

Yamaha's F20B 4-Stroke Outboard

Continuing our program of independent "hands-on" tests of F&B's hard working Stacer 429 Nomad, the "mule" we're using as the basic, standard platform to test a wide variety of engines between 20-40hp. By using the one boat constantly throughout the program, with identical crews and equipment, we are producing a growing file of statistics and data that makes very interesting reading. This month, the Yamaha 20hp went under the spotlight.

The all new F20B and its sister engine, the F15C, are Yamaha's small sized and compact 4-strokes outboards designed for high reliability and excellent performance.

As things transpired, our F20B didn't have much luck, between Boat Shows, rain, test schedules, being bolting on and off the Stacer, we ended up on the death knock and needed the Stacer/Yamaha 20 to work perfectly on a lovely sunny day in order to make the cut for this October issue of F&B.

Needless to say, Murphy's Law immediately prevailed and everything started to go pear shaped.

The root cause of the problem was having what turned out to be the wrong prop. Pure and simple.

This is a beautiful little engine, but with the 12" x 9.5" prop, it was pushing the proverbial uphill, and although it wound up finally if we gave it a long enough run (and I stood on the bowsprit with my 105kg delicately poised in the Titanic position!) it would finally get up on plane two miles later.



Then, once that big prop started to work, it would push the loaded Stacer up to an astonishing 17.1 knots.

Full marks for this gutsy little engine – it was almost impossibly over-g geared for this boat, but did we have time or the prop to change and find out what would have happened if we'd put on a smaller prop? Obviously not – hence,

this month we decided that the performance trials and figures that we recorded were not really a fair representation of anything – it certainly didn't reflect fairly on the F20B, nor did it bode well for the test program, because as the base point, which we were trying to achieve, we need to ensure that we've got everything running to its optimum performance.

And in truth, bluntly, we didn't have another week to sit down and sort it out, as the next phase of this program was almost on top of us, and the pre-programmed engines already starting to arrive.

Sometimes it isn't easy being just the two of us – and this was one of them. So what we have this month, is a Claytons engine test report –

we've used the engine, logged the data, studied the build, ran the rig for several hours, but we're not publishing the full performance data because the rig simple didn't work well enough to warrant such detail.

Engine Specs

This is a beautiful little engine, make

"... It's a beautiful engine, superbly engineered, as fuel efficient as technology can make it at the moment, and that's saying something! It is also – importantly – an absolute delight to use in every sense of the word..."