

The Long Trek To Borroloola, NT



After numerous conversations with one of my mates, who is also a valued customer, about the great fishing and interesting characters they've come across on their trips to Borroloola, we decided to get organised - and planned our inaugural trip together.

Another reason for this great adventure was that it enabled me to see how practical it was to stay aboard three different boats with a minimum of gear, while still being comfortable.

By the time we left we'd halved our initial list.

All three boats were built by Australian Master Marine. We had a 6.4m

centre cabin, the boat I built incorporated a fridge/freezer built in as seat boxes. Being the smaller of the three boats, the only noticeable hassle was having to move gear off the bed morning and night. Best solution? *Don't sleep, keep fishing!*

This boat was powered by twin 90 hp Hondas. The other two boats were cuddy cabins powered by twin 115

hp Yamahas.

The 7.8m has plenty of storage below the floor and two 90L fridge/freezers built into the boat, which means the crew had a large amount of uncluttered deck space from which to fish.

Our 7.4m had a free-standing freezer in the centre of the aft deck. This was easy to work around while fishing, and it also doubled as a table for us.

For top Brisbane plate boat builder, Barton Thomas, the chance to have *three* of his AMM boats travel right up to King Ash Bay, NT, together was irresistible. Apart from being a fishing trip many can only dream about, it gave him the priceless opportunity to use his own boat - and two others - in the field. In this special report, Barton and his companion Catherine Scrymgeour, share the highlights of an unreal expedition.

Our other fridge/freezer, was mounted behind the passenger seat.

Moving Out

Our first leg was from Brisbane to Oakey where we would meet up with our fearless leader, and spend our first night. This set the trend for our accommodation for the duration of the trip - sleeping in the boats every night we were away.

This short trip was enough for us to check how the boats sat on the trailers, monitor the wheel bearings and make any last minute adjustments necessary.

While there, we weighed the boats with the friendly local weigh bridge owner and found all three boats averaged between 2.5 tonne



Clockwise from Left: Sunrise over Cabbage Tree Bay, North Island. **Top:** Fountain Springs rest area, about half an hour south of Mt Isa. **Above Left:** Another hook-up! This time near Stevens Rocks. **Above:** Cath with a superb large mouth nannygai **Below:** AMM 7.4 at Small Inlet on Centre Island.

