

Fisherman & Boatowner FIELD TEST

It was a sad day for the boating industry when Dave Mackenzie lost control of his beloved Sportfish plate aluminium boat building business. Based in Clontarf, a northern suburb of Brisbane, Mackenzie had done the hard yards over the years, working closely with just a small team of exclusive dealers.

Together, they had built an excellent reputation for a beautifully built aluminium boat that was considered by many to be the benchmark by which all others were measured. Mackenzie developed centre cabs when centre cabs were just a twinkle in many sportfisherman's eyes, and he took the concept down to as small as five metres to entice even entry

level sportfishermen up to this level of sportfishing capability.

But through a combination of circumstances which are all historic and of little consequence here, Mackenzie lost the business and for a while there, it looked like Sportfish had gone forever. Finally, after a false start or two, Pacific Custom Craft's Frank Wielinga and partner Annie Minchinton stepped in and bought the jigs and tooling.

Who the hell is Frank Wielinga? This was the question most people asked. How could he possibly take over where Dave Mackenzie had left off, and besides, without Mackenzie could Sportfish ever

happen again?

To be brutally frank, not too many people gave Wielinga much chance of success. Mackenzie was synonymous with Sportfish, and without him, it seemed like a hopeless situation.

But then, not too many people realised how determined Frank Wielinga was to pick up the pieces. As the first weeks went past, even the trade was surprised by the level of financial resources, skill and engineering capability Wielinga was prepared to commit to make sure he made a real fist of taking over the Sportfish reputation and credibility, and turn out a first class product. (Cont.Over)



Pacific Sportfish



5.8 m Centre Cab

The Story So Far . . . When Sportfish boats went into liquidation in 1996 there was a heartfelt groan from the boating industry. Sportfish had earned an enviable reputation for high quality, plate alloy boat building in sportfishing and commercial fishing circles. Most people doubted it would ever rise to see the light of day again, but it did. Frank Wielinga's Pacific Custom Craft took over the wreckage, and the Sportfish boats live to fish another day - and proudly so.