



Off the Trailer

Back on the bite

Yellowfin boats are back, and striking fear into a whole new generation of fish...

Back then, it was the Rolls Royce of plate alloy boats – it was built like the proverbial brick outhouse...



Good things come to those who wait' – that's a phrase many might have been saying in the late '70s when the Yellowfin boats arrived on the market. Back then, it was the Rolls Royce of plate alloy boats – it was built like the proverbial brick outhouse and, while basic, it had all of the practical assets for serious anglers. The old models are still out there. Perhaps their make up or powerplants have changed, but they seem to live on forever, the pride of their owners.

In 1981, Bob Caruthers sold the Yellowfin name and design to one of the directors of the Telwater Group, which continued to manufacture

the Yellowfin boats for nearly a decade until changes in the specialised plate boat market and family boating designs (read: bow riders) saw the Yellowfin name shelved (but not forgotten). Now, almost two decades later, they have re-emerged – and they have the potential to be as popular as their predecessors.

Three new-school Yellowfin models have been launched – 5.7m, 6.2m and 6.7m – and each is available in both cabin and centre console designs. The entire range is constructed of 5mm plate bottoms, 4mm plate sides, with an internal sub-frame rib structure supporting a tread plate deck.

Ostensibly, the transom design is the common denominator across all three. A starboard-side transom walk-through opening is fitted with a door that hinges down onto the deck. This is innovative in that it keeps the aperture width to a minimum, so as not to encroach on other installations under the transom bulkhead, while providing easy thoroughfare.

Mid-bulkhead, the cranking battery is installed on a raised shelf, along with the oil reservoir for the big Mercury OptiMax engine. You will find the battery isolator switch here, too, while under the shelf, the house battery is installed in a plastic

battery box. The fuel filter is also installed in this lower section.

The remaining section of the transom bulkhead has a flush-fit fascia behind – here you'll find a 65lt live bait tank, with access via the aft edge of the upper bulkhead under a tinted Perspex hatch.

Sitting on top of the bulkhead, you'll find a bolted, but easily removed, bait rigging table. Over the aft end, the full-width platform houses a berley munching pot in the port side – handy to the live bait tank where all the smelly stuff may be stowed. In the starboard corner, a drop-down

By Mark Meyers



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Above: A 100lt icebox stows neatly below the practical double-seat system on the centre console.

boarding ladder lines up with the walk-through transom door.

The decks on these boats are self-draining into a 75mm-deep gutter running abeam at its aft extremity, which should catch all the rubbish on deck and then funnel it into tubes that lead to scuppers with a floating ball in a tapered neck system. On our test boat, this seemed to work flawlessly.

Also standard on the three models is a 135lt kill tank, fitted midships in the aft end of the deck. It has a clever hinge system that will take a lot of abuse from above and drains via the transom.

The Yellowfins feature some of the biggest side pockets in the business. They're deep and wide, but still don't protrude beyond the massively wide overhanging coamings, which start wide forward and taper slightly toward the stern. These are great seating areas when fishing in calm waters, but they also allow for some serious installations of downriggers, gunwale-mounted outriggers and the like. Such expansive topsides also offer the best in rigidity. Continuing on the 'big, robust and solid' theme, all hand and bow rails are formed from 32mm tubing, so these boats look the part too – rugged!

As you move forward in the centre console models you will find a practical double-seat system that acts as a bum rest when standing and also has a short back rest for when you need to get off your feet.

The aft end of this module has a flat ledge on which four rods may be stowed. Also, a grab rail is handy for passengers standing behind the skipper when underway. The aft fascia has an aperture leading into stowage and a padded brow for observers to lean against while trolling lures and baits. The two posts supporting this module have a sliding pin lock system, so the superstructure may be raised or lowered to accommodate a range of heights. A 100lt ice box slides comfortably under the top section and may be strapped in place.

The cabin models feature seat base modules with stowage and a cabin with a good head height when seated on the low 1.8m long berths. There is shallow stowage underneath and the bottom of these compartments is on the same plane as the outer deck.

In contrast, the centre console modules have a beamy helm station with plenty of stowage, while forward, a short raised deck with hatches accesses



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shallow stowage for safety gear. These boats have a lot of standard features you’d only find as optional extras on many other brands.

Our test ride took us offshore and into absolutely sloppy conditions courtesy of a strong wind warning. The boats showed, beyond a doubt the Yellowfin reputation is alive and kicking, providing one of the softest rides for a plate boat and remaining unusually dry – even with 15 knots of wind on the forequarters. These were conditions that normally would have you looking for a diving mask when travelling in centre consoles, yet as far as a dousing goes, it just didn’t happen.

Stability on the drift while fishing is as good as it gets for this size of boat, and the scupper system works a treat – even when going astern into big seas chasing fish.

With the 6700 series powered by 200hp Mercury OptiMax engines and the 6200s by OptiMax 175 outboards, there is power to burn and then some.

Overall, this is a good, balanced range of boats built to tough it out at the hands of those who



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want to push towards the horizon with both their fishing and their boating.

These new 'Fins are only now finding their way into dealers' yards, so pricing has yet to be finalised. We spoke to JV Marine World in Melbourne (www.jvmarine.com) and we were advised that pricing will be in the vicinity of \$75,999 for the 6700 cabin and \$76,900 for the centre console version, while the 6200 will be around \$65,600 for the centre console and \$64,800 for the cabin version.

If the 5700 is to your liking, the centre console comes in at around \$59,900, while the cabin version is around \$53,990. JV Marine is a sole Suzuki dealer, so with these engines at the premium end of the price range, expect to see some big price fluctuations from different dealers.

How this stacks up against similar styles of boats is interesting, and, of course, prices will vary from dealer to dealer and state to state, depending on freight charges. It appears that pricing will be a couple of thousand dollars down



on similar base models from competitors, and while those base models have no optional extras, the Yellowfins have quite a few that are part of the standard package. This is where the 'Fins might just break away from the rest of the school!

For more information, visit: www.yellowfinboats.com.au. 

Opposite page top: Yellowfins offer ample storage facilities for both bait and catch.

Above: The 6700 version's 200hp Mercury OptiMax engine offers power to burn.

Left: Neat and clean instrumentation is a feature of the Yellowfin range.