

TRAILERBOAT TRIALS

By Sam Mossman

Smuggler Multisport 570

NEW ZEALAND
fishing
news



David Pringle has a 30-year history in the boat-building industry.

He served his apprenticeship with Salthouse Brothers at Greenhithe, Auckland, and built custom boats for many years. The business slowly grew into David Pringle Boat Builders, and his wife Pauline joined full-time in 2002. Next, they bought the moulds of the original Smuggler hulls and set up Smuggler Marine in 2004, operating out of a 929m² purpose-built facility in Henderson, West Auckland. There, six staff members produce 26 high-quality hulls per year.

Smuggler Marine's range now includes Strata rigid inflatables, as well

as the well-known Bonito hulls, the moulds for which were purchased in mid 2009. One of these was the Bonito 535, a Scott Robson design, 5.7m in overall length. With an all-new topside design on this hull, Smuggler Marine has produced the Smuggler Multisport 570, a centre-console fun boat that has a lot of application to fishing. This good-looking rig took my eye, as well as those of the judges, at the recent Hutchwilco NZ Boat Show in Auckland, where it won the the 'GRP Fishing Boat Under 6m' award.

Construction

The hull has five layers of chop-

strand and two layers of 8/10 tri-axial glass. A Coremat sandwich is incorporated into the topsides. The design parameters call for a bottom thickness in excess of 5.6mm; in practice it is normally 6mm. Construction includes four full-length bearers and a fully-glassed ply and resin sole. The internal liner is made in four pieces, and a full-length brass rubbing strip is standard for keel protection.

The hull is CPC-compliant, meeting the construction code administered by the Marine Industry Association (MIA) and endorsed by New Zealand Coastguard. It also meets CE standards for boats to be

exported to EU countries. Smuggler Marine offers a five-year structural hull warranty and supplied a reserve buoyancy figure of 437kg.

The level of finish is excellent and the makers have gone to a lot of effort to source high-quality fittings and materials. The through-gunwale rod-holders, for example, are cast stainless steel, lighting is LED, and the seating uses Dripore, a closed-cell foam which, although more expensive than standard types, does not soak up water.

Power and performance

The Multisport 570 is rated for 90-150hp and the test boat was fitted with an Evinrude E-TEC 115hp spinning a 17-inch pitch Viper propeller. Fuel is supplied from a 120-litre underfloor tank.

Test day was a beautiful calm morning on the Waitemata Harbour. At 6200rpm the rig achieved a top-end speed of 68kph (36.5 knots). This is revving slightly higher than the specs recommend (6000rpm), so a slightly coarser prop is indicated, which would probably give just a little more speed at the top end; not that you need it.

The centre-console was a pleasure



A hatched anchor locker is built into the bow.



Squabs incorporate closed-cell foam which does not soak up water.



A tall polycarbonate screen shelters the helm from wind-rush.



The seat forward of the console doubles as an insulated ice bin.

to helm, with Ultraflex hydraulic steering making life easy. What was difficult was finding any sort of sea in which to test the rough-water performance of the hull. We eventually had to resort to running across the wakes of passing ships. This provided indications that the 570 Multisport handles a chop very well, the 21° deadrise, cutting through the water softly. And despite such a substantial deadrise, this is a remarkably stable hull, compliments of three strakes per side and a down-turned, stepped chine. This, added to a well-balanced hull giving a good bow attitude, makes for a dry-ride – an important attribute in a centre-console layout.

Anchoring

Bow access is easy with a centre-console layout. As an all-rounder, the Multisport sacrifices a little anchor access by fitting seating in the bow. An anchor well is moulded into the forepeak, and there is another warp-storage option under the bow seat. A James Nilsson Sea Winch capstan is mounted in the bow, and a pop-up cleat is fitted for tie-off duty. The capstan is controlled by a foot-switch, which is set under the starboard bow squab, making it a little tricky for one man to operate and feed the warp into the anchor well at the same time. Also, the one-piece bowrail is somewhat low, preventing a decent-sized anchor being passed beneath it.

However, the system is fine for casual anchoring, and as a mostly coastal sport boat with fishing applications that favour drifting and casting, this may be all that is necessary most of the time. A rethink of the capstan control switch position and

a change to a split bow rail would improve matters for those with more serious anchoring requirements.

Layout

Considerable effort has gone into providing stowage space in this centre-console's layout, including under the bow seats, and in an under-deck hold in the bow, while the comfortable seat forward of the console has internal stowage and is foam-insulated to form an ice box.

The console itself is a double-width model, topped by a tall polycarbonate screen fitted with handrails, giving protection from wind-rush while providing a large dry-stowage locker. Besides the usual gauges and switches, an Eagle 640c sounder/GPS and a Cobra Marine DSC VHF radio had been flush-mounted, and two Tallon mounts take a variety of fittings – in this case cup/bottle holders. The console is also used to mount an optional and classy-looking lined fibreglass bimini top that provides a bit of shade during the hot parts of the day. It is possible to remove the top for storage by undoing 16 heavy screws.

