standard, the price of safety fell to \$65 at boat show specials. That's typical of the savings that can come when we adopt an international standard instead of soldiering on by ourselves.

Back to the US standards for outboards. Depending on whether we jump in the deep end and go directly to three star, or phase in with two star initially, the result is the same: we will no longer be able to buy carby or even EFI two strokes.

Only four strokes and DI two strokes like E-TEC already pass the proposed standards. And let's make it crystal clear: What you own now won't be "banned". The new laws will only affect new imports after a certain date, and even then, there is most likely to be a phase-in period, as importers clear their old stocks.

Yes, but what date, you ask?

Here is where the crystal ball gets cloudy. No one has yet decided when regulations will start. There are no secrets here, just a process to go through.

As we mentioned above, in February, Environment Minister Hunt announced a final agreement on the Decision RIS by mid-2015. So that's the agreement of Ministers and a green light. What follows is the drafting of legislation, and passing the laws through Parliament, which could take six months: December?

With the National Clean Air agreement planned



****Gary Fooks is a well known consultant to the marine industry and government specialising in sensitive environmental issues - when he's not competing in his beloved bream comps!**



Left & Above: The push for greater horsepower in the 'States continues unabated, with new 300, 350 and 400hp outboards being released by mainstream outboard makers at last month's Miami Boat Show. All meet 3-Star emission standards already.

for 1 July 2016, it would be no surprise if that was the target starting date. It could slip, but for sure, someone in Canberra has that date in mind. Any later than mid 2016, and we are then in the run up to the next Federal Election (due no later than January 2017).

What will be regulated?

All small non-road petrol engines will fall under the new standard. That includes lawn mowers, brush cutters, chain saws, generators, outboards, inboards and PWC's. Diesel standards will come later. The standards are practical and are matched to product types. No surprise there, as all the details have been ironed out over 15 years under the USA Standards.

For the 50% of Australians already buying four strokes or DI two strokes, the extra cost for a compliant outboard will be \$0. It's not going to cost anything. That's because the three star outboards we are buying right now, already meet the standard.

For those who love the smell of two stroke in the morning, buying a clean engine next time will cost about 20% more the day you buy it, and then start saving you money. The new engine will use 30% less fuel and last years longer – for most boat owners a 3 star outboard will save you money in the end.

No doubt some people will be unhappy. Change is always a challenge.

It will be the same uncomfortable change within the marine industry. Some outboard companies have 60%, even up to 90% of their unit sales in non-compliant outboards. Others have been both proactive and responsible and have moved early to focus on clean outboards. So some have made the change, and some will move at the last minute.

The bottom line is that they all have heard the same government briefings for more than a decade, they just made different business decisions. Right now, every outboard company in Australia distributes a full range of clean products. There is nothing to be developed or prepared, and no advantage or disadvantage for any one manufacturer.

Instead of Green Zones, clean engines are opening up new fishing areas. Queensland fishers now have access to Lake Lenthalls and Wivenhoe Dam, but only for low emission outboards. There are similar moves in S.A. and other states.

To reduce fuel vapour adding to smog levels, new boat hulls introduced after the commencement date, will need to meet a fuel evaporative standard. The same sort of standards that have been on cars for a decade, will also come into effect with outboard emissions. That means low permeable hoses, fuel tank expansion capacity and a carbon canister on the fuel line.

Boat builders who are on the ball, like Haines Signature, already have their hull designs ready to add these extra features. Others will wait until the due date and rush to make costly last minute hull adjustments, including reducing fuel tank capacity.

The extra cost for a Haines Signature will be about \$150.

Boat hulls should by now all be ready for the slightly heavier, clean engines. The Boat Building Standard AS1796 was updated in 2009, so any boat builder who has not kept up to date by 2015, had better start catching up quickly.

Why do we need emissions standards?

Australians buy about 2 million petrol engines a year. Half of these are in cars - and they have had emissions standards since the 1970's. The other million engines we buy each year, are non-road engines: from mowers to outboards and they have been completely uncontrolled. But only in Australia.

Marine engine emissions standards were first regulated at the Bodensee Lake (Europe) in 1993. The US Environment Protection Agency has

regulated small engine emissions since 1997, while the European Commission introduced the first emission standards for marine engines in 2003. China introduced small engine emission standards in 2010 followed by India in 2012.

For a country that says we responsibly look after our waterways and fish, we are well behind the



Below & Above: As these pics attest, ABM's Gary Fooks certainly puts his heart and soul into his research for the state of play in the world of outboards, emission legislation, E-10 fuel issues, and how vital matters such as these impact on fishermen and boatowners - hey, he even checks in with the fish in the bream comps! But as we've learned over the last couple of years - few (if any) other people in the management side of Oz fishing and boating have his academic and hands-on knowledge.



world in limiting air and water pollutants from outboards.

“But the small two strokes don’t pollute much!” is still an all too common catch-cry.

Sorry, but that’s just not true. No outboard, even the cleanest, is as good as the equivalent car. For a start there are no catalytic converters. Not yet anyway, though there is a push to overcome the technical issues for outboards and inboards have started to appear with CC’s.

A carby 2-stroke has about 11 times the emissions of a 3 star engine. You can see this for yourself at a glance at the Engine data base and the emissions numbers in the right side columns. The HC+NOx and CO numbers tell the tale.

While you are there, pull out the calculator and you can work out that a 6hp 2-stroke has the same kg of emissions per hour as a 150hp 4-stroke. And an 8hp two stroke has 59% more! These numbers are rock solid: they are calculated by the engine manufacturer in their own labs, and audited by the USA EPA.

With evidence like this, it is no wonder we need to catch up to the world and limit what we are pushing into the air and waterways.

What took so long?

The road to Australian standards started way back in 2003, but grew serious with expert panels in 2006. This writer sat on one of those panels and is named in the report that came out in 2007. What followed were further studies, a Cost Benefit Analysis and a Public Consultation in 2010 that suggested

regulations in 2012 – but then progress stalled.

Following a change of government, the new Federal Environment Minister Greg Hunt got the process started again. In April 2014 he ordered that the report stalled in 2010 be completed within 6 months. That happened, and at the Ministers meeting last month (February 2015) the National Clean Air plan was launched with an launch date of 1 July 2016.

In the fine print on page one is a statement under Finalising existing work streams that “Under the Agreement, Governments will complete work by mid 2015 to develop emissions control measures for: - wood heaters; - non-road spark ignition engines and equipment;”

Well that’s us – “non road spark ignition engines” includes outboards, PWC’s and inboards.

So the writing is on the wall, and not in pencil. This time it is written in ink.

Want to read more? Go to

<http://www.scew.gov.au/consultation/ephc-archive-spark-ignition-consultation>

<http://www.environment.gov.au/protection/air-quality/national-clean-air-agreement>

ABM

Below: Outboard, back to camera, doing what we’ve all lived with for years: spewing oily smoke into the atmosphere and the water. Ugh.





South Australia News

with Di Ross & John Batty



wrecks, shoals and shifting sand bank zones. By the very nature of these shoals and sand banks, they shift all year round; hence data included may not be 100% accurate at any given time. Some are visible and many are not.

Water depths shown

are also indicative, subject to change from upstream discharge. A few years back the entire lower Murray basin dried up and the Murray mouth closed with no water left over from irrigation practices upstream. Many folk at the end of river including the lakes, lost their livelihood and the region is only now showing signs of recuperating.

The Superb New Murray Lakes Guide

Carto Graphics have recently released a navigation guide for Murray Lakes, Goolwa and Islands, South Australia.

This is one of our favourite water ways. It is so relaxing to tootle along these waters taking in the scenery, the fantastic birdlife - and maybe you could be lucky enough to hook and land a Coorong mullet. This SA delicacy is sadly rarely seen in numbers at the fish markets these days, so if you land one . . . treasure it, and importantly don't overcook it! More overseas folk get to enjoy them than we Aussies.

The chart is printed on what's called 'stone' paper, manufactured from milled quarry tailings. This paper is made largely of a calcium carbonate powder with a non toxic, photo-degradable resin, giving a very durable finish with exceptional water proof and tear resistant qualities. It is ideal for the boating scenario, and of course, is environmentally friendly.

The main format for the chart is a GPS grid. It contains all the navigation specifics on cardinal and channel markers, survey beacons, navigation light flash patterns, speed limits, barrages, ferry crossings,



Townships, visitor information, on water fuel availability, wharves, boat ramps, anchorages and national parks and reserves, are charted. The inserts present excellent information. Not all ramps along



Aerial of the upstream Murray River entrance Pomanda, Wellington.



Murray Lakes Goolwa & Islands

Carto Graphics

Navigation Guide

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Hindmarsh Island | Lake Alexandrina |
| Coorong Channel | Murray Mouth |
| Mundoo Channel | Lake Albert |
| Goolwa Channel | |



1:100,000
1:50,000
1:25,000



Produced by
Carto Graphics
www.cartographics.com.au



the lakes and indeed, the Murray itself, are suitable for larger, deep draft vessels. Unless you know a particular ramp, it is wise to check with the town locals before judging the suitability of launching your boat. The residents along the shores of the lakes and the Murray are very friendly and all too willing to assist.

Overhead electrical power cables with a nominal height above pool level are depicted, an excellent reference, particularly for sail powered vessels. My surprise on the mapping was that submerged fencing is indicated. These are not a general inclusion on



The Goolwa Barrage

navigation charts, but they can cause significant damage if your prop or wake boarder, skier or biscuit rider encounters them.

The main chart covers the Coorong and the Younghusband Peninsula, the major lakes, Alexandrina and Albert (from townships of Goolwa in the South East to Meningie in the South West to Wellington in the North) and the main islands of Hindmarsh and Mundoo. The chart also has an enlarged insert detailing the channel system from Pomanda Island at the southern end of McHughes Lake. This channel is the entry point for the River Murray. It should be noted that fishing nets are permitted in this top section of Lake Alexandrina but are not lit at night. They are generally marked by a series of floats.

Once through the channel and past Marina Wellington, the river becomes more defined, the

banks distinct, you are now travelling the River Murray proper. If you miss the markers at Pomanda, you will not get into the river proper; there is no alternative route.

At the height of the paddle steamer era, Pomanda Island was used as a port for vessels waiting for suitable weather to cross Lake Alexandrina.

Flip side of the chart centres on the Goolwa area. It details the Goolwa Channel from Lake Alexandrina, passing Goolwa wharfage and township, down to the Barrage and Lock (the times this lock is manned is noted on the Chart) , along the Sir Richard Peninsular to the Murray Mouth and the entrance to the Coorong.

Traversing the sea entrance (*see pic left*) into the Coorong should be made with much caution, there can be easily seen nasty turbulence in this area and on the contrary it may be visibly calm on the surface, but underlying swirling currents can present a nasty surprise even with a lifetime of local knowledge.

The shifting sands within the Murray Mouth regularly need dredging and this work can alter the designated channel, the markers will be relocated but your chart may be out by a few degrees. This scenario will be ongoing, so use your chart as a guide but always check the markers, the dredging activities and the general boating movement in this zone.

Just last week (early March) workers dredging in the Sugars Beach area discovered the body of a fisherman from Mt Barker SA. It is believed he drowned after being swept out to sea, his body returning with the tidal and current movements.

The Mundoo Channel is one not to be taken for granted either. Just last month an emergency beacon at 10.15pm was activated prompting the Sea Rescue Squadron and Water Police to respond. The Police helicopter was despatched to assist in the search and located a grounded vessel with a 50 year old man



and his 12 year old son onboard.

Neither was injured. Sea Rescue managed to refloat the vessel and towed it back to Goolwa. Night can make it even more difficult in picking up markers and this can be compounded with fatigue after a long day on the water.

The boat owner was very responsible in having all the correct safety equipment onboard and the entire mishap was over within two hours of the beacon activation. If only everyone complied with the Safety equipment rules with such diligence, our emergency services would have a far easier and speedier task in retrieving similar situations.



The Tauwitchere barrage lock (above) on the Coorong is a do-it-yourself hand operated lock. Approaching from the southern side there are several coral heads. It is safe to navigate, albeit with caution.

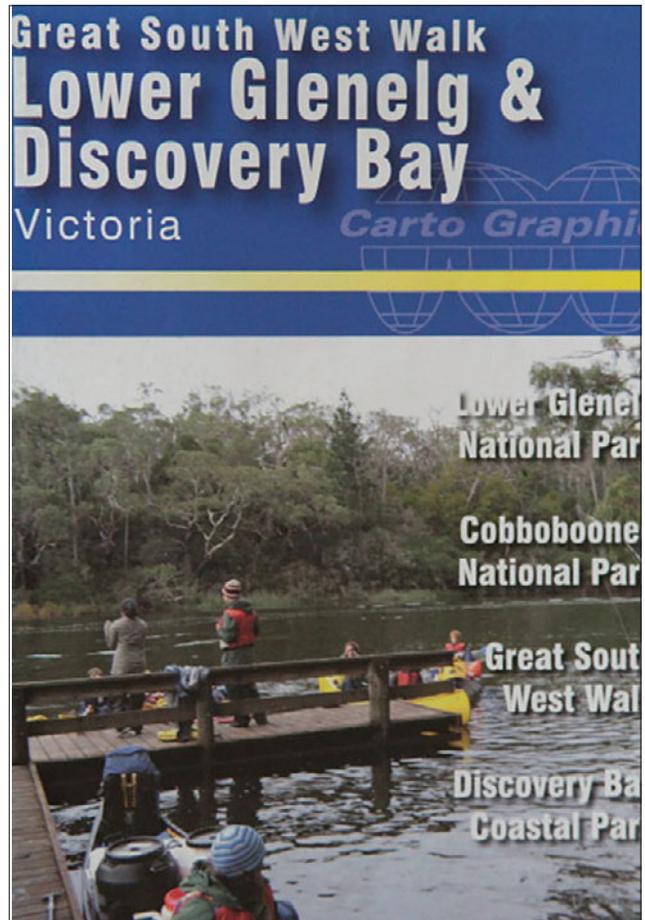
There is a myriad of small islands in the lower lakes system, particularly the cluster off the South Western shores of Mundoo Island which are detailed also. The bird life on these islands is prolific, an ever changing scene as the many breeds migrate with the seasonal changes. Fish nets may also be encountered along the Coorong, similar to the Pomanda area, with a string of buoys - *but these are not lit at night.*

Safety gear, communication appliances, common sense is essential for all our boating activities. The Carto Graphics Navigation Guide for the Murray Lakes, Goolwa and Islands is an excellent hard copy, durable guide to have onboard.

I have no hesitation in recommending it to all planning to travel, explore and enjoy these beautiful and unique waterways.

Glenelg, Too

Carto Graphics also have an excellent map on another of our favourites the Glenelg River. Whilst it primarily mainly addresses the walking trails of the lower Glenelg, (it is not a navigational map) it depicts in detail the river system, townships, ramps etc, which are good guides for boaties. Given that the Glenelg gets land locked and the sea entrance needs blasting just before it swamps the riverside



apartments (shacks) it would be very difficult to nominate any firm data on the depths at any given time.

If it is flood, there is a very strong current. If it is land locked it is 'calm as' and the mulloway head toward the closed entrance - that's where you will find us on such occasions.

I feel this map worthy of mention as many boating folk enjoy travelling the river, mooring and having a wee trek ashore with the kids and maybe the dog.

There are excellent moorings at the Princess Margaret Caves, and many easy "parks" along the river banks where a short walk can find you in beautiful leafy fern gullies, timbered forests and bird havens. All the small villages along the way are accessible and as the saying goes 'you'll never know what you might find there'.

Acknowledgements: *ABM thanks to SATC and Fleurieu Tourism for their invaluable assistance in compiling this report, and*

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ABM

We received a nice letter recently from previous ABM contributor Gary Rooks, a family bloke from up Rockhampton way. As always, it raised the odd eyebrow, created a few chuckles and just reminded we who are currently stuck with production issues in the bat cave, that there IS another world out there, people ARE still having fun in their boats, whilst planning more and better trips in the future. Rooksie and his mob are planning to invade the Whitsundays in September, so they are currently sorting out what goes where, and what they need for their next adventure. . . .

Cats To Great Keppel - With The Whitsundays In Their Sights . . .

Hi Pete.

I read with interest your retro test of the 7.0 metre Markham Dominator in the previous magazine issue. (#219, Ed). It got the ol' scribing hand quivering, so I thought I'd drop you a much overdue line.

As you will remember, I've had 35 years involvement with boats, from Kayaks to Cats and all things in-between.

My preferred boat type by far, is the cat concept with the Dominator 7.0m, in my opinion, top of the heap bar NONE, regardless of what the un-informed wankers

on the internet forums say.

(Yes, I did read the forums before I purchased our Dominator, but took them with a grain of salt, as I smelt a rat which turned out to be a big rodent).

This isn't to say other Cats don't rate, as most Cats on the market today barring the odd exception, are extremely good. (Especially the one made in Noosa . . .)

My second and current cat is the above mentioned 7.0m Dominator which we bought six years ago. We have found this hull very smooth riding, stable at rest, very fuel



efficient with the twin 150 Hondas and able to carry heavy loads, ie, 3 mates and all camping gear with not much effect on fuel burn, even when the weather turns foul.

The asymmetrical hull DOES work very well. This boat will plane at just under 40kph on one motor, as witnessed by our local Honda tech, and all the blokes and family I fish with.

My mate Greg, who also has a long association with mono boats, was impressed by these hulls and recently went and purchased a very good second hand Dominator of the same size.

Now we both agree that there are two types of cats. One is furry and kills native animals. The other being twin hulled boats.

On the Australia Day long weekend both Greg and I packed up our respective families and headed to Great Keppel Island for the weekend. This was to be Greg's maiden voyage in the big cat.

The plan was to basically sloth it out on one the islands with a bit of snorkelling and

swimming whilst at the same time, work out how to set these rigs up for extended camping trips as we intend towing these Cats to the Whitsunday's for 10 day's camping in September.

Friday morning finally arrived and with calm seas, we opened up the throttles and pointed the nose cones towards Putney Beach for our first stop.

My 8yo daughter Leilani, stepped up to the plate and offered to drive. Okay. So with a little bit of help, Leilani took up position on dad's knee and showed quite clearly how easy it is to teach youngsters the basics of helming a pretty big boat. And doing a good job of it, too, I might add.

Some twenty five minutes later saw anchors deployed at our destination. Greg offered to take us ashore in his brand spanking new rubber ducky thingy powered by some economy version of a no name cheap (very cheap) outboard. It doesn't even have gears. Just pull the chord and off it goes ... sometimes. A real little gem, for sure.

We took the safer option and paddled our



kayaks in.

Unfortunately, still laughing at the 'little gem', I fell off my kayak. There was still plenty of laughter though, but now it was emanating from the ridiculed little gem owner... um, well, from everybody, actually. Bloody karma.

Our next stop was at a small beach where we could anchor inside the small coral reef, giving us protection from the prevailing wind chop that was due later that night.

We rafted the boats up here as this was to be our anchorage for the evening. Both boats deployed bow and stern anchors as well as being lashed to each other. From half tide down, the boats settled onto soft sand for most of the night. Still up-right. Try that with a mono.

We spent the afternoon exploring along the beach and headlands at either end with Leilani and the respective adult females enjoying some snorkelling around the coral.

The Skippers at this point, decided to fight off sand-flies and heatstroke by par-taking in



a few beverages.

This of course led to friendly banter regarding the attributes of each boat. As the day wore on, the boats somehow turned into one boat with 4 x 150's. Must have been the sun.

As storms were in the area, we rigged up make shift canopies to keep the rain off. Great



idea really. When the rain hit, Greg's boat canopy collected the water and dumped it on our canopy. Our canopy dumped it straight through the guts and onto everything under it. Hmmm. It would have kept the sun off, except it was dark.

Back to the camping setup.

Recently, I fitted a 120 watt solar panel to top up the 150 amp house battery, which is also charged by the motors. This battery runs all electrics not associated with the motors including all lights, toilet, winch and 65 litre fridge which I built into the helm seat.

An interesting addition I have made is a 135watt LED bar light to the rocket launcher. This is very handy at night when coming into the beach (etc) as it has both spot and wide beam functions.

My main issue of concern now is shade, as my canopy only protects the cockpit.

I looked at a number of expensive options but finally settled on a 2m x 3m 4WD awning. I fitted this to the rocket launcher and surprise, surprise, it is a perfect fit - which

folds up out of the way when not needed and ready for our next trip.

I have a 2 burner BBQ which has its own bench which is suspended over the side. It doesn't encroach on deck space and can be rotated. This bench has 3 high sides to protect the BBQ from the wind and the whole thing folds up flat and packs out of the way.

I have fitted a prep table above the live bait tank which comes in very handy on camping trips. This too folds up out of the way.

Rubbish bins are fitted in the engine wells.

This is a quite comfortable camping set up for our family and can quite happily camp aboard for a week or more.

I hope to supply you with a detailed article of our trip to the Whitsundays later in the year.

Keep well,

Gary Rooks

ABM





Cheviot 32

The art of wooden boatbuilding has been well known and highly regarded in Australian recreational boating circles since pleasure boating began in the beginning of the last century.

In the early days, boating for pleasure was a rarity, and it wasn't until the 1950s that the concept of boating became something more than a method of catching fish (commercially) or the province of the very well to do, from Sydney's wealthy eastern suburbs.

By the 1960s, reputations of boat building families were becoming well established, with brands such as Halvorson, Quilkie, Bracken, Norman Wright & Sons, Millcraft and others, synonymous with the construction of beautifully crafted all-timber cruisers.

Even to this decade, at the high end of wooden boat building excellence, many of Australia's

**Tim Phillips, CEO
Wooden Boat
Shop, Sorrento,
Victoria.**





The sweet lines of the Cheviot 32 reflect an extremely traditional heritage, with an incredibly fine entry designed to do away with Port Phillip Bay's choppy water, but with the needed strength in the shoulders to brush aside the swells 'outside' in the Bass Strait. Note electronics on the dash.

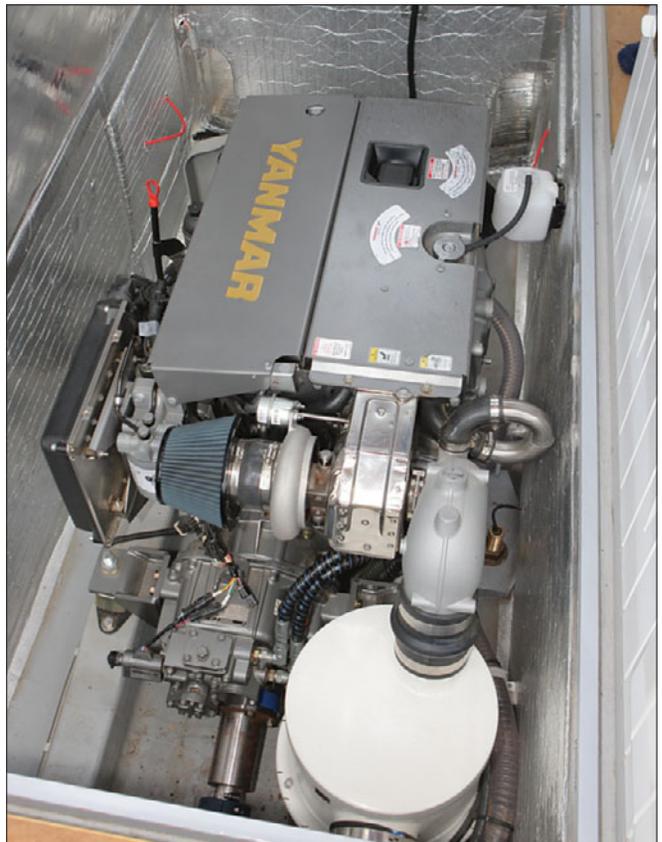
foremost gameboats have been constructed of wood by master craftsmen of the calibre of Frank Woodnut in Innisfail, FNQ, David Pleysier in Perth initially, and Brisbane later in his stellar career, with the other big yards (Halverson's and Norman Wright & Sons particularly) adding to this "field of dreams."

And dreams they are. The construction of some of these craft is breathtaking, so it was with no little surprise and quite a lot of pleasure we were introduced recently to the work of the Wooden Boat Shop in Sorrento, Victoria.

Here, Tim Phillips (*pictured left*) heads up a small team of highly specialised and very skilled craftsmen building in 2011, a range of wooden cruisers.

