



Mean machine – Quintrex's 690 Trident Hardtop looks the biz in gunmetal grey.

## Tough on top

FISHOS SEEKING EXTRA PROTECTION FROM THE COLD OR SUN  
NOW HAVE A RUGGED NEW OPTION FROM QUINTREX

**M**ore than 60 hours of welding goes into the construction of every Quintrex Trident Hardtop boat, according to the company's media director Damien Duncan. So why would they let a gang of inept marine writers anywhere near Quinny's hi-tech twin-pulse welder?

As one journalist after another burned uneven welds across their magazine's aluminium nameplate, the answer became clear: to provide an appreciation of the craftsmanship that goes into a quality welding job. From bow to stern, these new Hardtops feature endless lines of neat, workmanlike welds but, as a factory tour of the assembly plant revealed, there's a lot more than just talented welders involved with these new models.

### HANDS ON

In a break from tradition, the most recent

Quintrex media launch included more than just letting the boating press loose on the water with the company's newest toys. First up, the friendly PR team led us through the factory to demonstrate the various steps involved in creating the new Hardtop range.

This starts with a robotic stretching machine which stretch-forms sheets of specialised alloy (imported for its high silica content, which equals "stretchability"). A plasma cutter then carves the sheets into recognisable hull shapes, before the first of the welders sets to work.

The new Trident range features two models: a 650 Hardtop and a 690 Hardtop, both based on Quintrex's existing Trident range, but with a few interesting extras. The Blade Hull remains, with 5mm bottomsides supported by a sub-frame of both longitudinal and latitudinal ribs, or "gibs" in Quintrex-speak.

Gibs are a cross between gussets and

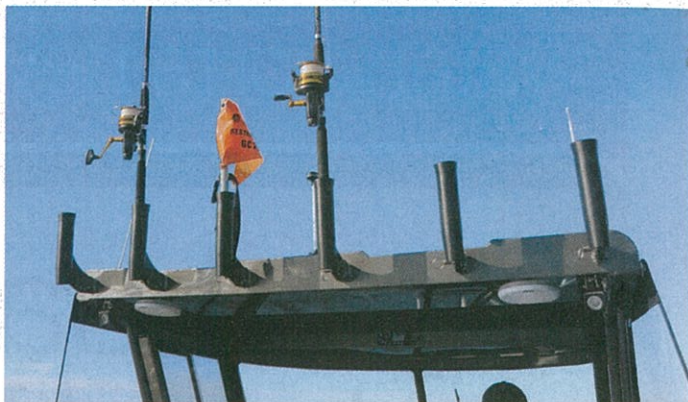
ribs, but all you really need to know is that they're pre-cut aluminium struts of various sizes that are welded into the sub-floor every 50cm or so for additional strength. The plate bottom is pressed up against the sub-frame and its gibs and the welders set to work. The result is a hard-wearing, very rigid hull with a smooth finish.

### DOWN TO BUSINESS

Inside that hull, there are a host of new features that are bound to excite those with saltwater in their blood. Positioned across the floor amidships, there's a 135lt killtank for starters. This unusual forward placement has been done for optimal weight distribution, but serves a dual purpose. At rest, it can be flooded to give you substantial water ballast for more stability, or even filled while underway for a more weighty punch through heavy chop.

Just aft, there's a hefty 200lt fuel tank (standard in both Hardtop models) and





### quick specs

#### 650 Trident Hardtop

**MATERIAL** Aluminium  
**TYPE** Monohull fishing boat  
**LENGTH** 6.69m (LOA)  
**BEAM** 4.32m  
**WEIGHT** 1020kg  
**ENGINE** 150 to 225hp

### quick specs

#### 690 Trident Hardtop

**MATERIAL** Aluminium  
**TYPE** Monohull fishing boat  
**LENGTH** 7.07m (LOA)  
**BEAM** 2.48m  
**WEIGHT** 1130kg  
**ENGINE** 150 to 250hp

this can be accessed for maintenance via a removable floor panel. On the starboard quarter there's a solid transom door for dragging those prize fish on board, or for divers to access the flip-down swimladder.

And it's all business at the stern, folks. Fishy business. The bait station houses five rodholders, two drinkholders, a nylon cutting board and a rear drain. No mess, no fuss, and no lip to interfere with the delicate business of filleting. On port there's a livebait tank with viewing window and an external water pickup and in the centre is the twin battery box, raised off floor level.

### TOUGH ON TOP

But what about the hardtop? This is no tacked-on afterthought – the new model Tridents feature a two-piece curved glass screen that rises from the line of the original cabin top and sliding glass panels fill out the sides. This ensures fishos down south stay cosy, while those up north can let the breeze in. Additional clears can also be fitted at the sides for more driver protection.

There are plenty of handholds inside the cab, which is carpet lined, and optional LED striplights can be fitted along the roofline. There's also an

included wiper and a hatch from the cabin opens out to the bow for anchor access.

The rocket launcher is worth a mention, too. Quintrex have developed a clever system dubbed Reel Easy which sees the six rodholders able to pivot down to a horizontal position, via a locking pin. This means anyone can easily reach up to load or unload rods, before flipping it up again and locking everything in place. The company's new Boat Catch system was also on display – another elegantly simple solution and available as a trailer option.

At the helm was a smart switch panel, and Volvo Penta trim controls, plus twin E-TEC i-Command gauges for the outboard. Quintrex have intentionally left a huge space clear for modern widescreen electronics, but the choice of unit is left to you, the purchaser. Helm seats are mounted on storage boxes and there's shelving that extends all the way back, beneath the gunwales.

### CLEAR THE SEAWAY

Quintrex provided both models for the media pack to test. The 650 Hardtop featured smart black and white paint, paired with a Evinrude E-TEC HO 225. The 690 was menacing in gunmetal grey

**TOP LEFT** Plate boats supervisor Peter Steinhardt demonstrates how the "gibs" are fitted; the clever Reel Easy rodholders. **ABOVE LEFT** Fully-equipped bait station, with live tank on port. **ABOVE RIGHT** The 690 Trident Hardtop was fitted with a 250hp E-TEC HO that looked slick in matching paint.

and the matching Evinrude was a nice touch, this one at the top of the power range – 250hp.

Conditions on our test day were fairly benign – shining sun and a slight wind chop, but it's easy to see both models of the Hardtop would be belters offshore. The Blade hull features an increased 23° deadrise and a sharper entry than previous models to carve up the lumps and when packaged with high-output Evinrudes, they're a formidable package. The release this month of a new-look E-TEC range will only further this appeal.

Quintrex are a common sight on the water all around Australia, and for good reason, with a reputation for toughness and reliability. The release of this Hardtop range is only going to gain more fans, providing mariners seeking protection from the elements with a solid option, regardless of where in Oz they're dropping a line. ■