

Presenting one of the most interesting reports we've had the opportunity to produce for some time. In fact it's a test not of one boat, but of two - and further, not of just one technology but three or four. Adding ever more spice to the subject, it raises a whole heap of philosophical issues which an increasing number of boatowners are having to address as they plan their next boat.

7.5m NOBLE SuperVee

In-depth report and pics by Peter Webster and Ruth Cunningham.

We had mixed emotions as we drove into the parking lot of the Moreton Bay Boat Club at Scarborough, right on the northern tip of Brisbane on the edge of Moreton Bay.

We were scheduled to test not one, but two of the Noble family's latest craft. Specifically, a 7.5m Sports cruiser powered by a 250 Evinrude E-Tec outboard, and a sister ship fitted with a Volvo D-3 aluminium block diesel

sterndrive. Both engines come from different worlds, and both claim to represent the real 'state of the art' in their respective fields.

Volvo believe their D-3 is the best of the new lightweight European diesels, and of course the Duo-prop sterndrive leg they produce is renowned as one of the best in the business.

BRP are very proud of the new Evinrude E-Tec 250 and much is claimed for this incredibly light, XL 238kg package that is just about the most horsepower you can get for the least weight, in the world today.

Now as if this wasn't interesting enough for the writer, we had a number of other issues to deal with as well.

The last time we wrote about a



Noble Super Vee it all ended up somewhat acrimoniously because the Noble family thought the writer had treated them unfairly, describing the finish of the Noblecraft as needing to be improved. After several years of silence it was significant that both parties wanted to get together again, but equally, one could sense the trepidation of the Noble family.

Readers never really contemplate the impact boating journalists can have, in the context of the boat builder's perspective, but more importantly, the impact a good/bad test report can have on the marketplace.

Significantly, we're not writing about vast multi-national companies selling product across the world with the

irreverent, tongue-in-cheek style of Jeremy Clarkson's "Top Gear" team.

Instead, we write, comment and try and critique small family boat building companies with mortgages, kids and responsibilities just like you and me - and more often than not, they've put their family's future security on the line, developing the new models

It's an uncomfortable cross we have to bear.

We need to tell the truth about how we find boats; F&B has a reputation for telling it like it is, because we know that thousands of readers around Australia rarely have the opportunity to climb onboard boats like these, and be able to draw their own conclusions.

Needless to say, they rely on F&B to 'tell it like it is' and in most cases, the readers have the smarts to recognise that we have pretty strong views on how boats should be built, set-up and finished. And as this month's "Letters" clearly demonstrates, they often don't agree!

But personal opinions are one thing, a credible, well balanced and interesting technical story is something else - and there has to be a balance between the