Here is a delicious irony to contemplate: the cost of many "white" GRP cruisers has now increased to such an

(Continued over on Page 31)

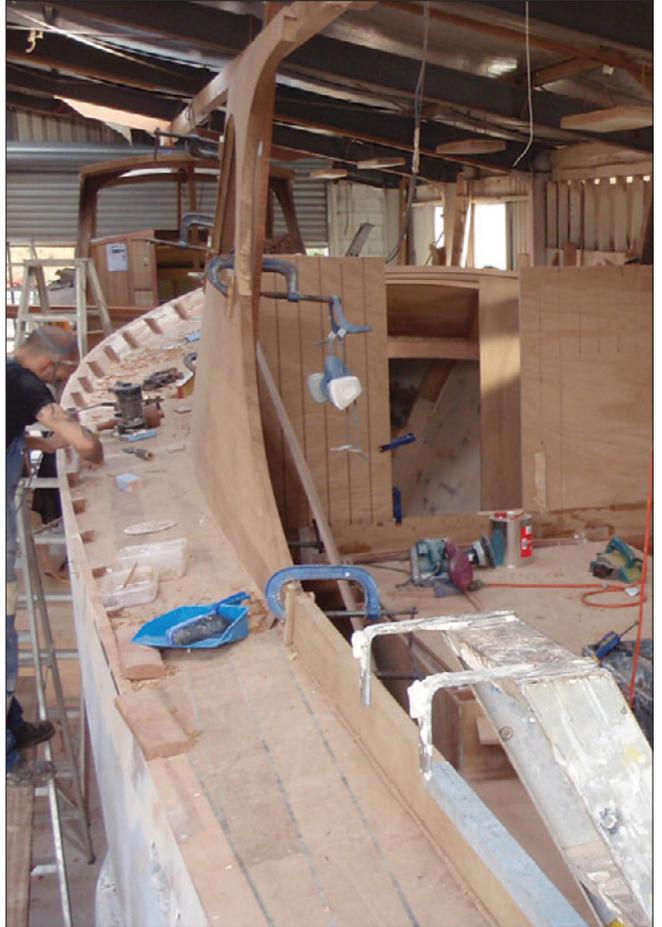


Cheviot 32

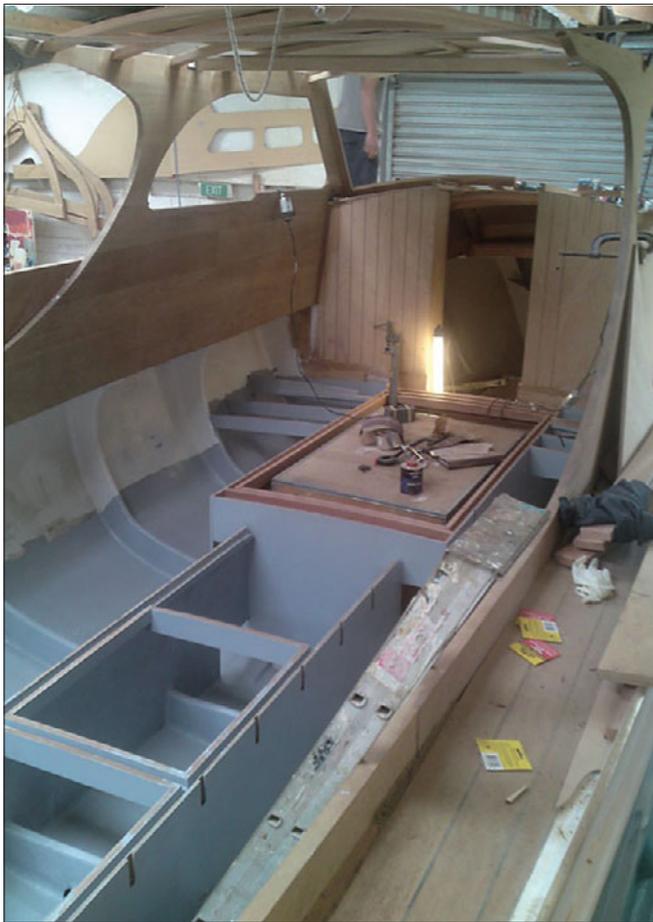


A beautiful set of photographs of a Cheviot 32 being built in Sorrento by the WBS. So much to observe here, just take a few extra minutes and contemplate the ultra modern, (West system) saturated epoxy technique they are using, as promoted originally by the Guegeon Bros in their classic boatbuilding manual.





Cheviot 32



extent in Australia that it is feasible to consider building in timber all over again.

A very good example is this exquisite craft, *Murray Pass*, a Cheviot 32 launched back in November 2010, in Sorrento Victoria, and seen here in this special pictorial essay produced with the generous assistance of the Wooden Boat Shop, and some great work by WBS staffer, Tim Huggett.

Second Generation

This is the second generation of these beautifully drawn, hand built cruisers upgraded by reknowned America's Cup, Sydney Hobart and international ocean racing naval architect, Andrew Dovell.

Working with the Wooden Boat Shop, Dovell has upgraded the sweet lines of the Cheviot to make it run even more efficiently, and take advantage of the modern diesel power now used in these craft.

For here is another irony. Although the Cheviot 32 is representative of the pinnacle of traditional wooden boat building in Australia, it nevertheless incorporates the very latest in boat building technology.

This is clever.

Consider the power plant: The engine had to

deliver impeccable performance, quiet operation and fuel efficiency, and be tucked away well out of sight. Phillips' choice, the Yanmar 6BY2, delivers smooth, clean and fast acceleration.

This BMW-based 6 cylinder Yanmar BY2 is rated at 260hp (191kW) @ 4000rpm from a 2.993L inter-cooled and turbo-charged diesel engine. Common rail direct injection (CRDi) technology (featuring magnetic vertical injectors) ensures optimum performance and outstanding fuel efficiency.

The Yanmar 6BY2 engine also incorporates a CAN bus operating system using the universal NMEA 2000 protocol, and offers electronic throttle and electronic gear shift controls for the helm station.

The all up weight of the engine including the gear box is just 362kg.

Day, W/End Cruiser

The Cheviot 32 is a magnificent day or weekend cruiser, and using the (standard) 6BY Yanmar diesel, has the power to push this 9.7m long, 4.5 tonne cruiser to a top speed of 22 knots.

With classic lines, refined in this Series Two for even better handling and performance qualities, the Cheviot 32 is a deceptively big, open cockpit boat.

Fascinating hull shots here. Note how the sweet buttock lines merge with the carefully developed, almost flat running lines aft towards the stern; this is how they've retained planing boat performance in such a gentle 'displacement' shape, producing a remarkable mix of 22 knot performance, a very soft ride, with sensible power and excellent fuel economy. There is much young students of marine design can learn from the Cheviot 32.



Hosting a BBQ onboard or evening cocktails at the marina is a cinch - up to 9 people can be accommodated easily.

The cabin layout includes 2 berths, shower, head, galley, fridge, and a host of comfortable seating.

A fixed swim platform ('duckboard') is fitted across the transom.

Apart from Yanmar's diesel, the technology shift extends to the onboard electronics, and importantly, to the use of the West System fibreglass resin, timber saturating technique. Combined with long-life urethane finishes, this will ensure the hull and superstructure of the Cheviot will keep its

Cheviot 32



lustre in the hull finish department, as long, or even longer than solid fibreglass.

The writer is very aware of this because of the extensive experience at F&B/ABO we've had with urethane finishes on plate alloy craft.

The days where fibreglass was the only 'maintenance free' finish to consider, have long gone. Today's urethane finishes over resin-saturated timber will result in a boat building methodology that will last longer than the lifetime of any of its owners.

The Cheviot 32 is one of the most interesting

craft available today in Australia. Although it's designed around "standard" lines and offsets, obviously the Wooden Boat Shop is keen to embrace the owner's personal taste and requirements, and this is reflected in the various Cheviot 32's that have already been built for a growing number of very happy owners.

Wooden Boat Shop CEO Tim Phillips advises that the price of the Cheviot 32 is in the high end of \$350-\$400K but it is a very movable figure, because of the differences than can occur from one craft to another just in the electronics and





customer additions. However, he pointed out that he was more than happy to extend the hard top for the writer for more practical use in the

(very) wet tropics, and would also happily consider the rear cabin bulkhead.

It's that type of project – where the builder and the owner work hand in glove in the creation of something that is truly unique.

More to the point, perhaps, the Cheviot 32 embraces a style and elegance many of today's boatowners miss very much; the timeless lines, the warmth and emotional appeal of the hand wrought timber finish - this is indeed a craft that will provide its owner with considerable pleasure and satisfaction just lying gently at the end of the jetty, at the bottom of his garden . . .

For more information call
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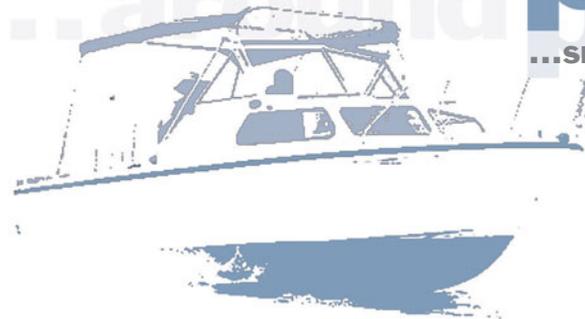
Starting Next Month: We step aboard *Murray Pass* with Tim and Sally Phillips as they begin Part One of their Three Part series, tracing their extraordinary journey back around Australia, from Perth, WA to Melbourne Victoria, in successive, carefully planned legs.



Murray Pass at anchor off Depusch Island, WA

...around the place

...snapshots of some very interesting projects around and about...



Work is proceeding nicely on the other Geelong cats . . with work on ABM reader Rob Harpur's new 5.2m centre console (the jade green cc seen here - and the shot we featured (right) last month before it went to the paint shop. The lower shots reveal the underfloor structural matrix, the twin 75 litre fuel tanks that will feed the SINGLE 140 Suzuki, foam filling and the extensive storage locker area under the forward casting platform. The white cat is the amazing 450 model (it's huge!) with its very cunning 'transom bridge' which allows for the battery, cabling, live bait tank and occasional seat across the transom. This is good design; this cat is destined to be their top seller. Want to know more? Give Alf Stessl a ring on (03) 5248 0622 or Email stesslboats@bigpond.com





Make	HP	Model	RRP	4-stroke 2-stroke Carb/Inject	Capacity (cc's)	Cylinders	Amp/hr capacity	Weight (Kg)	F&B Star Rating	Emiss HC+NOX (g/kw/hr)	Emiss. CO (g/kw/hr)
Honda	2.0	BF2.3DK2 SCHED	\$1,234	4c	57	1	-	12.2	3	24.9	388.2
Yamaha premix	2.0	2CMHS	\$900	2c	50	1	-	16.5	0 est		
Mercury	2.5	M	\$1,374	4c	85	1	5A	19.0	3	25.5	434.1
Mercury	2.5	M	\$902	2c	74.6	1	-	13	0	277.1	399.4
Parsun	2.5	T2.5BMS 2C	\$700	2c	74.6	1	-	16	0 est		
Parsun	2.6	F2.6MBS 4C	\$899	4c	72	1	-	18	3	29.8	134.5
Suzuki	2.5	DF2.5S	\$1,125	4c	68	1	-	14	3	24.0	367.8
Tohatsu	2.5	MFS2.5A S	\$1,494	4c	85.5	1	-	13.0	3	24.3	384.5
Tohatsu	2.5	M2.5A2 S	\$894	2c	74.6	1	-	12.5	0	305.3	150.0
Yamaha	2.5	F2.5AMHS	\$1,349	4c	72	1	-	17	2	42.9	466.2
Yamaha premix	3.0	3AMHS	\$1,099	2c	70	1	-	16.5	0 est		
Mercury	3.3	M	\$979	2c	74.6	1	4A	13	0	277.1	399.4
Evinrude	3.5	E3R4	\$1,459	4c	87	1	-	18.4	3	27.7	468.8
Mercury	3.5	M	\$1,460	4c	85	1	5A	13.0	3	27.7	468.8
Tohatsu	3.5	MFS3.5A S	\$1,527	4c	85.5	1	-	19.0	3	24.3	384.5
Tohatsu	3.5	M3.5A2 S	\$925	2c	74.6	1	-	12.5	0	305.3	150.0
Tohatsu	3.5B	M3.5B2 S	\$1,029	2c	74.6	1	-	13	0	280.2	150.0
Parsun	3.6	T3.6BMS 2C	\$720	2c	74.6	1	-	16	0 est		
Evinrude	3.5	E4R4	\$1,769	4c	123	1	-	26.0	3	24.3	468.9
Mercury	4	M	\$1,662	4c	123	1	5A	25.0	3	24.3	468.9
Mercury	4	M	\$1,416	2c	102	1	0	20	1	221.9	236.2
Parsun	4	F4BMS 4C	\$1,195	4c	112	1	-	24.5	3	21.8	339.9
Suzuki	4	DF4S	\$1,638	4c	138	1	6A	25	3	19.1	268.0
Tohatsu	4	MFS4BD S	\$1,693	4c	123	1	5A	26.0	3	20.7	263.0
Tohatsu	4	M4C S	\$1,411	2c	102	1	5A	19	1	204.0	258.4
Yamaha	4	F4BMHS	\$1,689	4c	139	1	6A	27	3	22.5	290.9
Yamaha premix	4	4ACMHS	\$1,468	2c	83	1	5A	21	0	332.3	598.3
Honda	5	BF5DK2 SB	\$2,195	4c	127	1	3A	27.0	3	20.5	374.0
Mercury	5	M	\$1,738	4c	123	1	5A	25.0	3	24.3	468.9
Mercury	5	M	\$1,505	2c	102	1	4A	20	1	221.9	236.2
Parsun	5	F5BMS 4C	\$1,245	4c	112	1	-	24.5	3	21.8	296.5
Suzuki	5	DF5S	\$1,731	4c	138	1	6A	25	3	19.1	268.0
Tohatsu	5	MFS5BDS	\$1,746	4c	123	1	5A	25.0	3	20.7	263.0
Tohatsu	5	M5BDS	\$1,536	2c	102	1	5A	19	1	204.0	258.4
Yamaha premix	5	5CMHS	\$1,782	2c	103	1	5A	21	0 est		
Yamaha	5	F5AMHS	\$1,919	4c	139	1	6A	27	3	22.5	290.9
Evinrude	6	E6R4	\$1,889	4c	123	1	-	26	3	24.3	468.9
Mercury	6	M	\$1,846	4c	123	1	5A	25.0	3	24.3	468.9
Mercury	6	M lite	\$1,939	2c	169	2	-	26	0	306.1	225.5
Parsun	6	T6BMS	\$1,495	2c	169	2	-	26	0 est		
Suzuki	6	DF6S	\$1,913	4c	138	1	6A	25	3	19.1	268.0
Tohatsu	6	MFS6B S	\$1,851	4c	123	1	5A	25.0	3	20.7	263.0
Tohatsu	6	MFS6BSUL(Sail)	\$1,900	4c	123	1	5A	25.0	3 est	20.7	263.0
Tohatsu	6	M6B S	\$2,013	2c	169	2	6.7A	26	1	220.9	377.3
Yamaha premix	6	6CMHS	\$2,196	2c	165	2	6A	27	0	322.7	331.7
Yamaha	6	F6CMHS	\$2,149	4c	139	1	6A	27	3	22.5	290.9
Honda	8	BF8DK2 SHD	\$3,392	4c	222	2	6A	42.0	3	17.9	363.5
Mercury	8	M	\$3,140	4c	209	2	6A	38.0	3	20.7	144.4
Mercury	8	M lite	\$1,991	2c	169	2	-	26	0	306.1	225.5
Suzuki	8	DF8AS	\$3,133	4c	208	2	6A	39.5	3	17.6	196.0
Tohatsu	8	MFS8A3 S	\$3,080	4c	209	2	6A	37.0	3	20.0	296.4
Tohatsu	8	M8B S	\$2,040	2c	169	2	-	26	1	220.9	377.3
Yamaha premix	8	8CMHS	\$2,467	2c	165	2	6A	27	0	322.7	331.7
Yamaha	8	F8CMHS	\$3,149	4c	197	1	6A	38	3	21.9	325.0
Evinrude	9.8	E10EL4	\$2,935	4c	209	2	6A	37	3	20.7	144.4

Notes: **Shaft length** - representative models shown use the following convention where possible. Up to 10hp, short shaft. 10hp to 150hp, long shaft. Over 150hp, extra long shaft. Up to 18hp, tiller steer. 20hp and over - forward steer. Readers are advised to make sure they check *the latest prices* with their local dealers, before making a purchase decision - and please note, freight costs will vary according to the location of the dealer.

Make	HP	Model	RRP	4-stroke 2-stroke Carb/Inject	Capacity (cc's)	Cylinders	Amp/hr capacity	Weight (Kg)	F&B Star Rating	Emiss HC+NOX (g/kw/hr)	Emiss. CO (g/kw/hr)
Suzuki	9.9	DT9.9S	\$2,412	2c	284	2	2.5A	33	0 est		
Suzuki	9.9	DF9.9S	\$3,311	4c	209	2	6A	37.0	3	17.6	196.0
Tohatsu	9.8	M9.8B S	\$2,188	2c	169	2	6.7A	26	1	195.0	150.0
Tohatsu	9.9	M9.9D2 S	\$2,494	2c	247	2	6.7A	37	1	180.9	287.2
Tohatsu	9.8	MFS9.8A3 S	\$3,147	4c	209	2	6A	37.0	3	20.0	296.4
Mercury	9.9	M	\$3,519	4c	209	2	6A	38.1	3	20.7	144.4
Mercury	9.9	M	\$2,506	2c	262	2	8A	35	0	323.2	533.4
Mercury	9.9	EL Big Foot	\$4,591	4c	209	2	6A	43	3	20.7	144.4
Parsun	9.8	T9.8BMS	\$1,575	2c	169	2		26.0	0 est		
Parsun	9.8	F9.8BMS	\$2,095	4c	209	2		38.0	0 est		
Yamaha	9.9	F9.9FMHS	\$3,199	4c	212	2	6A	39.9	3	18.6	267.7
Yamaha premix	9.9	9.9FMHS	\$2,709	2c	246	2	6A	36	1	249.6	408.4
Honda	10	BF10DK2 SHD	\$3,906	4c	222	2	6A	42.0	3	17.9	363.5
Evinrude	15	E15RL4	\$3,349	4c	351	2	12A	52	3	18.4	150.7
Honda	15	BF15D3 LHD	\$4,200	4c	350	2	6A	46.5	3	15.5	172.6
Mercury	15	15ML	\$3,821	4c	351	2	11A	52	3	18.4	150.7
Mercury	15	M L super	\$2,249	2c	294	2	6A	42	1	173.5	270.3
Mercury	15	ML	\$2,726	2c	262	2	6A	35	0	323.2	533.4
Parsun	15	T15BML 2C	\$1,810	2c	246	2		37.5	0 est		
Parsun	15	F15BML 4CT	\$2,645	4c	323	2		51	3 est	16.0	221.3
Suzuki	15	DT15S	\$2,679	2c	284	2	2.5A	33	0 est		
Suzuki	15	DF15AS	\$3,918	4i	327	2	6A	44	3	17.1	59.9
Tohatsu	15	MFS15CL	\$3,858	4c	351	2	12A	52.0	3	16.7	164.4
Tohatsu	15	M15D2 S	\$2,601	2c	247	2	6.7A	37	1	180.9	287.2
Yamaha premix	15	15FMHL	\$2,952	2c	246	2	6A	36	1	249.6	408.4
Yamaha	15	F15CMHS	\$3,899	4c	362	2	10A	50	3	22.3	229.0
Tohatsu	18	M18E2 S	\$2,601	2c	294	2	6.7A	37	1	173.5	270.3
Honda	20	BF20DK2 SHD	\$4,694	4c	350	2	6A	46.5	3	15.5	172.6
Mercury	20	20ML	\$4,526	4c	351	2	11A	53.0	3	18.4	150.7
Suzuki	20	DF20AS	\$4,324	4i	327	2	6A	44.0	3	17.1	59.9
Tohatsu	20	MFS20CL	\$4,114	4c	351	2	12A	52.0	3	16.7	164.4
Yamaha premix	20	20DMHL	\$3,599	2c	395	2	6A	48	1	201.9	200.4
Yamaha	20	F20BMHL	\$4,749	4c	362	2	10A	53.7	3	14.6	311.1
Evinrude E-TEC	25	E25DTSL	\$5,589	2di	576	2	56A	64.4	3	16.4	139.8
Mercury	25	ML EFI	\$5,279	4i	526	3	15A	71	3	14.9	279.4
Parsun	25	T25BML	\$2,635	2c	496	2		53	0 est		
Parsun	25	F25BML FES	\$4,045	4i	498	2		68	3	12.8	152.0
Suzuki	25	DF25S	\$4,887	4c	538	V2 70°	6A	70	3	15.5	205.2
Suzuki	25	DF25A	TBA								
Tohatsu	25	MFS25B (EFI) L	\$5,312	4i	526	3	15A	82.5	3	14.5	282.8
Tohatsu	25	M25C3 L	\$3,384	2c	429	2	6.7A	52	1	160.7	194.0
Yamaha premix	25	25NMHL	\$3,839	2c	395	2	6A	48	1	201.9	200.4
Yamaha	25	F25DETL	\$5,969	4c	498	2	10A	79	3	14.6	230.5
Evinrude E-TEC	30	E30DTSL	\$6,685	2di	576	2	56A	64.4	3	16.4	139.8
Honda	30	BF30DK2 LHTD	\$6,398	4c	552	3	10A	72.5	3	14.6	239.2
Mercury	30	EL GA EFI	\$6,467	4i	526	3	15A	71	3	14.9	279.4
Mercury	30	EL lite	\$3,773	2c	430	2	6A	48	1	164.2	202.9
Parsun	30	T30BML 2C	\$2,660	2c	703	2		75.1	0 est		
Suzuki	30	DF30A	TBA								
Suzuki	30	DT30S	\$3,194	2c	499	2	2.5A	57.5	1 est		
Tohatsu	30	MFS30B (EFI) L	\$5,312	4i	526	3	15A	82.5	3	14.5	282.8
Tohatsu	30	M30A4 L	\$3,384	2c	429	2	6.7A	52	1	164.2	202.9
Yamaha	30	30DETOL	\$6,229	2c	496	3	6A	66	1	237.6	425.6
Yamaha	30	F30BETL	\$6,549	4i	747	3	16A	99.6	3	15.6	131.7
Evinrude E-TEC	40	E40DLP11	\$8,612	2di	864	2	81A	109	3	15.2	66.5
Honda	40	BF40DK2 LRTL	\$9,059	4i	808	3	17A	98.0	3	12.6	87.0
Mercury	40	ML	\$7,148	4c	747	3	6A	93	3	13.0	185.4
Mercury	40	ELPTO	\$6,197	2c	644	2	18A	78	1	142.2	192.3
Mercury	40	MHL Lite	\$6,233	2c	697	3	11	69	1	142.2	192.3
Mercury	40	ELPT EFI bigfoot	\$8,802	4i	995	4	18A	120	3	14.2	188.9
Parsun	40	T40BML 2C	\$3,140	2c	703	2		75.1	0 est		

