



Haines Signature 530C

In an ever changing world where terrorists fly passenger jets into sky scrapers, airlines and insurance companies go belly-up, and job security seems to be a thing of the past, the decision to go out and buy a new boat takes no small amount of courage.

Ironically, few would disagree that the world would be a better place if more people went boating, but the pressures on family budgets, the aforementioned job security let alone the bigger picture fears of global warfare and terrorism are often enough to send us all scurrying back to our caves.

There, we can turn on the “box”, watch the Grand Final and draw the curtains on the outside world.

But life, as wiser men than this writer have observed, goes on, and for

many people, an inheritance, a win at the races, the Lotto or just accumulated savings from sheer hard work, often tip the scales in favour of a new boat.

Even so, consumers are buying very cautiously these days, and doing a great deal of research into what constitutes the best package to buy, with the highest resale and if you like, the best “investment” value.

In boating parlance that actually covers quite a few points – including safety for the family, comfort and performance, and most of all, a needed

feeling of security and pleasure for everyone in the family.

At times like these, F&B’s enquiry from readers often triples as people redouble their efforts to establish what is the “safest” (sic) product to buy.

And as it happens, boats like this Haines Signature 530C are right up there on top of the list.

It fulfils most of the mission statement.

It’s a wonderful investment, with a resale value that is second to none. Plenty of people have actually bought



Haines Signatures and sold them for a profit after 12 month's use. You can't get it much better than that – and even though that doesn't always happen (you need to have a crystal ball to pick the model that is going to sell out and remain in hyper-demand to do it) but even the slowest selling Signatures retain very high resale value.

Models such as this 530C, which are just a notch or two above the entry level region, are especially valuable assets. They will always be easy to sell and will always attract a premium because so many more people can afford a 530C style of craft than can afford (say) a 702 Sportbridge. That much at least, is just commonsense.

But boats like the 530C are more than just a good “investment”.

This is a top notch family boat for Mum, Dad and a couple of youngsters. It's also a beauty for a couple of over 55's heading towards retirement. And from a retirees point of view, it's just about perfect.

People in these categories ie, the young with ankle biters, the post 55 baby boomers, and the retirees – none of them want the cost or the physical demands of a bigger boat. But all of them want the comfort and the ride qualities that the bigger boats allow.

And again, without labouring the point, that's where boats like the 530C blitz the marketplace.

Softly, Softly This is a particularly soft riding hull, incorporating John Haines' now famous “variable deadrise hull”.

This is not just advertising hype, but a genuine description of how the hull is shaped under the waterline.

The deadrise (or the amount of “vee” at the transom - the back of the boat) actually varies as it progresses from the keel out to the chine, giving these Haines Signature models the ability to have varying degrees of ride in different sea conditions.

It's all clever stuff, and whilst the basics are easy to understand, getting it right is something of an art.

But in basic terms, the principle is quite simple. At the bottom part of the hull (nearest the keel), the hull is very deeply “veed”, especially as it goes up towards the forefoot (near the front, where the boat cuts through the water). There, the “vee” or cutting edge is no less than 29 degrees,

measured off the horizontal plane.

As you get further back down the hull and look back up towards the “chine” (the edge of the boat) the amount of vee varies quite considerably. It softens down to as little as 21 degrees in the mid sections, before completely flattening off at the edge of chine.

This is really clever stuff, because it allows the boat to cut through the choppy water when it’s cruising along and doesn’t need the flatter sides of the boat to even be in the water. But when the boat slows down and finally settles in the water, the outer or flatter sections of the hull then take up position in the water, providing the boat with a very high degree of stability.

Yes, it’s all fairly obvious stuff when you put it in those terms, but for many years, most Australian designers preferred what they call a “constant deadrise”.

In that environment, the deadrise is exactly the same at the transom as it is at the forefoot, and through the 1960’s and 1970’s this was all the rage. And to a large extent they’re still very popular, because all those old 1960-1970 “classics” such as the John Haines’ designed V-17 series Haines Hunters, the classic V-19C, the wonderful old V-213 series were all constant deadrise boats.

Providing they were given heaps of power, they performed very well. But note the codicil – they needed heaps of power.

