



# Suzuki's 140 Is Here

**R**ight upfront we should declare that F&B has had more than a passing commercial interest in this new Suzuki 4-stroke 140hp outboard.

As most readers know, F&B maintains a number of project boats, and for some time, we've had in mind powering our new 6.50m alloy cat with a brace of Suzuki 140hp 4-strokes. However, until a few days before writing this report, (mid-April 2003) we'd neither finished the new cat, nor had we even seen the new 140 Suzukis.

Well, not until Greg Haines turned up with the 600RF spruced up and ready to be entered in the 2003 Australian Boat Of The Year Awards judging process. The Award's judging was taking place just down the road from our office, and quite a few of the entrants came and left through Runaway Bay Marina - including Greg, in this stunning 600RF.

Needless to say we knee-capped him in the parking lot, and grabbed the boat for a morning's workout as soon as he returned from the judging.

As things worked out, it was a near perfect set-up. F&B's Fishing Editor Damon Olsen was involved helping the Haines Marine team set-up the Signature for competitive Tag & Release fishing, so Damon was able to have several really good offshore runs in the 600RF too, as part of his involvement with the fishing program - see his counter-point on Page 63.

*Time Out:* New readers should note our full test report on the HMI 600RF was published in F&B April 2002 #78).

## Trade Pressure

It's doubtful if any engine has created quite so much angst amongst Suzuki's competitors as this 140hp, 186 kg (L/S - 20") engine.

It's easy to see why, too. Yamaha, one of the world's biggest manufacturers of 4-strokes, simply doesn't have a competitive engine at the moment, and although they're advertising that they've got one coming, even their most optimistic dealers acknowledge there won't be stocks in Australia "for months".

This leaves Yamaha with a huge gap in their range, jumping from their 115hp 4-stroke straight through to their 200/225hp 4-stroke engines.

Honda are a little better placed, but

Introducing what is certainly the most talked about new outboard motor we've seen in Australia for some years. Being the same weight as many comparable 2-stroke outboards, the Suzuki 140 not only breaks down the few remaining 2-stroke barriers, it has so many advanced technical features, it steps forward well clear of comparable 4-stroke engines, too. After a few minutes aboard the Haines Signature 600RF, the test boat for this 140hp mission, we knew what all the fuss was about. . . Peter Webster reports.

their 130hp is now in the middleweight division, being nearly 39kg heavier than the Suzuki 140hp, with 10hp less in output.

Similarly, even the 2-strokes are struggling to compete with this engine - it actually weighs less than Mercury/Mariner's 135hp Optimax (201kg) and even more incredibly, weighs virtually the same as the 2.5 litre, 2-stroke Mercury/Mariner 140hp which weighs 184kg.

No wonder the other outboard companies are paranoid about this engine!

For the record, this Suzuki 140 hp engine has also been available, rebadged, through the OMC Bombardier network, but rumours persist that the relationship between Bombardier OMC and Suzuki is not going to survive too much longer.

These rumours have been fuelled by Bombardier's recent announcement that they have now decided to sell off the struggling Johnson/Evinrude outboard motor business. Despite all

the Bombardier hype over the past 12-18 months, they are now seeking bids from interested parties to buy the troubled outboard business off them.\*\*

Just how this will impact on the Suzuki-Bombardier relationship was unclear at press time.

However, one would have to conclude that the relationship would be hard pressed to survive yet another round of corporate takeovers, mergers and changes.

## Suzuki Settles In

In Australia and NZ, Suzuki has now found a real home with the Haines family, and Haines Suzuki Marine is going from strength to strength on both sides of the Tasman.

The tightly-knit Haines family has achieved small miracles with the re-supply and distribution of this popular brand of outboards throughout Australia, in a remarkably short space of time.

Of course, they couldn't do that if the product wasn't as good as it is; Suzuki has always had a really good "grass roots" reputation out on the waterways, where thousands of boat owners have been happily using these tough little engines for many years.

That the Suzuki brand is now wholly administered in Australia and New Zealand by the Brisbane-based Haines family, has been welcomed by the trade and boating public alike.

## Suzuki Features

Contrary to what some outboard companies would have you believe, most real innovation in the world of outboards in the last couple of decades has come from Suzuki.

Probably their biggest achievement was the first development of a crankshaft driven, oil injection system that took away the hassles of having to blend outboard oil into the outboard's petrol for the first time.

Within a couple of years, virtually every outboard company in the world was forced to adopt the principle, and this and many other Suzuki features has given rise to the international respect this outboard company has in the marine world.

The 140 is another technical "tour de force".

It literally bristles with new technology and consumer benefit features.

Like so many of these Japanese