



# 6.8m (Prototype) Sportfish “SUPERVEE”

Few boats have aroused so much curiosity and discussion as the subject of this month's major test report, the Pacific Sportfish SuperVee. For Editor Peter Webster, this was destined to be one of the most difficult tests of the year, as apart from all other considerations, just about everybody in the trade wanted the new Sportfish to be better – but was it really possible?

**I**t was never going to be easy re-inventing this particular wheel. For many years, Sportfish has been the benchmark by which all other plate aluminium trailerboats were measured.

Year after year, the Sportfish organisation has either won State or National awards for its superb standard of design, building and finish, and has always been a big winner with the consumers.

Hundreds of Sportfish have been built in sizes ranging from 4.5m through to 10m. Over the years, they've delivered a wonderfully high level of service, and consistently high standards of boat building.

Now, for the first time in many

years, the Sportfish brand is under attack – and this time, the enemy has to be taken seriously.

Plate aluminium boats are now finding it pretty tough going in the market place under 7.0 m LOA.

A number of the big pressed aluminium boat builders such as Quintrex, Ally Craft, Sea Jay (etc) are now regularly building 5.5-6.5 m models, further encroaching on what has traditionally been seen as the plate alloy builders' own market. But like just about everything else in the boating industry these days, yesterday's rules no longer apply, and today, a plate aluminium builder is finding himself hard up against Quintrex or Ally Craft as much as he is

up against (say) Cairns Custom Craft or Sportfish.

It's a cold old world out there, and the pressed aluminium boys have been relentless in their pursuit of the plate aluminium market. But it's not been all one way, that's for sure.

It's very hard to press aluminium sheet beyond 3 mm thick, and there are other problems when you start going into heavy construction of plate aluminium. Ribbing, framing systems and welding techniques that work with small pressed tinnies do not necessarily scale up to work effectively with heavier sheets of plate aluminium, so welding strategies and techniques have to be seriously modified. Even so, for experienced pressed builders of the

