

BIG CAT GAME FOR ANYTHING



You can go out and try to do it, or you can go out and do it properly. If you love blue-water game fishing, you need a craft that's specifically designed for the task.

There are now quite a few trailerable pocket game cruisers on the market and recently I jumped aboard for a boat that's been around for a

while but has been updated to cater for the diehards who love to tangle with angry fish.

Most would have heard of Sailfish aluminium catamarans, custom-built at Alstonville on the NSW North Coast. With their huge cockpits and angler-friendly inclusions, these seagoing multihulls have won a place in the hearts of anglers.

With 75mm wider sponsons and a longer spray chine, the new Gamefisher Series boasts a heap of new features that make catching big fish very ergonomic.

First and foremost is the safety aspect. Sealed, foam-

filled hulls ensure the boat falls well within flotation guidelines. A self-draining cockpit and twin motors give a feeling of security when ploughing through the rough stuff out of sight of land.

High padded gunwales keep the sea on the outside and the huge tunnel up forward just loves the sea right on the nose.

Up forward there's a short bowsprit and a huge anchor well for holding a mile of warp. A smoked polycarbonate hatch throws light into the small, storage-only cuddy. Huge wrap-around split bow rails are great for holding onto,



The twin Honda 135s provide excellent power and frugal fuel consumption.



The Sailfish 2400 Gamefisher comes complete with wide-screen Furuno electronics.

especially when manoeuvring at the wharf.

For spotting fish, there's a ladder from the bow onto the hardtop, a great place to stand and look for those tell-tale signs of bird activity.

For those who want to reach the bow via the cockpit, a narrow non-skid walkway with grab rails on either side of the hardtop makes for a precarious trip in bumpy seas.

The upholstered Reclax seats give a comfortable ride in the roomy wheelhouse. GPS and sounders are easy to read and there's heaps of room to add radar or any other electronic trinket.

In the hardtop ceiling is the VHF radio and AM/FM CD player with speakers. Lighting is via LEDs and there's a small glovebox for passenger and skipper to store personal items. The dual binnacle engine controls have thumb-controlled trim/tilt switches and are set at the right height for ease of operation.

Forward vision is limited by the top of the windscreen, the split bow rail and the ladder. I found I had to move my head a fair bit when in enclosed waters to ensure we had clear passage. To complete the comfort feel, a pad and a rail support feet when sitting in the helm chair.

Both seats have slide-out tackle systems with removable boxes below.

BAIT STATION

The whole cockpit is carpeted, as is the lockable cuddy and even the dash.

Anglers will appreciate the centre bait station, which includes a cutting and rigging table, raw water tap, lure locker, storage hatch, knife holder, kill tank and a rear-facing game seat with rod gimbal.

A unique tube that empties between the sponsons allows dumping cubes direct from the cutting board and delivers the berley underwater, well away from prowling sea birds. Smallish side pockets run under the coamings.

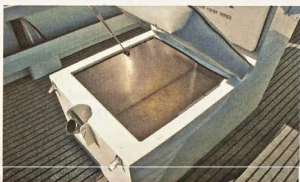
I did like the recessed grab rail that runs around the top of the gunwales and there are more rails around the hard top and near the transom.

Under the walk-out rear platform is a large scupper to remove water quickly. On the starboard quarter, fitted onto an expandable hose, is the deck wash powered by its own pump.

Two fully plumbed live bait wells are set into the

transom, each capable of holding around half a dozen slimy mackerel. On top of the coamings are three flush-mounted, aluminium rod holders per side and the filler for each 180L underfloor fuel tank.

Rod holders are supplied on the rear rail and a shotgun lure can be trailed from the rocket launcher on the hardtop. Reclax game poles are a must on any thoroughbred game



Under the mini-game chair is a large, drained kill tank.



A raw water wash is provided on the centre bait and cutting table.

THAT WAS THEN...

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SPECIFICATIONS

Length Overall	7.5m
Construction	Aluminium
Bottom plate	5mm
Side plate	3mm
Buoyancy	Basic Flotation
Fuel Capacity	2 x 180L

Standard Inclusions: Rear dive ladder; transom door; lock-up cabin door; stainless props; hydraulic steering; nav lights; LED cabin lights; LED under-gunwale lights; VHF radio; AM/FM CD player; Furuno 585 sounder with 1kw transducer; Furuno 7000 GPS; deck wash; 2 x plumbed livewells; berley bucket and chopper; gaff rack; tackle storage system under seats; Reelax outriggers; centre bait station with saltwater tap, berley tube, kill tank, lure locker, mini game chair, storage hatch

Price as tested including 2 x 135hp Honda outboards, custom dual-axle aluminium trailer with 14" mag wheels, hydraulic disc brakes, LED lights, breakaway brake system and two outrigger storage tubes, all regos and safety gear: \$139,990.

Boat supplied by Webbe Marine, 27 Marshall Road, Kirrawee, NSW 2232. Ph 02 9521 7944 Fax 02 9542 1287. Email: webbmarine@bigpond.com, website: www.webbmarine.com.au

boat and the Sailfish has removable poles with storage tubes on the trailer.

Two Halogen floodlights bathe the deck in bright light for night sorties. Under each gunwale is a strip of LED lights which throw a softer glow.

Pushing us along were two 135HP Honda four strokes armed with 17" four-blade props to give better traction in the disturbed water created by the sponsors.

WIND WARNING

With Webbe Marine boss Gavin Daly as my companion for the day, we set off from St George Motor Boat Club. There was a strong wind warning with 20 to 30-knot sou'-easterlies and when we hit the bay, it was a mass of whitewater.

Just a touch more on the throttles eased the boat over the top of the chop and she just loved it right on the nose.



Left: One of the two plumbed live bait wells in the transom, which will hold at least six slimy mackerel each.



Right: The Sailfish 2400 Gamefisher is a big, safe, seaworthy offshore fisher with plenty of creature comforts and fishing features.

The huge hull cushioned out the bumps and even with my bad back, I chose to sit for the ride.

Being high sided, the Sailfish picks up the wind and a touch of into-weather motor throttle was needed to keep us on track with the wind and sea on the beam. I felt this was one very safe boat that relished the rough stuff.

Hard turns, full reverse and flat out, the boat asked for more, which means there's a large safety margin. High gunwales allow the angler fishing a short-stroker rod to lock his knees in without the feeling of being tipped overboard.

With the longer spray chines, there was no water intrusion into the cockpit under way. With one motor up, the Sailfish still managed over 20 knots on one engine, a very

significant safety factor.

Each Sailfish has its own custom-built tandem trailer with stainless brake callipers, LED lights, hydraulic disc brakes, 14" alloy wheels and

bronze, rubberised suspension system. There's a breakaway electric braking system, ideal for those extended road trips up and down the coast in search of pelagics.

Going out wide is not for everyone but for those who do it, it's very addictive and the Sailfish Gamefisher 2400 will be with you every inch of the way.



There's plenty of room in the cockpit, which has the large central bait station as a focal point.