



## Noble Super Vee 6.2 & Honda 150 Combo

**Fighting for space in one of the most competitive sections of the marketplace is no easy task, and for Ben Noble's hard working team at his Brisbane factory, their challenge was even more difficult than most – they had to pick up the pieces from the much publicised Sportfish collapse of 2003. But all that's behind them now, and the crew, working alongside original Sportfish foreman, Warren Jackson, are putting together one of the best production plate alloy boats in Australia. Last month, Editor Peter Webster went along to check on their progress to date . . .**

**We've** always felt a bit sorry for Ben Noble, because he really did inherit a lot of baggage through the tortuous legal procedures that followed the collapse of the Sportfish operation in Brisbane last year.

A huge legal bun fight followed the voluntary appointment of an Official Administrator due to the ill health of the principle director of the Sportfish business at that time. In the fracas for control of the Sportfish business that followed, Ben Noble's 30 year old family business (based at Redcliffe in

north Brisbane) found themselves going head to head with Bill Collingburn's Yamba Engineering, an equally well known aluminium boat builder from that lovely part of the world on the banks of the Clarence River in Northern NSW.

When the dust settled, Ben Noble basically was forced to start all over again, as it transpired that Bill Collingburn's Yamba Engineering had indeed purchased the rights to the Sportfish name and the associated intellectual property.

The whole show was very poorly handled by the Official Administrators in the writer's opinion, with both companies "copping it sweet" to an extent that should never have happened. But it did, and it's taken the best part of 12 months for everything to settle down and the two (now) competitive companies to put the entire fracas behind them and move on.

That's what they are both doing.

This month, we are testing Ben Noble's latest 6.2, a craft which has been revamped by the architect

involved in the development of the original Sportfish Super Vee.

In the very near future, we will be looking at another platey of a similar genre, produced by Bill Collingburn's Yamba Engineering.

Bill has gone ahead with the complete redesign of the Sportfish range with his own naval architect, and thus we have a situation where one original company has now become two.

How this is all going to work out in the long term is anybody's guess, but given that both companies are highly experienced in their respective fields, and both are more than capable of producing national standard plate aluminium boats, we suspect that both will carve out a niche in the plate alloy sector, and could even end up working together.

Huh? "Together? Get outa here.!" I can hear you and the trade exclaiming.

Well, in the sense that all traditional plate aluminium boat builders (building craft such as these) are going to have to work increasingly well together if they are to combat the powerful competitive pressures being brought to this section of the market by the giant Telwater and Savage groups.

Yep, this is one hell of a competitive end of the marketplace, and the consumer is in the box seat.

Absolutely. Never has there been such



a fantastic choice of boats, from some of the best manufacturers in the country. They are producing boats of a calibre that not so long ago were just a twinkle in a fisho's eyes, or the subject of wishful thinking around a campfire between mates sharing a cold beer after a hard day's fishing offshore.

This month, we start off the comparo

with the Noble Super Vee 6.2, and as the first competitor out of the barrier, it's certainly laid down a very strong bid for supremacy in this complex and competitive field.

### **Background**

As the pictures show, this boat is very similar to a number of the original