

Smuggler 670 Kingfisher



TEXT & PHOTOS BY BARRY THOMPSON

Improving

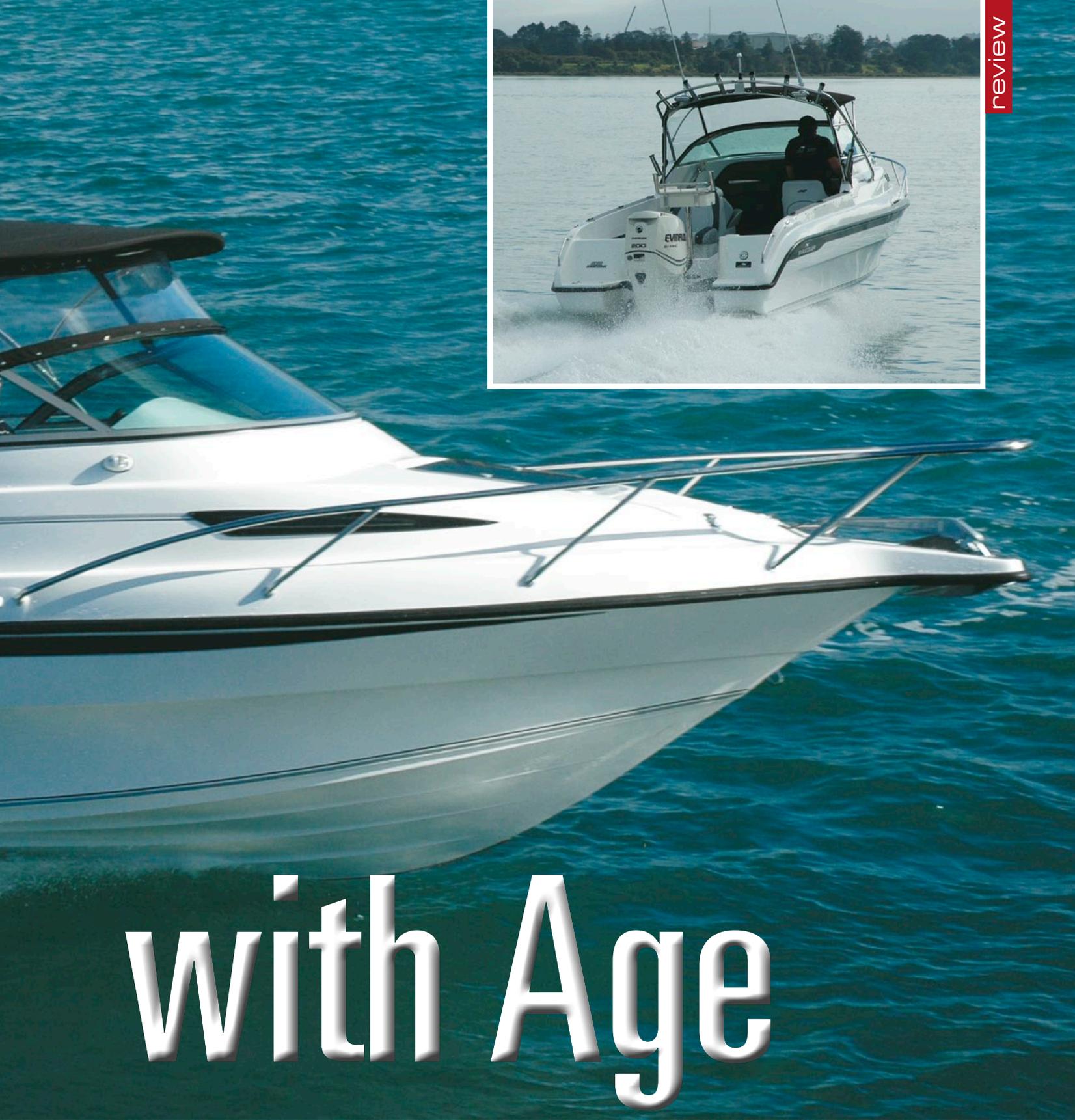
CLASSIC LINES, OUTSTANDING HULL AND DESIGNED WITH FISHERMAN IN MIND.

SMUGGLER MARINE'S KINGFISHER 670 HAS ALL THE HALLMARKS OF BECOMING AN ICONIC MODEL FOR THIS FAST GROWING BRAND AND COMES WITH A HISTORY THAT ENFORCES IT'S CREDENTIALS AS AN EXCEPTIONAL PERFORMER.

When David Pringle of Smuggler Marine took ownership of all the Bonito moulds and branding he set himself a task over a number of years to reintroduce each of the boats with a few changes, but more importantly to eventually totally phase out the Bonito name, which he did in 2010.