Make	HP	Model	RRP	4-stroke 2-stroke Carb/Inject	Capacity (cc's)	Cylinders	Amp/hr capacity	Weight (Kg)	F&B Star Rating	Emiss HC+NOX (g/kw/hr)	Emiss. CO (g/kw/hr)
Suzuki	40	DT40L	\$4,087	2c	696	2	18A	76.0	1 est		
Suzuki	40	DF40ATL	\$7,605	4i	941	3	19A	104	3	14.6	73.7
Tohatsu	40	M40D2 L	\$4,519	2c	697	3	11A	85	1	153.0	150.0
Tohatsu tldi	40	MD40B EPTOL	\$8,373	2di	697	3	23A	93.4	3	16.1	96.6
Yamaha premix	40	40XWTL	\$5,579	2c	703	2	6A	80.7	1	196.6	364.8
Yamaha	40	40VETOL	\$6,499	2c	698	3	6A	88	1	167.5	329.7
Yamaha	40	F40FETL	\$7,824	4i	747	3	15A	90.4	3	15.6	131.7
Evinrude E-TEC	50	E50DPL11	\$9,487	2di	864	2	81A	109	3	15.2	66.5
Honda	50	BF50DK2 LRTL	\$10,049	4i	808	3	17A	98.0	3	12.6	87.0
Mercury	50	ELPT EFI	\$8,889	4i	995	4	20A	112	3	14.2	188.9
Mercury	50	ELPTO	\$7,285	2c	967	3	16A	93	1	140.1	411.0
Mercury	50	ELPTEFI BigFoot	\$9,164	4i	995	4	20A	120	3	14.2	188.9
Suzuki	50	DF50ATL	\$8,655	4i	941	3	19A	104	3	14.6	73.7
Tohatsu	50	M50D2 EPTOL	\$6,962	2c	697	3	11A	85	1	167.8	387.0
Tohatsu	50	MD50B EPTOL	\$8,551	2di	697	3	23A	93.5	3	16.1	96.6
Yamaha premix	50	50HETL	\$6,949	2c	703	2	6A	87	1	167.5	329.7
Yamaha	50	50HETOL	\$7,699	2c	698	3	6A	86	1	167.5	329.7
Yamaha	50	F50FETL	\$8,831	4i	996	4	17A	111	3	15.1	128.7
Mercury	55	Sea Pro MHL	\$7,236	2c	967	3	18A	100	1	140.1	411.0
Evinrude E-TEC	60	E60DPL11	\$10,437	2di	864	2	81A	109	3	13.4	66.5
Honda	60	BF60AK1LRTL	\$10,999	4i	998	3	18A	110	3	14.2	188.9
Mercury	60	ELPTO	\$7,606	2c	967	3	16	99.5	1	140.1	411.0
Mercury	60	Sea Pro Big Foot	\$7,432	2c	967	3	16A	108	1	140.1	411.0
Mercury	60	ELPT EFI	\$9,237	4i	995	4	20a	112	3	13.0	161.4
Mercury	60	ELPTO BigFoot	\$8,101	2c	967	3	16A	109	1	140.1	411.0
Mercury	60	ELPTEFI BigFoot	\$9,633	4i	995	4	20A	120	3	157.9	298.1
Parsun	60	T60FEL	\$7,100	2c	1141	3	(tba)	119	0 est		
Suzuki	60	DF60ATL	\$9,130	4i	941	3	19A	104	3	14.6	73.7
Tohatsu	60	M60C EPTOL	\$8,995	2c	938	3	11A	115	1	157.9	298.1
Yamaha	60	F60CETL	\$9,250	4i	996	4	17A	111	3	15.1	128.7
Yamaha premix	60	E60HMHDHDL	\$7,592	2c	849	3	6A	102	1	168.2	319.4
Yamaha	60	FT60DETL	\$9,375	4i	996	4	17A	115	3	15.1	128.7
Yamaha	60	60FETOL	\$8,459	2c	849	3	6A	105	1	168.2	319.4
Suzuki	70	DF70ATL	\$10,403	4i	1502	4	27A	156	3	12.4	60.3
Tohatsu	70	M70C EPTOL	\$9,045	2c	938	3	11A	115	1	151.4	291.2
Tohatsu tldi	70	MD70B EPTOL	\$11,994	2di	1267	3	23A	143	3	12.4	134.7
Yamaha	70	70BETOL	\$8,959	2c	849	3	6A	105.5	1	168.2	319.4
Yamaha	70	F70AETL	\$10,412	4i	996	4	17A	118	3	11.2	108.0
Evinrude E-TEC	75	E75DPL11	\$12,087	2di	1295	3	81A	145	3	12.3	69.8
Honda	75	BF75DK2 LRTL	\$14,249	4i	1497	4	35A	162	3	15.2	63.6
Mercury	75	ELPTO	\$9,389	2c	1386	3	18A	138	1	122.9	401.5
Mercury	75	ELPT EFI	\$12,914	4i	1732	4	50A	181	3	15.4	336.0
Mercury Opti	75	ELPT	\$12,540	2di	1526	3	60A	170	3	13.3	127.5
Parsun	75	T75FEL	\$7,200	2c	1141	3	(tba)	119	0 est		
Honda	80	BF80ALTRL	\$14,249	4i	1496	4	35A	165	3	12.3	103.0
Suzuki	80	DF80ATL	\$12,432	4i	1502	4	27A	155	3	12.4	60.3
Mercury	80	ELPT EFI	\$12,036	4i	1732	4	50A	181	3	15.4	336.0
Yamaha	80	F80BETL	\$12,376	4i	1596	4	25A	172	3	16.2	102.0
Evinrude E-TEC	90	E90DPL11	\$13,260	2di	1295	3	81A	145	3	12.3	69.8
Honda	90	BF90DK2 LRTL	\$15,199	4i	1497	4	35A	163	3	15.2	63.6
Mercury	90	ELPT EFI	\$13,699	4i	1732	4	50A	181	3	15.4	336.0
Mercury	90	ELPTO	\$10,522	2c	1386	3	18A	138	1	122.9	401.5
Mercury Opti	90	ELPT	\$13,354	2di	1526	3	60A	170	3	13.3	127.5
Parsun	90	T90FEL	\$7,400	2c	1141	3	(tba)	119	0 est		
Suzuki	90	DF90ATL	\$13,307	4i	1502	4	27A	155	3	12.4	60.3

Notes: **Shaft length** - representative models shown use the following convention where possible. Up to 10hp, short shaft. 10hp to 150hp, long shaft. Over 150hp, extra long shaft. Up to 18hp, tiller steer. 20hp and over - forward steer. Readers are advised to make sure they check *the latest prices* with their local dealers, before making a purchase decision - and please note, freight costs will vary according to the location of the dealer.

Make	HP	Model	RRP	4-stroke 2-stroke Carb/Inject	Capacity (cc's)	Cylinders	Amp/hr capacity	Weight (Kg)	F&B Star Rating	Emiss HC+NOX (g/kw/hr)	Emiss. CO (g/kw/hr)
Tohatsu	90	M90A EPTOL	\$9,799	2c	1267	3	11A	135	1	147.7	286.0
Tohatsu	90	MD90B EPTOL	\$12,249	2di	1267	3	23A	143	3	12.4	134.7
Yamaha	90	90AETOL	\$10,179	2c	1140	3	10A	122.5	1	161.4	432.5
Honda	100	BF100ALTRL	\$14,499	4i	1496	4	35A	166	3	12.3	103.0
Suzuki	100	DF100TL	\$15,134	4i	2044	4	40A	182	3	13.9	56.0
Mercury	100	ELPT EFI	\$13,733	4i	1732	4	50A	181	3	15.4	336.0
Yamaha	100	F100DETL	\$13,928	4i	1596	4	25A	172	3	16.2	102.0
Evinrude E-TEC	115	E115DPL11	\$16,253	2di	1726	V4 60°	133A	167	3	12.8	122.8
Evinrude E-TEC	115	E115DHX11	\$16,847	2di	1726	V4 60°	133A	177	3	12.8	122.8
Honda	115	BF115DK1XD	\$18,499	4i	2354	4	40A	217	3	13.8	75.6
Mercury	115	ELPT EFI	\$15,495	4i	1732	4	50	181	3	15.4	336.0
Mercury Opti	115	ELPT	\$14,475	2di	1526	3	60A	170	3	13.3	127.5
Mercury	115	PRO-XS	\$15,476	2di	1526	3	60A	170	3	12.6	139.7
Suzuki	115	DF115TL	\$15,647	4i	2044	4	40A	182	3	13.9	56.0
Tohatsu	115	M115A2 EPTOL	\$12,314	2c	1768	4	27.5A	164	1	199.6	150.0
Tohatsu	115	MD115A EPTOL	\$15,849	2di	1768	4	40A	173	2	31.1	128.5
Yamaha	115	F115LB	\$16,099	4i	1832	4	35A	171	3	11.8	204.9
Yamaha	115	115CETOL	\$10,999	2c	1730	V4 90°	20A	167	1	169.4	356.4
Mercury Opti	125	L	\$TBA	2di	1526	3	60A	170	3	12.6	139.7
Evinrude E-TEC	130	E130DPX11	\$16,966	2di	1726	V4 60°	133A	177	3	12.8	122.8
Yamaha	130	130BETOL	\$12,069	2c	1730	V4 90°	20A	167	1	140.0	392.8
Honda	135	BF135A4 LD	\$18,799	4i	2354	4	40A	217	3	13.8	75.6
Mercury Verado	135	L	\$20,613	4i sc	1732	4	70A	231	2	15.4	336.0
Suzuki	140	DF140ATL	\$16,234	4i	2044	4	40A	179	3	13.9	56.0
Tohatsu	140	M140A2 EPTOL	\$12,795	2c	1768	4	27.5A	164	1	167.3	355.3
Evinrude E-TEC	150	E150DBX11	\$19,674	2di	2589	V6 60°	133A	190	3	15.2	114.2
Evinrude E-TEC	150	E150DHL11	\$20,361	2di	2589	V6 60°	133A	190	3	15.2	114.2
Honda	150	BF150K2 LD	\$21,126	4i	2354	4	40A	217	3	13.8	75.6
Mercury	150	L EFI	\$18,203	4i	2980	4	60A	206	3	13.8	115.2
Mercury	150	L EFI	\$14,616	2i	2507	V6 60°	60A	193	1	117.2	282.4
Mercury Verado	150	L	\$19,458	4i sc	1732	4	70A	231	2	15.4	336.0
Suzuki	150	DF150TL	\$19,753	4i	2867	4	44A	215	3	14.1	85.9
Yamaha	150	F150LA	\$20,210	4i	2670	4	35A	216	3	10.8	222.3
Yamaha	150	150FETOL	\$14,999	2c	2596	V4 90°	45A	198	1	130.0	354.8
Evinrude E-TEC	175	E175DPX11	\$21,325	2di	2589	V6 60°	133A	190	3	15.2	114.2
Honda	175	BF175 AK2XD	\$24,199	4i	3471	4	60A	267	3	12.4	89.4
Mercury	175	175ProXS	\$20,312	2di	3032	V6 60°	60A	229	3	15.1	92.8
Mercury Verado	175	XL	\$23,154	4i sc	1732	4	70A	239	2	12.1	278.8
Suzuki	175	DF175TL	\$21,377	4i	2867	4	44A	215	3	14.1	85.9
Yamaha	175	F175LA	\$22,599	4i	2785	4	50A	219	3	11.0	169.9
Yamaha	175	175DETOX	\$16,029	2c	2596	V4 90°	45A	198	1	122.5	241.8
Evinrude E-TEC	200	E200DPZ11	\$23,302	2di	2589	V6 60°	133A	190	3	15.2	114.2
Evinrude E-TEC	200	E200DHL11	\$23,957	2di	3279	V6 90°	133A	238	3	10.6	84.9
Honda	200	BF200A6 XD	\$25,299	4i	3471	V6	60A	267	3	11.5	77.8
Mercury	200	XL EFI	\$17,411	2i	2507	V6 60°	60A	196	1	117.2	282.4
Mercury Opti	200	XL	\$19,970	2di	3032	V6 60°	60A	225	3	15.1	92.8
Mercury Opti XS	200 (Pro)	L	\$20,284	2di	3032	V6 60°	60A	225	3	15.1	92.8
Mercury Verado	200 (Pro)	L	\$23,128	4i sc	2598	6	70A	288	2	18.6	124.2
Mercury Verado	200	XL6	\$22,414	4i sc	2598	6	70A	294	2	15.1	278.2
Mercury Verado	200	L4	\$22,150	4i sc	1732	4	70A	239	2 est	17.7	119.8
Suzuki	200	DF200TX	\$24,475	4i	3614	V6 55°	54A	263	3	12.9	200.4
Yamaha	200	200FETOX	\$17,199	2c	2596	V6 90°	25A	198	1	122.5	241.8
Yamaha	200	LFL200XA	\$23,216	4i	3352	V6 90°	45A	274	3	12.7	199.9

Footnote: Readers are reminded that all the outboard data, and the prices Australian Boat Mags has published here, are as accurate as we can make them at the time of going to press. The database is derived from various sources in Australia and overseas, and regularly spot-checked for accuracy. We maintain the lists on a monthly basis, but from time to time, an ammendment will come in too late to make the cut for the following issue, so the published prices and specs can be as much as 5-6 weeks behind the 'street' figures. **Do Not Rely On Them To Make A Purchase Decision!** Always check with your local outboard dealer to get the latest 'deal', 'package' or price before deciding which one to buy - and don't forget to clarify **whether the 'price' includes the propeller, throttle, gearshift and appropriate cables, the engine gauges, and installation charges.**

Make	HP	Model	RRP	4-stroke 2-stroke Carb/Inject	Capacity (cc's)	Cylinders	Amp/hr capacity	Weight (Kg)	F&B Star Rating	Emiss HC+NOX (g/kw/hr)	Emiss. CO (g/kw/hr)
Yamaha	200	F200XB	\$23,999	4i	2785	4	50A	227	3	7.4	196.6
Evinrude E-TEC	225	E225DPZ11	\$25,469	2di	3279	V6 90°	133A	238	3	10.6	84.9
Evinrude E-TEC	225	E225DHX11	\$26,204	2di	3279	V6 90°	133A	238	3	10.6	84.9
Honda	225	BF225AK2 XD	\$26,999	4i	3471	V6	60A	267	3	12.4	89.4
Mercury Opti	225	XL PRO XS	\$24,655	2di	3032	V6 60°	60A	229	3	15.1	92.8
Mercury Verado	225	XL	\$29,706	4i sc	2598	V6 60°	46A	294	3	15.1	92.8
Suzuki	225	DF225TXX	\$26,082	4i	3614	V6 55°	54A	263	3	12.9	200.4
Yamaha	225	LF225XCA	\$25,840	4i	4169	V6 60°	70A	253	3	10.4	219.8
Evinrude E-TEC	250	E250DPZ11	\$29,332	2di	3279	V6 90°	133A	238	3	10.6	84.9
Evinrude E-TEC	250	E250DHX11	\$27,708	2di	3441	V6 90°	133A	234	3	10.6	84.9
Honda	250	BF250AXD	\$29,490	4i	3583	V6	90A	278	3	13.5	84.7
Mercury Verado	250	XL	\$31,515	4i sc	2598	V6 60°	46A	294	2	103.6	248.3
Mercury Opti	250	250 XL PRO XS	\$27,473	2di	3032	V6 60°	60A	229	3	15.1	92.8
Suzuki	250	DF250TX	\$27,349	4i	3614	V6 55°	54A	263	3	12.9	200.4
Suzuki	250SS	DF250APX	\$29,214	4i	4028	V6 55°	54A	274	3	12.9	200.4
Yamaha	250	F250DETX	\$28,772	4i	4169	V6 60°	70A	253	3	10.4	219.8
Evinrude E-TEC	300	E300DPZ11	\$31,777	2di	3441	V6 90°	133A	242	2	29.5	251
Mercury Verado	300	XL	\$35,470	4i sc	2598	V6 90°	133A	294	2	15.1	278.8
Suzuki	300	DF300APX	\$32,306	4i	4028	V6 55°	54A	274	3	12.9	200.4
Yamaha	300	F300XA	\$31,578	4i	4169	V6 60°	70A	253	3	10.4	219.8
Mercury	350	XL	\$35,615	4i	2598	V6 90°	50A	365	2	15.1	278.8
Yamaha	350	FL350XCB	\$39,601	4i	5330	V8 90°	50A	365	3	9.2	216.1

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Back to Basics



One of the frustrating things about getting into boating, be it for the first time ever, or because you are switching from sail to power, or big boat to small - there is much to learn. Knowledge concerning the 'tricks of the trade'. New skills, old skills. Tips and techniques. In boating, we never stop learning . . .



Crabbing - Muddies and Sandies



Prawning - Northern & Southern versions



Fishing - Aaron on getting amongst 'em !



Family Fun Diving

This is our new section that is designed to help people get to know about boating as quickly as possible, and learn how many different aspects of boating can work for them and their families.

Over the next 18-24 months, we're going to look at a whole range of subjects that many regular readers already know intimately, or take for granted, so for those people we acknowledge that this is not breaking any new ground.

The fact is there are thousands of families who would love to go boating, but

it's a very big investment and scary to do so without the confidence of knowing they've got back up, good reference material and people they can call for assistance when they are drowning in the competing salesmen's presentations.

All the material published in this series will soon be made available FOC in a new **'How To Go Boating'** section of the ABM Sea Library, as we work to encourage more people to take up boating and fishing with the passion we all share.

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Which Type Of Boat Suits You Best?

It's becoming something of a cliché, but in truth, boat buyers have never had it so good.

There is a staggering array of boats for sale, both new and secondhand, in just about every shape and size imaginable. But fundamental to the process is the recognition that there are essentially 8 different types of configurations or layouts for trailerboats,

Each 'type' has different design values to the other, and each offers specific advantages to the boatowner. This is what often causes a great deal of confusion and no little concern when newcomers to boating (especially) try and figure out which is the best configuration for them.

In this report, we're not going to try and pick favourites, but concentrate on the differences between the designs.

Few manufacturers make the eight configurations available in their range, with most GRP (fibreglass) boat builders rarely having more than two or three model lengths in production, and then rarely more than two versions of the different length boats.

Aluminium boatbuilders have infinitely bigger ranges, with different lengths and configurations in an often bewildering blur.

Ally boat builders can chop and change models almost at will, as each boat is built one at a time over (or 'in') an easily altered steel jig, giving them a huge advantage in terms of flexibility and model variation over their fibreglass colleagues.

So, by the time you contemplate the possibilities from 20-30 aspiring boat builders, there's no shortage of different boats to choose from!

The eight principal configurations include:

1. Open dinghy
2. Cuddy Cabin
3. Centre (or Side) Console

4. Bowrider
5. Casting Platform
6. Runabout
7. Walkaround
8. Cruiser

(And please note we acknowledge that at the last count, there were at least 1,476,321 possible variations on the above groupings - and that is just counting the Telwater range(s) of Quintrex, Stacer, Savage, and Yellowfins !

So within most of the big manufacturers' ranges, we have eight quite separate configurations for just about every step in their different size boats, leading to a truly amazing array of boat models to choose from.

In a perfect world we'd have all eight boat designs, characteristics or advantages in the one model – but obviously enough, that is simply not possible. So in the end, the consumer does have to make a choice.

That's where this report begins. Choosing which boat best suits your needs is an interesting, not to say 'debatable' issue, and with a bit of luck, we'll fuel the fires of debate over the next couple of pages!

In this report, we'll take a look at the "big picture" pros and cons of the different types of designs, without worrying too much about the nitty-gritty differences between (say) a Quintrex and its opposite number from Sea Jay.

That's *another* area we'll look at in the not too distant future, but for this issue, we'll focus just on the differences between the main configurations, regardless of the manufacturer.

BTW - Queries, questions and comments more than welcome - and we'd especially like to hear from reader's own experiences with the different configurations.

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1. Dinghy

The ubiquitous Australian tinnie is just about unique in the whole boating world.

Few other countries have embraced the concept of very thin sheet aluminium boats, much less learned how to develop the extrusions and welding techniques to make these strong, robust, fun boating craft as well as we do in Australia.

Tinnies range in length from around 2.4m long, right up to the big commercial fishing jobs that commonly are as much as 5.5m LOA ('length overall').

Hundreds of thousands – literally – have been built since they were first developed in the 1960s, and they have introduced countless families to the wonderful world of boating and fishing throughout Australia. Still hugely popular, most tinnies today are set up with two very wide thwarts (seats) which is a specific design characteristic as the seats themselves cover big blocks of foam which help make the tinnies (basically) unsinkable. You can still turn them over if you are silly enough, but by and large, most open tinnies that were built in the last couple of years will do a decent job of floating, even if they are half full of water.

There are numerous safety aids that can be added to

a tinnie including the extremely effective Air-O-Floats we have featured in our magazines many times over the years because they are such a fantastic safety item and so easy to use, cheap to buy and easy to install yourself. But there are many other people making "collar" type systems all of which go to make the tinnie an even better fishing family boating platform than it is when it leaves the factory.

Half a dozen manufacturers still build tinnies, but they are becoming very state-centric these days, because the cost of freighting tinnies around the country gives the home state where the tinnie is built, a significant advantage in their price.

Today's tinnie can still be identical to the ones made in the 1960s but we can also purchase sophisticated versions complete with side decks (a very good idea for fishermen) fuel tank racks, battery rack forward for an electric outboard and of course, many now include an electric outboard mounting pad off the bow.

Terrific value, they last forever if looked after, and always retain good resale.

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2. Runabout

The traditional runabout is still popular, although the sales have been knocked around by the more contemporary bowrider and to a lesser extent, the casting platform style of boat.

The classic runabout, with its low-set forward seating for the passenger and the skipper will always be popular, because it still offers a pretty useful compromise between the protection of the windscreen and canopy (especially in the summer) as well as having a solid foredeck that is capable of bursting through the odd wave if things get a bit nasty.

That said, nobody in their right mind would ever see a basic runabout as an offshore capable boat – but they still do excellent duty as the best way of tubing, wakeboarding, waterskiing and the like, any activity where you need a skipper concentrating on his job and you are legally required to have an observer. (Oh, and you don't have spare \$90K laying around to pick up one of the imported wake boats . . .)

As this applies to some of the most popular family activities, it's probably not all that surprising that runabouts have retained their popularity despite being threatened by bowriders.

Runabouts do have some disadvantages, not least of

which is that for older people, getting in under the canopy, and up and down from the seat is sometimes a real pain in the whatnot, a practice which is virtually avoided altogether in the (say) cuddy cabin configuration.

With a runabout having the canopy up, it's often quite awkward to get down, along, and into the passenger or observer's seat.

That said, it's usually more comfortable to sit in these runabout chairs than one of the tall pedestals, because it's much closer to the water and you feel much more secure.



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3. Centre and Side Consoles

The centre console configuration is available from just about every manufacturer in the land, and it sustains its popularity because it is such a practical set-up – and invariably the cheapest model in the boat builder’s range.

A lot of fishermen don’t like centre consoles as such, especially if they’ve got to cross over a bar, but they are so practical in all the other departments, the centre console will forever remain a popular choice for dedicated fishos.

Most use the platform up forward for casting, or working into schools of pelagics. Two or three blokes can easily work together in a boat just 4.80m LOA.

Centres consoles are not good for families with little kids or older people, as the protection these folk need from the biminis and canopies are a pain in the whatnot for serious fishermen.

Sure, many of them have a T-top, but this is scarcely sufficient protection for youngsters or oldsters.

In terms of seaworthiness, a centre console is arguably the most vulnerable of all configurations, but the completely open centre console is also far and away the cheapest of the five basic configurations. Not surprisingly, the younger blokes tend to target the centre console as their “weapon of choice”.

In recent years, the side console has become

fashionable, too, as it has one huge advantage of the centre console: with the console on the starboard side (invariably), the crew HAVE to walk back and forth along the centreline of the boat – and this is far safer than always having to walk AROUND the centre console set-up, no matter how small the console itself is – perforce of necessity, any crew movement has to (then) be around the edge of the boat – and that can be very ‘tippy’ and positively dangerous in some situations.

In summary, leave the pure centre consoles for the guys that know what they are doing, and need 100% fishing area for the least amount of money.

Side consoles are a more practical option – especially if family or less experienced crew is involved.



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4. Bowrider

Made by many manufacturers in ally or GRP in various sizes, the bowrider configuration is just plain terrific for families with kids.

One of the few boat types *made with seats* . . . curiously, as most boats built today are strictly two seat affairs unless they've got a squab across the transom. But transom seats are hopeless in small craft, and besides being an awful place to sit, you really don't need a couple of adults sitting down back near the transom in a small craft – well, not if they're fairly large people, and you want to trim the boat properly.

As a result, most family boats are restricted to two seats on a pedestal, and the kids are supposed to sit in the cabin – which they'll do at the Boat Show, but that will only last for about five seconds flat when they get out on the water and the boat starts going *bump-pitty-bump!*

The answer to the family problem of where to seat everybody can easily be found in the bowrider format. Commonly with either back to back seats or swivels plus boxes, the bowrider section actually adds an important couple of seats for kids, depending on the size of the bowrider involved.

Bowriders are also terrific fishing boats – something that most people don't think about until they sit down and have a look at the alternatives. But for drift fishing, for example, you can't beat a

bowrider, as you can fish three or four people along one side in quite a small boat – and they're all very comfortably seated to do it.

There are not too many disadvantages with a bowrider, either. Obviously the smaller models are not really designed to go to sea, and the owners need to use some commonsense about how they load the boat up and run it in choppy conditions. They might have seats up under the foredeck area, but the reality is that in choppy conditions, it doesn't take very much weight up forward to spoil the boat's handling, and/or make the front end of the boat a rather wet area to sit.

I'd also like to mention one other aspect of bowriders that very rarely gets a mention: its inherent user friendliness. For those precious times when the boat is just anchored somewhere; the kids are jumping in and out of the boat, Mum and the girls are putting the picnic on the beach, and Dad's contemplating his fishing gear and tackle set-up. . . . Even the small 4.80m models have enough space to walk up and down the boat, for people to sit or laze around in the different "corners" of the boat. This is one of the reasons why they are so fantastically popular. They're just really good boats to be in, anchored off a nice sandy beach on a warm Sunday morning.

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5. Casting Platform Style

This is a relatively new configuration that emerged from the influence of several Top End N.T.) fishing gurus who took the concept of the centre console and developed a different style of console – specifically, with the centre console moved over to the side so that anglers walked up and down the centre of the craft.

This was really clever because it means that the boat is far less rocky and tippy with the crew walking around because they're always walking up and down the centreline as distinct from around the side of the centre console, as you do in the traditional set-up.

As well, the “top enders” who specialise in casting for barra, jacks, GT's and such other exciting fish, also set-up the notion of creating a big casting platform up forward, roughly in the first third of the boat.

The idea here was that you could have two and possibly three anglers working lures over the side or out of the bow of the boat. It didn't take long for this to be further developed with an electric motor mounted off the bow, controlled by the forward angler.

Today, the so-called “topender” style of boat is made by just about all the manufacturers and is easily identified by being a big open boat, with a side console and a carpeted forward casting platform.

Some models are actually designed for offshore work – such as the Quintrex Topenders, Stacer Nomads, or Makocraft Frenzies – these top of boats are easily distinguished by the higher sides ('freeboard') they have, compared to their freshwater, or inshore cousins. These have bugger-all freeboard sometimes, as the whole point is to get the angler right down close to the water, so he can impart a better action on his or her lures or 'flys'.

Usually there are two or even three seats well aft, so the boat can track quickly along rivers and across bays with relatively moderate horsepower.

These casting platform style boats are really targeting the dedicated fisho who wants to go to the next stage beyond the base centre console.

