



The Yates' Allycraft 5.5 m Centre Console

Twelve months ago, a highly modified Allycraft left the Gold Coast heading for central Australia - and probably the hardest life an alloy centre console could be expected to endure. Fishing from one side of Australia to the other, the Allycraft Honda combination has been truly 'put to the sword' and exceeded all expectations. Special report by John and Samantha Yates.

Besides the obvious in seaworthiness the three primary requirements my wife and I required in our new boat were versatility, strength and the ability to be towed - anywhere.

As there were no off the shelf boats which met our requirements, particularly in the area of strength, we enlisted the services of Ally Craft (in Queensland) to construct a custom vessel.

The 5.35 metre centre console that resulted was launched in mid 1997 and since that time has been given a field test most boats would never have to

endure and probably would not survive. 'Reelflash' as we affectionately call her has graced the waters of OZ held by all four points of the compass and has been towed thousands of miles on roads ranging from highways to what could at best be described as rough bush tracks. (See F&B issues 27 and 29 for the full story of the hows and whys of her construction).

Reelflash is a unique boat in that she has a number of innovative features in her design and of course, to be truly versatile also required some thoughtful fitting out. This is the story of how far

we got it right. Bear one thing in mind while reading - and that is that *Reelflash* was not purpose built for any particular style of fishing. Instead she was designed to be taken anywhere in Australia for the purpose of exploring new fishing grounds and that required her to be adaptable to many varied environments.

As an illustration, a half cab will provide welcome shelter from the winter winds while fishing for whiting in S.A.'s Gulf of St. Vincent. However, it would probably not survive the trip to a remote Kimberley coastline in WA, and if it did so, would make a