



SAILFISH

3000 Weekender

When I arrived at St Georges Motor Boat, the Sailfish Gavan and Ashley from Webbe Marine had yet to hit the water, so I got a real feel for how big this boat was. My first instinct was to have a look underneath the hull while I could and check out the twin alloy sponsons that are fast becoming a first in industry standards. As I ran my fingers along the hull, I could only admire the craft of TIG welding and wonder how long it must have taken the boat builder to master his craft. This is what Sailfish bases its company ethos on: craftsmanship.

Walking around the 3000 I had to put away any presupposed attitudes towards alloy hulls that many of my peers have whispered into my ears as we race out to the tuna grounds. "Noisy", "heavy" and "hard to steer" are only a few disparaging remarks I have heard as a twin catamaran passes through in a metre-plus swell with apparent ease.

As I jumped aboard, Ashley was at the helm and within an instant we were moving towards the boat ramp and without much ado slipping off the triple axle trailer and into the water. This boat was a joy to launch and get back onto the trailer, considering its

size. The box alloy trailers are as well built as the boat itself and with slips, make the whole experience relatively embarrassingly free at the ramp.

Dropping the twin 225 Hondas into the water and firing up the outboards I noticed the steering works on a twin-ram hydraulic rack, which makes turning the wheel child's play. The manufacturer's recommended power for this boat is 450hp, so twin 225 Hondas are standard, and if I was to wonder if this was enough, it wasn't going to be long before I found my answer. Once past the no-wash zone I was preparing my camera for some running shots when Ashley opened up the two engines from about 1500rpm to 3000rpm. I went flying from the cabin and out onto the rear deck. Enough said!

Starting at the bottom and working upwards, the sponsons are made from 5mm alloy and are box-sectioned with foam fillers for damping and flotation. The sides of the boat use 3mm alloy sheet, wrapped around the hull using a jig system. I am reliably informed there is no bog used, which adds to that aforementioned company ethos.



Nice wide gunwales provide sure and safe access to all areas of the boat.

At the stern there is a really nice touch in that the manufacturers have built a transom walkway that juts right out and runs parallel with the outboards. At the end there is a ladder for getting in and out of the boat. I would love to have this when a marlin is hooked and you want to quickly bring the fish close and unhook it with the minimum of fuss. It also plays a big part when the family wants to snorkel or play in the water. The rear deck is spacious and has all the things you would expect from a boat like this: a transom and deck wash; live-bait tank; kill tank; rod holders running parallel with the gunwale (starboard side only); transom icebox; tackle boxes and two padded seats that tuck into the corners port and starboard. There is also a barbecue and wash sink on opposite corners and a

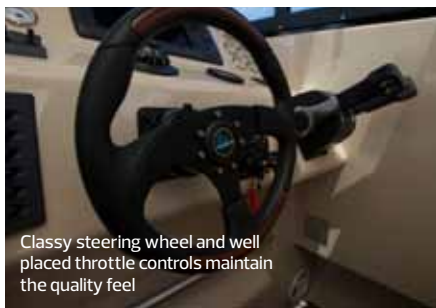


A very ergonomic dash layout provides a comfortable driving position and easy visibility to all necessary information

Performance from the twin hulls is competitive – if not better than V-hulls. I base this assumption on the fact there is less drag and friction and therefore less fuel needed to move the boat. The design can be compared to a knife-and-spoon effect. The mono hull has a much larger surface area, compared to the knife of a catamaran. My test, albeit brief, had my calculations running about 18-litres per hour, per engine at 4000rpm. That's a speed of about 30-knots. This translates into a range of 700km with a full tank of 700-litres. The tank system runs on twin 350-litre tanks. You might get a touch more but I would never promote unrealistic figures when it comes to the range of a boat, just in case. Running figures are as follows: 3000rpm – 20-knots; 4200rpm – 30-knots; 5800rpm – 43-knots (top speed).



The Sailfish 3000 is an imposing boat coming head on.



