

Yamaha Unleash

5.3L, 350 hp V-8 Outboard

Definitely an engine for its time, and that includes taking in the view from the perspective of its 'carbon footprint' and impact on the environment.

Boatowners will need to carefully study what it can replace - as much as what it is. Editor Peter Webster contemplates the big picture perspective. Technical input from Yamaha's engineering department in Tokyo.

The development of the Yamaha 5.3L V-8 outboard producing a staggering 350hp in a package that weighs just 373kg (in the ultra-long (30") version) is going to have considerable impact in the international boating industry in the medium to long term future.

To begin with, there are hardly any craft in Australia legally capable of carrying, let alone utilising, such prodigious horsepower, so it will take some time before boat builders get around to figuring out how they can take advantage of this extraordinary portent of the future.

In many ways, the Yamaha F350A is very much an engine for its time.

The reason it's being produced is clear: Yamaha obviously have identified a big shift in habits by international boat builders and consumers alike, and I suspect we'll see similar shifts occur 'down under' in Australia in the near future.

These engines can produce up to 350hp with a fuel burn that will be quite acceptable to recreational boat owners, given the long list of other cash advantages this big V-8 outboard engine offers to low engine hour operators.

At cruising speeds, any kindred diesel of similar horsepower might use up to 50% less fuel, but so what?

If a 10.5m family cruiser completes 150 hours p.a. with a typical 350 hp diesel and an average fuel burn of 50 l/ph, what real disadvantage is the Yamaha F350A equivalent burning

(say) 75 l/ph – especially as it will almost certainly deliver a much faster boat in the process.

The bottom line is this: In this (typical) illustration, the real difference between the diesel powered boat and the same boat with a Yamaha F350A, is only 150 hrs x 25 l/ph = 375 litres of fuel at (say) \$1.75 per litre (the writer's 2008 national average guesstimate of fuel cost) ie about \$657 per annum!

In case you've been on Mars recently, we should point out that most of the really dynamic sales activity in the Australian industry has in fact been enjoyed in the 9.0-12.0m classes from Riviera, Noosa Cat, Sunrunner, Four Winns, Mustang, Deep Vee, Powercat and a plethora of smaller, localised boat builders working in the 9.0-12.0m classes. Especially in plate aluminium.

It's these builders in Australia, and their counterparts overseas, Yamaha is clearly targeting with these magnificent new engines.

Yamaha's international intelligence identified a potential gold mine if they could supply boat builders of the larger, 7.5m –12.0m boats with competitive engines at the end of a boat building program, not at the beginning.

This is a seriously clever development by Yamaha, one of the biggest Japanese outboard engine manufacturers.

For production-line boat builders who have to buy two \$50,000 diesels in January for a boat that might be finished in May and June, and paid for

in July, when the engines have to be purchased is a matter of real concern – and that's with just one twin engined boat in production. If you've got 4 or 5, then we're talking hundreds of thousands of dollars. With twenty or thirty . . . work it out!

That's in Australia – imagine the engine investment some of the big US, UK and Euro manufacturers are having to make, purchasing engines months ahead of time.

With outboards, the boat builder can go right down to the wire. The day before the boat is launched, bolt on two V-8 350hp Yamahas at the end, hook up the electronic cabling to the dash through electronic controls, and put the boat in the water about two hours later. Purchased June, paid in July.

In a sense, the potential success of the F350A has got nothing to do with public taste at all – but from a boat building perspective, it is such a significant change to the boat builder's cashflow, you don't need to be Einstein to figure out which way they'll head in the future.

But it's good for the consumer too. The days of people buying Rivas, Stebers, Wellcraft, Four Winns (whatever) with inboard petrol (very common in many U.S. boats, Mustangs, *et al*) petrol sterndrives, or inboard diesel engines, are being increasingly challenged by the new 'green order' and boatowners (even the well-heeled variety) in having so much capital tied up at the end of a wharf .

New

F350A Four Stroke V8

