



Honeymoon 26

The Honeymoon 26 is one of the most interesting of the new generation, albeit old-fashioned, diesel cruisers. Designed by Neil Holland from Queensland's Boat Park in Labrador (on the Gold Coast), the Honeymoon 26 owes more than a passing allegiance to the ubiquitous Cuddles 30 cruiser, built by Bruce Harris, next door to Boat Park. For once, this is not a case of one manufacturer 'flopping' or pinching another fellow's design, as the Honeymoon 26 and the Cuddles 30 were not only designed by the same person, the development of one led to the development of the other.

The Cuddles 30 came first, and was very heavily influenced by Bruce Harris' own experience as a professional prawn fisherman in his earlier years. After drawing the lines of the Cuddles 30 for Harris, Holland figured there was yet another stage to go, and spent the following 12 months preparing the lines for what has since become the all-Holland Honeymoon 26.

This new craft differs in many specific ways from the Cuddles 30, so much so that comparison of the two, although inevitable to some extent, is really quite unfair.

The Honeymoon 26 lines are almost totally different to those of the Cuddles; although they share a similar internal layout, the design philosophy of the two craft is almost as different as chalk and cheese.

Design

In a nutshell, where the Cuddles 30 was drawn out to be a traditional double ender with fullish bow sections, firm bilges and almost 'wineglass' sections throughout the

Easily the most significant trend in Australian powerboat design and construction in the last two years, has been the development of the locally-built, GRP displacement diesel cruiser. Demand for these slow, but thrifty, diesel cruisers is increasing as more boating families come to appreciate the many virtues of this style of vessel.

length of the hull, the Honeymoon 26 is more closely comparable to the famous US Maine lobster boats, or to a lesser extent, the Queensland hard chine river and bay prawn trawlers.

To sum up, the Honeymoon 26 is short, fat and stable.

It measures 7.92 metres (26') down the centreline, with a beam of no less than 3.35 metres (11'0") and a draft of only 0.83 metres (2'9"). It is easily the widest of the current crop of displacement cruisers, and this combined with the slack bilges and near hard chine hull shape has resulted in a cruiser that is uncannily stable, with a volume approaching that of the larger 30 foot cruisers.

Particularly noticeable in the wheelhouse, the extra beam takes a little getting used to, because the cockpit (for instance) although it is quite short in length, is no less than 2.49 m wide. The cockpit area of

4.15 square metres is thus much the same as a cockpit of a vessel much longer, but with a narrower beam. In the Honeymoon's wheelhouse there is sufficient beam for a 'walk-in' galley arrangement, a vital improvement for cruising Mums, because they can stand and work in the galley without being in the major thoroughfare along the centreline of the cabin. And you can only do that when you have this sort of beam width. Importantly, none of the other displacement cruisers can approach the Honeymoon 26 in this regard. The unusually high beam length ratio of the Honeymoon 26 also affects the craft's seaworthiness in a very obvious manner.

The Honeymoon 26 is as stable as the proverbial rock, with an unusually short, quick movement reacting to wash or waves.

In other words, where a traditional round bilge hull will tend to roll from one side to the other around its finer, easier bilge sections, the Honeymoon 26 has a short, firm roll movement, more like that of a hard chine planing cruiser than a traditional displacement hull shape. It is very noticeable when the Honeymoon 26 is passed by a larger vessel throwing up a big wake. Instead of rolling madly from one side to the other, the Honeymoon 26 lifts up as the wake passes underneath, but instead of continuing to roll from one side to another (a bit like a pendulum) it simply stops rolling once the wave has passed through. In this sense, it is a very comfortable boat in a beam chop situation, but thanks to the finely-drawn bow with its heavily knuckled shoulder, the Honeymoon is also a very dry boat when punching into a head chop.

Design features abound on the

**TBM
RETRO
BOAT TEST:**
Unchanged, as first published, written and photographed by Peter Webster in 1982