The casting boats – be it the inshore or offshore versions, are always a lot more expensive – and I mean *a lot more* expensive – than the base centre console, but they usually have a lot more in them, too.

Apart from the forward casting platform, and the side console, they have frequently got special seats, multiple rod holders, storage cupboards, live bait tanks – some of these boats are really sophisticated fishing platforms.

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6. Cuddy Cabin

This is probably my favourite. Depending on the size of the boat, the cuddy cabin really isn't a practical area for sleeping until you get up into the 6.5m boats.

In the really popular areas from 4.7m-5.8m LOA, the cuddy is usually little more than a couple of low seats or mini-berths, backed up with an open bulkhead and the helm mounted on what's called the 'ring frame bulkhead' on the starboard side.

As you can see in the pic, this Ally Craft 480 Challenger has the big opening hatch in the middle, a feature that's become almost a de facto standard in Australia from just about every manufacturer. They do this because it allows them to eliminate the side decks, and thus push the cuddy cabin right out to the gunwales of these relatively small boats.

The cuddy cabin models are usually the safest in any manufacturer's range.

The cabin "shed" itself provides a 'bulwark' or protection against the ingress of the sea or waves, and this offers a considerable boost to a boat's safety compared to the bowrider version, for example, with its completely open foredeck arrangement.

Cuddy cabins also have the big advantage of allowing fairly tall blokes like the writer to stand underneath the canopy which has usually got some sort of see-through 'clear' or infill panel between the top of

the canopy and the top of the windscreen (see pic.)

This is a good set-up, because it means that a 6' bloke can walk around the cockpit quite safely, stay inside the cuddy and the canopy for excellent shelter from the sun, rain and wind, and with two aft facing seats end up with a pretty good fishing platform – especially if you like anchored fishing of the whiting and luderick kind.

Many of these cuddies have a fold down seat across the back transom which works with varying degrees of success – but in these smaller models, they're usually more trouble than they're worth.

The downside of the cuddy set-up is the big reduction in available fishing area for true fishos, because in the cuddy type boat, it is really hard to fish more than 2-3 people at a time. Well, to fish fairly seriously, that is.

Most cuddies are family boats, and I'm here to say it's easily possible to fish with Mum and at least four kids if you need to, even in a 4.8m model. Not sure you'll catch much, but the kids will have a ball; Dad can keep re-baiting the hooks, whilst Mum undoes the tangles . . . and keeps the peace.

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7. Walkarounds

Walkarounds were developed way back in the early 1980s when a couple of manufacturers picked up on a trend that was developing in American fibreglass boats ie, to create a walk around ‘trench’ or passage around the side cabin of the 96”-114” inch beam boats common in the ‘States at that time.

Some clever aluminium boat builders here realised that aluminium could be used extremely effectively in the walkaround configuration, because ally doesn’t need the mouldings needed for strength in fibreglass.

The original Yellowfin and Alufarm “walkarounds” set a huge precedent and within a couple of years, just about every aluminium boat builder had a ‘Walkaround’ in his arsenal.

Some of them were dreadful, because the manufacturer didn’t understand how to get the balances right, and when a big bloke walked forward in some 5.2m Walkarounds, in some choppy sea situations there was a real risk of tipping the boat over. So everybody learned pretty quickly how to make walkarounds more safely. This meant reducing the size of the trench, pulling down the size of the cabin that was between the walkarounds and then finally, pulling it all back towards the stern so there

wasn’t so much weight allowed up in the bow.

It was an interesting period and some very poor boats were made - so buyers need to be very careful when buying secondhand – and always do a physical trial of the boat in a seaway, before purchase.

Today, it’s possible to buy some beautiful walkarounds from both aluminium and GRP manufacturers, but the popularity of the concept has markedly reduced, as families realised that in truth, they didn’t use the walkaround facility enough to justify the space it took up; they preferred to have the space back in the cockpit where all the activity takes place.

Nowadays, it’s more the province of the really specialist fisherman and we can in fact see one coming through in this very issue (Page 34) where a very experienced angler is building a 2015 OMM Walkaround with a minimal cuddy, and maximum fishing space.

Today, most fibreglass walkarounds come from the cat manufacturers, where the rectangular shape of the cat (in ally too) obviously suits the walkaround configuration more than the ‘pointed’ monohull.

ABM



8. Cabin Cruiser

Once the backbone of the recreational boat industry, very few genuine cruisers are now made in Australia. The Victorian Whitley brand is just about ‘the last man standing’ in this once vital field.

Many reasons have been put forward for the decline in “proper” cruisers of trailerboating size, but primarily, the writer believes it’s due to the division of interest in boating families today. Whilst Dad and the boys are mad keen on going fishing, the girls in the family are more likely to want to go to Bali or the nearest mall on another shopping expedition.

Cynical? Perhaps, but the reality is that very few manufacturers could take the risk of building a fully-found cruiser today as the cost of building such a craft in Australia is extremely high.

This has precluded much development from some very experienced GRP manufacturers although ironically, it has boosted the plate aluminium boat sector. Many experienced cruiser owners today are opting to get a naval architect to design, or adapt a custom plate cruiser built, by hand, by some of the top plate yards around Australia.

In this way, they can achieve a very personally developed craft, hand built to their specific

requirements and if it ends up costing \$130-\$180K, well, that’s what it costs.

That said, it’s obviously not a proposition these days for any GRP manufacturer to invest that sort of funding into the development of a cruiser, so apart from the Whitley brand who stand stoically alone in this field, most purchasers are now opting to build trailerable cruisers in plate aluminium.



ABM

For a creature as unattractive and prehistoric as the mud crab looks, it sure brings a premium price in the retail seafood outlets, making it difficult to afford for the average person. So instead of forking out your hard-earned to treat your family to this delicacy, you may like to try your hand at catching, cleaning, cooking and presenting this highly sort after crustacean yourself. It is not that hard, and a hell of a lot of family fun, too.



Left: The author with an 8" buck caught in the Narrows, just north of Gladstone.

Scylla serrata:

The Humble **MUDDIE!**

Story and photographs by Scott Shepherd





Above: Although proper 'pots' account for most crabs, crabs are very commonly a by-product of regular bait fishing in estuaries, especially when whole dead fish baits are on offer. For many fishos, these are the best capture of them all.

Below: *Crabbing with the kids is something everyone enjoys - and it's always in safe, smooth water. Just make sure you keep the little ones - and Mum (!) well forward and way out of reach of the crab's claws.*





Above: Good crabbing country up one of the many mangrove lined creeks in Hervey Bay, Qld.

Below: Kids love this type of crabbing. Using a tinnie in the crystal clear waters of Hervey Bay, Qld.

Now here is a Queensland and Northern Territory icon that surely lives up to its reputation as a gourmet delight.

You would be hard pressed finding an a-la-carte seafood restaurant anywhere in Australia that did not feature the sweet and earthy flavours of the mud crab. The State governments issue licences to professional crabbers to keep the supply of mud crabs up to the markets, so seafood lovers can enjoy the delicacy, albeit at a high cost to the ol' hip pocket. There is of course another way of obtaining mud crabs, a way that's not as hard as you think.

Why not catch your own?

While a lot of the fishing areas are being closed down around the coastline, crabbing is still one of those recreations that is still permitted in most places. It's as easy as grabbing a few pots, going down to the local creek or river and getting a feed for your family for tea. That includes you southerners while you're on holidays up in the tropics or sub tropics.

However before I get into the ways and means of catching a crab, let's first look at the 'make up' of this prehistoric looking crustacean that is *scylla serrata*, the humble mud crab.



A good bait for crab pots is shark heads. Scott baits up while the kids look on.



Rules To Remember

Every state has different laws governing the catching and keeping of crabs, but in Queensland this is the rule.

- Only 4 pots per person aged 15 years or more are permitted.
- Pots must be marked with the owner's name and address.
- Pots must have a float no smaller than 15cm in any dimension with the owners name on it.
- \$150 fine applies to the above infringements.
- Only male crabs measuring 150mm across the carapace from point to point can be kept.
- A maximum of 10 crabs per person are allowed.
- Female mud crab claws are not permitted to be kept, even if they accidentally fall off the crab.

What to look for

Weighing up to just over 2 kg but commonly caught from 1 to 1.5 kg, the mud crab can do irreparable damage to the fingers of the foolish or over confident crabber. They are deceptively fast and can fend off an attempt to pick them up the wrong way with their two powerful claws. They are usually an olive green to muddy brown colour, depending on their condition in relation to their moulting cycle.

You see, every year they shed their shell (carapace) and grow bigger into a new softer shell that progressively hardens with age.

When caught, a greenish crab (which is more than likely one that has just moulted and has a new shell) will tend to be only half full of meat, and is commonly called "a rattler". These crabs tend to be excessively sweet to the point of being too salty to enjoy. However, they are still acceptable if you are a bit light on in the bag. Many blokes will tell you that these rattlers don't have any meat in them, but in truth they have as much as they had before moulting, if not a tad more, but it's in a bigger shell.

A crab that is browner, even verging on blackish brown, or one with barnacles on it's back is more likely to be full of meat or commonly called "a full crab." (*Original, hey!*)

The meat in these tends to be very earthy and strong tasting and this is the reason these crustaceans fetch such a high price. Being so strong tasting, makes them the ones to keep if you catch enough to allow you to be picky.

There are ways of checking if a crab is a rattler or full. The easiest way, of course, is by feeling the weight when you get them out of the crab pot. Another is by the colour of the shell or the condition of the claws.

If the crab has just moulted, he will have fresh sharp teeth on his pincers. On the other hand, if he has been around a bit (so to speak), his teeth on his

claws will be worn down and that means he's been eating and is healthy. The best way to check however, and a dead set recipe for disaster for the beginner, is to squeeze the shell directly above the claw socket. This is where the claw joins onto the body. He can't bite you there but he can while you're on the way there! If it feels hollow, it's a rattler and if it is solid, start boiling up the cooking pot.

Muddies are sometimes caught with only one claw or sometimes with a small claw and a big claw. This is because they have the ability to throw a claw to escape the enemy. If they are stressed in your boat and a claw is stuck in the mesh of the crab pot, they will purposely throw it to escape. A new claw will grow back over time but this must still hinder the crab in his eating ability.

How to pick 'em up

This is where your confidence can be friend or foe. The sand crab (Blue swimmer) can be picked up holding the body from behind because their claws do not move up and down, so they can't bite above or below the body. The muddie, however, has the ability to reach beyond his eyes and bite the foolish that defy their better judgment.

The only way to handle a live muddie safely is from behind, by putting your foot, a bucket or lump of timber on his back to hold him, then reach down



Above: The tell tale abdominal flap of a Jenny (female) mud crab. **Below:** A fresh clean green buck showing the triangle flap underneath.



and hold his back flippers with your thumb and middle finger and place your index finger on his back (carapace). You now have total control over your captor. (See pic)

Sex ?

Right, now that I have your attention, if you are new to this type of hunting, you will want to know how to tell the difference between a man crab and a crabby female. The attached photos with this story will make it easier to see. A male crab (buck) at a quick glance (while still in the crab pot), is spotted by having bigger claws than the female and not so bulbous at the lower carapace. If in doubt, lift up the crab pot and look at the telltale triangle of the belly flap underneath the crab. It will be white or on some of the older stallion type bucks, it could be a yellow/brown tinge, but it will be a triangle. In short the males are slimmer in the back end with bigger arms, not as aggressive and have a big pointy triangular thing underneath. Sound familiar?

The female (Jenny or Mary) on the other hand, is extremely aggressive and fast. She is plumper or rounder in the rear of the carapace and has the much smaller claws. She also has a flap underneath which is fan shaped and always brown to orange in colour.

Check with your local state on rules about catching and keeping crabs, as there is no national law. For instance, in Queensland, we can only keep bucks with a minimum carapace measurement across from point to point of 150mm or 6 inches. Jennys are not permitted to be taken at all and must be returned to the water immediately. In N.S.W. the carapace is

Amazing facts

- Mud crabs live for up to 3 years
- They can live either in or out of water, however they don't seem to feed out of the water.
- They are reportedly found from Exmouth, W.A. around the top to the Bega River in N.S.W.
- Even though they are called Mud crabs, they are commonly caught on sand.
- Female mud crabs produce up to 5 million eggs under their abdominal flap in each spawning.
- In the two to four weeks of incubation, the female mud crab can venture up to 25 mile offshore.
- Barramundi, cod, sharks and some rays prey on mud crabs in their different stages of growth.
- Although aquaculture has been tried, at this stage it's still not economically viable.

What A whopper

- The largest known mud crab according to DPI documentation was 3.25kg and measured 22.5cm across the carapace.

measured from the front to the back and you can keep females so long as they are not in berry (carrying eggs). These rules could change at any time, so grab the relevant brochures or a local tide book to keep up with the current legislation, or do the research on Dr Google to find your home state's fisheries' rules and regulations.

Catching Crabs

It can be as cheap as putting a piece of meat in one of your mum's or wife's stockings and letting him snag himself, or spending around \$30 -\$50 on a crab pot from your local tackle shop and letting the pot do



To prepare the mud crab for cooking, slide a knife up under his flap and between his eyes and give a twist. It's quick, easy and effective.

the work. One of the pleasures of crabbing is its simplicity and fun, especially if you have kids. I've never crabbed so much in my life as I do now I have my own children.

Time of year plays a role in your success. The general rule of thumb is, the months with an "R" in them are the best. Of course this just means anytime except winter. You will catch crabs in winter, but just not as many.

To start with, you need to know some basics. First of all, mud crabs are scavengers that clean up the bottom of the estuaries and rivers. Their natural diet ranges from mussels, worms, pipies and dead creatures such as fish. Being scavengers however, they will take red meat, chicken, stingrays or even canned dog food.

Everyone has their favourite bait to use, but in reality, they'll eat almost anything. I mainly use reef fish heads from my fishing trips in the gutters of Hervey Bay. They last a couple of days and hold on the bait clip well. The secret is to use something that will last because in most normal pots, once the bait is gone, so are the crabs.

The bait can be contained in bait tubes inside the pot, usually PVC pipe, gutter guard or a bait clip.



The 3 stages of preparing crabs . . . Some say 'Greater love hath no man than to share his muddies with his lady . . . ' always providing that she DOES bring the cold beers

So now you have the pots baited up with some delectable morsel that should catch you a feed. That is if you put it in the right spot. Crabs will travel to the baited pot as they are very active at night, however finding a drain or a deeper hole might just increase your chances a bit.

Crabs feed mainly on the incoming tide so if you are tending your pots for a few hours only, make sure you're on an incoming and not an ebbing tide. For overnight set pots, that will not be a worry as you will have a full tide range. The concern for this is having your pots stolen, especially in populated areas. Also make sure you don't put unweighted pots in a fast flowing creek overnight as a bit of weed or a rubbly seabed can see your pot halfway to Tahiti.

If you checked your pot and found it empty, check the door latch (or opening rope) to see if it's the way you left it. If isn't, your neighbouring fisherman has just got himself a cheap shot on you. If, on the other hand, it is intact the way you left it, move your pots to a better location, or at least a different location. Don't worry how shallow it is, so long as there is a couple of inches at low tide just to protect the crabs against the cold, that will be sufficient.

If you do have a crab or two, check which ones are legal and empty the balance into the water and tip the keeper/s into your bucket or crate. Do not, and I stress, do not put two crabs in the one crate without something like a hessian bag to cover them. This will settle the crabs down straight away, otherwise they will fight and crush each other's shells. With a good covering, you can put as many in with each other as you like.

Fresh is best

I don't care what people tell me, you can't freeze a mud crab and have it tasting the same as a fresh one. Fish, yes – crab, no. But why would you? They can stay alive out of water for days if treated properly, or even better, in a "funnel-less" pot submerged in a secret location (complete with food) for a lot longer. The only thing they don't like is the extreme cold, like at night time when it gets down to around 6 or 7 degrees or less, they have a tendency to slow their body down to the point where they just fall asleep – forever.

If you are going to keep them for a day or two out of the water, you must keep them in a container like a rubbish bin or milk crate well off the ground, as ants are partial to crabs. They must also have a hessian bag or similar covering them to keep them calm, and of course have a secure lid, but still have ventilation. I've lost count of the number of crabs I have lost because of an unsecured lid. (Can be a tad dangerous, too, with the Billy Lids around)

Never put two or more crabs in the one bucket, bin or box without a cover of some sort, as I explained



before. It is preferable to keep them kicking until you're ready to cook them as like fish, the bacteria can affect the taste if they are left dead for too long.

Cooking arguments

Find me two blokes that agree on how to cook a muddie and I'll find you a crab that can talk! It's as simple as that. I'm not here to tell you how to cook a crab, as next to claiming a pool table in a pub, it's the easiest way to start a brawl. Let's just say I am going to describe to you the way my son Josh and I prefer to cook them, and yes, I've tried many ways.

For me, the easiest way to spoil a crab's taste is to add unnatural flavours. Some are okay, and really, it ultimately comes down to personal preference. But before we go there, let's find the best way to prepare him. Some people like to clean their crabs first before they cook them and if you are going to spice it up with garlic, curry or other herbs, this is the best way to let your flavours in.

There are several ways to kill your crab before you start cooking him, but to do it as humanely as possible is the way I suggest you go about it. One way is to put them in the freezer for a couple of minutes as this slows the crab down until it falls asleep, as it would on a cold winter's

WATCH THE RULES . .

Crabbers are reminded the rules and regulations covering crabs not only vary from State to State, but they are changed frequently, affected by changed seasonal closures, carapace sizes, whether you can take "jennys", use a dilly or just a regulation 'pot' etc! However, it is easy to get up to the minute info by just tapping "mud crab regulations" into your search engine - and you can download the latest info in seconds.

Above: There is a right way to pick up and/or hold muddies - and a 'orribly wrong way! The next trick is to tie the claws into the crab's body - see Chud's #4 pic on the right.



Muddies: The Short Version

from veteran pro fisho, Chud Parker

The Mud Crab or Mangrove Crab (*Scylla serrata*) can grow to 2.5kg and is found in mangrove lined or muddy bottom estuaries and bays across the top half of our coastline. This powerful crab yields a whitish meat with a very succulent, distinctive flavour matched only by the best lobster. The round wire, two-entry, gated pot with mullet or catfish bait is the preferred trap. The muddy can be lured away from its hole in the mangrove mud by an attractive mullet bait in the pot, which is ideally left sunken overnight on the rising tide. Most abundant in summer, this crab can live for days out of the water, and is generally marketed live.



1. Okay – you’ve caught your first muddy – the next trick is to get him out of there! Best bet? Tip him out; don’t grab him!



2. This is how you hold them – um, after you’ve picked the muddy up from the bottom of the dinghy or cockpit . . .



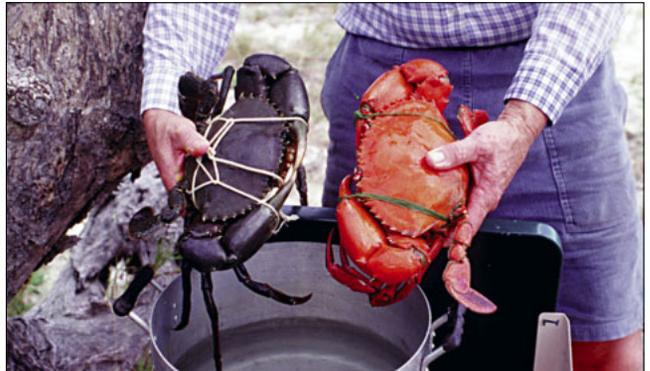
3. . . . and checked he’s a ‘keeper’ – in other words, he’s the right sex (like this one, a male, or ‘buck’) and the right size. Enjoy.



4. This is NOT easy – especially the first time! The secret is to use a rough twine and to wrap the twine quickly around the big claw – note how Chud has his toes firmly holding down the muddy.



5. Trussed, tied and safe to handle – but still watch those claws carefully as they can easily crack fingernails and crunch finger/toe bones, and once they are “locked on” they are incredibly hard to “unlock”.



6. Before and after cooking. Opinion varies on cooking time, with advice ranging from 10-20 minutes. Similarly, many people believe the crab should be cleaned first.



morning. Once again, everyone has their theories on this one as well, so I can only tell you how I do it. I prefer to put a strong bladed knife under the belly flap and push it up between his eyes and give it a quick twist. This kills him instantly and because of this he doesn't drop his claws or legs as they do in other ways. It sounds pretty gruesome, but it works.

To clean the crab before cooking, peel the belly flap right back and grab the carapace and simply pull it off. Now it's just a case of breaking the body in two down the centre by grabbing his claw and legs and breaking in two. Now give each half a flick and all his jellified innards will come out. Pull the gills and assorted bits of shell off and what you are left with is two clean half's of quality crab meat to prepare to your tastebuds delights.

To cook your cleaned crab with spices and other flavours is another contentious issue, but my sister Deb, (who also cooks up a mean red emperor soup) knows how to tantalise the taste buds. Just put your crab, or crabs in a hot wok, and add some of your favourite herbs or spices. Garlic, chilli or whatever else tickles your fancy can be added to a splash of white wine and left to simmer with a lid on for around 20 – 30 minutes. Very messy to eat, but yummy all the same.

But me? Well, call me a traditionalist if you must,



Crab pot types

There are several types of crab pots on the market, and all will catch crabs with varying degrees of success. It is also possible to build your own from a simple idea of wiring a few dead mangrove sticks together and covering it with chicken wire. Old weldmesh is another method that can be used to great effect.

These days, for the sake of a handful of gold coins, you can pick up a few different folding type pots. Twenty dollars will get you a starter crab pot for light work around the shallow drains and side creeks, while \$30 - \$40 will buy you an average round pot that will be more universal.

On the top of the scale, for around \$60 - \$70, you can buy a good metre round pot built over a 10mm galvanized bar that will hold the seabed well and last almost forever. These will almost double your catch, but if you are limited for room in your car or boat, a smaller collapsible type will be much easier to stow and handle.



because the way I like to eat my crab is cooked whole (uncleaned) in seawater as you would other crustaceans like prawns, crayfish or bugs. If you are

not so close to the water, take a 5-litre container with you and fill it up with seawater before you come home as this takes the guess work out of how much salt to put in. Too much or too little can take the real taste out of it. If you don't have this option, use tap water and just add salt to taste.

I want to stress at this point: Don't overcook your crab. If you buy one from a fish shop, 9 times out of ten it will be half crucified. A good full buck will only take 10 – 12 minutes from the boil. A rattler even less time. Put your water on the hottest burner or element on the stove (or gas bottle outside, preferably) and bring to the boil, then place your crab (not alive) into the water and bring back to the boil and start timing. If inside, make sure the range hood is on flat out, otherwise the cheese & kisses will come a' huntin'.

Now for ease of eating, have a cold slurry waiting and when you've finished cooking, dunk him in the slurry and the flesh will pull away from the shell. All that's left now is to get a fresh loaf of bread, some avocado and the rest is up to you. It tastes better if you use a beer when you're cooking. It's not actually anything to do with cooking the crab, but you know what I mean.

Here is a treat that is not new. In fact it's probably 40,000 years old or more but I'm sure our indigenous relatives knew something that we don't. Cook 'em on the fire! Yep, that's right . . . you just burn your fire to coals and place your crab upside down on some not so red coals and cover with ash and coals. Be careful not to let too many very hot coals come into contact with the shell as it burns a hole straight through.

It should only take about 20 minutes cooking time from woe to go. The taste has to be tried to be believed. It's a smokey flavour that you could try to vary with different kinds of timber. As our property is full of cypress, we naturally have that pine flavour being devoured by our ivories. *Ze piece de resistance.*

How'd you go?

So there you have it. I'm a big believer now over the last couple of years, that if you have the right bait (fresh fish heads, mullet or shark) and the right pot like round mesh type, (not those silly \$15 folding type) you just can't miss.

Take your kids and give them a lesson they won't learn at school but may help them become good hunters and gatherers for their families in the future. What a prize to bring home – a meal fit for a king at a price everyone can afford.

Happy crabbing.

ABM

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This is the totally upgraded and revised, 70 page, 2014, 6.5mb PDF Third Edition of this popular book. First published by F&B magazine back in 2004, it retains all the key features of the first edition that made it so popular with the 'around the block' caravan and motor home community, and both visiting and local fishermen.

The new ONLINE edition includes the vital 'mud maps' of the main creeks and drains, launch ramp and fuelling information, crucial boating and navigation know-how in this vast, sheltered water boating region. Now, in this latest ONLINE edition, all the 'need to know' stuff about fishing east of the Island out on the Great Barrier Reef is included, along with even more detailed fishing tackle and technique info that will ensure you get amongst the region's big barra, mangrove jack, sooties and salmon (etc!) waiting for you in the incredible labyrinth of mangrove forests between Lucinda and Missionary Bay.

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Taking Marina Service to a New Level

Moreton Bay, one of Australia's most loved natural attractions, offers diverse marine life experiences and adventures for all ages.

Stretching 125km from Caloundra to the Gold Coast, the bay is sprinkled with some 365 islands set in sparkling blue water. Nearby multi-million dollar marinas offer everything one could need for a day at sea, from learn-to-sail courses to good food and coffee.

