



Sleep-over SUCCESS

A classic kiwi trailerboat is reborn thanks to an extended hull and a clever interior.

Words **Sam Stewart** Photos **Will Calver**

At a glance loa x beam 6.2m x 2.45m cruise speed 26 knots max speed 43 knots engine power options 115-200hp outboard price (as tested) \$83,500

New Boats tested



Scallops for breakfast, mussels for lunch and fish for dinner. If food is the way to a man's heart, then the Smuggler 620 Sport is bound to tug some heartstrings.

This 6.2-metre runabout has been designed to make the most of those unforgettable summer days when sunnies and sun-cream are a must and sea creatures queue for a look inside the boat – days when calling it quits and heading for the boat ramp scrum seem like sacrilege.

For those trailer boaties keen to maximise their time on the water, the 620 has the ability to house two adults for the night while providing all the amenities necessary to catch, cook and process anything hauled from the briny.

But let's start at the beginning. Some keen hull-spotters may recognise the 620, originally launched in 1996 as the Bonito 585. More than 600 of the Scott Robson-designed boats were sold throughout New Zealand before Smuggler bought the moulds in 2009 and created their version, the Smuggler Profisher 600.

Since then the West Auckland boatbuilders have worked with Robson to lengthen the hull by 200mm, and incorporate all the creature comforts needed for an overnighter.

"People expect more now than they did 15 years ago," says Smuggler Marine managing director David Pringle. "They expect to be able to overnight and we've provided for that with a sink, water tank, stove, toilet and remote anchor winch."

Big is better

The lengthened hull also means Smuggler has been able to provide a cockpit almost one square-metre larger than the boat's predecessor, and with the outboard mounted on a pod, the flush transom means there is 600mm more length in the cockpit too. Extra space turns it into a mixed-use area with the size and space needed for a

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Test conditions Slight sea, five-knot breeze



"Stopping the 620 from getting on the plane is harder than getting an untrained dog to heel."

comfortable fishing and diving set-up, but with enough seating to keep most families happy.

Bums on seats, the 620 has capacity for five people: driver on a pedestal, king and queen arrangement to port and two people on top of a cushioned fish bin that slides up against the transom. Although the transom is cushioned, the large fish bin stands quite tall so passengers seated on top don't have the luxury of leaning too far back. A couple of people could happily park in the cabin too, but more about that later in the story.

When it's time to go hunting, the fish bin can be moved forward and the cockpit is then freed up for four anglers to comfortably chuck a line over.

Gunwales are at comfortable height for fishing and divers will find it easy to sit on top of them before rolling into the water. Retrieving water toys over the side won't be an effort either.

Clambering out of the water is easy thanks to a swim ladder and a nifty pull-out piece of transom that creates a walk-through.

The reworked transom means the

underfloor fuel tank has been moved aft and its capacity stretched to a useful 200 litres. Smuggler's standard underfloor stowage compartment – big enough for three dive tanks – is also present.

Two sealed batteries sit behind the transom's pull-off cover but stowage for anything else would best fit in the full-length cockpit side pockets or fish bin.

Dinner for two

The most interesting feature of the cockpit is its ability to become a makeshift galley. While most king and queen seating units

double as a place for stowage, this one houses a sink, single-burner cooker and bench space.

The first mate's seat lifts off to reveal the sink and burner which is powered by a 2kg LPG bottle mounted under the console. A 55-litre water bladder and pump feed the sink.

When the aft seat is folded out it presents a surface that can be used as a kitchen bench, perfect for preparing and serving anything that will accompany whatever delicacies are sizzling away in the pan.



Performance data
Speed and fuel as tested

Lowrance GPS, E-Tec electronic fuel flow

RPM	speed (knots)	fuel (l/ph)
1500	7.1	5
2000	8.3	11
2500	13	16
3000	21	20
3500	26	26
4000	33	33
4500	36.5	47
5000	40.1	59
5300	43	60



When it comes time to retire with a tummy full of fresh seafood, the comfy cabin has enough space for two. Anyone six-foot (1.86m) tall will be able to stretch out on the port side where the cabin extends slightly further aft, while a shorter counterpart will fit to starboard.

Although the cabin is an open arrangement, there is a canvas cover that encloses the back of the boat, shutting out the elements.

Any contributions to the cabin's head need to be made more than 500m offshore as there's no holding tank, and you'd want to make them long before bedtime for obvious reasons.

It should also be noted the mirror featured in this boat's cabin isn't standard, but it's not a bad accessory.

On the run

After a night at anchor, your day can start without any boat ramp niggles. Simply let the windlass pull up the pick and then you can head for the hunting grounds, or the next picturesque anchorage.

Fitted with a 150hp two-stroke Evinrude E-Tec DI and 18-inch three-blade prop, stopping the 620 from getting on the plane is harder than getting an untrained dog to heel at the beach. Three planing strakes shove the 620



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Smuggler 620 Sport

technical



PROS

- z suitable for overnighting
- z functional cockpit
- z spacious cabin

CONS

- z limited back support on transom seat
- z no side decks



OUR VERDICT

Smuggler Marine wanted to create a trailer boat with a difference and they've succeeded. Its newest release combines a soft-riding, dry hull with the ability to overnight in comfort, all in 6.2m of length.

Even if it's just a day trip, the option to place the catch straight in the pan before another bout of fishing, watersports or cruising is very appealing in this nicely-finished family boat.

Smuggler 620 Sport

loa 6.2m beam 2.45m draft 0.45m deadrise 21° displacement 1150kg cruising speed 26 knots max speed 43 knots fuel 200 litres engine 150hp Evinrude Etec weight on trailer 1450kg price as tested \$83,500 price from \$66,500 enquiries Smuggler Marine 09 838 9024 www.smuggler.co.nz

over the hump and the quiet rig delivers smooth power capable of hauling the tubbiest of water-skiers out of the hole or providing instant acceleration if the situation calls for it.

When cruising at around 3500 revs, the boat sits at 26 knots, but self-confessed petrolhead David prefers to sit at around 4000 revs and 33 knots. Either way, she's settled and comfortable.

This boat likes a decent amount of

trim. At about 35-40 percent she really loosens up and comes into her own. Couple that with her hydraulic steering and she's extremely responsive. After a few tight turns at speed it quickly becomes obvious most drivers will give in before the boat does.

The throttle falls nicely to hand when standing or sitting and views through the curved glass windscreens are almost uninterrupted.

In minimal seas on test day, the 620 proved happy running with or into the sea. The lively boat reacts instantly to helm or trim adjustments and will reward a good driver once her characteristics are clear.

In a straight line she tracks well, and offers a relatively dry ride, helped by the new flush transom keeping water out of the back of the boat.

Full clears and a canvas bimini top keep out any water from the odd misbehaved wave and the enclosed set-up makes conversation easy. While it doesn't come with all the warmth of a fibreglass

hardtop, the weight is kept down and so is the overall price of the boat. The bimini can also be collapsed, making garaging easier.



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