

the functionality of the bow rider – particularly for photography purposes, being able to move freely about the boat. We had an eye on the 6.0m 585 Sport – but that had not yet been developed as a bow rider – watch this space... So the only other model in the range was the Bonito 570 BR, which looking at and crawling over the 570 cabin version, the 570 seemed to have good a volume cockpit and it would be easily moved about the country to shows and events over the year, and who knows – as the 6 metre is developed we could step up to that after our photo boat period with Smuggler.

The now Smuggler 570BR has come a long way from the original Scott Robson designed Bonito 522, having been developed and enhanced over the years in cosmetics, usability and functionality. It has also been improved structurally, with the additions of the rear pods on the transom along with other hull improvements, giving the boat a smoother and dryer ride.

After the 522, with various changes by previous Bonito owner Peter Johnson, it was renamed the 535, and now with the latest Smuggler touches it becomes the 570BR. Right through the evolution the construction has remained more or less the same; there is a moulded floor section that runs chine to chine and part way up the side of the hull, as with most of the Bonito range. The build process still incorporates a plywood cockpit sole, with the fibreglass liner sitting on top, rather than replacing it altogether, as is

common with some other manufacturers.

“This hull has been a very popular model in the past and there is no reason why it should not continue to be so.” says Dave Pringle, MD of Smuggler Boats. “In fact, we have just developed and released the new Smuggler 570 Multi-Sport – a centre console model based on the 570 hull, released at the recent Hutchwilco NZ Boat Show last month, where it drew a great deal of interest – especially after taking out the ‘2010 Under 6 meter GRP Fishing Boat of the Show Award’.

We (Propeller magazine) took possession of our Smuggler 570BR in April and have already managed to show her off at a few outings. Given Smuggler’s well established

partnership with BRP, the manufacturer and distributor of Evinrude E-TEC outboards, we decided to run with Evinrude E-TEC this year on our photo boat, and because we could, we decided to run at the high end of the recommended power range, fitting her with a 150hp Evinrude E-TEC. When Dave Pringle (who is very much a petrol head himself) handed me over the keys – he commented while shaking his head – treat her with respect, suggesting that only those with some boating experience should be let loose with her. Our first trip out certainly proved thrilling and brought a true appreciation of Dave’s words. The power from the Evinrude 150hp E-TEC was exhilarating –



*There is plenty of seating for the whole crew*