

Upgrading the Honda carby 50hp to the 60hp efi

West Aussie contributor Mike Levy found his immaculate Quintrex 485 Fish Seeker was struggling with the original 50hp Honda when the rig was loaded for camping trips in the Exmouth /Coral bay region, so he decided the best way forward was to upgrade to the superb new Honda 60hp, complete with Honda's unique 'Blast' technology.



Regular F&B readers will recall the article I did on outfitting the Quintrex Fishseeker 485 from "bare hull" (F&B August 2009) and my delight with the normally aspirated Honda 50hp tiller steer engine - with just a few reservations about its ability to cope with the loads we sometimes have to carry up here on the Nor' West Shelf, out from Exmouth, WA.

From the first trial though, I thought it was a little under-powered for the hull and the gear I wanted to carry, and experience subsequently proved that to be accurate. On heavily loaded trips, perhaps overloaded, that great little engine needed a lot of throttle to maintain 17 or 18 knots in good seas, and in adverse seas, forget it!

I am absolutely sure the hull and engine combination is more than

adequate for those who take Mum out crabbing or for a picnic, not travelling more than a few kilometres. But if you are like me, carrying a large icebox and plenty of ice, safety equipment, camping gear and a comprehensive safety margin of fuel, it just won't cope as comfortably as we'd all like.

The combo was first recommended by the dealer, and to be fair, the newer, lightweight engines weren't

available in 2007, while an extra 64kg for the then current Suzy 60 was not something I was mad keen about.

Although the Suzuki was injected even then, I was happy to have the lighter, carbureted Honda with its reputation for longevity, less complex fuel system and great warranty.

Eventually though, I pulled the trigger and decided to upgrade my hardworking Honda 50 to the new

fuel, WOT was around 22 knots on the flat, with tide and breeze assist. Cruising was comfortable at around 16 knots.

With the standard Solas prop supplied I found performance was greatly enhanced out of the hole and slower planing speeds achieved with a hydrofoil fitted. Maintenance is simple and the engineering is beautiful considering it is quite an old design.



Honda 60, and I negotiated a swap + cash deal with the same dealer in Fremantle, Marlin Boats.

I am pleased to report that although bucket loads of money had to change hands, about which the first mate got a little cranky (*I'm sure I had told her previously!*) the service and consideration could not be faulted.

I hope all the importers and dealers around the country are contemplating their futures instead of their navels, and providing the same level of courtesy, advice and consideration. Clearly the greater the rapport between dealer and customer, the more return sales, and recommendations, they will receive.

Okay – a quick recap on the original Honda 50. Stats say it weighs 98 kg and has a capacity of 808 cc. In my 4.85m Quintrex, one person up, a modestly filled icebox but with all safety gear, anchors, fishing gear and nearly 100 litres of

Fishseeker console – running out of space!

Anecdotally I have had many reports of extremely long life in arduous commercial use and generous application of warranty conditions.

I added wiring for an engine hour meter and voltmeter via the tiller arm EHM connections to provide some guidance in the ignition "on" state – no problems there, but you will probably need a bit of experience to read the circuits - and a magnifying glass. I balked at a tachometer, mainly because I just couldn't find room on my console for a 95mm gauge.

The guys at the dealership were able to swap engines and run up the new 60 in less than an hour, while I pacified the first mate with a coffee on the cappuccino strip in Freo (*Fremantle – Ed*).

Everyone at the yard seemed

interested, putting in their two bob's worth and asking questions. I get the impression they don't see too many 485's set up like mine, although they are a major retailer with a very large stock. Someone will doubtless be very happy with my low hours Honda 50.

Getting the rig back home some 1300km was, as always, a nervous trip but accomplished without mishap. Unfortunately we were in the middle of one of Exmouth's less than common rain and windy periods and it was nearly two weeks before I could get the bottom wet and start the run-in period. Probably just as well though, because it gave me an excuse to do some electronics, lighting and transducer installs, fit a new water trap filter and clean everything up. The filter was set up using Honda fuel tank fittings so I could simply unplug the under-floor tank and re-connect my standby portable tanks as required.



Water trap filter setup

BF60 On the Water

First impression of the new 60, bearing in mind this was its first swim and still in the run-in period, was a feeling of effortless power compared to the 50. The new EFI BF60 has a listed capacity of 998cc and weighs in at 110kg, so I have about 200cc extra for an extra 12kg. Not a bad trade off, you would think. As a matter of interest, the Yamaha 70 has a capacity of only 996cc, but adds another 10kg on top.

With a good crank of the throttle, the Quintrex heaved its bow out of the water easily, but unfortunately, that's just where it stayed!