



The Back Story:

Fitting Out 'Leviathan' For Long Haul Trailerboating

Report, Pics and Good Advice from Andy Meyer

When undertaking a trip, such as the one just completed to Emu Reef, NT, it is worth looking at a few of the logistics and considerations that come into play on such a long trip, in essentially what is just a small boat, albeit long way from anywhere.

Overall I think the most importation aspect I contemplate each trip is what can we take (or more importantly, not take) to make the trip both easier and more comfortable. The big secret to success which, while easily identified, I am yet to achieve success at, is to put the items that you get out back away after use. The longer the trip, the more the boat, and in particular the dash and cabin look like a bomb has hit them. Naturally the best outcome is to utilise every bit of space for storage, but the problems start when the stuff stays out or is not put back the same way. This situation is magnified when crew items starts arriving that have not been allowed storage for. I hasten to add that am very fortunate with this one and most of my crew travel pretty light. I suggest setting out clearly what they intend to bring before the eleventh hour.

The big ticket items are (more or less in order) as follows, fuel, water, ice, food and drink, fishing gear, bedding and a few changes of clothes. These items will be utilised continuously as

opposed to stuff you still need but don't usually access like first aid, spotlights, tools and spares etc.

Looking at these items in some detail, fuel is a big one. From a usage point of view the Rebel's Hondas use almost exactly one litre per kilometre under just about any load or conditions that I have had it in. On this trip we did around 475km and have done even longer trips. So with only 290 litres under the floor, extra fuel will be important. The large seat boxes that are under the helm chairs just manage to squeeze 2 x 20 litre squat jerry cans under each side with a bit of a jiggle to get them in there.

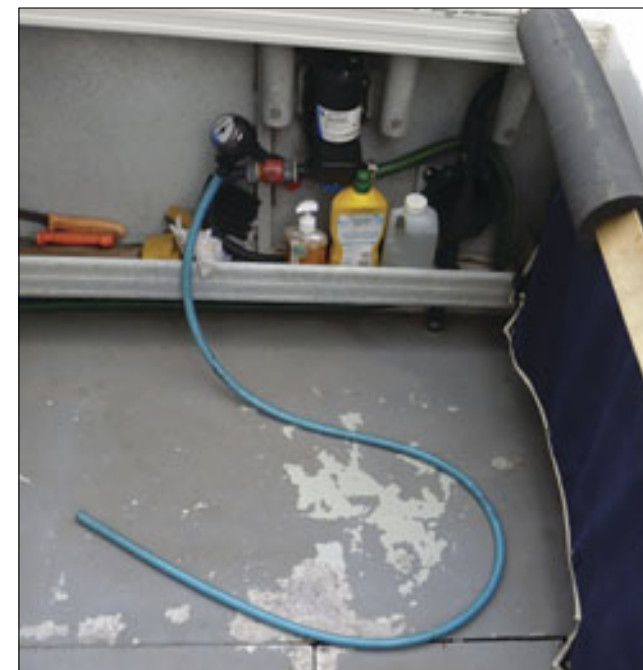
A note at this point that in my experience with plastic jerry cans in very hot weather is that air/vapour expands, while fuel doesn't very much at all by comparison. Therefore, when filling, I suggest not stopping when you get to 20 litres at the bowser. I get 22 litres in the squat cans and 23 litres in the taller ones with two openings, and until I empty them have very little trouble with expansion plus it's over an extra can of fuel in the end. Once I tie them on the cabin roof empty, they blow up like you wouldn't believe, sure keeps the rope tight.

That gets me to 380 litres with nothing on the floor. Depending on requirements, from there, I just add the taller plastic fuel cans (with the double opening) around the walk



around depending on the anticipated usage, plus the appropriate safety margin.

On the Emu trip I had 4 more on each side of the walk round giving a total of 564 litres. I keep the can in contact with the aluminium boat when filling and use a jiggler siphon arrangement to decant into tank. The last thing on fuel is, and I know this is a bit pedantic, but I fill the cans myself, every time. That way if it is not full enough, or the wrong stuff goes in, (it happens) the buck as usual, stops with the skipper.



Water can be easy if there is an inbuilt tank but unfortunately on Leviathan there is no such luxury. I have a 20 litre can in between the cab and the seat box and two more 20's and a 10

litre in the kill tank. Along with the 15 litres of ice water in the drink bottle, this is enough for cooking tea and showering.

The showering is too easy with a clip off hose on the intake



of the deck wash which allows a 2 metre piece on and just deck wash shower straight out of the drum. The drum I use daily that is in the sun a fair bit, is a black one (of the type that should be for diesel) so by day's end it is usually pretty hot as well.

Ice is critical, and in the tropics, even more so than normal. I take a lot, and have a 165 litre igloo marine poly cooler (5 x 12 kg bags) and a 125 litre popular fibreglass type box (4 x 12kg bags).

On the Emu trip we had an old fibreglass jobby in the cabin as well with 3 x 12 kg bags of spare ice (over 3kgs of dry ice) up our sleeve. I have to say that the big igloo holds nearly as



well as the fibreglass box and is twice as robust. I am thoroughly sick of refixing hinges handles and latches on these expensive glass eskies and they aren't worth the hassle in my opinion.

Having had a crack at fishing commercially and the associated master fisherman's licensing exams, it might be interesting to look at the best way to keep fish for the table. To cool them down it's all about surface contact between ice and fish. Therefore, it follows as a simple fact that cube ice is fitter for purpose by far than block ice. Sure block lasts longer, why? Because it's not cooling your fish as much, or as quickly!

Unfortunately the cube ice takes up much more space and many boats just can't dedicate that much room to carry ice as we do.

Fish are best put in layers standing upright with just enough ice between so you can just see the last lot, then more fish and so on. (See pic over page - Ed)

The ice will melt fast at the outset getting the fish down to temperature and then the melt slows right down to a trickle. The ice must be melting ice and draining freely with bung out (at