

Sportfish's 5.5 Cuddy

- Original Design In Cockpit



One of the most popular plate alloy fishing boats in Australia has long been the Pacific Sportfish 5.5 Cuddy.

It's been in regular production now for many years, and has earned an outstanding reputation as a mid-sized sportfisherman with a magical combination of size and performance vs. economy and cost.

It's been made in centre console, shelter cab, cuddy cab configurations and been fitted with just about every option known to boat builders.

For Bill Hull, Northside Marine's sales chief, coming up with a new look 5.5 cuddy for last year's Brisbane Boat Show offered something of a challenge.

Bill is a very keen fisherman, and relates closely to the needs and concerns of the fishing fraternity, be they bottom



bashers or high tech sportfishermen using lures or saltwater flies.

One of the things Bill had noticed in his order book was the large number of people who ordered the same boat, motor and fit-out combination. Most new Sportfish invariably involved the live bait tank, bait prep area, storage lockers, electronic positions, etc. It also became apparent that most customers were concerned about seat positions, and did not want them "down the back" to interrupt the free flow of this critical fishing area.

Thinking sideways, Bill figured out that if you put all of these elements in a centralised fishing box near to the helm, he could achieve all the features keen fishermen require, but still leave a huge working area or fishing cockpit abaft the box. *(Continued Page 44)*



And that's what he's done. It's a very clever set-up, too. There's 1.82 m of cockpit length behind the centre work station, and combined with the boat's 2.3 m beam, created a wonderful fishing area right where it should be. He's incorporated a very space efficient transom too. So in the context of achieving maximum fishing space for his dollar, this is a really good set-up.

Also note that the work station carries fold down seats on both the forward side and on the aft side. This solved another problem commonly found in some of these dedicated fishing boats - there's nowhere to seat Mum and the kids or your mates should you want to take a party of people along with you. In this case, the 5.5 m Sportfish now seats four people really comfortably, and also seats them where they are quite sheltered from the elements.

The compartment itself is easily walked around, and although the live bait tank is much higher than usual, it is probably in the most practical place you can put it. Trim and stability with the big tank full is nicely offset by the location of the batteries in the cockpit floor level of the work station, so from the point of view of standing out in the bait grounds catching yackas or slimies, this is a first class set-up.

Work station aside, the 5.5 is still the benchmark by which all others are measured. This boat is beautifully finished, with a paint job that is the envy of every other alloy yard, and dozens of little tiny finishing items that separate Pacific Sportfish from the rest.

This particular boat didn't have berths in the forecabin, although as Bill is quick to point out, they can put a



Queen size double with a Jacuzzi and air conditioning in there if you want it – just add money!

Instead, Bill opted for the fisherman's favourite alternative ie, the flat floor area that will allow guys to lie down and sleep on a roll-out air bed if they choose, but otherwise does most of its duty as a storage locker.

As seen here, the boat packages up in the \$37-\$43,000 range depending on the toys selected, the extent of biminis, canopies and clears, cockpit covers etc.

For further information give Bill a ring at Northside Marine on (07) 3265 8000.

F&B

Although a big 4WD would be nice to have, with a 5.5 Pacific Sportfish, launching and retrieving in a normal 2WD sedan/wagon is all you need in most situations.



Admire the attention to detail - and observe the fold-down lounge, tackle drawers, wash down pump (below).

