



New Power

Hardcore Hard Tops



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Quintrex has expanded its Trident range of plate aluminium boats with new 650 and 690 Hard Tops.

Quintrex continues to expand its range of tough Trident offshore plate aluminium fishing boats, with the recent release of new 650 and 690 Hard Top models.

The Gold Coast-based manufacturer, the largest boat builder in the southern hemisphere, hosted a media launch of the new models in late-June, also taking the opportunity to show journalists through its factory, which is now geared up to produce around 12,000 plate and sheet aluminium boats per year.

Quintrex has also updated the existing 610, 650 and 690 open boats in the Trident range, packing them with even more fishing-friendly features.

We spent a couple of hours sampling the new Hard Tops on the Gold Coast's protected Broadwater waterway, as well as venturing out into the Tasman for a taste of bluewater handling on what was a relatively mild sea.

The Trident range is intended to offer a rugged platform for those who take their fishing seriously and who aren't shy about going out wide in search of fish. With the launch of the new Hard Tops, Quintrex is taking the concept to another level, offering increased protection and comfort, which should appeal particularly to boaties in the southern half of the continent, who have to endure sometimes harsh treatment from the elements.

Built tough with 5mm bottomsides and plenty of longitudinal and lateral underfloor ribbing and struts to withstand punishing offshore conditions, the new 650 and 690 also share Quintrex's Blade Hull and Flared Bow design for softer and drier riding and directional stability.

The hardtops are bolted to the upper deck and provide good protection as well as offering plenty of head height. A laminated toughened glass windscreen, with wiper and freshwater wash, is standard fitment, as are sliding side windows. Sturdy adjustable pedestal seats with bolsters and storage pockets in the bases provide running comfort, while there is also an optional foldaway bench seat in the cockpit.

Both Hard Tops feature plenty of dash space for large-screen plotters and sounders, which are not included in the packages as Quintrex



maintains most buyers have their own specific preferences when it comes to electronics.

A spartan, though spacious, cabin is a little light on when it comes to creature comforts, but the extra space will be appreciated by fishos with a big toy collection.

FISHING CENTRAL

Fishing is central to the whole Trident concept and with the range of standard features Quintrex has thrown into the mix, these boats will be ready for a trip to the Shelf straight from the showroom.

A deep livebait well with a viewing window sits in the port corner of the transom and features an underhull scoop inlet that forces water into the well when the boat is underway. In the middle of the transom is a sturdy and large bait prep station with a cutting board and overboard drain to keep things tidy.

Opposite: The Quintrex 690 Hard Top is put through its paces.

Top: The conventional dash is well laid out and has space enough for most large-display electronics.

Bottom: Fishos will appreciate the practical working transom.



By Chris Beattie



Fishing is central to the whole Trident concept



A total of 17 rodholders are distributed around the cockpit, including Quintrex's own 'Real Easy' roof-mounted plastic holders, which cleverly flip down to allow easy and quick rod access.

There is also a new 135lt plumbed kill tank positioned mid-ships in the floor and set laterally to keep things in place when underway.

Other features shared between both models include twin batteries mounted high in the transom, a self-draining checkerplate deck for rapid water expulsion when needed, a transom door for easy access, a built-in boarding ladder, burley bucket, large side pockets for storage, Volvo BTS trim tabs and a VHF radio.

There is also a host of other options available for those who want to pack their Hard Tops with extra features.

During our limited time on the water I was impressed by the overall layout of both boats, in particular the large, open and deep cockpits, which should appeal to dedicated anglers. There is plenty of room to move about and the hardtops provide plenty of protection without sacrificing visibility.

On-water behavior was confidence-inspiring in terms of handling and steering response and the ride was particularly impressive, albeit in pretty mild conditions. Stability at rest on both craft was what you'd expect from a boat designed for fishing in all conditions.

PRICE POINTS

Pricing for the 650 Hard Top supplied by Hunts Marine (huntsmarine.com.au), as presented, including an Evinrude E-TEC 225hp, and additional options, including Fusion sound system, cabin backrest, deck wash, HT LED lighting, rear lounge, cabin cushions and two-tone paint is \$82,320. Standard pricing begins at \$79,990, including registration and safety gear.

