

F&B's Small Craft Section



F&B's Small Craft Test: Stacer 475 Nomad



A couple of months ago, F&B ran a feature on the new Stacer range for 2001, and we had a remarkable reaction to one of the models photographed in the story.

The Stacer 475 Nomad captured a great deal of interest. Readers wanted to know more about this high-sided, beamy 4.75m, aft console runabout.

Design As you can see in the photographs, it is indeed a big, high-wooded, beamy style of boat – but with a very well designed and space efficient transom. It provides the sort of buoyancy you need today if the boat is going to run successfully with the heavier 4-stroke engines.

The Nomad does so beautifully – carrying the weight of the Honda 50 quite easily, so much so, that the writer could actually sit on the transom ledge without really affecting the trim of the craft either at rest or underway.

Having the centre console aft is not unusual – having the courage to put it on one side certainly is. As we learnt with our project boat *Red Ink* some years ago, this is an extremely space efficient and safe position for the “centre” console to be located. To begin with, most boats carry two people ie, the skipper and his mate or lady. So the boat is naturally well balanced with a person sitting to both port and starboard.

Secondly, when either get up to walk in or along the boat, they do so along the centreline – and this is the huge difference between a side console and a centre console. Nowhere is this more important than in a relatively small craft like this. With a centre console, the crew is forever walking around the console, and this can create some stability problems – especially in a seaway, and more so if we're talking here about fairly big blokes.

In this case though, all crew movements are up and down the centre of the boat, and that's a very good idea from every viewpoint.

Another feature of the Nomad we particularly liked was the flexibility of its layout.

Much attention these days is paid to casting platforms, and whilst one could argue this is perhaps a little bit too low in some environments, the reality is that most lure casting is conducted with the rod tip kept low to the water to enhance the action of the lure. There is no reason why you can't do this very efficiently in the Nomad.

Okay, let's accept the casting platform could be a bit too low and/or the sides are



too high. Against that, here is a boat that you can genuinely use in ocean entrances, nearshore fishing situations, let alone the dozens of bays and rivers that get quite choppy, not to say rough water.

In that environment, this high-sided, traditionally shaped hull will be 100% better (and 500% drier) than any of the regular vee bowed punt or conventional punts in such conditions.

Sure, boats are all a compromise – and in that sense the Stacer Nomad is no exception. But this is a very good compromise, and it's been achieved in a boat that's only 4.75m long. It only needs the 50hp Honda to realise 27 knot performance, has an easy cruise around 19-20 knots. It also has all the benefits that Honda technology accrues ie, extremely low fuel consumption, no oil usage to speak of at all, and 4-stroke engineering that will enable this boat to troll all day just ticking over in idle, without ever oiling up the plugs and/or smoking out the crew.

Specific Features Little things we liked included the moulded recesses for the live bait tank and battery box, and we noted with interest they had actually gone to the trouble of putting in a battery frame up forward as well, to facilitate the installation of the electric outboard.

Having said that though, one could observe there's not a lot of point putting in the frame for the battery if in fact provision isn't made for the electric motor. You'd need to order this boat with a modified bow rail and bow roller set-up if you are going to install an electric outboard to work off the bow.

We were surprised Stacer hadn't (at least) made a plate position for a bow-mounted electric outboard.

Summary A very impressive small craft, providing the very interesting option of a side console in a sea of centre consoles.

Easily trailered by virtually any mid size car, much less 4WD's, that transom set-up makes it absolutely ideal for off the beach work. With the addition of one or two other features (like a bloody big manual bilge pump) this could be made into a ripper off-the-beach boat for a variety of fisheries around Australia.

Packaged up for around \$20,000 at Bill Fankhauser's Runaway Boat Sales, this represents a pretty good investment in versatile, safe family boating.

For further information call Bill Fankhauser at Runaway Boat Sales on (07) 5577 5483

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The Nomad has a terrific amount of storage space, thanks to the raised casting platform and flat floors. As Ruth shows, there's plenty of room under here for camping gear, as well as ample space(s) for the obligatory safety equipment.