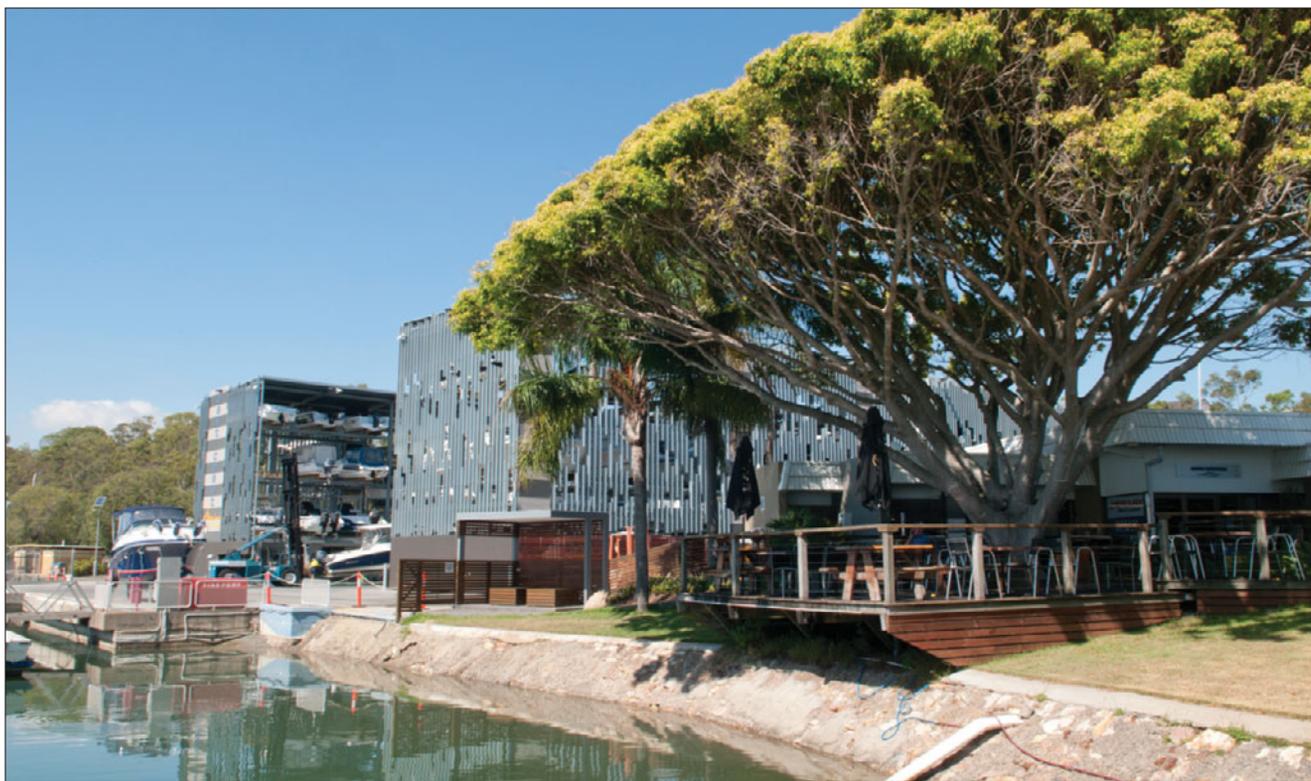
One such marina, East Coast Marina, is a fully serviced marina with onsite marine engineers, boat sales, boating courses and state of the art facilities. Dry rack storage allows unlimited lifts, hull wash down, and even usage of maintenance cradles. Its facilities are the most modern of their kind on the continent. It also manages to hold 240 large craft up to 10 metres LOA, and floating berths that hold craft

of up to 20 metres, all while being in an environmentally sustainable, safe and secure marina.

Tenants at East Coast provide a convenient one-stop-shop to customers of the marina. Southern Cross Yachting, accredited by the Royal Yachting Association, offers power and sailing boat courses for all levels of boaties, from beginners right through to professional level courses. They also coordinate corporate sailing events, yacht racing and offer safety courses for sea survival and first aid.

Tenants such as ADL Electric make sure that new vessels are wired properly by providing both design and installation of electrical systems. With environmentally friendly options like solar and wind installation, they also have LED lighting specialists on staff.

Austaliawide Boat Sales are brokers accredited by Marine QLD, and can help customers sell their boats, or buy new ones. This diverse team of boaties has





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Euan - keen to help people buy and sell as their circumstances change.

also built its own line of classic boats. If something does go wrong with your vessel, Bayside Boat Repairs, the resident shipwright, can have you up and running again in no time. Whether your boat needs some quick general maintenance or more intensive fibreglass or timber work, Bayside's convenient location right at East Coast Marina, means there are no worries about towing from the marina for repairs.

For engineering support, the Marina also offers the services of Manly Harbour Marine Engineering, to keep your engine, controls, steering systems and propellers ship shape before you set out on the Bay. For trimming repairs and upholstery work, G & S Marine Trimmers are also onsite. From carpets to sail covers, G & S works to make sure your vessel is just the way you prefer, inside and outside.

If you are spending time at the Marina while your craft is being serviced by one of the many helpful tenants at East Coast, you and your family can enjoy a gourmet meal by the water at Café La Mer whose



chefs dish up a constantly changing menu based on seasonally fresh produce.

Part of East Coast Marina's appeal is its prime location. Just 15 minutes from the Brisbane CBD, the marina is located on Manly Boat Harbour, just minutes from a charming village full of coffee shops, accommodation and restaurants.

Book a complimentary tour of East Coast Marina by phoning 07 3393 3811 or emailing info@eastcoastmarina.com.au

ABM

The first of Aaron's new 'How To' Series on the toughest sportfish!

WAHOO!

**Special Report & Pics by ABM Fishing
Editor, Aaron Concord**

(On one of his favourite species!)



Big eyes, bad teeth and all barred up!

The mackerel clan boast some of the most highly regarded target species around the entire tropical and sub-tropical coastlines of Australia. Although the wahoo is not, strictly speaking, part of the mackerel family, they are incredibly close - being of similar size, disposition, shape, locations, environments, taste - but even greater ferocity.

Gentlemen, tighten your leaders - and hang on!



WAHOO..!



Another Rapala CD-18 victim.

Depending on the species of “fisherman” you are, wahoo can be looked at as a curse or a cure.

Most billfishers can’t stand them, since their razor jaws will slice through *hard-to-rig* baits or expensive lures with total disrespect to the human race.

Other anglers, who don’t mind the brilliant eating qualities and the pure speed of ‘Hoo, gladly accept them as part of the offshore scene.

Then at the extremist end of the spectrum, you get full-on wahoo addicts, which haunt their favourite reefs in hope of attaching themselves to one of these sleek speedsters whenever they possibly can.

Wahoo are fast. Damn fast. They make all other fish bar a very agro billfish look silly in the speed department.

Small wahoo go quick through the water, though bigger specimens will make each click of your reel’s ratchet just combine into one out-of-control wail. Your reel will scream.

It is adrenaline pumping on light gear, not knowing if the run will cease!

It has been said that if spanish mackerel are the V8’s of the mackerel clan, then wahoo have a damn turbo attached as well!

There are anecdotal reports of wahoo being able to hit 100km an hour in short sprints, though the rivalry is between wahoo and sailfish as THE fastest fish with fins. The debate still continues.

For the trailer boat fisherman, they represent a

package that is downright hard to beat.

They grow large. Their eating qualities are superb. As a sport fish, they are terrific and can be taken via a mass of methods and straight out of the water, wahoo are an impressive animal to look at to boot.

Combined with an availability to catch them within 20nm off the coastline in most areas they frequent, it is hard to argue, “Why not chase them?”

Wahoo are a true tropical pelagic, occurring in all the major oceans worldwide.

In our neck of the woods, their distribution occurs from around Rottenest Island off Perth in W.A., around the Top End and down the Queensland coast, stopping around Montague Island in southern New South Wales.

In smaller sizes along the mainland, wahoo can school up as part of their annual migration southbound with the Leeuwin and East Australian Currents during summer and autumn.

Larger individuals tend to arrive later in this migration and stay around as late as June or July and tend to be more solitary.

They are not part of the “true” mackerel and tuna clans but a singular species with no other brethren.

They tend to get lumped in with the mackerels since at first glance they appear to carry similar characteristics - in body shape, especially.

Several individual characteristics leap out and help distinguish wahoo from other species that have similar body shapes.



Connect jigs & minnows via single strand wire using a Haywire Twist and Barrel Roll.



A small live tuna rig. The loop goes through just in front of the eyes using a bait-rigging needle. The trailing hook goes near the anus.

An alive wahoo possess a cobalt blue back with a large array of tiger-like wavy stripes down their flanks, which helps break up their outline to baitfish underwater.

When excited, like an abundance of top-end pelagics, these bars can exhibit as electric blue-purple, making them a truly spectacular animal when seen alive.

The rest of the flanks are silvery/grey fading to a white belly.

Wahoo have the ability to move both upper AND their lower jaw where, at least in the pelagic world, no other fish can do this.

This ability provides far more biting power, allowing even small fish of 10kg the ability to cleaver in half a 5kg tuna.

The jaws are lined with much finer teeth than Spanish or spotted mackerel and the way they mesh together provides the species with the finest set of slicing dentures known. Dead or alive, wahoo teeth can inflict nasty wounds.

Wahoo don't tear at prey. They cut them in half, bones and all.

Another identifying feature is their large eyes.

Wahoo seem capable of feeding in low light conditions, so the larger eye must therefore be able to gather all available light for them to hunt in dim illumination.

Though not enough to write a scientific journal on, I have been present when wahoo have been caught around first and last light, with one adult fish around 26kg eating a lure half an hour after sunset in 4,000m of water while coming back from Cato Island. Wahoo at night? *Who knew?*

Also, wahoo always seem to have 2 large parasitic worms in their guts.

I haven't found anyone who can tell me why, though they appear to do the animal no harm at all.

Their tail is also smaller, more perpendicular and rigid.

It has almost no "swept back" look about it at all compared to other mackerels and tunas.

The pectoral and primary dorsal fins fold into slots creating a fish equivalent of a torpedo or missile.

When a wahoo wants to put the hammer down, everything has a depression or slot to help streamline



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it, with the secondary dorsal and only ventral fin plus the caudal keels either side of the tail providing stability for high speed.

Being true oceanic roamers, not much is known about the breeding cycle of wahoo, other than the presence of gonads or roe in fish caught during this summer/autumn migration.

Average weight of these fish is 7-10kg in summer and 14-16kg by autumn. Whether they are the same biomass that has put on weight or different year classes, I don't know, though as I said earlier, later in the season is when the more solitary 30kg+ specimens arrive.

Without enough tag returns to map out their movements after an initial capture, it is hard to say where the majority of the fish go when the water cools.

Having said that, ex-contributor Damon Olsen seemed to have stumbled across a large mass of wahoo in August 2006 around Wreck Reef, 400km off the central Queensland coast, where in 2 days of blinding fishing, nearly 300 adults were caught and

When rigging with mono leader and crimps, if you burn the end into a little ball, you can then pull the leader up to the crimp snugly without the possibility of any large tag forming.

released from 1000 bites from 4 dories. Average weight was 30kg with some being 40kg or more.

Part of a Pacific spawning run? Who knows?

He has gone onto finding this aggregation several times. Always during Australia's winter and always a long way off the coast around the Southern extremity of the Coral Sea Territories.

These are reefs, sand cays and islands that lay off the Queensland coastline that run mainly from about Yeppoon to Cooktown. The areas around Wreck, Kenn and Fredrick Reefs are being bathed by some of the deepest water we have along this stretch of Pacific Ocean. It also stays quite warm, even in winter, which is why there are bountiful gamefish there even in winter.

Like most popular game fish, too little in the way of science has been accomplished, which is unfortunate. One thing is for sure, I have never heard of such a large congregation of wahoo, big or small from anywhere else on the planet where these fish are common.



Sure, there are places that wahoo stack up like logs; they do this in Hawaii, Alijos Rocks (another long-range destination: this time off of Mexico) and San Salvador (the Bahamas) to name but a couple of international places where they dwell in large numbers.

The Coral Sea aggregation that Damon has stumbled upon is a unique find that hopefully, with the help of his crew and guests, they can tag enough wahoo to see if returns come back from other parts of the Pacific, as recaptures need to occur for the jigsaw puzzle to fill in.

Though scientifically there are large gaps in the knowledge of this species, anglers who love to chase them have found areas where they are more likely to congregate.

Wahoo hangouts.

Wahoo much prefer the cobalt blue of the open ocean, more so than the rest of the “mackerel” species. They can turn up in 20m or 2000m of water if it’s clean and warm.

Having said this, in areas of coastline where true, purple tinged oceanic current licks wrecks, reef or holds bait, wahoo will make their presence felt, so they are not strictly a deep-water species.

A close up of how a Haywire twist with Barrel roll should not look like at the top. Uneven twists and a big tag end, especially where the wire meets mono, will cause bubbles. The middle rig shows how a jig with wire should be rigged. The ball bearing swivel eliminates twist. The bottom Haywire twist is attached to a stickbait which swims true. No need for a swivel.

Also, the harder this current runs, the more likely wahoo will want to eat. The “no run, no fun” adage is alive and well with “hoo.”

Most of the structure I fish off Southern Queensland is hard rock or coral that has near vertical rises that come out of 40 to 50m of water with the top sections of reef being anywhere from exposed to having 10 to 15m on top of the reef.

Typical versions to look at are Sandy Cape Shoals off Breaksea Spit, Hutchison Shoal off Cape Moreton and the Tweed Nine Mile wide of Tweed Heads/Kingscliff. Windarra Banks off Northern New South Wales is another cracker if you need to study the bottom contours that make a great wahoo reef that is close to the coast.

Rottenest Island and the drop off outside Ningaloo Reef in W.A have their share of wahoo turn up, so to



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does the Sir Joseph Young Banks in New South Wales, just to name a few.

Whether it is due to the currents being reliable, baitfish always being in attendance or a “salmon like” response to be familiar with certain reefs is speculation, though there is no doubt that while wahoo love reef, there are, like the reefs listed above, favourites for them year in year out.

The main recipe is hard oceanic current running into a reef that has edges or a leading section that can provide an eddy for them to surf and patrol the front edge with ease. With large reefs, wahoo will patrol all over it though on smaller bombies and wrecks, the edge poking into the current is where they are most likely found.

Reef complexes are a typical area to find wahoo. I think they use them as a reference or “home base” while venturing away to find bait.

If a reef has working tuna on it or near it and/or sauries or oceanic long tom are in attendance, then wahoo won't be far from them.

Lack of bait over the reef will push the wahoo into leaving to scout for small tunas (they love frigate mackerel, bonito and “jelly bean” sized mack tuna

A Heru Wahoo 150 Stickbait after a hard morning of manic wahoo action out at Wreck Reef.

and yellowfin) or yellowtail scad and slimy mackerel schools.

This is when bill fishers can have their patience tested, since they know wahoo are 90% of the time caught near reef, yet if there are schools of bait within a few nautical miles of reef, they will cut to pieces offerings presented for sailfish and small black marlin.

Areas of converging currents, i.e., current lines and rips are another structure worth inspecting.

I use the word ‘structure’ because that is what it is, when two or more currents collide to form an area of disrupted water that gathers debris, plankton and bait. It may not be hard structure, like rock, but to the wahoo, it can be very instrumental in their schooling behaviour. They still act like it is a ‘hard’ object. A ‘barrier’ of sorts.

The very nature of where these occur is the wild card, since unlike a piece of coral that is firmly on the bottom, currents can collide anywhere and not necessarily repeat themselves in the same spot every day.

All manner of pelagics use these as a feeding zone where one side is usually warmer and more baitfish

saturated than the other.

It certainly pays to try both sides of the current line. Even though the baitfish may be forced into staying on the side that is warmest, the wahoo are not bound by that. Since they are larger than the bait, they can maintain their core body temperature far better than a small tuna or a 20cm slimy mackerel, therefore they could wander either side of the current line.

Another thing to keep in mind is water temperature. As I said with regards to fishing current lines, the current lines can act as a barrier. So too can temperature.

Wahoo can be caught in water temps as low as 19 degrees Celsius, and I have caught them out of 27 degree water, though their preferred range is 22-24 degrees. I would recommend the use of sites such as www.fishtrack.com to gauge if the reefs that you plan to fish are going to have the correct temperature water hitting them. The brilliance of websites like FishTrack is the ability to zoom in on the map to see if there is any temperature breaks that may come into contact, or be close to the area that you intend to fish.

It certainly rids another element of guessing when you have this sort of data BEFORE you launch your boat. It is great to be able to confirm that there is good quality water hitting the reef/s you plan to fish and the sea surface temperature charts that are

available either very basically without charge, or with a lot more detail and functions, but with a yearly subscription. I think anyone who is serious about fishing for pelagics offshore should belong to some group that does them. The charts are invaluable.

So too is a working temperature gauge on the boat. Many of today's modern sounders have temp, so it should be no issue to have it.

Ways To Entice.

Wahoo can be caught with a wide manner of methods.

Trolling both lures and/or baits, using live baits. Casting lures. Jigging and fly fishing all have their place in the armoury of the trailer boat fisherman.

One common thing that all fishermen who target "hoo must ask is should I risk using mono leaders, or rig everything on wire? The answer isn't as cut and dried, as you would like for every technique, though here is what I would rig up:

High speed skirts: multi strand wire 175lb for the lure leader, 400lb multi strand cable for between the 2 hooks. .

Marlin skirts: mono leader with wire between 2 hooks hidden inside the skirt.

Bibbed & bibless minnows: single strand wire from 60-150lb. Heavy tackle and drag settings opt for 120-

Wahoo don't mind if it's overcast.





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150lb.

Live baits and strip/dead baits: single strand wire between the hooks (60-100lb) and a mono leader. Change to wire leader if cut offs occur. Use only a short wire leader of about 30-40cm.

High speed jigs: mono leader UNLESS cuts offs are occurring.

Stick baits and poppers: single strand wire leader 60-150lb depending on the weight of the tackle.

Fly fishing: 30cm of wire in front of the fly. Usually single strand and the lightest I'd use is 60lb.

Keep the length of wire to a bare minimum of less than 1 metre. 30cm is usually enough since they can only bite at one end.

The reason for trying to get by with a mono leader is purely for more hook ups. Wahoo have terrific vision and can balk at heavy mono let alone 400lb cable!

Having the capability to work with single, 7 and 49strand wire is a must for these fish. 49strand offers the best in kink resistance and flexibility, though single strand is cheaper and is less visible. It tends to "floss" the teeth of a wahoo rather than get bitten, and yes, I have seen wahoo bite through multi stand cable

Some locally made high speed Hex Head lures that are made with wahoo in mind. Top one is the big 300 gram model. All need wire leaders. Bottom lure is a Pakula Uzi which at normal troll speeds and in the shotgun position is just dynamite for wahoo.

on heavy gear with high drag.

I should also preface this by saying that wahoo are a fish that will show up shortcomings in your knots and your ability to rig with cleanliness. By that I mean, using the lightest wire and leader material you can get away with. Plus, use the smallest crimps and swivels, making sure that you use black coloured rigging items where possible. Cut tags (both wire and mono) as neatly and as close as possible. You are trying to avoid any bubbles forming from any of your knots or rigging or any flashes of light that could be construed as a flashing bait. Wahoo will bite at all of the above poor rigging. And then some!

High Speed Trolling lures: Jet Heads and Wahoo Bombs. .

Depending on how rough or what the boat traffic is like in your area, wahoo can be caught trolling from speeds of 5knots to around 20 or more.

With the price of petrol staying high, it is more realistic to crank the engine/s up to an RPM that gives

Fact Box

- Wahoo prefer oceanic current, though will push into less desirable water if there is a stack of bait.
- Larger versions appear at the southern ends of their annual migration in autumn off both Western & Eastern Australia.
- Large schools of adults can be found out in the Coral Sea Territory reefs in August & September.
- In areas of heavy traffic, wahoo are an early morning/late afternoon target. Without traffic, they can eat all day, with a preference to a lead up to a tide change.
- Wire is mandatory somewhere in your offering to prevent bite offs.
- With their brilliant eyesight, wahoo maybe seeing your offerings though refusing them if rigged improperly or on heavy gauge wire. Drop in gauge/breaking strain of wire to get more bites.
- Typical tackle is in the 8-24kg range in quality spin or short stroker rods.
- Fly rods should be 11-14weight.
- Reels require at least 400m of line, with more required if tackling big 'hoo on ultra-light line. Drag systems need to be flawlessly smooth.
- Keep rigging clean and minimal to

prevent bubbles occurring once a wahoo has been hooked. Others will bite at the bubbles and any connection.

- Where possible, use single hooks on all poppers, jigs and minnow lures. The hook-up rate is far better in my opinion and also makes releasing excess fish far safer.
- As with any toothy critter being kept for the table, gaff, dong on the head and cleaver its head off before laying in an icebox or deck. **THEIR TEETH ARE DANGEROUS!**
- Any wahoo undersized or over the possession limit needs to be released with a decent hook-out gun or long-nosed pliers.
- Keep the boat going forward to maintain some control of its movement though be ever watchful of their headshakes.
- Make sure you are aware of size/possession limits for your state or territory.
- The flesh of a wahoo is firm, white and sweet. It freezes well, too.
- They are one of the prettiest fish you will see alive, so take images in the water and straight from the water for best results. The tiger stripes don't last for long.

Aaron, ABM

an economical displacement speed of 6-9knots.

There are times, when all else fails that a jet head or some other heavily weighted skirted lure that can handle 14-16knots of speed will bring wahoo undone like nothing else.

Lures to pick from are skirts from 6-12inches long and have a head weight of 300grams. It takes serious gear to tow a 300gram Hex-Head at 14knots. 80lb bare minimum just to cope with the water pressure, bone jarring strikes and the drag needed to hold the lure in place when trolling, so most people opt for lures around 60 to 130grams so they can tow the lures on 20, 30 or 50lb gear.

Monofilament offers some advantage with its elasticity when 20kg of wahoo cracks a lure at these speeds!

Lure choices for high speed are jets and bullet heads made by TT's, Hex Heads, Screammers etc. They are basically a billfish skirted lure, but with a metallic head instead of a resin one. They are usually chrome

plated brass with the brass giving the lure enough weight to stay in the water at higher-than-normal trolling speeds.

Rig these lures on a metre of 49-strand wire around 150-175lb in strength to allow proper lure movement and stop those razor jaws cutting you off.

The American's are especially fond of things called 'wahoo bombs', which are typically bullet-nosed high speed skirts. Though they can be as light as 'a couple ounces', they can weigh 6-10 oz with extreme models being 26 oz, or around the 730gm mark.

To get even more speed out of the wahoo bomb, the American's and Bahamian's will add torpedo shaped sinkers to their lines about 3-5m in front of the wahoo bomb, though this distance can vary a fair bit depending on the captain. The sinker acts like a cheap downrigger. Some can weigh as much as 48oz (1344gm) so it is the domain of very heavy tackle: 80lb would be a starting point but with over a kilo of weight on a rig going at 20 knots, it really is 130lb

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territory.

It is brutally effective. There are a lot of big tournaments in the Caribbean and Bahamas that are wahoo-only and they are typically won by vessels that are into high-speed trolling with a mix of bibless minnows and wahoo bombs. Other than high-speed skirts like Hex Heads, they are the only things that can handle such high troll speeds.

About the only reason I can see why this method of using 'wahoo bombs' has not taken off here in Australia, is we enjoy fighting our fish. It is not all about 'meat on the deck', as it tends to be in other parts of the globe. On the very heavy tackle that is needed to use the heaviest of 'bombs' a wahoo would

The clean way and the ragged way to rig! The top left has a loop too large and a massive tag that will cause bubbles. Top right is the correct way a swaged loop in mono should look. Left middle and bottom show the difference between being too lazy in changing from 150lb juvenile billfish leader and swivel combination to a size smaller swivel and 60lb leader. It's pretty obvious which one will make more bubble and attract less bites due to its visibility. Right middle and bottom show the correct and incorrect ways to rig with cable!

be subdued pretty easily. They need 15kg gear or less to really show their potential as a sportfish for the average fish caught of around 13-15kg.

Having said that, I do find the use of the 'wahoo bomb' technique very interesting. There is certainly value in knowing the technique, in my opinion.