The Smuggler 670 was in its previous life an extremely popular model for Bonito Boats and sold as a no frills, serious fishing boat. While the same certainly applies for the new Smuggler Kingfisher 670, there are also quite a number of significant changes that have completely restyled the look of the boat and also made the handling and performance even better.

The most radical change has been to the foredeck area which



with Age

is completely new. Smuggler Marine sliced off the forward 1m of the hull mould and redesigning the cabin line and forepeak areas to more resemble the Smuggler lineage.

You can now fit an auto rope/chain windlass with self-launching anchor, so there is no need to go forward during anchoring duties. The anchor locker has also been enlarged to take more than enough tackle.

"We wanted to not only give the boat a new and more modern look, we wanted to make it look like it was part of the Smuggler family", said David.

The foredeck now tapers all the way to the bow and there is a moulded anchor pushpit, rather than a plumb cabin top line and bolt on timber pulpit. The cabin window line has also been softened and the bow rails have been raised and

carried further aft. There is a better symmetry now and the rakish lines certainly give the 'new' 670 Kingfisher more balanced proportions.

Dry and Slippery

The earlier hulls had a reputation as being a little wet due to the steep sheer and needed a lot of trim to get the nose to lift, especially if you had a light weight outboard on the transom or too much weight forward. In the 670 Kingfisher the 200 litre underfloor alloy tank has been moved from the forward end to the aft end of the cockpit to achieve a better overall balance and it is certainly noticeable. Even when fitted with one of the heavier 4 stroke six cylinder outboards, the position of the fuel tank remains unchanged.

INSET: THE EVIRUDE E-TEC 200 IS A PERFECT MATCH.



TOP: THE COCKPIT OFFERS NEARLY 4SQM OF WORKABLE SPACE.

RIGHT: THE CABIN HAS A HEAD, INFILL FOR THE SQUABS AND 1.9M LONG BERTHS FOR THOSE THAT LIKE OVERNIGHTING.

Gone is the tendency to flick spray over the foredeck. If you trim it right this is a very dry boat. Tabs are standard and used in conjunction with the engine trim you can get the boat to plane very easily and maintain it at low speed. Acceleration from holeshot to WOT is very quick and the hull leaps onto the plane with very little bow lift.

Before throwing the 670 into seriously tight turns at speed, warn your passengers. Failure to do so could result in damage to them or the parts of the boat they fall against! The 21° deep V hull has wide double chines and grips hard no matter what you do with it. In my mind this is still one of the best performing hulls for its size on the market.

Whilst our test day was mirror smooth without so much as a ripple, I know enough about the hull to give it a 10 out of

10 pass for moderate to rough water handling. It's the sort of hull that you feel safe in.

Our 2.6 litre Evinrude ETEC 200 gave the boat a top speed of 39.1 knots straight out of the box. Our test was the first time the engine had actually been wet so it was still a little tight. No doubt when it frees up there is a little more speed to be found. Maximum rpm was 5350, swinging an 18" Viper stainless prop.

Expect around 35 knots with a 150hp outboard and around 45 knots with a 250hp.

Workable Cockpit

When you first step aboard the 670 Kingfisher you can't help but be impressed by the size of the cockpit, something that





the previous builder emphasised in marketing the boat. After all, this boat was originally designed for day fishing, with some overnight concessions, and that has never changed. Given that there is almost 4sqm of workable cockpit space, the builders have certainly not forgotten that not everyone wants to go fishing and may want to use the boat as an overnighter.

No problem. The cabin features two separate 1.9m berths with a couple of infill squabs to turn the entire cabin into one very large double bed. There is an electric head under the forward squab and the new 670 Kingfisher has higher and plusher foam and fabric backrests. A Cule overhead hatch allows for a little cross flow ventilation.

There is a natural flow between the cabin and cockpit with only the starboard side carrying a bulkhead to the sole. The passenger side is left open, although if you like the idea of a lock up cabin then this can be provided.

To starboard is the split-level helm, complete with a Lowrance HDS7 MFD screen, icommander ETEC instruments, Cobra VHF, Aquatech switch panels and controls for the Lenco tabs and auto anchor. The angle of the upper dash where the twin engine-monitoring gauges are makes them hard to read if you are seated to drive, although the same could not be said for the sounder, which was perfectly placed. For the more serious fisherman you could squeeze in a 12in display screen by repositioning things on the fascia. Christchurch based SeaThru is responsible for the three-piece acrylic windscreen, which is surrounded by a very robust and practical extrusion and a wraparound handrail. A hardtop option is due for release shortly, with our test boat carrying a custom built Manta fold down stainless steel bimini with rocket launcher. The side and front clears are easily removed if you want to feel the fresh air passing through, or you can leave them in place for full protection.