The other problem the “constant deadrise” designs all had (like the author’s 1975, 5.5 m Nova Tribune deep vee) was their planing attitude. Most of ‘em only had 2 speeds – on plane or off plane!

It was an absolute bloody nightmare when you were offshore trying to hold onto about 14 or 15 knots, because they would so easily drop off the plane.

If the going got too rough, and you couldn’t keep planing along, the boat would fall ‘off the plane’ . . . so you’d drive it back up again for a few minutes - but then drop off again. *GGgrrrr!* Most experienced boatowners will have owned a 1960’s - 1980’s boat with these characteristics.

Slowly Fast In the case of the 530C type of hull, with its variable deadrise, one of the first things you notice on a test is that it can be driven at almost

any speed that suits the sea state – and it always maintains a nice level trim ie, it doesn’t fall on or off the plane.

All these Signature variable deadrise boats can work very efficiently at high speed when only the deep part of the hull is slicing through the water. But now, when the conditions get rougher and you are forced to slow down, instead of falling ‘off the plane’, all the Signatures have this excellent mid plane or “trough” planing speed which enables the skipper to button right off the speed, stop bouncing around, and come home efficiently. The boat retains a good running attitude, no matter how rough it gets, so it stays dry, it’s completely safe and quite comfortable, even in truly awful conditions.

And so it is here. The Haines Signature 530C will plane down to 10 or 11 knots with the right engine and trim combination, yet it will absolutely fly across bay chop flat stick if you like a bit of excitement in your life.

At one point during the test, the



writer came flying up Runaway Bay absolutely flat stick, with the boat quite literally starting to “chine walk” from the combination of too much power on the transom, too much speed, not enough waterline length and an idiot at the helm yahooing and carrying on like a stunned mullet. *Stupid yes, but it was seriously good fun there for a while!*

I’m not sure Auntie Thel would appreciate the speed with which we were crossing the chop, but by crikey, we certainly “flattened the water” and provided a very convincing demonstration of the awesome potential of these variable deadrise hulls if you have enough grunt, nerve and the ability to drive the boat up into the top end of its performance envelope.

However, I’m sure Hainsey would be mortified to see us driving his “family” boats like that, because he’s so intensely proud of their ability to go through poor conditions at low speed so safely and comfortably.

I’m not sure that he really wants to have us rabbiting on about crossing the chop at the best part of 40 knots in a boat that was purpose-designed for quiet, tranquil days on the estuary and near shore snapper grounds.

(Yeah, but you can make this hull get up and boogie . . .!)

Formula Boating The 530C is virtually a clone of several other models in the Haines Signature range. It is mainly drawn from the top selling 520C, one of the most successful models in the whole Signature range.

This boat is very similar, but where the 520C has the protruding half pod arrangement, the 530C has a more conventional full width transom without any semblance of a pod left at all.

This increases the boat by about 100mm (4”) overall. The new space is entirely in the cockpit.

The cabin mouldings are virtually identical between the two boats, but the 530C now has the longer cockpit.

The 530C is unashamedly a formula boat in the sense that Haines Signature has now established very carefully what it is the public loves about the Signatures. They are deliberately creating a range of craft from 4.6 m through to 8.0 m (yes you read that correctly) that all follow very similar lines.

“Why is it so?” you ask. Easy - because thousands of Australian families have said “*Stop, go no further – this is exactly what we want.*”

Having established what so many families wanted from their Signature, the Haines family have been hastening very slowly indeed, using similar design and fit-out strategies on all of the models in their range.

So it is perfectly true that the smaller Haines Signatures look for all intents and purposes much the same as the bigger ones, and they all look pretty much the same as the one you saw last year.

You are not going cross-eyed or missing the point at all – the Haines Signature team are intent on developing a range of models that all have very similar features.

Look at this one carefully. If you rubbed off the numbers on the side, stood back 50 paces, the lay person would be very hard pressed to tell the difference between the 460 or the 600 – let alone this 530C.



The Fit-Out Not so from the consumer's point of view. That's a whole different world.

In this case, the 530C is packaged up with engines in the 75-115hp range and whilst I think anything above 90 would be crazy, the fact is that it can take up to 115hp.