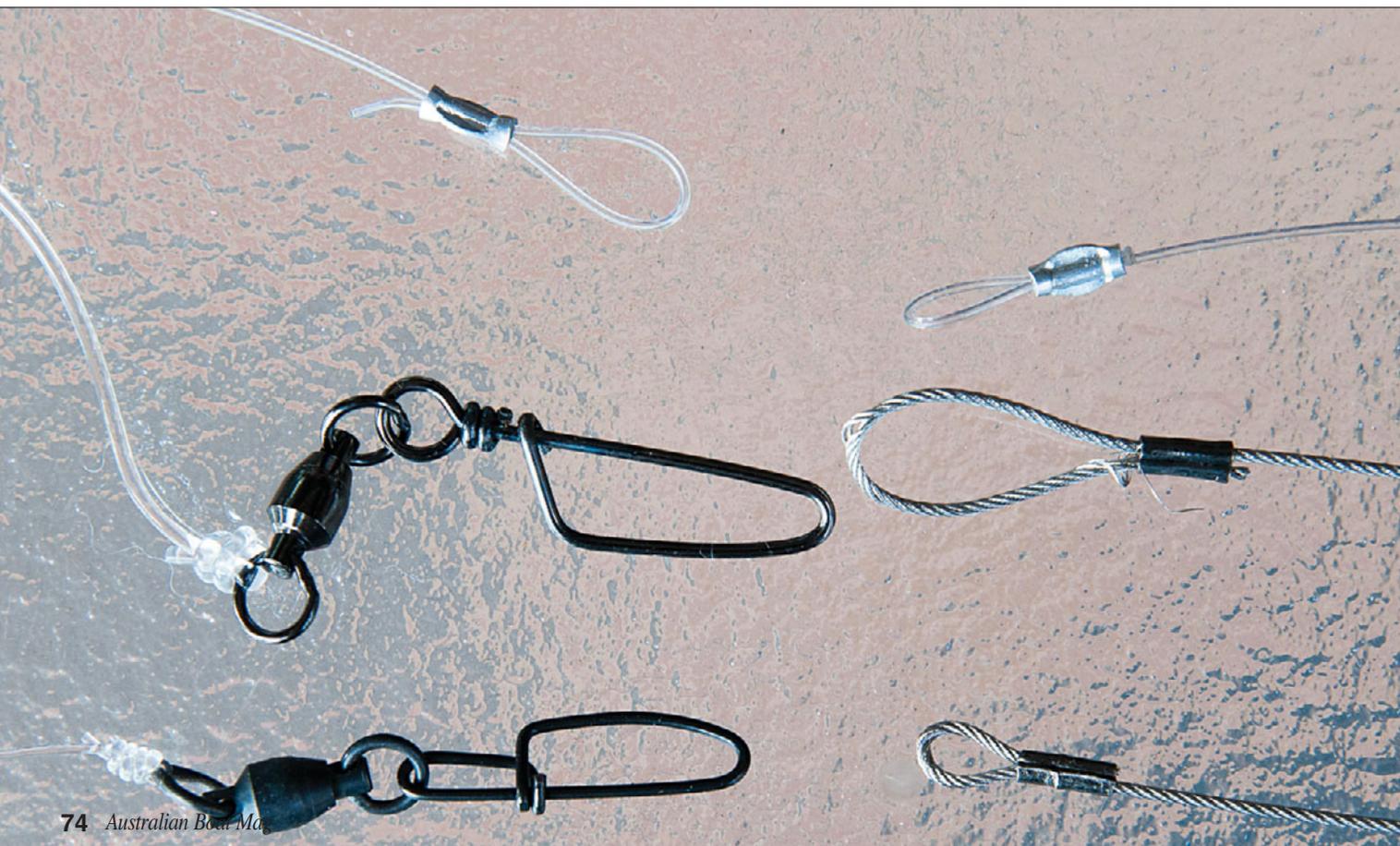
Trolling Marlin Skirts.

I once heard Peter Pakula wanted to breed wahoo, since the amount of lost lures that anglers suffered from this breed were keeping him in business! They can certainly exact a toll on an offshore fisher's wallet. The cut-offs I have seen have never been a massive crack like a rifle shot. Far from it. The line is tight one minute - then just goes limp.

I remember an early morning yellowfin strike. My buddy and I cleared the other lines as the yellowfin was played out. As I went to re-set the lures, I noticed that 2 of them had been hit by wahoo, yet I saw no strike on the rod tips, nor did any reels ratchet bark to say that there had been a hit and a miss. If it were not for that initial yellowfin, I would have driven around all day thinking that the area was devoid of wahoo.

The skirts were in tatters and one marlin skirt was nearly cut completely off its monofilament leader. Wahoo's teeth mesh like sheers.

When throttled back at around 6-9knots, ANY skirted lure that has been designed with billfish in mind will take wahoo. They are not name brand conscience.



Meridian, Pakula, Black Bart, Bonze, JB Lures, Top Gun, Joe Yee, Marlin Magic and Moldcraft all make beautiful lures that wahoo will gladly cut to bits or chop off completely when rigged on monofilament leader.

There are far more lure manufactures than these so don't think it stops with these brands.

Most people can't stand the thought of using such expensive lures for an animal that shows no regard towards a work of art, though the problem is they work so damn well for them.

Wahoo are not shy of lures of 40-45cm in length though the problem lies in getting a decent hook-up in such a long lure.

Smaller lures from 12cm to 20cm with 2 needle sharp hooks set at 60 degrees seems to give the best chance at pinning the corner of the jaw or the roof of the mouth. Wire in the 250-400lb range is commonly used between the hooks and have the trailing end hook as far back in the skirt as possible to help pin tail biters.

Having said this, wahoo can slice a lure skirt to bits,

Close up of an FG (green knot) and a PR (white knot) friction knots. These give the slimmest connection between GsP braid lines and single strand leaders when jigging, trolling and especially, casting. An FG or PR is much less likely to form bubbles than other connections.

taking skirt and even chunks from a resin headed lure and STILL not hook up WITHOUT making the rod bend or the reel growl in protest. They are truly the Houdini of the fish world.

In trailer boats where the prop wash is very long, it pays to stagger your "spread" of lures to run in clean water away from the heavy aeration from the boat. Lures run from outriggers or shotgun positions seem to take more strikes than lures closer to the transom, particularly in heavily trafficked waters.

Even though they are not brand conscious (as such) they will shy away from shoddy rigging.

Other than when using single strand wire, I use crimps for all of my wahoo rigging, be it the monofilament or wire parts of the system.

When I pull my wire or mono to form a loop that needs to be crimped to be secured, I will use a pair of side cutters to pinch the bitter end in place before pulling the loop closed.

It just makes for a nice, neat loop without any long tags that could grab air bubbles or look out of place to a wary wahoo. They may be fast, but they have excellent eyesight. Clean and neat rigging applies to all aspects of rigging for wahoo.

Trolling Baits.

Any hardy baitfish such as garfish, yellowtail scad, ribbonfish and mullet will work on wahoo either skipped on the surface or as a swim bait.

They can be mixed in a spread of minnows and





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skirts or run by themselves at speeds from 4-7 knots.

The single factor as with all baits and lures is hook coverage.

A well rigged skipping garfish with a hook inserted both up the anus and just behind the gills gives maximum coverage and would probably be the pick of all troll baits for wahoo, for ease of rigging, durability and efficiency.

They do work best when run from outriggers or a centre rigger to get them skipping properly and in clear, clean water.

Swim baits work, though it is more difficult to get a balanced bait with 2 hooks inserted to swim. It is well worth the trouble though, especially when using garfish. You can either use a smaller hook as your 'stinger' hook, or a treble hook to suit, pinned through the back.

For a trolled bait, it is hard to go past the flexibility of multi-strand cable when attaching the rear hook to the front hook. If you think you can, by all means, use the finer single strand wire as you will need to use this in front of the bait as a cut-off preventer as well.

Using just one hook makes the bait a target to get chopped off behind the front hook, which is a waste of time and effort in rigging.

Watson's Leaping Bonito and small Australian

Teasers used to rile up wahoo. On the left is a Pakula Witchdoctor. On the right is a Boone "Lulu" Bowling Pin teaser; top middle is a Moldcraft Bobby Brown Senior; Bottom is a Pakula Lumo Sprocket with a tuna belly flap stitched up that is pulled up inside the skirt of the Pakula. When a wahoo chops at the flap, wind it in fast and either deploy a jig, stickbait or fly to the angry wahoo.

Bonito can carry a few more hooks along the belly while maintaining some swim action in the tail. The hooks are usually ganged together, and best are the non-offset Southern and Tuna or Tarpon style hooks with a couple of cast net leads attached/wrapped around the leading hook's shank to provide some nose weight for the bait. It is the same rig used for mega Spanish mackerel using the same baits.

At times, you can purchase ready-made versions of this rig, though I have made them myself. With the right components, it is not difficult.

Extra long versions of these, with chains of hooks - up to 6 in a chain (legal in Queensland waters at the time of writing) can be used on baits like wolf herring and longtoms. These tend to need to be trolled more slowly, which tends to suit Spanish mackerel more so than wahoo.

I believe that the skipping gar and swimming gar are the pick of the baits, due to the ease of rigging and

The use of downriggers adds an exciting (and extremely effective) option to the fisherman's available armoury of wahoo catching equipment - especially if it is worked in conjunction with an accurate depth counter, and good 'sounder. This enables the skipper to (literally) track around structure like reefs, ledges and FADs, or position the lure or bait at exactly the right depth to tease up an attack from below now, HANG on!

the ease of obtaining garfish.

Also, the skipping gar can be fancied up a bit by adding a rubber squid skirt over the top of the gar. It helps protect the garfish to get longer out of the bait, as well as adding some colour.

If you intend to chase wahoo on trolled baits, make sure you have ample for the duration of your trip. You can certainly go through a few.

Live Baiting Hr 'Hoo.

In the bait fishing stakes, a bridled up live "jelly bean" sized bonito, frigate mackerel or mack tuna are hard to beat.

My money is on frigate mackerel, though small striped and yellowfin will do. Wahoo will come a long way for a tuna in distress.

Yellowtail scad and slimy mackerel are great baits too, though if you want to weed through small wahoo to pick off the biggest around, don't be afraid to put a couple kilos of tuna out on a 15kg or 24kg stand up stroker style rod, wack the rod in a decent holder with the drag on strike and slow troll it around the feeding/schooling tuna or the closest reef.

Make sure that the front and rear hooks are attached via wire, and if the bait gets hit and doesn't hook up, free spool the cut bait. Better yet, just stop the boat and put the boat in reverse just a touch, so it creates some slack for the cut bait to free fall on some slack line.

Nine times out of 10 wahoo will come back to clean up the bait they have cut in half so be prepared by having the reel back in gear should the bait get eaten. Wahoo tend to rocket through and with the speed of the attack, they will hook themselves, though if you are unwary, you could end up with the backlash of all time, or worse still, the outfit could get snatched from your hands. It is no gentle bite!

Slimies and yakkas either slow trolled or staggered in a berley trail does work well and since the baits are smaller, they can produce a better hook up rate.

The main aim is to keep the baits near the structure that wahoo frequent, or around the fringes of the bait school that you caught the bait from.

Wire is mandatory both in front of the bait and between the 2 hooks. On larger baits, you may be able to get 3 on the bait without stuffing its ability to



swim.

Since any of these baits are going to feel the added weight of hooks and wire, rigging with single strand wire and fine gauge, chemically sharpened hooks gives the best outcome, weight-wise, for the bait to carry.

Dead Baits

Though I have heard of the odd one being taken on a pilchard aimed at Spaniards from time to time, dead baiting isn't something I would personally call the most useful technique.

However, wahoo LOVE berley, so a chunk of tuna, a strip bait or pillie floated back in a decent berley trail may work well. I have succeeded in catching wahoo out of berley trails. Just haven't pursued them on dead baits while doing it so it is an area that needs

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more exploration in my own situation.

Minnows For Wahoo Trolling

Being speed freaks, wahoo like a lure to move at a fair clip.

Reactive bites occur when those large eyes of theirs don't have an eternity to analyse your offering, so either bibbed or bibbless minnows from 18-45cm and that can tolerate speeds of 5 knots or more are the ticket.

I happily troll at between 6 and 9 knots, purely dictated by how well the lures are running. If I can do 9, I will. Get as much top-end speed as you can out of them and make them shimmy and vibrate hard.

The larger lures can be very hard to come by, to the point that anything over 25cm is usually a homemade lure or a "billfish teaser" such as a Boone Lulu Bowling Pin teaser that has been drilled out and rigged with hooks.

The big modified "Lulu" sorts out the monster "hoo, though a wahoo I saw caught at Kenn Reef on the same lure last year would have been 7kg.

It had no fear of it! Though the average wahoo that knocks this huge thing off is over 20+kg.

Production made minnows to look at are the River2Sea Downsider 200mm (it's a brilliant lure), Rapala CD-18's and 22's.

Halco Giant Tremblers and Laser Pro 190's (in particular the deep & Crazy Deep versions), C-Lure Outsiders (if you can get them!!) Bomber Long B17A and B26A's {colour XM7 is a classic}, Lively Lures Blue Pillie 18cm in shallow or deep diver and Lively Lures 7inch Mack Baits are all first line starters in my kit. Other lures of note are Classic Bluewater F18 (there are several sizes, though the 160mm and 200mm that dive to 5+m have been excellent for other people I know.

So too the Rapala X-Rap Magnums, with the XRMAG20 and XRMAG 30 diving to 20 and 30 feet respectively.

This is a mix of import and Aussie made products, with the Aussie made lures generally being more durable.

My own shopping list for a great wahoo lure is:

- *To be durable against teeth. It cannot fall to bits or swim funny after one fish.*
- *It needs to handle speed. I want my bibbed lures to be able to troll at 9 knots, though if they can handle more, all the better.*
- *They should be around 14-22cm for the majority of the lures, with a few up to 40-45 to sort out the larger fish.*

● *I want some of them to be able to dive deeply without the aid of a downrigger. It is not always possible to use a downrigger, so having some lures that can handle speed, but more importantly, dive to over 7m, is a must.*

● *The terminals (hooks/split rings etc) need to be A1 grade. If they look weak or are bent from a previous capture, put a new one on.*

Be prepared to have to re-tune bibbed minnows after a fish or two.

The ferocity of the bite plus the damage caused from their teeth can cause a lure to lose balance and not swim properly, though some judicious work with pliers and even a file can smooth out or re-shape bibs and the body scars.

When rigging a bibbed lure to swim to achieve maximum knots, your ability to rig neatly is mandatory. Any bulbous snap clips attached to the nose of the lure or over-zealous use of heavy wire can see the hydrodynamics sorely tested, as well as the chance of bubbles being formed when a fish takes off. Over-size swivels, especially non-black ones, along with any tag that may be untrimmed can mean that the fish that you hook will get chopped off by one of it's hyper-active mates.

There are few things in fishing as frustrating as hooking wahoo, only to be bitten off, time and again. Rigging cleanliness has a lot to do with it.

On the subject of hooks, I reckon that a pair of in-line single hooks, like the Decoy Sergeant N series of jig hooks work better than trebles. Trebles may get you more initial hook-ups, but they are far more prone to pulling out of the very bony and teeth riddled maw of a wahoo.

The singles tend to give better hooksets, are less likely to straighten out and actually balance most lures better too. With only 2 hook points to worry about, a bibbed or bibbless lure with singles makes a better catch and release proposition to undersize and unwanted wahoo as well. Anyone who has dealt with these critters will agree that the less you have to deal with their mouths, the better. Wahoo are a serious fish to have to deal with, alive or dead!

Downriggers

If you do not know what a downrigger does, it does the same job as an outrigger, though vertically.

It helps spread your lures and baits vertically through the water column with the use of a big lead ball and a release clip that is similar to the one's used on outriggers.

They are brilliant for wahoo.

For trolling dead and live baits plus bibbed and bibbless minnows, downriggers are awesome at expanding your depth profile.

It allows you to get better depth out of a deep-



diving minnow.

For example, if you deploy your downrigger 6 metres and your lure already dives 6 metres, your lure will actually attain a depth of 12 metres. The only variability is water pressure. As the troll speed increases, there will be water pressure increasing on the system, though the point being, you can attain depths you can never achieve without the aid of the downrigger.

On one of the boats I fished on, we worked out that when using the Cannon Uni-troll and a 10 lb ball at 6.5 knots at a depth of 90 feet, our troll baits were about 30 feet down. This was using the 150lb cable that was supplied. I believe that when spooled with gel spun polyethylene line, you can get deeper still.

The use of the downrigger certainly extends the bite period towards midday, as on sunny days the fish will go deeper as it gets later.

By having the downrigger in use, it is typically the one to get hit first. Then, if there are other wahoo around, they will hit the other lures due to the excitement caused by the deep bite.

The one difference that you need to think of when using a downrigger is that you want to hook the fish FROM the release clip tension. You do not want the wahoo to pop the bait/lure from the release clip under

Some wahoo stickbaits, both floating and sinking. Left: Craft Bait Real Bait; Orion Bigfoot 180; Heru Wahoo 150; Shimano Ocea Pencil; Right: Carpenter Gamma 160; Carpenter Gamma 140 Mid Tuned; Orion Bigfoot 230; FCL Labo CSP 150S; Adhek Baby Penipen. If the hookups are failing, use lures in the 140-180mm with single hooks.

light load, in the hope of it coming around to swallow the offering. Hook it FROM the clip. It does mean that your clip tension will be firm. It will be at least as high as the pressure is to yank it from the clip via water pressure, though in most cases, you will be setting it at your line's strike drag setting, which is 1/3 for mono and about 1/4 for GsP braids.

Teasers.

Wahoo are an excitable fish.

Having said that, I have seen these fish just swimming along at barely a knot. When like this, they need to be revved up a bit, either by berley or teasers.

When towing baits, minnows and skirts, it pays to pull at least one teaser. If you are in a boat large enough, pull more. More the merrier.

My #1 choice is the original Pakula Witchdoctor. It

WAHOO...!

flashes like a 70's disco. Wahoo love flash. I have actually seen a couple game boats that have had their Witchdoctors clobbered by mega wahoo, leaving an impression in timber that is like a machete hitting it. Thankfully the Witchdoctor is made out of timber. Other teasers that work and are also durable are the Boone 'Lulu' Bowling Pin teasers.

Spreader bars and daisy chains of rubber squid work brilliantly, though they are poor in the durability department.

Towing extra deep diving minnow lures, like the River2Sea Downsider 200, without hooks and farther back than normal, can get them riled up too. You just need someone who is going to watch the rod with this lure on it like a hawk if you are going to tow it without hooks as a bite can be damn hard to see unfold.

When fly fishing, I use the big GT calibre stickbaits, like a Heru Wahoo 150 as the teaser lure. Wahoo cannot leave it alone. In part, due to the action and in part, due to the flash it puts out.

By crimping 2 small ball sinkers in place of where the hooks would be to add weight, you can cast a Heru Wahoo a long way. As it works just under the surface, you will see any wahoo that come in after in. Especially the ones that rocket out of the water 10m into the air with it.

At times, you will get more people wanting to use the teaser rod than actually properly fish. When the wahoo are around and they are hitting that stickbait, it is THAT much fun finding a willing angler can be a problem!

Wahoo Love Jigs!

You can use jigs in a few ways.

As your primary fishing method as in blind casting over reef or high speed spinning up a berley trail OR as a secondary effort.

If there is a sad lack of action on the troll rods, it may be due to the boating traffic rather than a lack of 'hoo. By using your sounder, you may have seen the 'hoo stacked up around bait somewhere on the reef you are fishing. The boats may have just forced them down. They are gun-shy due to all the abnormal activity and won't willingly rise to your offerings. So why not drop something pin-pointed at them instead?

Another scenario when trolling, it pays to have a nice flashy jig around 15-20cm long ready to drop over or cast immediately once a wahoo has been hooked on troll gear.

By deploying a jig deep in the water column amongst the other lures you may entice any other

wahoo to bite the jig.

You need a crew that is enthusiastic to reap this benefit, though it can turn a single hook up into a double in quick time.

As a primary effort, jigging vertically through schooling wahoo that are stacked up on reef or an edge can work brilliantly.

However, if wahoo have gone off trolled lures or wised up to jigs, it can pay dividends to anchor up current of the school and berley them into biting again. It can take some effort and time to do it, but wahoo are very responsive to a berley trail of Individual Quick Frozen Pilchards or freshly caught tuna. The IQF pillies work best of all the pilchard I think due to the brine that they are frozen in.

My favourite jig for berley trails, for flash, action and value for money is a 125gm Raider Jig. Just get rid of the treble and put a single on the back instead. Make sure that you have some 60-70lb single strand wire in front of your jigs, with a small, black, ball bearing swivel at the bitter end to tie your leader to. On spin gear up to 10kg mono, 50lb leader is ample. If using heavier GsP braid, you may need to step it up to 70-80lb. Any higher and it is just a waste of time. The fish will see the leader too easy and the thicker line will make the lure suffer in action and also in the depth it can attain when dropping in free spool.

Some of the more recent Japanese jigs that have arrived from Fisherman, Jigs Ace, Smith and Carpenter are brilliant as well.

Go for lures that either have plenty of flash or resemble pilchards or fusiliers in colour and you can't go too far wrong. The 125gm Raider Jig with Purple tape on it is dynamite too.

If the jig is long then use a wire "assist" hook rig on the nose and a large single on the tail to offer good coverage.

Wahoo love to bite the parts of lures that DON'T have any hook with gluttonous abandon, so if you can, keep the jigs around 6-8inches long and make sure that teeth will come in contact with hook!

A medium to fast pumping retrieve works or go for the plain old flat chat wind-like-there-is-no-tomorrow technique. It can make you fit!

When you feel the hit, just keep winding until the wahoo takes off. This is important! Most times, the wahoo will just have clamped down hard on the jig without a hook hitting the mark, so by just winding until he takes off, it will help the lure slide into the hook into the jaw when he motors off.

Fast On Fly

I doubt I will ever see a reel yield line as fast, or spin as uncontrollably as I have seen when a wahoo scorchs off on fly gear.

My first wahoo I had hooked on any gear was on fly gear.



The 25kg fish when berserk, taking 300m of backing in a single run. It was unbelievable. The RPM the large G.Loomis fly reel was doing during this run was insane!

Losing the fish to a straightened 5/0 hook made me sob and though I have hooked a few now, it has been a failure of mine to convert.

I have been fortunate to be a part of captures of wahoo for friends and clients up to 27kg with further refinements of my flies.

The 2 best ways to connect to wahoo on fly are switch baiting or retrieving flies while at anchor using berley.

With switch baiting, you are trolling hook-less teasers around waiting for a wahoo to poleaxe one.

When a teaser is hit, a large flashy-profile (8-12 inches long with tandem hooks) fly is cast out as fast and as far as possible.

What happens is the wahoo clips the hook-less bait, screams past and does a u-turn to come back to clean up what it has killed.

So, when the angler has cast, all the other teasers are brought out of the water immediately, so only the fly remains. Leave it dead in the water for up to 1 minute then strip it back to the boat as fast as possible.

This makes sure the agro wahoo has only one thing to choose from and the bites can occur fairly close to the boat, which is spectacular.

Berley is the other option to unlock wahoo jaws and to concentrate them behind the boat.

A bunch of bluewater flies that work for wahoo. Most represent either the bait that they like to eat or the teaser lure colours. The odd one out is the grey/white/silver Mega Hair Deceiver which is just plain flash when in the water. Clockwise from top: Mahi mahi/Pakula Lumo Sprocket; Queenfish; Original Bill and Kate Howe "Wahoo" Flashy Profile tube fly; Fusilier; Slimy mackerel tube - note the hook rig. Best to use the smallest fly you can get away with as it aids in hook setting.

Using a rod between 11 and 14weight in calibre with a quick descent line such as a Rio Leviathan or a Scientific Angler Wet Tip Express in 475 or 575 grain to get the fly down deep in the water column in the berley is the way to go. Ditto for switch baiting/teasing.

More hits come just after the fly has sat for a minute or so as far from the boat the line allows. Usually, the take happens within the first couple strips. Wahoo must eyeball the fly, waiting for any sudden movement.

Reels need to have at least 400m of 50lb braid backing and a diameter of 4 inches or more to help retrieve all the line you will lose after the first run.

It would be hard pressed to beat an Abel Super 13 or 14 for these fish or a Tibor Gulfstream or Pacific. Jack Charlton's Mako series is superb. The new Sage 8012 would a top pick as well.

WAHOO...!

The Bill & Kate Howe Flashy Profile tube fly in red/pink has probably accounted for more wahoo in recent years than any other.

Deceivers (XL), berley flies (pillie head replicas) with plenty of flash are great starters. I tie a double hook Deceiver using grey and white Mega Hair, which is like long, very coarse bucktail. I put a lot of holographic and silver flash through the middle of it. It's gotten me my couple of wahoo shots, with a lot of other quality by-catch along the way. It's my go-to berley fly. It has a 6/0 in the head and a 4/0 in the tail with 150lb cable securing the hooks together.

There are a lot of flies that will work, though the main thing to remember is this: even a big wahoo has narrow jaws, so don't have a massive gap between the front and rear hook or all they will do is bite between the hooks!

Care To Stir The Surface Or Walk The Dog?

Over the years I have been cut off enough times back near the mainland while chugging big blooping poppers for GT's to realize wahoo are attracted to them.

Having had the opportunity in 2006 to see anglers cast poppers, both skipping and blooping styles at schooled up wahoo, it fast became the way to want to chase them.

The crashing strikes are amazing.

Though that was until I saw how much they love surface walking stick baits!

Stick baits are a torpedo shaped lure with no bib. If you have some rhythm, twitching the rod and retrieving the slack line will make these lures dart side to side and wahoo are suicidal for them.

Stick baits are generally worked at a moderate walking pace, so it defies logic, that one, if not the fastest fish in the world, gets so psyched out of their minds for a lure that is going relatively slowly.

