

Mike Jessop's Oceancraft 6000 Cylindrical Experience!

Introducing one of the most unusual craft we've tested this year, but a boat that has a real link to F&B's activities. This is the big brother of the highly successful Oceancraft 3.4m fishing dory we take away with us on the 8.2m cruiser "Far-Away". Again, it's built using the unique cylinder design concept that Caloundra boat builder Mike Jessop has patiently and thoroughly kept developing with spectacular results. Peter and Ruth joined forces to "test" this craft as both were curious to see how it performed compared to F&B's smaller version.

Well, if they give away prizes for originality, fresh thinking and initiative, Caloundra boating enthusiast and boat builder Mike Jessop would almost certainly take home the prize.

Mike is the epitome of the small, struggling boat builder fighting to develop an unusual product against a sea of mediocrity and indifference.

What makes Mike's Oceancraft different, and the fundamental reason he's survived so long in a very difficult industry, is simple: his Oceancraft work, and a steadily growing group of owners swear by 'em.

There is no doubt whatsoever that the fundamental principle of this design concept, whilst as ugly as sin, overrides aesthetics with the sheer excellence of its performance. And make no mistake – these Oceancraft are amazingly well performed at virtually everything except appearance.

That's probably a bit unfair really, because Mike's not setting out to build a Haines Signature, is he? Indeed, Mike also epitomises the great virtue of aluminium boat building ie, to take a superbly ductile material and wring its neck to produce shapes and craft that would defy the best fibreglass and wooden boat builder. Mike Jessop has probably done more than most boat builders to work with aluminium to such an extent that he's created a product that utilises all the best features of this material, and abandons all pretence at being anything other than what it is – a 100% effective, utilitarian workboat.

Recently, he rang to let us know that the 6.0m boat was finished and he was powering it with a 70hp 2-stroke Tohatsu.

"Would we like to take it for a run?" he asked.

It took a month or two to bring everything together, but we're very glad we did, because this is a boat that deserves much wider exposure than it's had. Sure, it's obviously not for everybody, but there's a growing charter and commercial world out there where this boat has enormous application and potential.

Design

The 6.0m series is really very similar to our 3.4m, in that it essentially consists of two extremely buoyant cylinders, each divided up into 5 watertight compartments, so that like a catamaran, the two cylinders provide a virtually unsinkable structure. But he doesn't stop there – like the original Ocean Cylinder concept, Jessop links the two hulls with what is nothing short of a classic constant deadrise deep vee configuration. So the upshot is a deep vee, plate aluminium boat under the waterline, but as it zooms along it lifts up and out of the water with the cylinders providing edge buoyancy (only) as the deep vee hull runs along.

As long term readers will remember, back to the years 1999-2000, F&B ran the extremely successful project boat "Shutterbug" which was a genuine 7.2m Ocean Cylinder and of course a much more sophisticated craft than this, but the principle nevertheless was exactly the same, albeit coming from a different direction.

We hammered that boat in all sorts of weird and wonderful conditions and it never put a foot wrong – and this is a characteristic that applies to this boat, too.

OCEANCRAFT 6000

Length **6.0m**
Beam **2.4m**
Base hull weight **280kg**
Approx BMT weight **1100kg**
Min HP **50hp**
Max HP **115hp*** (more opt)
Max People **15**
Fuel N/A (**tub**)
Options: Just about anything - built in fuel tank(s), water tank(s) hardtops, different consoles, cuddy cabin, etc!
Price **\$34,995**
(as tested here, with trailer)



".. strange they might be, but these cylinder boats set a completely different standard of safety, stability, performance, and ride softness. They are literally in a league of their own . . ."