



Like so many families today, Tim Paul's mob all wanted to do something different - and it wasn't just about his own family - but also their friends who, naturally enough, wanted to join in the fun. So the trick was to create a performance family fun boat, Tim could use as a pretty serious fishing rig, too . . .

With Patience & A Helpful Boat Builder, Compromise Can Work Well.

How Tim Paul and his Melbourne family worked out a compromise between a fishing boat and one also for family fun, including skiing.

As a normal family man with two now adult children, I decided to purchase a new boat that could accommodate my own interests as well as those of my son and daughter who both have boat licences.

After owning an excellent 2002 5.0m Cruise Craft Rival fibreglass runabout, with a 115hp 2-stroke Yamaha motor, it was time to update the ability for family fun and skiing with a bit more power and room. Pulling wakeboards, kneeboards and tubes was no problem for the gutsy Yammy, but the skiers were a different kettle of fish, even with the 15" pitch, four blade prop.

I'm a keen fishing person when I

get the chance, in both fresh and salt water, but it was also necessary to balance the ledger in both areas of fishing and fun. How to achieve that in a workable compromise is a dilemma.

Reading many articles in F&B magazines and the extensive Sea Media on-line library, provided me with a lot of ideas to explore. You have to compromise, and therefore each side of the equation must – by definition – lose out in some aspects. Throw in a neck and back problem for yours truly, an electric anchor winch comes into the fray as a necessity. That is a big problem for price negotiation, because a known brand 12v power winch is always

going to be around \$2,500 fitted.

So after having a Savage Envoy fibreglass, a Quintrex alloy and a Cruise Craft fibreglass boat, we decided to go back to a lighter aluminium boat. We joined the current trend of it being a platey, tough and stable, but for this one, I wanted it to be 4 mm plate aluminium all round, sides and hull, which ruled out quite a few brands.

Why back to aluminium? The 2002 Cruise Craft we sold with 70 hours on the clock, was probably one of the nicest looking Rivals you will see around, but it required a lot of TLC, especially when you pull up and get scratches on the sandy banks of Lake Hume, NSW, or



. . . with some very clever thought, and the bit between his teeth, Tim set out to build his (last) dream boat. "This is it," he said, "It has to work . . ."



nestling against the cliff banks of the Glenelg River at Nelson on the Victoria/SA border. Whilst these things are unavoidable to a large degree, and are just part of our boating world, there isn't the same worry about potential hull damage with plate boats.

Now what sort of plate boat? It had to be bigger – 5.6m was a good size, and easily capable of carrying six passengers. By the time you have a couple of people out the rear on the ropes, plus an observer, and a few who want to change over, the capacity for six is needed.

As far as fishing, then it allows 3 to fish comfortably.

I had to have a 4-stroke motor to meet future emissions and resale later on, and for it to be able to take the weight without any issues of being too heavy on the transom.

The 4-stroke had to have the power to pull slalom skiers.

The motor choice came down to weight and reliability and the review articles in Sea Media pointed to a popular motor, the Suzuki 140hp 4-stroke. Obviously for both purposes a suitable prop would be vital for the performance. A 17 pitch 3 blade was advised by Solas Propellers.

When requesting packages from dealers, you have to strictly compare apples with apples and that is when the options have a big influence on the sales.

There are many good electric anchor winches in the same price bracket. The one that was chosen, the Savwinch – was picked for one basic reason – it did not have a gap or recess in the side of the drum, where a rope could get caught.

Other issues impacting on the rig's

cost included:

Having had mechanical steering on three previous boats, and seized cables no matter how well they were serviced, it was time to take the plunge and get hydraulic steering.

It was decided a rear transom door for getting in and out of the boat would make it much easier for the skiers, and also the lady folk and us older gents, when backing up to the bank.

A live bait tank and a kill tank would be desirable to finally be able to get that mulloway at Nelson.

Inquiries were made with many brands of plate boats, and there sure is a plethora of them available now. But you may ask, why haven't I discussed price range? Well, in truth I was still on the learning curve, but learning fast! You can't buy much for the mid \$40's. Some of the higher