They rush from the depths and skyrocket up to 15m out of the water with the lure side-ways across them maw. It is a sight to behold.

Poppers to try are Bills Bugs in 150mm or 200mm. Carpenter Sea Frogs, Lively Lures Big GT popper and River2Sea Dumbbell Poppers. Any popper around 150-200mm long from the Japanese made stables of Carpenter, Fisherman, Heru/Nomad in either skipping or blooping styles will work. Favourite colours are Redhead/white body and Fusilier.

As for stick baits, the Heru/Nomad Wahoo 80, 100 or 150, Smith Marvellous Rumbous and Carpenter GT-y Gamma's or Bluefish are all brilliant. As are Adhek Penipen's, Orion Namba's and Bigfoot's,

Maria Loaded 140s and 180's and the like.

Out of all methods talked about here, using stick baits on spin gear would have to be the most exciting, if fly fishing does nothing for you.

Gearing Up.

Rods, reels and lines need to be of decent quality and care taken to look after every part of the system, right down to the hooks.

Trolling and live baiting gear isn't just the realm of overhead reels.

I have used (albeit top of the line Daiwa Saltiga and Shimano Stella) spin outfits for trolling minnows and skirts to help stagger the height of the tips when trolling. This prevents tangles when doing turns in a small boat.

Most outfits would be short stroker rods fitted with Silicon Carbide guides or rollers to prevent line damage. Strap a quality lever or star drag reel to it. My preference is for lever drag reels. They are cheap compared to when I started out and their drag settings are much easier to manage compared to a star drag system.

For casting poppers, jigs or stick baits a spin stick around 7-8 old fashioned feet long that carries silicon carbide oralconite inserts are best. Torzite if you can afford it.

What breaking strain of line you choose depends if you want fillets more than sport, I guess.

Since wahoo are excitable animals and will snap at bubbles formed on swivels, the line itself, skirted lures slipping up the leader for starters, it pays to keep the wire length to a bare minimum; use the smallest and strongest swivels IN BLACK to prevent another flashy target and use the most streamlined system for adding mono leader to you mainline.

In monofilament, I use a 25-turn Bimini Twist or Plait double with a figure 8 loop connection to a wind-on leader.

In braid, I'll use the Japanese FG knot, which is a friction knot. Youtube has a lot of tutorials on tying FG's. It allows GsP braid (PE line) to a single-strand leader. As they can be a bit fiddly to tie, if I have a break off or bite off, I may re-rig with a 50-turn Bimini Twist and the wind-on leader will be a spun-wind-on ala Knotted Dog style.

In other words the leader will be a folded length of mono that is twisted so the twists are 1-2 per cm.

Remember, the more large tag ends on knots, crappy swivels or use of bad line will cost you dearly if there is heaps of wahoo around.

It isn't the hooked one that gives you grief, it is all his revved up buddies with jaws full of razors looking at anything as a potential meal.

One pass of a reef full of wahoo can send you broke through lure loses.

On hooks, there is no such thing as too sharp. Conical points tend to tear less than those with cutting edges.

Any decent wahoo angler has a bunch of small diamond files to sharpen and re-sharpen hooks that are deemed too blunt for the water.

So there it is. A comprehensive run-down of one of my favourite fish and the many ways that you can entice one onto your line.

Take extra care around the front of dead and alive wahoo as their teeth do cause serious damage.

Please be aware that from a catch & release point of view, these animals can be dangerous and use extra caution when gaffing or de-hooking these wonderful fish.

- Copyright to Aaron Concord, March 2015

ABM

Footnote - And A VITAL Question:

We hope you've enjoyed this amazing report from Aaron. Editorial work of this calibre involves an incredible level of research, experience, skill, and time. To a large extent, an in-depth report like this flies in the face of what many internet gurus believe magazines like ABM should be doing today. They believe today's (internet) readers are struggling to stay focused on long, detailed articles like this one.

"People don't have time to read in depth anymore" "Editors need to keep the articles short, sharp and to the point."

For news, sports results, press releases, native editorial, I don't have a problem with that policy.

But I have a real problem with it when it comes to educational or technical reports. I can't see how dumbing down the editorial is going to attract MORE readers - and you sure as hell can't edit a report like this one back to a few pithy paragraphs. And for the record, as a fisherman, I hate 'part-works' too.

The point is this: We believe we're here to produce words, photographs - knowledge - for our readers. And hopefully provide a bit of entertainment along the way, whilst keeping you in the loop about what's going on with tackle, marine equipment, Rules, etc.

Let's cut to the chase: Would you like to see more articles of this calibre from the team? Or less? Do you see articles like these as a resource you want to keep (and subscribe to) - or a woftam?

We'd really like to hear your views on this critical subject - please let us know how you feel about it, to

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Our publishing format may have changed, but the basics haven't. You can still count on the Australian Boat Mag team for fast, 'off the shoulder' advice or comment - whether you are planning to buy a new BMT package, a 'pre-loved' rig, an import, a new outboard, or start your own "DIY" project at home - we're here to help when you need it most.

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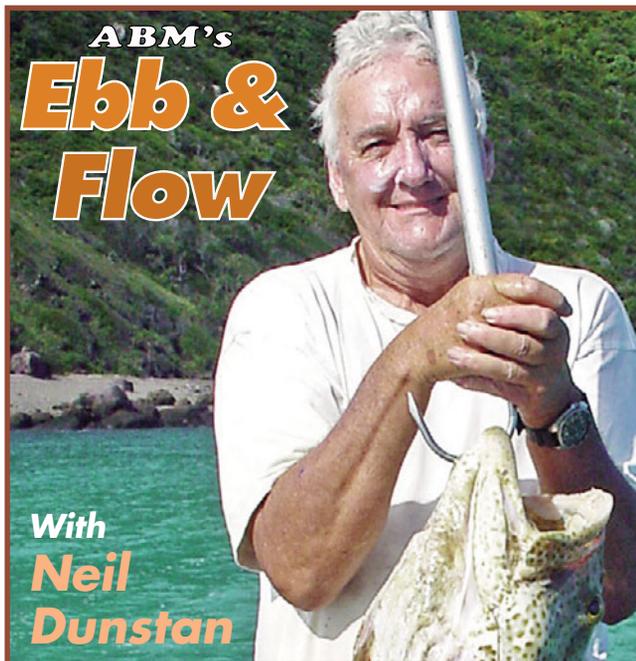
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Boating For Old Blokes . . And Food For Thought.

A couple of weeks after writing this piece, I will be celebrating my seventy sixth birthday, and of course this number is starting to have some serious ramifications with regard to my safety when I am operating either of my two boats.

I don't intend to stop boating and fishing anytime soon, probably never, but there are a number of things I must take into consideration - not the least my ability to stay out of trouble. I almost always go out alone and this makes it difficult if, for instance, I fell over the side or had some sort of a health problem which is a possibility the older I get.

What should I do about all this?

As previously mentioned, I don't intend to stop. I have given this a bit of thought and I reckon that there are plenty of readers in a similar situation and to be fair to our families we need to work out the safest way of operating and still enjoy what we do.

I guess the first thing must be to have a boat that is as seaworthy as we can get, and stability is a must. Along with that, I think that most boats don't have near enough rails and hand holds especially in an open tinnie, so the addition of full length hand rails makes the crew feel as if the boat has a bit more side height, and feels safer.

In a small alloy boat (say) up to five metres, I think it is safer to have a side console instead of a centre console as when the crew are moving about they can stay in the centre of the boat instead of going around the outside of the console. When operating one up in a side console boat, the trim is affected by the console, helm and skipper all being one side, however, once the boat's up on the plane, it tends to level up. If it is still a bit lopsided, an astute repositioning of heavy objects in the boat (such as the icebox, or fuel tubs) can solve that problem, but make sure that where ever it is shifted to, there are adequate



tie down points to stop it moving in an emergency.

It also goes without saying that a reliable outboard with electric start and power trim and tilt, makes life a hell of a lot easier when things are going pear-shaped.

There are also a number of things that I have in my boat which I wouldn't put to sea without.

The first is an inflatable life jacket which I wear all the time. No excuses - just get used to it.

Next are a set of safety ropes along each side similar to those which are compulsory on hire boats and while you may be able to grab the safety rope if you go over the side, unless you are some sort of acrobat it is near impossible to get back on the boat, especially if it is still moving along.

I have fitted a waterline step on the transom and another step/platform across the outboard well similar to where the swim platform would be on a more modern boat as well as more grab rails in this area. This also allows me to climb on to the boat via the transom when casting off from the ramp but it mainly allows me to get back on board from the water if I have fallen in, or have been having a bit of a snorkel

Lots to consider here - check the safety ropes on the topsides of the Quinnie, and the extended hand rails around the gunwales of the Quinnie. Staying IN the boat is crucial - but if, for any reason, the lone skipper does find himself in the drink - getting back on board can be a real problem - and not for just older blokes either! Neil has a good swim board on the port side, and admits he's looking at a fold down ladder, too.

around.

As I have been saying, one of the biggest problems that us old blokes have when we are on our own is going over the side and it happens more often than we are prepared to admit, sometimes with fatal consequences.

So if we get left behind by the boat drifting away or the current taking us away from an anchored boat then we are in real trouble and this is where an



important piece of safety gear comes in, namely the personal EPIRB. I always carry a small unit which clips into my shirt pocket and can be activated from there, bearing in mind that although there is a normal EPIRB clipped to the aft cabin bulkhead it is not possible to reach it when in the water, especially if you are drifting away from the boat.

One last thing re going over the side, is that the most common reason this happens is when leaning





Ebb & Flow

out over the side to have a pee. It is much safer to use a bucket and chuck it over the side afterwards.

I have fitted an electric anchor winch which took lots of fiddling to get everything right so that I hardly ever have to go forward to fix any hang-ups. When I do go forward it is to change the anchor from a reef anchor to a sand/mud anchor for anchoring up for the night, but on the odd occasions when I have to go forward at sea I have installed a large opening hatch in the cabin which I sized-up so I could easily fit my shoulders through. If I stand on the end of the bunks I can reach most of the anchoring system without getting out on the deck, but if this is necessary, I have a reasonable width walkway down the side of the cabin which has outdoor carpet glued to it and makes a fairly safe access to the deck via lots of rails and

Typical of a really carefully set-up 'pro' Quinnie fishing rig - a place for everything, and everything in its place. Note depth of the 'cockpit' here from the hand rails and the Quinnie 455 Dory's good natural internal freeboard. Console is a Dunstan special - but as the pic (right) attests, it all works.

hand holds.

Speaking of slippery foot holds I believe that the worst floor or sole to have in the boat is chequer plate aluminium. It reflects the sun straight back up into your face and burns the crap out of you. It is very uncomfortable on your feet, especially if you do as most of us do and operate bare footed - and is almost as slippery as smooth aluminium. It is much better to have smooth aluminium with a good quality outdoor carpet, or if it already has chequer plate, then cover it with carpet.

It also goes without saying that you should have your EPIRB, passengers life jackets, flares, vee sheet

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etc in a position where it is easily accessed in an emergency, and that does not mean under the bunks or in the forward storage area. I store all these safety items in a decent sized tool bag-type of shoulder bag, which hangs just inside the cabin within easy reach.

Twelve months ago when I turned seventy five, I received a letter from the registration branch of the government to say that henceforth I would need an annual medical certificate from my doctor to indicate that I was fit to drive my car.

I was insulted, and went around the house complaining that I was perfectly able to drive without some doctor telling me so, but eventually I submitted and went along. After a couple of eye sight tests and a check of my medical records he signed a certificate making my driving legal and reminded me that I needed to carry it in my wallet at all times in case I had an "episode".

On thinking about this, I wondered what would happen if I had an "episode" out in the boat, maybe a stroke or a minor heart attack which is more likely as I get older.

Being on my own I reckoned that I could call for help from VMR on the VHF but if I was on the floor, and couldn't get up, then I could reach my personal EPIRB in the shirt pocket and fire it off - and hopefully someone would find me in time.

All this sounds a bit morbid but I guess if you don't make some preparations and work out some tactics, then it is too late when the shit hits the fan. I hope I never have to resort to these tactics, but if I do, then I want to give myself the best chance to survive and continue to take my boat to sea for the foreseeable future and get home again safely.

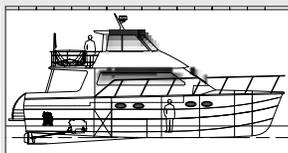
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We talk a lot about the so-called “state-of-the-art” in boat building, but this new 7.4m SuperVee Sportfish is surely getting pretty close to deserving the accolade. Last month we had the opportunity of jumping aboard this special craft just days before it was packed up ready to head for Weipa in the Gulf.



Facing Page: From any angle, this SuperVee Sportfish certainly looks the part. More to the point, it works very well with the quite moderate 2 x 90 hp outboards.

Left: Stability at rest is outstanding, and the fishing room unreal. Observe very well located fish box, and the flip-back seat backs

Pacific Sportfish's Magic 7.4 m Centre Cab

Whenever a group of fishermen sit down around a campfire, or in the pub or at the fishing club, it doesn't take long before the conversation turns to a discussion about the make-up of the perfect fishing boat.

Yarning about boats, boat design, outboard motors and fishing gear is of course what makes our world go round, and many a pleasurable hour has been spent by each of us in the pursuit of such conversation.

For most people, a 23' walkaround fisherman like the one shown on these pages is the definitive, truly perfect boat. Of course, there is no such thing as a “perfect” fishing boat, and indeed, I suspect we'd all be very disappointed if someone actually built it! What on earth would we talk about for the next 10 or 15 years?

Seriously though, this is a beautiful fishing boat. It is, quite simply, one of the best plate aluminium boats the writer has ever clapped eyes on, and it's been fitted out with real care and passion.

Actually, this boat has an interesting background. Although the boat is a genuine Pacific Sportfish, it's the consummation of the owner's many years of experience. Working together with the Sportfish team, the “big picture layout” ie, the walkaround, chair placements, fish boxes, gunwales etc was created to suit the owner's needs within the factory allowances. But the owner then had a very good friend called George Jekyll supervise much of the construction and detail fitting out process. George too is a very experienced, former central Queensland reef fisherman, so his involvement added yet another dimension to the development of this special craft.

As the owner is a farmer on a property hundreds of miles from the Sportfish factory, he figured the next best thing to being there himself, would be to have George Jekyll act as his eyes and ears in the Project. And it's to George's great credit that the Project has come together as well as it has.

We actually met George Jekyll when we were building *Genesis*, and the F&B team and George

**ABM
RETRO
BOAT TEST:**

Unchanged, as
first published,
written and
photographed
by Peter
Webster in
June,
2001





The cabin of the Centre Cab model is surprisingly big - and sleeps two very comfortably. On the boat's first trip to the Gulf, two blokes slept in the cabin, whilst three more slept on air mattresses in the cockpit under the stars . . . and there were no complaints. Fit-out and workmanship is excellent.

struck up a friendship that has sustained long after the *Genesis Project* was concluded. In fact, George and F&B's Ruth Cunningham spent quite a lot of time together figuring out the best gear and equipment to install on this 7.4m Sportfish.

So we've been able to watch it from the keel up, with more than the usual interest. It was largely at our behest and the installation of the cork in F&B's *Dusty Rover* that the owner made the shrewd decision to install the exquisite cork floors on this craft, deciding from the outset that if he was going to build the definitive fishing boat, he was going to choose the best available equipment and fittings.

That's what makes this such a special boat. It really is a showcase of the industry's talents, equipment and skills at this moment.

But join us now, as we step onboard and take this rig for a run just hours before it was packed up for the long trip to Weipa and the 'dry' season fishing around the edge of the eastern Gulf of Carpentaria.

Design

Stepping onboard this big craft, you immediately notice the stability and firmness of the boat under foot. It is a big boat, measuring 7.4 m in the hull, but having an overall length of 7.4 m. The beam is out to the maximum, 2.5 m and it's carrying a very deep 24 degree deadrise at the transom.

Pacific Sportfish advise that the minimum horsepower would be 150 hp and the maximum, 225 hp. You don't have to be a genius to figure out that

this will very soon appear with a new 4-stroke Yamaha 225 hp clamped on the transom.

With a raw aluminium hull weight of around 1,200 kg, in the real world it stacks up to the best part of 3.1-3.2 tonnes fully fitted and ready to fish, but still in 'dry ship' (no fuel or water) configuration.

It sits on a Mackay KR Series trailer, almost the perfect choice for a rig that is going to be towed well north in the Gulf country behind the owner's 100 Series LandCruiser.

In standard form, it has a fuel tank of 180 L, but does not have a water tank.

Bottom and transom plate thickness is 5.0 mm, whilst the topsides and decks are made of 4.0 mm plate aluminium.

The boat is designated the "SuperVee" as a reflection of the near gullwing shape of this hull when viewed out of the water. Unfortunately, we couldn't get a shot of the boat out of the water for you on this occasion because it came up to Runaway Marina on the water, and then fairly quickly disappeared on its trailer to head north. However, what you can see in this photograph of the smaller 6.4m model (from F&B issue #60) is, pro-rata, virtually identical.

Designed from the ground up as a walkaround with





a centre cabin, it's got more than enough space to keep the walkaround fair dinkum, and leave enough space up the front to make sure the walkaround foredeck is big enough to fish a couple of blokes. As well, the boat is big enough to create a centre cab that encloses a 2.0 m wide double bunk, 1.85 m long.

With 2.0 m of head room in the cabin, it's positively spacious, and we looked at it enviously thinking about the much pokier, cramped quarters we'd experienced on the Haines Signature 702 Walkaround by comparison.

This cabin is extremely roomy. There's even room in a couple of places to put a chemical toilet, and probably a pump-out toilet with a bit of thought.

The owner had decided not to enclose the cabin and has left it wide open to the four winds, although he's arranged for a nice job to be done of the curtains wrapping around the cockpit.

I believe the idea is that they'll drop the curtains in the cockpit to keep the "bities" out of the cabin, but I'll give you 100:1 on that after the first night in one of those Gulf rivers, they'll hastily enclose the cabin opening with 'No See Em' Mesh.

Other design features of note include a superbly placed fishbox in the cockpit (see pic) with a flip-back seat arrangement. Why on earth other manufacturers don't copy this system is beyond me – it's practical, extremely comfortable and yet it still

The 2 x Honda 90's are ideal in this environment where a bit of extra weight is actually an advantage. The rig still turned 30 (+) knots top speed, and works with a total fuel burn of just 30-32 L/ph at its 'sweet' speed cruising around 24-25 knots.

works as a fantastic fully insulated ice chest, right where it's needed.

The boat also has a big wet/dry kill tank under the floor that will cope with headed mackerel. The deck is self draining even with 2 or 3 people down the back, and the hardtop is very well engineered and quite rigid.

Statistically, the outside cockpit measures 1.960 m across and it has 2.68 m (unreal!) from the transom wall to the back of the chair. This is one of the best fishing cockpits we've encountered for years.

Performance

Two Honda 90's were chosen because of their near legendary reliability, economy, smoothness and oil free performance.

We've had three pairs of these Honda 90's now, so we've spent hundreds of hours with them. We were able to share with George some of our experiences and were able to provide very accurate data as we've tested so many of these Honda 90's over the last 4 or 5 years.

They were propped nicely too, pulling up 5,800 with three quarters fuel, and that's about perfect.

We know from experience that at 4,000 rpm they will use about 15-15.5 L/ph each. But these motors just love to sit on 4,200 rpm, and will use just a smidgeon more fuel - around 33.3 L/ph for the pair at 4,200 for ever and a day.

Having two big 17" props helps the Supervee's performance and in an astonishing demonstration of low down hull efficiency, the boat was planing easily right down to 9-10 knots. That will be very useful when the 'glass is down, and the crew has to make passage in really rough weather.

They've come a long way these big plateys, haven't they? It was an absolute delight to use this big rig on the day, and we admired the low speed performance as much as the top end stuff. In fact, I was more impressed with the boat at the low end of the performance envelope than I was at the top end. Why?

Well, there are plenty of boats around that will do 28-30 knots flat stick. This evokes a sort of "so what" reaction in this writer, but there are precious few boats that will get down and work in this low 9-14 knot region where most trailerboats have the appalling habit of falling off the plane. And if you have to drive through any amount of choppy water, this can be absolutely heartbreaking.

Not so in this rig. It has a "get me home to mother" speed of around 12-14 knots which will go through just about anything. The stance is excellent, the craft poised and balanced, the motors just humming away on the transom, and that big, high bow is rising beautifully to the swells and choppy water.

As the seas flatten out, the speed is lifted, and we found the Sportfish 7.4 wanted to cruise at around 16-

18 knots most of the time offshore.

Now before you throw your hands up in horror and say 'that's not enough for me!' let me make this clear. This is 16-18 knots across the ground, and that's a pretty damn good speed in a 7.4m boat.

Obviously, in dead flat water it will go like the clappers - every boat will. But what I'm talking about is the typical southeast Trades' chop we meet in Qld and WA or the Southerlies that sweep themselves up along the coast in the summer time from Victoria into NSW. The sort of give and take water that offshore sportfishermen have to cope with as a matter of course.

In those conditions, this boat will sit on 16-18 knots very comfortably. And the crew won't be pounded to death - they'll just be sitting back, having a yarn, and enjoying the surroundings.

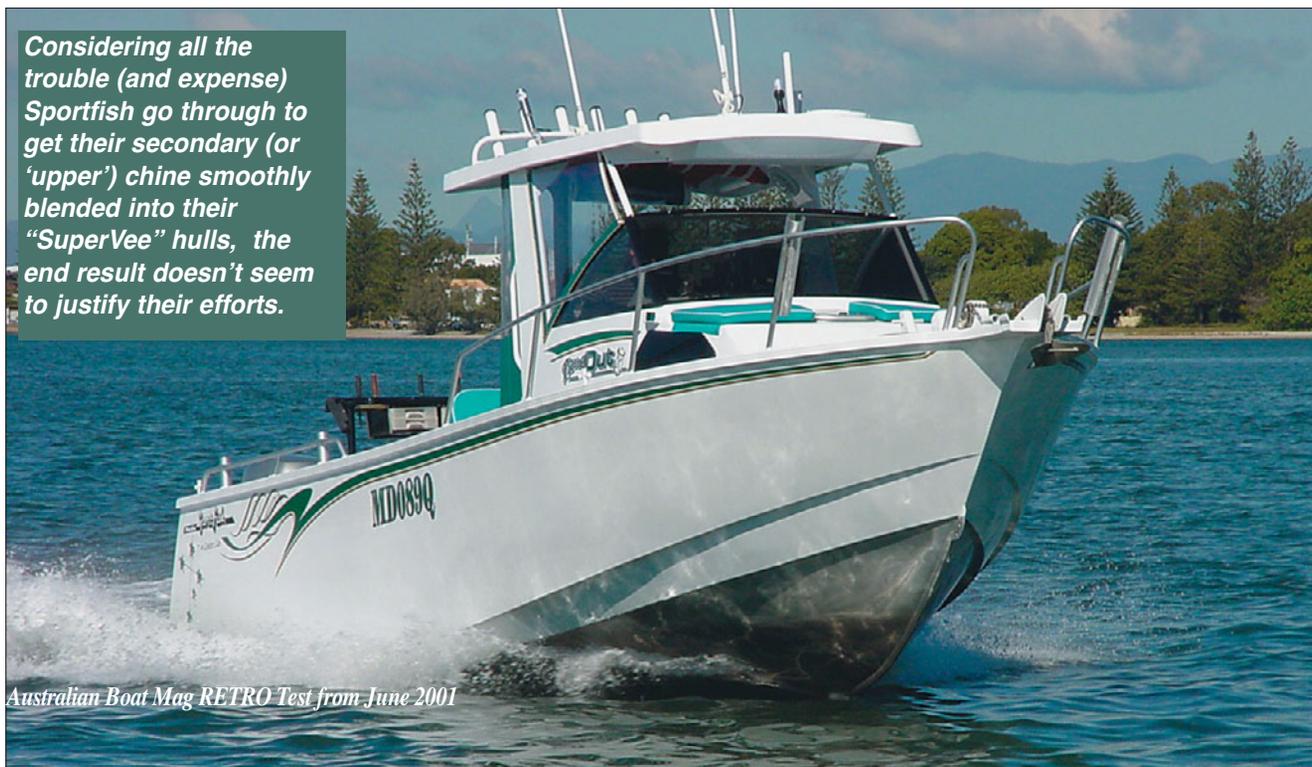
In the total picture, we pulled up nearly 31 knots with the engines cranked right out, and they'll probably pick up another knot or two as the engines run in, and after their 100 hours service. On all three pairs of Hondas we've owned, there's been a marked lift in the performance around the 100-hour mark.

Overall, we found the Sportfish 7.4 a singularly impressive craft. It's not as soft in the final analysis



Only the best gear was used - including this knock-out Raytheon GPS Plotter. Chart picture viewing (in broad daylight too) is superb.

Considering all the trouble (and expense) Sportfish go through to get their secondary (or 'upper') chine smoothly blended into their "SuperVee" hulls, the end result doesn't seem to justify their efforts.



