

Nova's Ground-breaking 2200 Bridgedeck



Above: The 2200 is well designed for just lazing around under the Queensland sun. Both helmsman and passenger chairs swivel round to face the cockpit, creating a living area more than 12' long.



Right: Offshore from Southport, Queensland, the Nova 2200 moves easily in the gentle swell.

1974: "The 2200 is one of the "softest" boats we've tested - regardless of size. We were particularly enamoured with the 2200 offshore. Setting the throttle on 3,250 rpm, (equal to an estimated 24-25 knots) she took everything in her stride. Out through Southport's infamous bar, well out into the ocean, she rode beautifully, throwing spray well away, sitting back on the aft sections of the hull, leaving the forward sections to cut through the waves, cushioning the boat's entry. "

Sadly, the Nova 2200 didn't receive the attention it deserved at either of the '74 Sydney or Melbourne Boat Shows. In both instances, it was tucked away from easy scrutiny, and unless it was specifically sought out, it was easily missed.

This was more than a pity, for the 2200 is one of the most interesting boats to come out of an Australian manufacturer's stable for some time.

With Novacraft's separation from their original Melbourne parentage now complete, the design team have been hard at it, preparing a completely new range of power craft, wholly designed and built in Queensland.

Heading up the design team, is well known industry leader, Bob Cook, whose background in the industry dates back to the times when fibreglass building was in its infancy; he was one of the first men involved in the creation of the now giant International Plastics group - and has literally spent a lifetime devoted to boat building in glass reinforced plastic, or GRP, as it is so commonly known.

Cook's years of experience is patently obvious in the new Nova; it looks well, works well, and has hard-to-define quality that sets the "big boys" products away from their more avante-guarde, but possibly less experienced, contemporaries.

Additionally, Cook's penchant for solidarity ("too many years handling warranty claims") comes over strongly in the 2200, in a very similar manner to its sister craft, the Nova 25' Flybridge. Both craft take to heavy conditions like ducks to water, without the bulkheads creaking, the floors twisting and the doors flying open.

The 2200's basic departure from the norm is the bridge deck, an area of 6'2" x 3'6" raised 15" off the cockpit floor, to give a double bunk under the bridgedeck, and a quite outstanding view of the passing world on the deck.

In itself, it is an intriguing use of space; we were delighted to find it also works well in practice.

Otherwise the design is reasonably conventional, if appearing a little bulky amidships. The hull features a slowly, curved chine cum built-in spray rail without the flaring of the outer edge of the chine, usually necessary to "break" the hull cleanly out of the mould.

Three planing strakes are strategically placed along the length of the hull. In another departure

from accepted practice, the planing surface of the strakes are noticeably angled down to the water, rather than lying horizontally.

The angled strakes, combined with the deep, swept-back forefoot running down to a 22 degree "Vee" at the transom, no doubt account for the craft's soft, flat riding characteristics, and explains where the hull is getting the unusually high degree of lift at planing speeds.

Overall the hull is quite high wooded, with, as mentioned, a slightly humped effect amidships. As this co-incides with a solid panel of GRP (behind the cabin windows) on the deck/cabin mould, the effect, particularly out of the water, is a rather bulky one.

But in fairness, part of the cause is the high coaming running down from the windscreen, and as this is very functional design in terms of weather protection and passenger security, the end result justifies the means.

We were impressed by the thought that went into the cabin mould, particularly up forward.

The mooring hatch is a beauty, one of the few

Text and photography by Peter Webster, in September 1974

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Classic illustration of a deep vee hull "working" - notice how the water is being thrown aside in "steps" from the planing strakes. Much of the hull lift is created by these strakes.