



Noblecraft 7.4m Super Vee W/Around

After 12 months of uncertainty, the original “Pacific Sportfish” brand has been sold to Yamba Engineering, whilst Brisbane-based Noble Engineering has emerged with another brand called “Noblecraft”. In this report, F&B’s Darren Shiel picks his way carefully through the legal mindfield, and explains what happened - and how it’s going to be in the future.

When the Sportfish Company and Pacific Aluminium Boats merged in 1996, the future looked very bright for the newly named Pacific Sportfish.

The two companies both had credible reputations as plate alloy boat builders, and the joint venture amalgamated resources, cut overheads and inspired a more focused sense of direction for both companies.

As fate would have it though, the merger would be short lived due to the untimely death of the MD, engineer Frank Weiling. The business struggled on though, with his partner,

Ann Minchinton remainly gamely at the helm. But even after a subsequent merger with Queensland Ships (bringing onboard the Ocean Cylinder boats) and despite a full order book and an excellent reputation in the marketplace, serious illness again crippled the new operation.

Unable to reconcile who would end up owning what, the directors reluctantly decided to appoint an Administrator to the amalgamated operation in late 2002, and the business was formally offered for sale.

Then followed an intense struggle for the rights to build the boats, the

intellectual property, etc.

In the final wrap, the name “Pacific Sportfish” and associated intellectual property was purchased by Bill Collingburn’s Yamba Engineering, whilst Ben Noble from Noble Engineering in Brisbane, secured the jigs and templates. Noble also employed many of the original staff, including the long-time foreman manager, Warren Jackson.

Not surprisingly, the new boats from Noble Super-Vee share very similar design objectives to the original Pacific Sportfish, and this includes the ‘benchmark’ finish Sportfish has

always enjoyed in the industry.

Ben Noble recognised that a great deal of the Sportfish reputation for a high quality finish was largely due to the professional efforts of renowned master painter, Paul Burton.

Burton has been filling, fairing and finishing Sportfish boats now for many years. He’s unquestionably helped to sustain the brand’s wonderful reputation ‘in the street’ through all the changes, take-overs and mergers of the last decade.

Aware of the background, and keen to put the pieces back together, Ben Noble approached Paul Burton a few months ago, and offered to set him up in his own show, complete with kilns and dryers, right alongside the 30 year old Noble family business, Noble Engineering.

For Paul Burton, after years of uncertainty and dispute, the offer was irresistible; he could finally settle down and get on with the job he does best of all – finishing the new platies - and leave the financial worries to someone else.

Design Designed primarily as a plate alloy offshore sport fishing boat, the Noble Super-Vee is right at home in big water. A deep sided boat, with a huge cockpit, the 7.4 is a perfect base for the serious fisherman. But the fishing possibilities are not the only impressive part about this rig.

The hull is a work of art. One look at the boat on its trailer, and you will be mesmerized by the thought that has gone into the hull design. Aluminium boats will never be the same. This truly is magnificent stuff.

A very deep 24-degree vee at the transom is certainly not to be sneezed at. This is probably the deepest vee aluminium boat I have ever seen, being carried all the way forward to the bow, to give a soft ride. The deep keel is also sure to assist the boat in its ride qualities.

Outer multi- chines, in a way making the boat a mini tri-hull, also complement the hull. The outer chines are designed to give the boat superior stability at rest, and also to assist in making this very deep boat dry underway.

With an overall hull length of 7.70 metres, and a beam of 2.5 metres, the boat is at the maximum size you could possibly get for a trailer boat. The extra wide beam allows the wheelhouse to

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be large enough to easily accommodate two blokes with comfort, yet still have a large walk around to the sides of the cabin.

Engineering/Construction Built from marine grade plate aluminium, the Noble Super-Vee is built to a very high standard. It is clear to see the Noble companies experience building for the defence forces, as these boats are built for strength.

Constructed from 5mm aluminium bottom sheets, and 4mm aluminium sides and deck, the boats are at the better end of the build standards in the industry. It is worth noting here also that should you be intending on operating the boat in extremely harsh conditions, a 6mm aluminium plate bottom is available as an option.

The underfloor strength structure is

built using 6mm stringers, along with a 4mm floor, after which the rest of the boat is created around that, producing a very accurate boat time and time again.

The boats are also built to meet quality assurance ISO 9001 standards, which are in place to prove the standard of their vessels, one of the only manufacturers in Australia to do so.

The fact that Noble Engineering is also a supplier to the defence forces is another telling factor, attesting to the quality and confidence provided by this product.

Backed by a full 3-year hull warranty, the Noble Company is very confident in the strength of their product.

Finish I am willing to go on record here to say that Noble Boats are the best finished aluminium vessels I have ever seen and have a far superior finish than their competition.

When this vessel arrived on the boat ramp to be dropped into the water, I took a good amount of time looking deeply over this boat.

Everywhere you look, this boat impresses. From the complex hull, the smooth and disguised welds, the straightness of the aluminium sheets, above average fittings on the boat to the absolutely awesome paint job, this boat is clearly a market leader.

The Rolls Royce of aluminium boats, this boat simply has to be seen to be believed.

