

Dominator 9800 Cat

Introducing a craft that has been coming for a long time - Mark Hookham put a scale model of this craft in the writer's hands more than ten years ago (*"One day, Pete, I'll build this . . ."*) but the wait has been worth it. This isn't just another new powered cat. It represents a new generation of GRP building methodology, a new generation of big cat hull design - asymmetric - and is, arguably, one of the first cats in Australia ever designed for today's gamefishermen.

It takes a considerable amount of courage to invest in the tooling of a fibreglass boat this big, but it takes even more to step forward and invest in a whole new type of tooling - even when most industry experts agree the methodology will inevitably become the 'standard' for any fibreglass boat builder in the future.

New concepts though, have never bothered designer Mark Hookham. For more than 30 years, Hookham has been pioneering in the world of asymmetric cats and cruiser construction, and has developed an outstanding reputation as one of the better GRP builders in Australia, regardless of the type of craft.

The public generally don't know that Mark Hookham built the Australian made Ranger Cruiser series back in the 1980's, and for many years has built both ski race boats and the well regarded Bonito Craft that originated in NZ.

However it's a long, long jump from building GRP trailerboats to the investment in a 9.8m flybridge cat, and it's taken several years for Mark and his patient business partner, Gavin Melville, to close the gap between the dream and the reality.

It wasn't easy. There were many times along the way when both seriously questioned the wisdom of what they were doing, and given the scale of investment involved, it's easy enough to understand why they

