



Explore and Discover

Quintrex recently unveiled a series of new models and hull designs. KRIS SWERES checks out a new version of the company's popular estuary tinny – the 440 Explorer.

1. Plenty of fishing space on the casting platform – ideal for estuary fishes flicking lures at bream and bass.
2. The Explorer gave a good account of itself, offering a dry, soft ride in bumpy conditions.
3. Quintrex now offers these quality wraps in various designs.





QUINTREX HAS LISTENED to the needs of estuary sportfishermen and delivered a practical and eye catching package with this new Explorer. Super clever storage, large clutter free casting decks and a ride that is rock solid and quick ... it seems that Quinnie has pulled another winner out of the hat with this boat. In my view, this boat would be ideal for any angler who spends time flicking lures round canals, creeks and river mouths. Maintaining the Eclipse hull design has given the boat a stable casting platform at rest while delivering a smooth, dry ride. Hull thickness for the Explorer we tested was 3mm along the bottom and 2mm up the sides, which equates to a non-flex, very rigid feel. Hitting chop and boat wash barely moved the hull and the ride was virtually unaffected. I've always loved the peace of mind that a heavier duty aluminum gauge offers. I think remote area anglers and guys that are a little harder on their boats will really appreciate this.

Additional extras like the vinyl wrap makes this little estuary legend even better. I'm told the wraps will initially be available in around five different designs with more to come. They really do offer that next step up from a standard paint job and are a high quality product. I just loved the blue "mangrove jack" design – it just looks cool!

A plumbed live well and dedicated electric motor bracket can be added as optional extras. This helps keep the initial boat price down.

Another great feature offered in the new Explorer range are the interchangeable storage bins that easily lift in or out depending on your requirements. These pre-moulded buckets fit like a glove into their respective hatches and add another level of customisation to the boat.

Day out with the kids? Convert the underfloor space into a massive storage

area for extra life jackets, towels or even a knee board. On the other hand you could drop the bins back in for clothes/wet weather gear, tackle or to chill drinks down. Very nifty stuff.

These days fishing rods are moving away from traditional shorter lengths to longer, lighter flick sticks. Lengths of 7ft plus are fairly common as more and more fishermen are opting for throwing light lures around the local bays, creeks and estuaries. The Explorer has an optional rod storage pocket that can accommodate rods up to 9ft in length. It opens from the base of the floor upwards. Rods are stored against the port side one up above the next, thus only requiring a thin side panel to do this – this results in maximum floor space.

The test boat featured a 50hp EFI four stroke Mercury that was so quick that I found myself throttling back to enable a steady heartbeat again! I loved the grunt this motor offered, but a motor of this size certainly isn't a necessity. You could easily downsize engines if budgetary constraints were an issue without comprising too much, but gaining lower running costs, etc. With the Gold Coast's Broadwater whipping up winds reaching 30 knots on the day, the ride was surprisingly dry, even at speed.

The fore and aft casting decks are perfect fishing platforms and a quality marine carpet covering both is another great standard addition for the Explorer. A small step from the centre floor up to the front casting platform would make a big difference to overall comfort and fishability. I found moving up and down off the front deck to be a bit of a jump.

A transducer bracket comes as a standard feature for the Explorer as well so hooking up your preferred depth sounder is a quick and simple process.

Although minor, the standard addition of a side pocket positioned thoughtfully next to the rear driver's side is a godsend. Keys, wallet

and phone now have a home. I've had the displeasure of taking an impromptu "swim" with my phone in one pocket and wallet in the other – it's not fun. Having a dedicated spot for valuables will see boat owners safely stow these away from harm's way.

For those inland fishos who spend a lot of time on large impoundments trolling for big yellies and bass, a bimini cover can also be fitted to keep that scorching sun at bay. The 440 Explorer Trophy also comes with two very nice marine grade seats that can be positioned in five different positions throughout the boat.

This rig would be ideal as an entry (and more) level tournament boat at a fraction of the cost of many of the imported boats available on the market. It ticks all the boxes as well as enabling anglers to reach spots that other bigger rigs can't. Think popping for whiting across super shallow sand flats or sneaking further up that shallow, inaccessible bass creek.

Overall I really loved this rig. The ride, fit out and use of space were everything you could want in a smaller boat package. It's clearly been designed by people who actually spend time in boats.

Check the Explorer range out at your local Quintrex dealer or online at quintrex.com.au. ■

Quintrex 440 Explorer

LENGTH: 4.48m

BOW/TRANSOM: 4.43m

BEAM: 2.04

WEIGHT: (Boat only) 360kg

POWER: (max 50 kg)

FIT OUT: ★★★★★

RIDE/HANDLING: ★★★★★

FISHABILITY: ★★★★★

OVERALL FINISH: ★★★★★

VALUE: ★★★

OVERALL: ★★★★★