

The *Clark 485 Dominator* Side Console . . .

Report & Pics By PW



Following the Tinny & Tackle Show in Brisbane, finding a side console that was fitted and ready for test was just about ‘Mission Impossible’ as everything that wasn’t bolted to the floor at the T&T Show had been sold.

Just as we were about to give up, we received a call from Yamaha’s Glenn Gibson who informed us he had been talking to Clark Boats’ GM, Michaela Ford, and she had asked if he still had the Clark 485 Dominator side console that he was fitting-up with a new Yamaha 70hp 4-stroke, ready to be shipped through to Clark and Yamaha’s mutual dealer, Townsville Marine.

“Would you guys like to take a run in the boat before it goes?” Glenn asked, “We’d like to water test the boat to check the props and the installation before it goes north. . .”

Given we’d been trying to source photographs of this boat from Michaela for the Virtual Boat Show supplement in this issue, let alone a test run, it was too good a chance to miss. There was only one catch – the truck left for Townsville on the Friday afternoon and this was Wednesday afternoon, ie, it had to be tested Thursday, or Friday morning, or not at all.

“Not a problem,” we replied “because it means we’ll have extra hands on deck for boat photography and the fuel trials.”

Well, the short version is that we all got together on Friday morning on the Gold Coast’s Broadwater with Glenn and his colleague Dan Power bringing the rig down from Brisbane for the morning session. It was a good opportunity for the Yamaha blokes to do some very accurate calibration of their instrumentation with a couple of different propellers, whilst I did the fuel trials for the test with our calibrated fuel bottles, *ye olde stopwatch* (gear we haven’t used for months as we now live in a world of digital fuel flow metering) and our new hand held Garmin GPSMap78sc which is proving to be an excellent upgrade for the original, long serving Garmin it replaces, the latter having been dropped once too often after its stellar 10 year career.

Windy Conditions

Typically, the Gold Coast turned on a pretty nice day, but one with increasingly strong winds which became a bit of a nuisance later in the morning during the fuel trials. Conversely, they were pushing up a typical bay chop of the kind you’ll find in Port Phillip, Sydney Harbour, Pittwater and of course, Moreton Bay itself. So they were ideal for the boat test side of the run.

It took several hours for us to complete the fuel trials but it’s no doubt that it certainly led to a very accurate “seat of pants” feeling about the boat and its ride in the choppy water. Why? Because yours truly

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spent most of that time sitting on the floor of the Clark (doing the fuel trials with the bottles i.e, topping up the fuel, timing the runs, logging the GPS output, hanging on!) definitely feeling the motion of the boat through the water.

Seriously, the conditions were perfect for boat testing and we were able to get a very accurate bead on what this Clark is all about.

Design

As you can see in the pics, it’s the classic 485 side console, very similar to a dozen or more such craft in the aluminium supplement on page 30, because there’s now a consensus “standard” between most manufacturers and dealers as to what the public wants in this class of boat. In turn, the boating public is driving that standard because this type of boat is incredibly popular today everywhere in Australia.

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The Clark sits squarely in the middle of this standard, and is a classic example of the breed. It’s quite well structured and in some ways better than