The 530C has the very popular twin pedestal seats, and a nicely sheltered and developed helm position with the modern multi-layered dash that the Signature people developed a couple of years ago.

The windscreen comes up to the shoulder height of a 6' bloke, so that you can choose to stand up and look over the screen, or sit down behind the screen if you prefer.

Adding a bimini as they did here, adds a lot of comfort to the boat, and although I don't think too many kids are going to like sitting down on the back lounge, it's certainly a nice place to laze around in the sun and read the papers.

Typically, if you're going fishing, the rear lounge just unclips and slides out to be left at home in the garage until it is required.

In the cabin area, the berths are just long enough to sleep in on a Sunday afternoon or on the night waiting for the tide to change for the bream run to begin.

I'm not sure you'd normally go away and camp in the boat for more than an overnight situation, but you certainly could if you had your heart set on going out to the islands (for instance) and wanted to stay out Friday and Saturday night. I've camped in a lot

worse environments than this, I can tell you, and I'm sure there are many readers out there with open tinnies who would wholeheartedly agree. Boating

Signature 530C

Moulded length (with bow sprit) 5.3 m
Length 5.05 m
Beam 2.21 m
Deadrise 21-33 degrees (SVDH™)
Power 75-115 hp
Hull weight approx 535 kg
Towing weight 1380 kg
Maximum engine weight 200 kg
Standard :

Anchor Locker well with hatch Battery box above floor Bilge pump & hose Bow Sprit Bunk cushions and panels Bunk extensions Cabin side boxes Cabin side windows Cockpit side boxes vinyl Cutting Boards Polyethylene Dash handle Deluxe deck hardware Forward acrylic deck hatch Fuel tank with sender unit Instrument cover Lights – Navigation and anchor Live bait tank Rod holders x 4 Seating – moulded buckets on pedestals Side rails stainless steel Sliding helmsman seat Steering mechanical Switch panel and wiring harness Windscreen acrylic curved
Total Package as displayed \$41,500.00

Packages start from \$33,990 with JV Marine (03) 9798 8883 Springwood Marine (07) 3208 5755

is all relative, isn't it?

If you can afford the new 58' Riviera, (try \$A1.8 m) then no doubt this looks like a little boat that you'd have as the tender . . . but on the other

hand, if you've been running around the bay in a 3.7 m tinnie with two thwarts and a flat floor between for your sleeping bag, then the 530 C looks more like the Queen Mary. As I said, it's all relative.

Criticisms We weren't too excited about the 175 kg Mercury 90hp 4-stroke on the back of this boat.

It really felt like there was 175kg sitting on the transom, and by the time I wandered down aft with my 105kg to join the load, I wasn't too impressed with this boat's ability to handle the combined 280kg. Now if there was another bloke with me of a similar size (and joking aside, there are plenty of people around the 100kg mark) and we were offshore fishing, I would be unhappy about the freeboard left in the transom area with this big 4-stroke sitting on the transom.

Given that I'm not sure it needs anything like 90hp to get a satisfactory level of performance, I think you could defuse this issue by coming back to a 70hp 2-stroke Yamaha or Mercury, and not only save a hell of a lot of weight, but also an awful lot of money.

As tested, this rig packaged up around \$41,000, yet J V Marine (Melbourne) and Springwood Marine (Brisbane), both have packages in the very low \$30's with 90hp 2-stroke outboards. Now pull that back to a 70hp 2-stroke, and you'd not only save weight, you'd save money again – and bring this boat to a much more affordable price.

What about the 4-stroke vs 2-stroke issue? Well, if you really want the 4-stroke (and there are plenty of reasons to do that) then I'd plug for the 80hp Yamaha which I think is a smoother, quieter and a tad more economical engine than this Mercury 90 4-stroke.

Summary Packaged carefully, (with the foregoing comments in mind) I reckon there's a very economical and extremely satisfactory day cruiser here. It will use very little fuel with either 2-stroke or 4-stroke outboards, provide excellent levels of ride comfort and safety, and sustain Haines Signature's exceptionally high level of re-sale value.

For further information, please call Greg Haines at Haines Marine Industries, (07) 3271 4400 or visit their web site,

www.haines-marine.com.au