Behind the console is a large and comfortable bench seat with a big internal stowage space. This has a rolled backrest which can be tilted back or forwards, depending on the direction you are facing. If more open space is required, undoing four screws allows the whole unit to be removed, leaving an open cockpit. There's more under-deck stowage space – lined and bung-drained – near the stern. Side insets have rod and pole racks built in, and the gunwale tops are nicely finished



The stern bench seat is removable and has a reversible back rest.



Gunwales have padded panels and attractive teak covering boards.

with teak covering boards. Nautilux vinyl covering gives non-skid decks. The decks and hold drain to a sump under the transom, fitted with an 1100gph bilge pump.

In the stern corners are removable fibreglass bench seats, which feature

padded tops and backs. One backrest hinges down to disclose a small locker; on the other side a small sink is inset into the transom top, serviced by a wash-down hose. Over the stern are two modest boarding platforms, both fitted with teak strips and grab



The stern bench seat is removable and has a reversible back rest.



Gunwales have padded panels and attractive teak covering boards.



Stern seats, tank rack and bait station are all removable.

rails, and one sporting a fold-down boarding ladder. Pop-up cleats are also utilised in the stern corners.

All the wiring is run under the deck, out of the way. The battery is in a protective box, at deck level, under the transom. Having the battery in a protected position is a pet niggle of mine; having once been in a boat that was swamped, drowning its badly positioned battery and removing bilge-pump, engine and radio communications at a stroke. Dave Pringle assured me that the battery can be mounted inside the console if required.

Smuggler has gone with LED lighting, citing low power usage and low heat output as significant advantages over other types. A red light option is built in to avoid affecting night vision, and low-level lights are fitted in the side liners for night fishing.

Smuggler, by dint of careful design, has managed to fit a lot of stowage into this boat without intruding too much into the working space.

Fishability

With the non-skid Nautilux decking giving good footing and a nice

stable hull, the basics of a good fishing platform are there. The cockpit section offers padded gunwale faces to lean on as well as toe room, giving comfort and enabling good balance to be kept.

One of the big advantages of the centre-console layout is that the bow section of the boat is opened up to fishing. This has been a little compromised by fitting extra seating in the bow, rather than a casting platform (which would also have improved anchoring access), but this boat is a 'Multisport' after all, and the bow certainly remains a viable fishing spot.

Hard-core anglers who do a lot of casting, such as those into soft-plastic fishing, poppers or fly-casting, may well skip the optional hard-top, allowing a lot more casting room, as well as more space around the console sides. Anglers also have the option of removing the seats from the stern corners and the big, optional bench seat behind the console (swivelling pedestal seat/s are an option), opening up considerable working space for casting and general fishing.

Smuggler Multisport 570

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Removing stern and bench seats, tank rack and bait platform opens up the cockpit for those who want more workspace. (Photo: Smuggler Marine)

The centre-console configuration opens up the bow as a viable fishing position. (Photo: Geoff Muir)



Three cast stainless-steel rod-holders are fitted along each gunwale, and the six-position rocket launcher on the hardtop hinges down to lower the storage height a little. The removable bait-station on the transom provides an additional four rodholders and will also carry a couple of drinks. A plumbed live-bait tank is built into the boarding platform and, as mentioned, the insulated box built into the seat forward of the console (or the under-deck holds) can be used to store the catch. Divers are catered for by boarding platforms,

ladder and grab rails; Tallon fittings on the transom allow upright stowage of two dive tanks.

There are plenty of fit-out options offered for anglers, and by making appropriate choices the Multisport can be configured to suit most.

Trailing

The trailer supplied with this hull is a DMW 500 Series galvanised steel cradle A-frame design, with a single axle and leaf-spring suspension. There are five pairs of wobble rollers per side, a wind-down jockey

wheel, submersible LED lights and a manual winch. Tow weight for the rig is 1200kg.

All in all

There is a lot packed into the 5.7m of the Smuggler Multisport 570. It travels well, and the level of finish and quality of components are superb, making it a real attention-grabber wherever it goes. If you're a fan of fibreglass hulls and looking for a neat all-round sport boat with a strong fishing bent, this may well be the boat for you. 

Specifications

Material:	fibreglass
Configuration:	centre console
LOA:	5.70m
Beam:	2.24m
Bottom:	5.6mm
Deadrise:	21°
Recommended HP:	90-150hp
Test engine:	Evinrude E-TEC 115hp
Prop:	17" Pitch Viper
Fuel capacity:	120 litres
Trailer:	DMW 500 Series
Tow weight:	1200kg approx
Price as tested:	\$69,750
Packages from:	\$49,700
Test boat courtesy of Smuggler Marine.	

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