Pacific Sportfish 7.4 m C/Cab SPECIFICATIONS

Sportfish Designated Builder John Bredhauer (Master Boat Builder)	Deck filler and gauge Anchor well Split bow rail Bow sprit and roller Quarter side rails Side pockets Battery shelf in transom Grab rail across motor well Transom grab rail Padded swivel seats on boxes Shelf in cabin Bunks Step down companionway in cabin Raised front floor Carpeted floor Internal screen rail Tinted screen Tinted side windows in cabin Instrument panel S/S steering wheel Heavy-duty non-feed back steering Electric bilge pump with float switch Painted with 2 pack Stripes to match trim colour Unpainted bottom	Factory extras Hydraulic steering Live bait tank Boarding ladder Twin fuel tanks Deck wash pick up Hardtop canopy roof - extended extra 300mm Radio panel in top Speaker boxes in top Aluminium doors on transom Facility for electric anchor winch Hatch in cabin Built in tackle box - lockable Transom to suit twin motors Base plates for outriggers Deck winch mounts in rear rails Bow ladder Larger bow sprit and roller	and aerial GME stereo, AM/FM tape GX950 aerial GME 27MHz GX290 radio Simrad CP40 GPS X85 Lowrance Speakers 602 100 watt Dash mounted power plug outlet Removable front and side clears on screen Motors - Twin 90hp Honda 4 stroke XL, S/S props Twin Racor fuel filter and water trap Trailer - Mackay PU65000T-!4-MSB, mesh walkways
Specifications Hull length 7.40m Overall length 7.70m Beam 2.50m Deadrise 24 degrees Minimum horse power 150hp Maximum horse power 225hp Approx dry hull weight 1180kg Bottom and transom 5mm Sides and decks 4mm Bunk length 1.8m			Total for above \$75,000 Add for the following extras:- Raytheon GPS plus 2 spare tyres and misc - \$9,500 Cork floor - \$5,500
Standard features Self draining floor (transom scuppers) Wet/dry kill tank under floor Fuel tank under floor - 180 litres Four rod holders on deck Two side bollards Two rear bollards Large front bollard		Special Fit out includes: Muir 900 electric anchor winch GME VHF GX548 radio	

as something like that amazing Southwind 640 tested elsewhere in this issue, or the big Seafarer Voyager, or a couple of the Signatures. But as a big plate aluminium boat, operating with two extremely economical Honda 90's, I feel the performance was exemplary.

The difference between this boat and the softer ones I've mentioned is probably 3-5 knots at best. But this boat has so many other advantages that I'd be prepared to forego the ultimate top speed and faster cruising ability for this boat's bottom end performance – let alone the fabulous fishing cockpit, cabin room and economy of performance.

Sportfish have put an enormous amount of energy and effort into this 7.4 m SuperVee hull, and clearly it's paying off.

However, I'm not entirely convinced about the value of their secondary, outer and/or upper chine. This has caused them much grief on the factory floor. Making a chine like this "fair" as it both curves and disappears into the stem, in aluminium, is incredibly difficult. It would even be difficult in fibreglass because trying to roll out such a hard knuckle and then lift it out of the mould would be almost impossible.

But the Sportfish team have spent zillions trying to make it work, and there's no doubt this one is miles better finished than the earlier examples. But as you can plainly see in the photographs, the area that's

causing them so much grief (where the chine disappears into the stem) is not even in contact with the water and has virtually nothing to do with the performance of the boat.

Equally, I suspect they could have achieved the stability and handling without half the dramatics of this complicated chine arrangement with a much simpler hull shape. We've seen other examples recently in the very impressive 7.2 m (+) Stingray hull (designed by Brisbane architects Stephen & Gravlev) and before that the Jon Kemp & Associates designed Oceantech 7500. Both these latter craft have created similar standards of ride and performance with a far simpler structure. So one has to question whether there is any pull-through benefit here from the technology Sportfish have spent so much time and energy trying to perfect.

Whatever – the hull's working beautifully, it rides softly, it's very dry and it provides an absolutely wonderful degree of performance through the lower and middle range of the performance envelope.

Criticisms

It's very hard to criticise such a well-developed and polished craft. It's an absolute travesty that boats like this Sportfish and F&B's *Dusty Rover* aren't put on display for the public to see because there is just so much to learn from these craft.

This Sportfish is a superb example of a situation



The Sportfish went straight from Runaway Bay Marina in SE Queensland to the launch ramp at Weipa - and several months of hot barra action !

where a very good boat builder (I should add John Bredhauer was the master boat builder for the Sportfish team) put together a boat for a very experienced owner, and the result is exceptional, to say the least.

So criticising something like this is more a matter of debating small boat design philosophy. It's about other experienced owners making observations that there are a couple of things they might do differently to suit their own needs.

For example, I think this standard 180 litre fuel tank is way too small. Even with the economical Honda 90's, that only gives the boat a range of about 125 miles (in theory) and that's no where near enough today.

But the boat building community have got to start thinking about range as a two way street. In other words, if the boat has a "range" of 120 miles altogether, that means you can only go 60 miles out and 60 miles back – and in the northern parts of Australia in Qld, NT and WA, 60 miles is just bugger all. What then, is this boat's range – 62.5 nm or 125 nm ?

Suffice to say, the owner agrees with our thinking here. This particular boat has the standard 180 litre tank - but they've also got a forward bow tank for another 120 litres, to give them a 'range' of a more respectable 191 nautical miles.

Similarly I think it needs a water tank somewhere, and for the \$80,000-\$90,000 involved, a water tank should not upset the budget too much.

Likewise, I think the acrylic windscreen is a bit cheap in a boat of this calibre. Sportfish have built enough of these big 2.5 m beam walkarounds now to standardise on a toughened glass window front section (at least) so the skipper can run with proper windscreen wipers or pantograph wipers from Sea Crystal.

But like all plateys, all you do is add money. I'm quite sure the Sportfish team will happily install a toughened windscreen set-up, bigger fuel tanks, water tanks – that is what boat building in this modern era is all about. You take a very good base product, and work up the specifications to suit your specific requirements.

Conclusion

A wonderful craft. Pure and simple. It's a very good hull, with two of our all time favourite engines, producing a combination of excellent performance, reliability, range and genuine fuel economy. This boat will troll all day for 7 or 8 L/ph and for a big, heavy platey, that's the sort of news fishos need these days. It will cruise loaded to the gunwales with stores and equipment, fishing tackle and ice at around 33 L/ph while the boat makes its way across the Gulf at around 21 knots on the clocks.

Sportfish have created a beautiful hull, and the owner and his offsider George Jekyll have done a sterling job of fitting it out with the best of everything.

It is truly one of the most impressive craft F&B has ever tested.

ABM, March 2015

Hindsight, March 2015

Reading this report again in the cold light of day some fourteen years later, I had a sort of epiphany . . . I realised this very boat sums up perfectly the fundamental problem confronting the boating industry: we have not moved design, build or technological standards forward one jot since this boat was built FOURTEEN years ago.

Superbly built of welded plate aluminium to a very contemporary design we haven't improved; powered by twin moderate horsepower Honda 4-strokes (the current technology) sitting on an excellent Mackay trailer that is still in their current 2015 range, and fitted-out with a standard of finish very few current boats have or can achieve - just thinking about the multi-function Raymarine electronics package, and the stunning cork cockpit sole, to name just two of the obvious 'state of the art' features.

It certainly suggests we need to go back to the drawing board, again, if we are going to raise the bar this Walkaround set, back in Y-2000-2001. - PW, March 2015.



ABM Appendix



Downloading 'Australian Boat Mag' PDF Edition

After you've downloaded the PDF edition of *Australian Boat Mag* onto your computer, tablet or smartphone (or any device) you can then read it anytime or anywhere without the internet. Furthermore, you can keep it on a virtual 'bookshelf', or build up your own ABM library in a convenient folder on your desktop, easily print out pages, reports (or the whole magazine in minutes) and/or transfer the issue to your iPad or smart phone with your Subscription number. And it is now so much easier to do . . .

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Step 1

Turn on the computer or tablet, and tap in

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into the browser's address panel at the top, and our home page (just like this) will appear on screen almost instantly . . .

Step 2

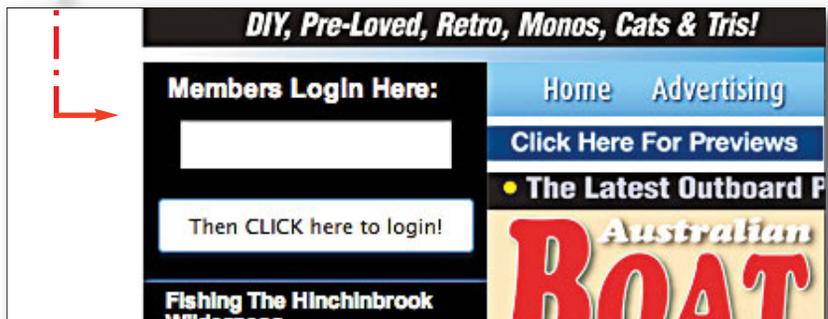
With your Subscription Number in hand, (or Tax Invoice Number if you've purchased a single copy) carefully tap in your personal Subscription **NUMBER** - *not your name*. Check them carefully (there are 16 in total) and press the LOG IN button next to the numbers, and

Step 3

. . . the "G'day!" or Welcome page appears with seven coloured bars next to the current *Australian Boat Mag's* cover, to take you straight to wherever you want to go, instantly.

Step 4

Having clicked on the navy blue bar for "The Latest Edition of Australian Boat Mag" here's where we see the magazine. As you CLICK on the Latest Edition Bar, the magazine pops up on screen, ready to enjoy. But remember, whilst it is on your screen - **it is NOT yet saved into your computer**, and we need to do that, now.

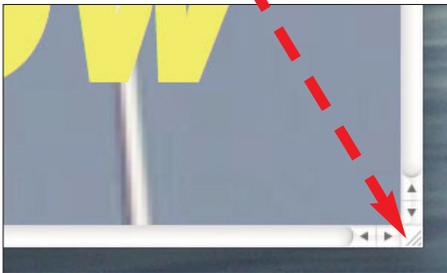


Step 5

By the way, the first stage that loads is often far too big . . . but before you adjust the actual IMAGE, make sure its window is a good size to view - not like this one, which is hopeless. The window is too small for this size image,  so we need to make a couple of adjustments . . .

Step 6

So firstly, adjust the size of the magazine WINDOW for good reading on screen with the **bottom right corner tab**



Step 7

Next, we need to get *the magazine* down to a convenient size in that window, right? To do that, gently moving your mouse arrow (or 'hand') across the bottom of the image window will raise a control bar like this - or possibly one that's wider with even more controls. As you can see, the two 'magnifying glass' symbols INCREASE or DECREASE the image . . . Many computer systems have these controls on the top 'TOOLS' bar - so if this control panel doesn't appear at the bottom - don't worry - you'll find all the PDF controls on the top as well. They will look like this grey bar:



Step 8

Now all we have to do is **SAVE this magazine PDF file** where you can easily access it in the future. There are several ways to do this - but we find the easiest method is to do a normal "Save As" in your internet software program such as Explorer (in PC's) or Safari (Apple/Mac devices) - and whilst there are countless programs that people use, every single browser program has a "Save As" facility.

Most people have an *Australian Boat Mags* folder on the desktop; many readers with Windows PC's put them in a folder in "My Documents". It doesn't really matter where the magazines are kept, as long as they are safely **saved for the future**, and you can access them in seconds, 24/7.

Peter's Tips For Faster PDF Magazine Usage:

Learn to use the PDF system - it is so easy and quick.

- Navigate thru the magazine on these page arrows, or just type in the page you want in the box - and press enter. Very handy way of getting around the magazine.
- "93" here is the number of pages in this particular issue - *simple, hey!* Go to contents (always P.2, P.3) first, and then tap in the page you want in this box.
- Use the up down (+ or -) symbols to resize the image for a comfortable reading size.
- In Acrobat (the program for reading PDF files like the mag) go to **VIEW** in the very top tool bar; the drop down will give **PAGE DISPLAY** which will give you 4 ways of viewing the mag - but **Single Page** or **Two-Up** are best - and **Two-Up** is the most popular way of reading through the magazine usually, before going back to **SINGLE Page** to read something intently. *Trick: Make sure you start TWO-UP on the Cover page (Page 1) otherwise the computer gets all confused about the sequence of the pages . . .*
- Printing out stuff (or the whole darn magazine) is a piece of cake. Just click on the "Printer" symbol, put in the pages you want printed - and grab your stapler!
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Up to four back issues are available (free of charge) through the ABM Subscriptions Dept to bona fide, current subscribers replacing lost or missed issues. All other back issues are rated at the regular \$9.95 each. Or 3x for \$16, 6x for \$29, or 12x for \$55.



ABM 206 January PDF (12.0mb)

This 132p January issue is our biggest ever. It contains a 58 page Holiday Reading Supplement and heaps of boats – Polycraft 5.3m Frontrunner, Noosacat 3000, BBB 700 Custom Console, Nautiglass 7.80 Walkaround, BMD's sharp Shoreline 487 DIY speedboat, PW's in-depth report on the stunning shaft drive diesel Arvor Weekender 700.



ABM 211 June PDF (19.3mb)

Lead feature is the spectacular Noosa Cat 4100 with Volvo IPS drives and incredible electronics, with the Black Rhino 660 Walkaround's first sea trials. PW continues the 'Virtual Boat Show' with 5.2-5.8m half cabs (P-1/2) and Andy Myers takes us on a great fishing adventure down to the Peron Islands from Darwin. The June Retro Test is the Haines Signature 542F.



ABM 207 February PDF (10.3mb)

Kiwi designer Scott Robson's new 6.60m plate aluminium Black Rhino Walkaround. The GRP Bonito 560 is featured alongside the Arvor Sportfish 755 powered by a Mercury 140 4-Stroke outboard, and the indestructible Polycraft 530 Cuddy. BMD's new Pro Tournament 24 DIY composite sportfisherman sits next to the sweet Voyager 625 cat.



ABM 212 July PDF (18.1mb)

We cover the stunning new Quintrex 650/690 Hardtop ("The best thing Quintrex has done in years" - PW) plus coverage of the colourful new E-TECs, new 75-115 hp Merc FourStrokes and a close look at the brilliant little Garmin 78sc Chart Plotter. A spectacular photo series of a trawler running the Yamba Bar showed why it's notorious - and the Retro Test is the original major report on the Southwind 640 Cuddy



ABM 208 March PDF (8.9mb)

The issue of DIY ("Do It Yourself") home boat building is about the joys, virtues, options and challenges of the exploding Australian DIY scene. Hundreds of Aussie families are busily engaged in their garages, carpools or home workshops building one of the new 'composite GRP' family boats in sizes ranging from 3.0m – 10.0m, and saving thousands of dollars on the cost of going fishing and boating in the process.



ABM 213 August PDF (19.0mb)

August leads with Damon Olsen's classic 'anchor float anchoring technique' then we welcome John and Annie Sullivan's cruising column back, look at a beaut 5.1 DIY Family Cuddy, plus a 6.2 ally DIY sportfisherman, whilst Andrew Hestelov files his report on the Merc 150 Four Stroke and we highlight 2 new tinnies from Telwater. The Retro Test is the original major report on the Whittley 700 Cruisemaster.



ABM 209 April PDF (13.0mb)

Our 'Virtual Boat Show' of the vital 6.0m-6.5m GRP cuddies with fishing in their DNA' brings together all the top models in OZ, with a special report by PW on what to look for, the pitfalls, and how to choose the best one for your needs. Plus there's a colourful report on the world's biggest outboards, an owner's report on his 680SX Bar Crusher and a Retro report looking back at the original 565 Centre console by Haines Hunter



ABM 214 September PDF (31.6mb)

This big 100 page production features a 10 page report on the brand new Stacer range for 2014-15, the release of Eden NSW's new safe harbour development, and a special Seamanship & Boathandling feature dealing with Rough Water in a trailerboat. We have first details of the new F-250, Volvo's bargain V6 Sterndrive, and the Retro Test is the original major report on the superb



ABM 210 May PDF (17.5mb)

Continuing ABM's Virtual Boat Show with the hugely popular 4.81m-4.99m side (or centre) consoles. PW's tests the single engined Makocraft 485 Cat, and the very affordable Clark Dominator 485 side console with the Yamaha 70's performance and fuel data. Di Ross heads for the Whyalla-based Australian Snapper Championships.



ABM 215 October PDF (37.9mb)

Interesting 90+ page production features Australia's first serious trials of the new Parsun 90hp 2-stroke, plus a close look at the Makocraft (ours!) 515 side console it's bolted onto. Doug Lindsay's sent in a jaw-dropping photo essay of fishing the Whitsundays, we update DIY composite projects, whilst the Retro Test is the original major report on the Haines Signature 630F



ABM 216 November PDF (30.4mb)

90+ page edition leads with a pictorial essay on the superb Noosacat 3000 order for NSW Water Police. Aaron Concord returns with a report on 3D Pakula lures, and Don Gilchrist starts a beautiful 3-Part series on exploring the GBR. PW looks at new ways to think about boat buying, and we look at the Savage 485 SC. The Retro Test is the rare (Hipkins) Haines Hunter 635 W/A.



ABM 217 December PDF (31.5mb)

Don Gilchrist continues his series (P-2 of 3) on trailerboating to the GBR. PW starts a no holds barred series on buying 'pre-loved' and starts another challenging the way we think about boats in the first place. We look at the Quinnie 430 Fishabout, Aaron has a beaut line spooler, Neil likes the Sprintgas cylinder, and the Retro Test is the Aussie built, Arvor 20 diesel.



ABM 218 January PDF (26.4mb)

Don Gilchrist continues his beaut series (P-3 of 3) on trailerboating to the GBR. PW nails the latest trends in the secondhand market, whilst Aaron gives us the low-down on his fave lures. We look at the Stacer 449 Outlaw, do a quick test in the Black Rhino 4800 side console, and sign up for the amazing 4800 Noosacat Flybridge. The Retro Test is Dominator 700 Canyon Runner.



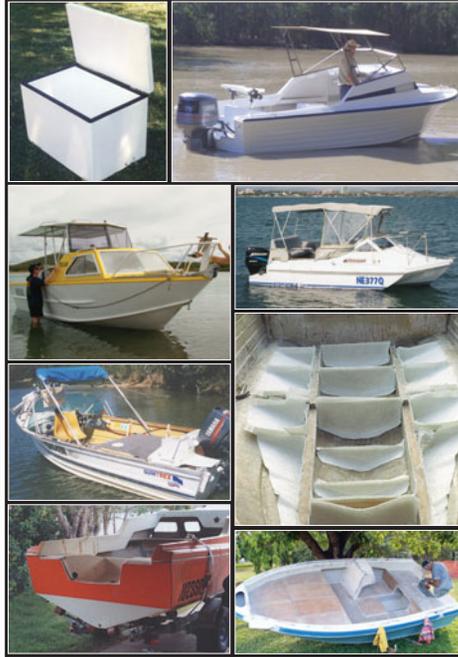
ABM 219 February PDF (27.1mb)

Another cracker issue, with Aaron Conrd explaining the mysteries of PE fishing line, whilst Don Gilchrist makes the case to buy an old cat, and do it up with four stroke outboards on pods PW questions the number of boat shows in SEQ, and we re-introduce a chance to win the fisherman's bible - Ern Grants Guide To Fishes. The Retro Test is the brilliant Signature 493F from 1999.

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These are fast-changing times. More than ever, families have to be mindful that some things are just plain fraught with problems, or are unjustifiably expensive. Or doomed to failure. Knowing who to trust, situations to avoid and projects that work, is a key element in going forward with confidence.

As much as anything else though, it is having someone minding your back; have a reference source you can call to clear the air, and get the facts.

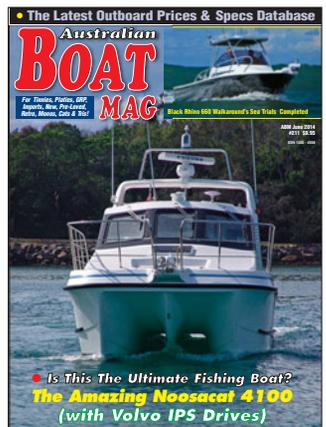
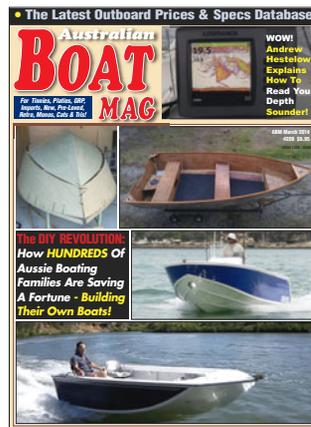
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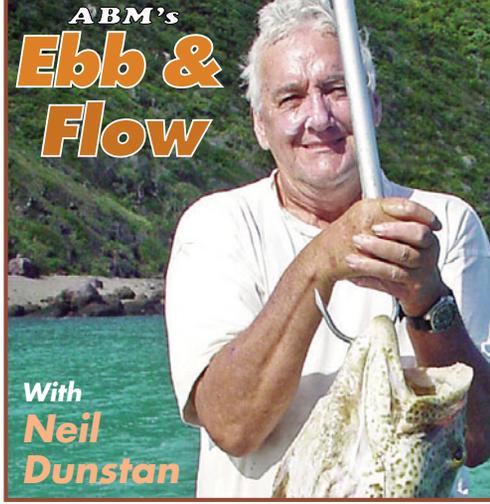


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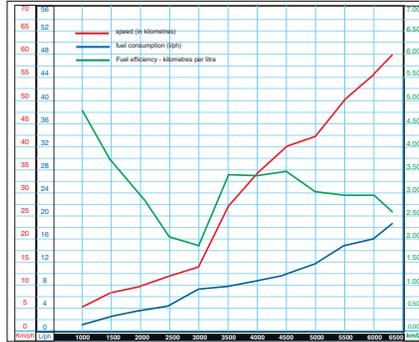
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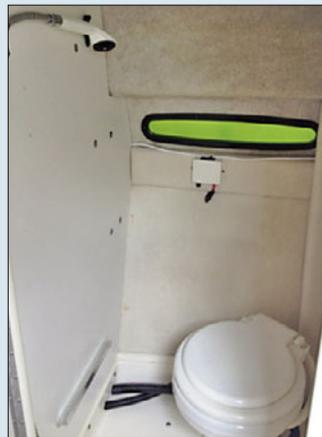
We've used it most weekends around southern Moreton Bay and it has been very reliable, safe and comfortable. The boat is big enough for 6 adults, easily handled alone, a cinch with 2 people. Great for anchoring stern in to the beach. Small enough to be not effected by 8.0m speed limits. The boat has been stored in a Rack 'n Stack - an inside multi-level marina shed. The boat will have paid storage at Horizon Shores Marina for 3 months included in the sale, but has a legally trailerable beam if trailerboating is preferred. It has a full service history from just two careful owners since new. The Mercruiser starts and runs smoothly, and the boat cruises beautifully around 42-45 k/ph. **Reluctant sale at \$31,990 ono.**



Inventory ● Raymarine A65 GPS Chart Plotter ● GME Stereo with iPod connectivity ● GME VHF & 27Mhz radios ● EPIRB ● Extended Swim Platform ● Hot & Cold Water System (Galley & Showers) ● New SS stove ● Enclosed toilet ● Magma SS BBQ ● Sleeping for 6 people ● Full storm covers ● Three new batteries ● Simpson Lawrence anchor winch (Reconditioned 2013) ● 5 life jackets ● Anti-fouled ● Bennett trim-tabs ● SS bow and aft rails ● New fenders & stern anchor

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Several potential buyers have loved the rig, but have been nervous about the new Parsun 90, as this is one of the first installations in Australia, and a pre-mix 2-stroke outboard. We're in the process of ordering a new Makocraft cat, so we're happy to sell the Frenzy 515 without an outboard, or with the Parsun, or with a brand new Evinrude 90hp E-TEC i.e.

Option One: Makocraft Frenzy 515, Oceanic trailer but no engine. All brand new equipment Warranties. \$16,500 incl GST. **Must Be Sold!**

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For further info, specs and details, call
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Peter,
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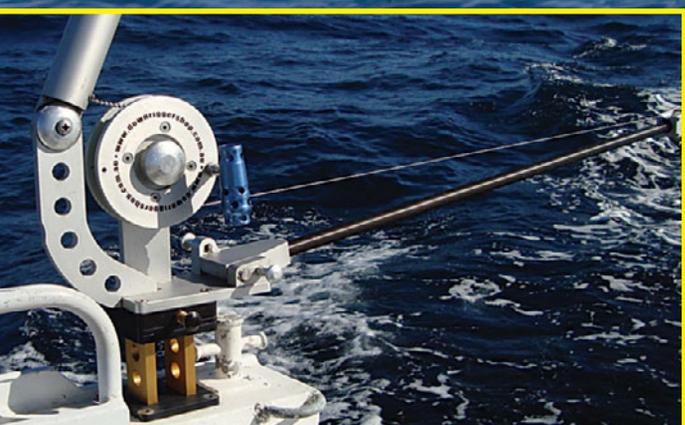
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