

The Exceptional RTM Markham 9800

Report by F&B Editor, Peter Webster, Running Pics by Peter, Interior Pics by Jeff Webster

It's certainly true the writer has known Mark and his wife, Pat Hookham, for more years than either of us care to remember, as Mark and the writer were part of that original, vibrant group of Sydney's northern beaches' boating industry members.

This group included people like the Steber family, Bill Barry Cotter, Gordon Woods, Peter Green, Clive Caporne, John Buck, John Griffin, etc) all of whom were very much part of the boating industry in the early 1970's.

At the time, Mark Hookham had completed his apprenticeship and was fast earning a terrific reputation as a superb wooden boat builder using high tech composite materials, with a talent and a passion for building very fast racing (sailing) catamarans.

As we noted in F&B #153, the writer, as the editor of the original Australian Boating magazine, became involved with the development of his original Markham Whaler series, which commenced with the little 4.3m back



in the mid-1970s, before Hookham expanded on the Whaler's success, to embrace the 4.9m, 5.30m and later, the 6.0m models.

In the early part of the 1980's, Mark

and Pat moved their family and business to decentralise in Port Macquarie, NSW and commenced building the 35' Ranger cruisers for Ranger Marine Australia, alongside

Few boats have been followed through from the design stage to completion as intently as this Markham 9800. Whilst it's true that F&B has always had a close relationship with the Markham/Dominator range built in Port Macquarie, and it's also true that F&B's editor PW and Mark Hookham go back fully 35 years in the same industry . . . but the fact of the matter is that ANY boatbuilder who tools up with a new type of construction process, on a set of flybridge cruiser moulds measuring nearly 10.0m in length, deserves our closest attention. Last month, two of these craft were displayed at Sanctuary Cove Boat Show to a very impressed audience . . .

