

The Mariner 3800 Mk11 Hardtop



Already a best seller for the Sydney based Mariner group, the Mariner 38 Mk 11 continues to improve as the factory incorporates US boatbuilding and finishing techniques from the locally built (and now highly successful) Hatteras 52 programme, into their more regular production models.

The Mariner 38 has been a success story for Mariner Cruisers, a division of the Kiwi conglomerate Questar, from the day it was launched.

First moulded from lines drawn by Australian designer John Griffin in 1980, the Mariner 38 was nearly a year in the pre-production tooling phase before the first boat was launched in 1981.

Originally, it was created to fill the gap between the original Mariner 34 (since replaced, too) and that venerable classic, the Halvorsen Gowland designed Mariner 43.

However, while the inspiration for the Mariner 38 might have been generated some eight years ago — the end result is just as valid today as it was then.

At 38 feet overall, the Mariner 38 Mk 11 is an excellent size compromise between a craft with genuine long distance cruising capacity, and one that is still a cinch to handle on your own (or with a companion) around the marina or anchorage.

Over the years, Mariner has made so many running changes to this 38 footer, they can now say (with some justification) it is virtually a brand new cruiser, compared to the Mariner 38s produced back in 1981-82.

Most of the changes are obvious improvements developed as a result of customer input over the years. Changes like the creation of a rigid, permanent GRP hardtop over the flying bridge. A completely different flybridge and



saloon layout. The (optional) 'island bed' arrangement in the forward stateroom. Development of the marvellous work station in the cockpit, along with the offset saloon doorway.

Other changes are not quite so obvious - including the incorporation of the new Mariner GRP exhausting and muffler system (more on this development later in the report), a sophisticated wiring system, plus hundreds of other 'behind the scenes' changes to specifications and fit-out schedules that combined, have lifted today's Mariner cruiser head and shoulders above the product built in the early '80s.

Recently, we had the opportunity of putting one of the latest examples through its paces in Pittwater and off Broken Bay in fairly calm conditions - a complete contrast to the conditions found off Port Stephens on the second weekend of the 1988 NSW Inter-Club Championship back in March. Then, the conditions let us study a number of craft

very carefully in the heavy sou'easterlies running - and in particular, the new Mariner 38 Mk 11.

We were impressed. So much so, we contacted the factory team fishing the tournament (they were competing in the updated, Tournament Series Mariner 43) and made arrangements for a detailed study to be undertaken as soon as one of the new models became available.

Design

The Mariner 38 Mk 11 is a raised sheer sports convertible, measuring 11.69 m LOA, with a maximum beam of 4.37 m, and a nominal displacement of around 10 tonnes. Power is provided by two diesel engines — in this case, twin Cummins 555 ('triple

**TBM
RETRO
BOAT TEST:**
Unchanged,
as first
published,
written and
photographed
by Peter
Webster in
1988