The 690 Hard Top as presented, including an Evinrude E-TEC 250 HO engine, Lowrance HDS12 display, LED lighting, deck wash, rear lounge and special Trident grey metallic paint, plus registration and safety gear, is \$93,808 as supplied by Springwood Marine (springwoodmarine.com.au). Standard pricing, including registration and safety gear, is \$87,168.

Both Hard Tops are available as Quintrex Instant Boating Packages, complete with motor,

The Tridents perform and ride well. Cabins are spartan but functional.



The 650 Hard Top is packed with fishing-friendly features.

Quintrex trailer and a three-year limited factory warranty.

The 650 is rated for up to 225hp, with a 180lt fuel tank, while the 690 can handle up to 250hp and is equipped with a 200lt tank.

Quintrex National Account Manager, Cameron Wood, said the Trident Hard Tops had been designed specifically to appeal to offshore fishers.

“The Trident Hard Top really is one tough plate boat,” he said. “Each one is built by our expert plate boat team and involves over 60 hours of welding.”

“The checkerplate floor is fully welded and the structure of the entire boat is reinforced with a solid T-keel, which is triple-welded to the side sheet.”

For more information, go to: quintrex.com.au.



Telwater tour

It was fascinating to see the production processes that Quintrex has developed over many years of aluminium boat production. With hi-viz vests and safety goggles in place, we were taken for a guided tour through the large 8.6-hectare production facility that parent company Telwater owns at Coomera on the Gold Coast. Brands produced in-house include Quintrex, Savage, the affordable Stacer range and the most recent addition to the brand line-up, the Yellowfin range of offshore fishing craft. It seems that, in the aluminium market, Telwater pretty much has an answer for most applications.

Our first stop in the factory was the stretching and cutting station, where the production of the company's plate boats begins. Here the lengthy special marine-grade aluminium plates that make up the hull sides

are stretched over a shaped form and then, depending on the specific model, are plasma cut in a computer-controlled process unique to Telwater. It certainly gives a new meaning to the term 'cutting edge' to see this high-tech process in action.

The process continues with the keel, 5mm bottoms, 3mm sides and transoms tack-welded to produce the basic hull shape. Then the various 4mm 'gibs' – specially shaped plates that Telwater says are a cross between structural ribs and gussets – are welded in place inside the hull to provide integral strength and stiffness and also to ensure the hull bottoms conform exactly to the desired shape.

At the same time the various other components, such as the upper decks, kill tanks, hardtops, bait prep stations, cabin bulkheads, fuel tanks and other



Left and below: Aluminium 'gibs' give strength and shape to the hull. A special TIG welding process ensures quality welding.



hull fittings are fabricated to suit each individual model as it progresses through the build.

An intricate 'milk crate' web of square-section aluminium framework is welded in place inside the hull to form the cockpit floor support and then the various components that complete the basic layout of the boat are welded or bolted into place.

A special twin-pulse TIG (Tungsten Inert Gas) welding method is used throughout the construction process. It ensures even welds and prevents any contamination or pitting. We each had an opportunity to weld some aluminium during our tour and the results of our efforts served to reinforce the impression that, as welders, the journo's present were better off sticking with their current day jobs!

Once all basic hull and upper deck construction and welding is complete, the hulls are prepared for the multi-stage painting process, which involves around three to four hours of hands-on work, before the hulls pass through an infrared drying booth.


From here, the hulls progress into a separate finishing building, where all of the many mechanical and electric systems are installed, along with seats, windscreens, carpeting, roto-moulded components and engines. The finishing process takes around seven days for a typical large plate craft.

In total, each plate boat undergoes over 60 hours of welding to produce the finished product.

Unlike some other alloy boat manufacturers, Telwater doesn't attempt to machine blend its welds, preferring instead to have them on show as proof of the company's high-quality production processes.

A few years ago the company also began building its own trailers and now produces around 20 trailers per day in either aluminium or galvanised steel.

Telwater currently employs a team of over 200 staff, including welders, painters, assemblers and a research and development team.

The company produces more than 100 individual models, ranging in size from two to seven metres, with up to 30 boats a day being sent out to more than 220 dealers Australia-wide and exports finding their way to over 20 countries covering the South Pacific, Asia and Europe. It also has a manufacturing and assembly facility in Russia, with demand growing for its range of rugged and functional fishing boats. 

The larger plate models typically take around seven days to complete. Over 60 hours of welding goes into each boat.

