

NOBLE BOATS INTERNATIONAL 5M
ON THE WATER

Story & Photos: John Ford



The neat side-console on this five metre model leaves plenty of room for fishing.



THE NOBLE BOATS INTERNATIONAL 5.0M CENTRE-CONSOLE IS PUT THROUGH ITS PACES ON SUSSEX INLET WITH FISHING EXPERT MICHAEL GUEST. JOHN FORD REPORTS — FROM A TREE HIGH UP THE BANK.

The idea of fishing Sussex Inlet (NSW) on Michael Guest's new Noble five metre estuary boat seemed like a good idea at the time, but after a late night visiting friends in the area the early start suddenly looked less appealing. Nevertheless I made it to the ramp at just before 6am — still in the dark — and met up with Michael and local guide Greg Reid from Bay and Basin Sportsfishing.

Michael had arranged with Greg to film some stories for his *Fishing The Edge* series, so we took advantage of the pre-dawn start to try to surprise some bream in the upper reaches of the lake system with light tackle fishing.

The predawn was clear and warm

as we headed up the lake to the shallow edges and set about flicking some of the walker-style lures at Greg's likely spots.

A walker is a lure that floats on the surface and retrieves in a slow motion with gentle tugs on the line, making the lure wander across the top of the water. It mimicked how I felt myself so I got the hang of it pretty quickly.

Fishing in the shallow water highlighted the versatility of the Noble 5.0 metre, a fairly large hull for an estuary boat that's not your average tinny.

This style of fishing can be quite exciting as the fish is visible as it follows the lure and it becomes a game of cat and mouse, allowing the fish to examine its prey and attack — and it's all happening right in front of

NOT YOUR **AVERAGE**
TINNY

ON THE WATER

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The chines give plenty of grip in hard turns.



The bait table is well designed with plenty of pockets and storage.



you with the angler controlling the action. We, okay, Michael and Greg, bagged a few small fish but the bite was pretty slow so after an hour or so we headed back to the main lake.

With the sun poking through the low hills and with a break in the fishing it was time to check out the boat.

Noble boats are constructed from plate-aluminum and are now built in China. The construction uses sheets of metal, cut and formed, then fully

welded together. This makes for an extremely strong and durable boat. The 5.0 metre model is constructed from 4mm plate throughout, giving a hull weight of 480kg (compare this to around a hundred kilos less for a similarly sized pressed-aluminium hull). The 5.0m is available as a side or centre-console.

THE NITTY GRITTY

The demo boat side-console layout is simple and makes maximum room for

fishing — three of us had plenty of room, even with my wayward casting. The design makes the most of opportunities for storage and practicality. The boats come with an excellent range of standard features and the overall impression is of solid build and quality finish. To be fair, this boat was finished by Michael to a high level. He is, after all, the distributor of Noble boats for the NSW North Coast and he has a deserved reputation for quality fit out. Custom-features included non-skid Regupol floor covering which is practical and neat and sets the boat off as being a bit special. When you see the product you'll ask yourself why all boats aren't fitted with it.

At the bow is a large anchorwell and a solid bollard. An 80lb Minn Kota is custom-mounted to the port bow-section, with a 24V Riptide battery in the storage area below the forward casting platform. This storage bin has space for lots of gear, even with the battery in there, and the lid is big enough to allow easy access to the whole space. A 7in Lowrance HDS screen is mounted low on the gunwale at the bow and

complemented by a second 10in screen at the helm.

A flat floor runs between the forward and rear casting platforms for easy access around the boat. Sidepockets run along each side and a 180mm wide non-slip gunwale gives the hull lots of integral strength and a comfortable place for sitting. Three welded rodholders are set along each sidedeck. Two pedestal-seats are the only other concessions to comfort but the generous height of the gunwales gives plenty of security when standing up.

The transom houses a plumbed livebait tank and an aluminum baitboard with four rodholders, two knife-pockets, and a slide-out drawer. There's also space here for two batteries, the fuel strainer, and a deckwash. Large bollards are set into each rear sidedeck.

Like its big brothers in the Noble range, the boat's welded floor allows for a fully selfdraining deck, so there are large scuppers to allow water out. A generous-sized killtank is set into the floor at the rear of the hull. It has an option for plumbing and for a split-tank to keep

the catch separated. The boat is fitted with a 130hp Evinrude E-TEC which, as usual, ran smoothly and quietly, and was a natural match for the hull. A small boarding or swim-platform sits to the side of the enginewell, and there's a drop-down ladder to starboard. Fuel capacity is 150lt in the baffled tank, which is plenty for covering lots of miles, particularly with the frugal Evinrude setup.

The side-console has a sturdy grabrail and it's topped with an acrylic glass screen. The console houses a switch panel and the Evinrude instruments with full readout. The Noble pedestal-seats are finished in blue and white vinyl and can be matched to the hull colours.

AND IT HANDLES

The sporty timber wheel fell easily to hand as we got underway. Visibility was good through the screen in either a sitting or a standing position, and all controls were just as easily handled.

On the wide expanses of Sussex Inlet there was a small chop from a 12-knot breeze that had picked up, but the hull rode across the waves easily with no banging. The boat rides high in the bow, deflecting any spray and keeping the occupants dry. The hull feels stable into the steepest of turns with the chines digging in and recovering quickly once the turn is complete. Only the sharpest of turns with not enough trim would result in any cavitation. Moving weight around while underway tested the optionally fitted trim tabs and the boat could be readily set for a flat run to compensate for this.

The Noble gets on the plane at 3150rpm doing around 13kts and quickly gets out of the hole and settles into its natural bow-up stance.

With 3500rpm we achieved 16kts and used 19lt/h. The boat feels in a natural gait at 4000rpm, burning 25lt/h and sitting at 25kts. A fast cruise at 5000rpm will burn 36lt/h and send you along at 32kts. WOT is 5800rpm, or 32kts drinking 42lt/h.

Summing it up, the Noble International 5.0m is a great multi purpose boat. It's small enough to handle on your own but spacious enough for the whole family or a few mates to fish extended periods in comfort. The large fuel capacity is an advantage and this boat is safe enough to get out into the wide ocean on the right day. 🚤

NOBLE BOATS INTERNATIONAL 5.0M CENTRE-CONSOLE

HOW MUCH?

Price as tested:..... \$58,000 with 130hp Evinrude E-TEC
Price from:.....\$46,000 with 90hp Evinrude E-TEC

GENERAL

Type:..... Monohull side-console
Material:..... Aluminium (4mm)
Length (overall):..... 5.3m
Beam:..... 2.1m
Deadrise:..... 24°
Hull weight (dry):..... 480kg

CAPACITIES

Fuel:..... 150lt
People:..... Four
Rec. max. HP:..... 130

ENGINE

Make/model:..... Evinrude E-TEC 130hp
Type:..... V4 two-stroke direct-injection
Displacement:..... 1727kg
Weight:..... 184kg (long shaft)
Power:..... 97kW @ 5750rpm

SUPPLIED BY

Complete Boating Solutions
11 Espirit Close
Ellebana, NSW, 2282
Phone: (02) 4946 8655 or 0412 723 787