Seating Variants

The standard seating layout is a passenger side king/queen and a single pedestal helm on a Softrider pedestal base. Plus you get a padded bin seat either side of the engine well and



if you drop in another larger removable bin seat you have seating for six. I liked the fact that you could leave the three bin seats at home and have maximum space for fishing. There is also the option of twin king queen back-to-backs or twin pedestals. The choice is yours. A benefit of the back-to-backs is huge dry storage lockers underneath. There is also the option of having a small water tank, stove and sink unit built into the starboard back-to-back. The 670 comes complete with handy storage shelves for things like keys and mobile phones and there are full-length side trays with rod holders. The exceptionally large wet locker forward in the cockpit sole will handle everything from dive gear to the catch of the day. There's also a fish bin in the portofino that can also be plumbed as a live bait tank.

Another change that has been made is the addition of cockpit sideliners, which brings the boat up to the standard construction specs and finish of other Smugglers. A fibreglass liner is glued over an epoxy resin-coated plywood sole and all open voids under the floor and sealed buoyancy compartments that allow the Smuggler 670 to pass the

TOP LEFT: STORAGE UNDER THE KING/QUEEN SEATS IS PLENTIFUL.

TOP: THE REAR BIN SEATS ARE REMOVEABLE AND THERE IS SOME EXTRA STORAGE BEHIND.



LEFT: MANTA'S NEW BAIT STATION COMES COMPLETE WITH ITS OWN TACKLE LOCKER.



RIGHT: THE FORDECK AREA IS ALL NEW WITH A BUILT IN PULPIT AND HIDDEN WINCH.



stringent CPS flotation rating. Nautilex flooring is standard but you have the option of clip-on carpet. Fishermen will like the six rod holders mounted in the coamings, plus two trolling rod holders as well as a further six across the rocket launcher above. Divers will find the height of the coamings and wide side decks easy for access

over the side and getting back aboard is by way of a folding telescopic ladder.

I was very impressed with the ease in which the Kingfisher 670 came on and off the DMW Premier trailer. Best thing is you don't need a lot of water to launch the boat with the low profile trailer design.

Good Buy

The Smuggler Kingfisher 670 has been designed and presented as a no-nonsense fishing/diving boat that while maybe lacking some of the 'flashier' bits from other Smugglers in the range, lacks none of the quality. It is built for a purpose and I reckon that David and his team have cracked it. It's a sweet boat that performs and for under \$NZ100,000 it's very reasonable buying.

"We have people say our big boat range is too prissy for serious fisherman and divers, so we needed to be able to offer a boat that fitted right into that 'blokes boat' scenario and I reckon we have delivered just that with the 670", David concluded.

PPB

Smuggler Kingfisher 670

Model: Smuggler Kingfisher 670
Priced from: \$NZ74,000
Price as tested: \$NZ96,500
Type: Cabin
Construction: GRP
LOA: 6.90m
Beam: 2.4m
Deadrise: 21°
Trailerable weight: 1700 kg (dry)
Power: Outboard Only
Power options: 150-250hp
Fuel capacity: 200 Litres

Performance			
rpm	knots	L/h	L/NM
1000	3.9	2.2	0.56
1500	5.2	5.6	1.07
2000	7.4	12.7	1.72
2500	12.6	16.0	1.27
3000	17.4	20.3	1.17
3500	23.4	25.2	1.07
4000	28.7	33.0	1.15
4500	33.4	46.6	1.39
5000	36.9	62.1	1.68
5350	39.1	69.0	1.77

Engine
Make: Evinrude ETEC
Power: 200hp
Model: ETEC
Cyl. Config: 60° V6
Displ.: 2.6 litres
Max rpm: 5500
Propeller: 18" Viper
Retail Price: \$ NZ28,000

Trailer
Make: DMW Premier
Braked: S/S
Suspension: Springs
Rollers: Multiroller
Std Equipment: LED submersible lights, Trojan webbing winch

Notable Standard Items on Test Boat
 Five year hull warranty, non-skid coamings, brass keel strip, hydraulic steering, bilge pump, Lenco trim tabs, CPC rated

Notable Options on Test Boat
 Simpson Lawrence V3000 winch, Manson 15lb, saltwater wash down, Manta bait station, Cobra VHF, Manta Marine Bimini, Etec 200hp, Lowrance HDS7 GPS, Live bait tank, twin batteries with VSR

Manufacturer: Smuggler Marine, Ph +64 9 838 9024, E: david@smuggler.co.nz W: www.smuggler.co.nz
 Boat Supplied by: Smuggler Marine

ad