



This is a most unusual boat test report. The subject of this month's analysis, *Take Two*, a 702 Haines Signature Walkabout, powered by two 90 hp Honda 4-stroke outboards on a tandem axle Mackay trailer, has been F&B's principal Project Boat for nearly 18 months. It was commenced in November '95, and launched in May 1996.

On the face of it, *Take Two's* original 'mission statement' seemed almost impossible to achieve, as several of the jobs were in open conflict with each other.

The job list included four principal areas of concern:

1. To work as the camera boat for the wide range of commercial marine photography undertaken by F&B publisher, Sea Media.
2. It was to be used as a fishing/cruising boat for a series of exploratory field trips throughout Queensland.
3. To provide the test bed for the brand new 4-stroke Honda 90's that had just been released (last year).
4. We wanted to work with a true 'walk-around' fishing boat, and check out the strengths (and weaknesses) of this interesting US fishing boat development under Aussie conditions.

It was a tall order, and we pushed the boat, the Hondas, the Mackay trailer and all the ancillary equipment to the limit as we explored this fascinating boat's potential to the max. Despite the conflicts (the demands of a good cruising boat are almost diametrically opposed to those of a good fishing boat) the Haines Signature 702 Walkabout succeeded to a remarkable extent in all four categories.

By the time this report is published, the boat will have been delivered to its new (Gold Coast) owners; they have purchased an exceptional craft - truly, one of a kind.

The 'Take Two' LOG



Over the last 18 months we've travelled some 20,000 kilometres on the highway, completed over 150 engine hours with the Honda 90's, lived onboard the boat for periods of up to five days, and taken thousands of photographs of so many boats we long ago lost count.

We've encountered virtually every condition you'll find at sea, short of a Force Seven plus gale and cyclonic conditions - not something we normally seek out in our test programs!

Take Two has come through this whole process with flying colours. The main skipper, Ruth Cunningham, and the writer are now so confident in the boat's ability to handle whatever comes our way, we would go anywhere in it, at any time.

It is a forgiving, sensitive and immensely seaworthy hull, and has easily confirmed my initial report (January 1996) when we described the 702 as having "the best seven metre

hull in Australia today".

That comment not only stands - it's been enhanced.

We've encountered some frightful conditions in *Take Two*. We've also endured a lot of very hard conditions. Such as the day we came back down the Great Sandy Straits punching for 25 miles into a short, 1.0 m chop. It's in conditions like these that you can see how well the boat has been 'glued' together; if anything's going to fall off, it will fall off in conditions like this.

Similarly, off the Barren Islands east of the Keppels in central Queensland, the seas were big enough to be a worry, and tested the whole notion of the walkaround's "big trench" philosophy. There was plenty of water flying about that afternoon, and I'm not talking about the boat being "wet" either. It was just plain bloody rough and wild.