

Nautiglass V-150 Sportsman

Original Story/Pics by Peter Webster

Easily the most controversial powerboat manufactured in Australia at the present time (1977-Ed) Nautiglass has stood the industry on its ear with the incredibly low prices of their products. At the request of many readers, we undertook this special report . . .

In the last two years, one boat manufacturing company has caused more controversy and soul searching to boat manufacturers than any other - the manufacturers of the Nautiglass range of fibreglass runabouts.

Trading under the unlikely title of Xatal Pty. Ltd., this go-ahead manufacturing concern from Wyong, New South Wales (near Gosford) has overnight become one of the biggest volume boat producers in Australia. There are a number of reasons for this instant success, but as most opposition manufacturers would point out, they have succeeded because of their "discount" pricing. Of course, that is looking at the overall picture from the point of view of the manufacturer who has lost yet another five or six sales to this extremely active newcomer to the manufacturing scene.

IT COST:

- \$2,285 for the boat
- \$2,055 for the single 60 hp key start Mariner outboard
- \$575 for Nautisport trailer

WE LIKED:

- The price
- Good all round performance
- Overall design concept
- Forward hatch set-up

WE DIDN'T LIKE:

- Standard of finish could be improved
- Lack of basic seating
- Poor windscreen des

On the other side of the coin, Sam Rutherford, the Managing Director of Nautiglass is quite emphatic when asked the reason for his success in this intensely competitive field.

"I don't mind telling you the secret of our success" he told me at a recent press conference, "We are building boats on a scale previously unheard of in Australia, and we are building on a constant schedule regardless of whether the dealers have ordered the boats or not. We are one of the few

manufacturers in Australia who is prepared to carry over 100 boats in stock in order to maintain a production line. In a word, volume. In the next financial year, we will build literally hundreds of fibreglass boats."

However, even a complete outsider could tell there is more to it than just volume.

A large part of Nautiglass' success is attributed to their use of sub-contract glass workers and their total dedication to the development of just one basic model hull with four or five different configurations.

Combined, these factors have come together to produce a marketing force which has had a remarkable effect on the Australian boating industry from the west coast to the east, and from north to south.

Design

The V150 Sportsman is yet another version of the standard 4.597m (15'1") Nautiglass hull. It is now produced in a standard half cabin layout, the unusual offshore model (specifically for purist fishermen) a conventional fisherman runabout, a "soft option" runabout with back to back seats, and now this new cuddy-cabin Sportsman series.