Classy steering wheel and well placed throttle controls maintain the quality feel



A Furuno electronics package compliments the Sailfish 3000

touch for the anglers: a direct linked screen to the sounder tucked into the corner under the hard-top roof so you can be in touch even as you fish off the rear deck.

Moving through the sliding doors, which incidentally have a locking mode so you can have the door halfway open without going back and forth, you find yourself in a spacious and very tall cabin. Ashley was every bit of 6'2" and there was plenty of head room above his noggin. From a visual aspect you almost have 360-degree sight, apart from two stanchions at the back of the cabin in either corner. What about the goodies inside the cabin? Well, the boat is designed to sleep four people with comfort. Two people fit in the cabin and two inside the cockpit. The seating arrangement in the

cockpit pulls out and turns into bunks. If you are taller than six-foot, fear not, your head will still be in line with your backbone after a night on this boat. I do feel for people who are tall when it comes to anything designed to sleep the average human being, but not in this case.

The cockpit is kitted out with all the accoutrements that you would need for your overnight stays at sea. The table-come-bunk-bed seats about five people and your food will be kept nice and cold with a 130-litre fridge/freezer. When it comes to heating a meal, there's a 240V microwave oven that runs off a 1000w inverter with dual plugs – enough for another appliance if needed. There are two household batteries serving you that are

constantly topped up by the standard solar panel that's situated on the roof. When the dual 80-amp sealed gel batteries are full, it transfers to the starter batteries. One improvement would have been the option to top your starter batteries over the household ones but needless to say, unless you have everything running all day, you're not going to run out of power. For the fisherman, the Sailfish 3000 comes with Furuno electronics, using the Navnet 3D colour LCD sounder. This equipment is second-to-none and will find those elusive fish, as the 1kW transducer will sound the deepest of marks.

In the cabin there is a stand-up shower and an electrical toilet. This runs down the port side of the boat towards the bow section. When it comes to the electrics on board, I have to mention the workmanship that has gone into organising a solid, safe and easy-access electrical circuitry. The thermostat will give you nice hot water running out of a 200-litre freshwater tank. There's certainly enough for the weekend if respected. There are a few other things I could mention, like 12W fans and three 12-volt outlets, but I would like to move on to performance.

Twin Honda 225hp engines provide plenty of power.



Our test took place on Botany Bay with a healthy chop so I was interested to see what the twin hulls could do with relatively easy-going conditions. As we pulled out of the no-wash zone, Ash got the boat up to 40-knots in less than seven seconds. Sitting up at the helm I really thought I was steering a tank. It even looked like a tank from the support boat. Stick a couple

of caterpillars on those sponsons and we could have invaded Poland. We smashed our way through the chop with not the slightest problem. This has to be the most solid trailerboat I have ever experienced. The twin hull is like steering a boat that has a course already cut through the water. The trick to these twin hulls, I'm told, is to get the air flow under the centre hull section, thus causing a lift. The faster you go, the better the lift out of the water. Ash was putting this into practice as we bombed our way over Botany Bay.

They don't look that pretty, but they sure move off the water well, and when it comes to construction you're not going to beat the craftsmanship of a Sailfish. Yes, they are a bit pricey - this one retails at around \$280,000 - but think about what you're getting for your money. This is a fishing machine and will have you and your mates safely onto the outer reef and back and will support you for a couple of days if you choose to hang out while the fishing is red hot. Sailfish will customise you boat to whatever your needs. I reckon they'd bolt a barbecue onto the roof if you asked them. At Webbe marine, Gavan and Ash believe the most important thing is listening to their customers and their needs, so if you've got a spare quarter of a million and don't know what to do with it, give them a ring. ⚓

A hot and cold shower on the rear of the boat will be very handy for hosing down salty companions.



A sink on the rear deck is a neat idea



Modern Boating **OPINION**

The Sailfish are super-high quality aluminium twin hull boats built in Australia. With a focus on the customer and customisation for their every need, there is involvement right through the build process so you are getting a true one-off, not a shelf boat.

