



Over the last few years the Yamaha boat building subsidiary Southwind has been building a reputation for very schmick, smooth riding fibreglass boats in the vital 5.2m-6.2m range. They've just released (in 2001, remember - PW 7/14) the latest model - and boy, it's one hell of a boat!

Southwind 640 Sportsfisherman

You know, we'd have killed for a boat like this only a few years ago. To think it was possible to purchase a rig this well built, with all the features sportfishermen need in a package that handles and rides like this, would have been not much more than a fisho's dream just 10 maybe 15 years ago.

Sure, we all know there's been plenty of good riding hulls around in the past, but what makes this such an awesome package is that it is so good in so many areas.

If you took the old Formula 233 (which many avid boating enthusiasts still regard as the benchmark in trailer boat handling and ride) and said that the Formula was 8 or 9 out of 10 in the Handling &

Ride Department, then most would also agree it was only 3 or 4 out of 10 as far as being fitted out as a sportfishing boat was concerned.

Then, if you took onboard how much fuel it used delivering that magnificent ride, then you'd be lucky if you got 2 out of 10 for fuel efficiency.

That's what makes these modern Y-2001 boats so special. The Southwind SF640 scores at least 8 or 9 out of 10 for ride and performance, but it also pulls up at least 8 or 9 out of 10 for fitting out as a sportfishing boat. Then, when you get into fuel efficiency and ergonomics, it scores in the 7-8 range as well! All of which highlights the gains that have been made in power boat design and packaging in recent years.

Design

Southwind's Stuart Woods turned up on our doorstep with this boat, a weighbridge certificate, a full tank of gas and two of the sweetest,

**ABM
RETRO
BOAT TEST:**
Unchanged, as first published, written and photographed by Peter Webster in June, Y-2001

