

Pongrass Waverider & the Chrysler 75hp Outboard

1976: "It may be just a little dated, but this 5.25 halfcab is still plugging a hole the majority of boat manufacturers just can't see - the family "station wagon" boat market."

Billed as the "jet age replacement, for the old Botany half-cabin fishing boat", the Pongrass Waverider is now firmly established as one of the biggest selling half cabs in Australia.

It was originally designed by Pongrass chief Frank Bailey, more than six years ago, and so far, more than 1,500 Waveriders have been sold.

Market penetration of this scale is something money alone cannot buy. It is said you can sell anything if you promote it hard enough — but if the basic product or commodity isn't up to scratch, no amount of advertising or sales pitch is going to convince fifteen hundred boatowners to buy it.

Typically, the Waverider has not been heavily promoted.

Like the Pongrass philosophy itself, the Waverider's success is drawn from extremely skilled original design, and consistently high volume production levels, which produce good products at the right price. In turn, this happy combination produces consistently high demand, year after year.

indicating she has ample reserves to carry quite a high floor loading. In other words, if you have a few extra friends along for a short ride, or a really big fish to carry home, she won't sink up to her gunwales and perform like a cow in a bog.

The cabin is just over 1.52 metres long with a sitting headroom of 1.29 metres. It is comfortable and practical for a couple of adults, although the sleeping accommodation puts



right up to the outboard well, and stand, fishing, wedged in the cockpit corner.

The outboard well area is well designed. The well is self-draining, and capable of accepting powerplants up to the recommended maximum of 125 horsepower. Two wide, deep, draining bait wells are fitted on either side of the forward edge of the well — and while that is not particularly unusual these days — the whole area works particularly smoothly.

The hull is a variable deadrise, curved chine planing hull, with a number of unusual features.

The most obvious is a 3" wide, docking keel which runs almost the full length of the hull to protect trailer" rollers, and no doubt, to provide extra rigidity and strength to the hull bottom.

Then, instead of the usual multiple planing strakes, the Waverider has just one wide strake on either side of the hull.

These two strakes fulfil multiple roles. They turn down some of the spray, they provide a degree of extra hull lift, as well as boosting the hull's grip on the water in tight, high speed turns.

However, the Waverider's beauty is more than just skin deep, and for a real education in the principles of good hull design, a close study of the hull is warranted.

Firstly, the hull features a fine, but by modern standards, very deep forefoot.

Bailey has designed a faint hollowness behind the forefoot which builds out into a smoothly curved bottom section. In fact, it is very difficult to find any flat sections on the bottom at all, as Bailey recognised the twin merits of curved hull sections

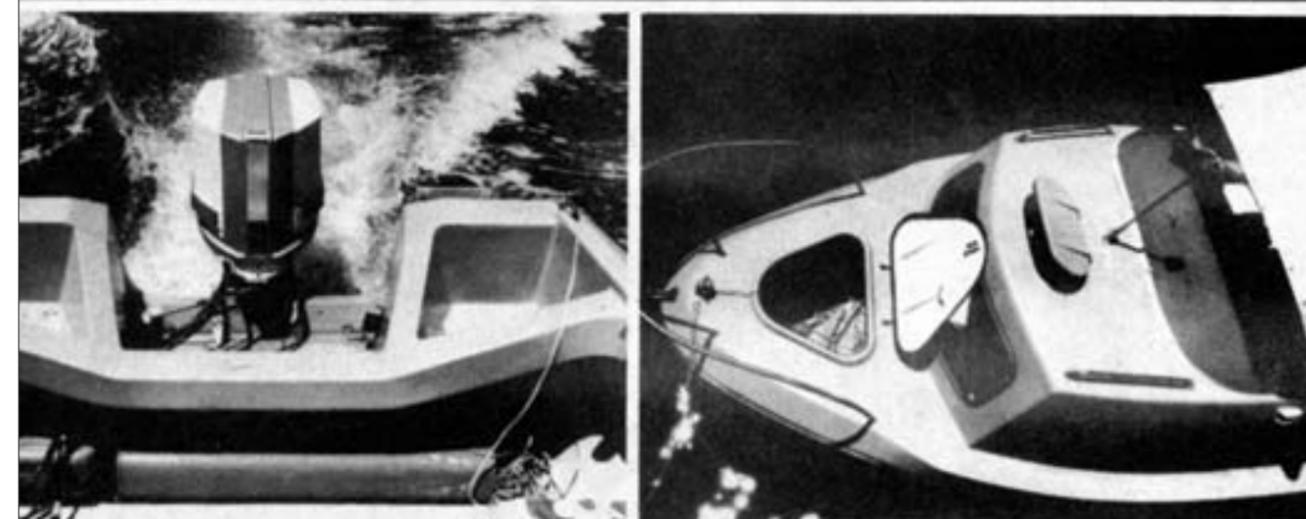
overnight stops in the adventure category, rather than the serious cruising class. The bunks measure 1.82 (6') metres. Treating the Waverider as a dayboat, the cabin/bunks provide comfortable shelter for Mum and the kids, along with all the paraphernalia of family days on the water, should the weather become unpleasant.

The cockpit is pleasing, as designer Frank Bailey has proven it is possible to provide inexpensive seating for the family, as well as leaving enough space for the serious fisherman. As the photos reveal, it is possible to walk



Manufacturer	Model	Length	Beam	H.P. Range	Weight	Price
Caribbean	Crestcutter	5.26	2.21	40 - 115	465	\$3,000
Haines Hunter	V17c	5.207	2.05	40 - 160	441	\$3,400
Savage	Pacific	5.03	2.13	40 - 140	476	\$3,265
Swiftcraft	Seagull	5.06	1.96	30 - 115	408	\$2,603
Pongrass	Waverider	5.23	2.13	40 - 125	430	\$3,175
Cruise-Craft	Regal	5.02	2.18	70 - 160	589	\$3,075

All prices include bunk cushions, windscreens and cabin windows. The prices shown are as accurate as we could obtain at presstime, for the Sydney metropolitan area. However, precise specifications vary from boat to boat, and neither this magazine, nor the manufacturers (or their dealers) can be responsible for any variation that may occur to the price of the craft now or in the future.



**F&B
RETRO BOAT
TEST:**
Unchanged,
as first
published,
written and
photographed
by Peter
Webster in
1976

Design

The Waverider is a basic half cabin runabout, with two berths in the cabin, a nice 6' x 6' cockpit and very interesting hull shape.

It measures 5.23 metres down the centreline, and has a maximum beam of 2.13 metres amidships. Importantly, the waterline beam is 1.62 metres,