

**YELLOWFIN 6700 HARDTOP**

# BARREL-CHASER

Yellowfin's heavy-duty, plate-aluminium fishing boats have recently been upgraded with an even better fishing-focussed design, together with a thoughtfully-constructed hardtop to provide excellent weather protection. Jeff Webster took the new 6700 Hardtop for a spin and came away very impressed with the performance of the Yellowfin and its Evinrude 225hp E-Tec G2 HO DFI 2-stroke outboard.

AUTHOR AND PHOTOGRAPHY: JEFF WEBSTER



**Y**ellowfin boats need little introduction to Australian anglers. These tough, plate-alloy boats debuted way back in the early 1980s and have been available sporadically from various boat companies ever since. Today Yellowfin boats are owned and manufactured by Telwater, which also builds Quintrex, Stacer and Savage aluminium boats.

Being part of the Quintrex/Telwater stable has been a good thing for the Yellowfin brand. Quintrex knows how to build aluminium boats, having done so for more than half a century, while Telwater's expertise in the design and manufacture of aluminium boats

cannot be questioned. This is reflected in the layout and construction of the upgraded Yellowfin boat range – all of which are built like tanks.

Three out of the four new models are built with a 6mm bottom, 5mm transom and 4mm topsides. The smaller 5800 model has a slightly lighter gauge 5mm bottom, but is sturdier than most other boats in this size.

All four models in the relaunched Yellowfin boat range are available with a standard cuddy/half cabin layout, as well as a hardtop and fully enclosed helm/saloon layout, effectively boosting the range to eight models. The boats all come standard with sealed, self-





draining cockpits with non-return scuppers, as well as hydraulic steering and Volvo Penta BTS 300 trim tabs.

We chose the 6700 Hardtop for this review as it can be comfortably towed behind a 4WD vehicle on a 2-tonne-plus trailer with break-away brakes, yet still retains the safety features, comfort and seaworthiness to fish wide offshore waters.

#### **WELL PROPORTIONED**

The Yellowfin 6700 has a traditional vee-hull bottom with a fine entry and moderate, 19-degree transom vee. The hull has an overall length of 7.05m and a hull







**Above:** The hardtop provides ample room to shelter both the skipper and navigator, without intruding on the cockpit fishing space. The helm and dash allows plenty of space for electronics, while the black painted finish and rubber dash matting eliminates any glare or reflection on the toughened-glass windscreen.

**Above right:** The cabin is deceptively spacious, providing 2m-plus berths. Berth cushions, side-pocket upholstery and carpet ceiling lining are options.

length of 6.75m. The beam is a substantial 2.4m and the hull is designed to accept a single extra-longshaft outboard to a maximum of 225hp.

Like its siblings, the 6700 has fully-welded construction, including the checker-plate self-draining cockpit floor, along with a matrix of longitudinal stringers, cross bracing struts and reinforced transom. There is foam flotation underfloor to achieve a 'Basic' standard with seven people onboard.

At a glance, the Yellowfin 6700 Hardtop appears to be all cockpit with little cabin, not that this will be a problem for most anglers. However, the open layout cabin is bigger than it looks from the outside, with ample space and more than 2m berths.

In my opinion, the 6700 has the best relationship between open cockpit space and helm and forward cabin shelter of all four of the different Yellowfin models. The proportions between the two are ideal and there's more than enough space in the rear cockpit to fit a small game chair and still be able to fish around it.

In addition to the over-sized berths, the cabin has two under-berth lockers with roto-moulded poly inserts, slim side storage pockets, a forward access hatch, 1.3m of headroom (sole to ceiling) and a removable wiring box cover.

The hatch covers are carpeted front and back for weather protection as standard. However, carpet lining to the ceiling and surrounds is optional, as are the vinyl berth cushions and upholstery to the side pockets.

Another option not fitted is an infill board and cushion to convert the two single berths into one very large double. There is also no provision for a toilet and no mention of one in the options list.

You can access the bow and large anchor well by using the clear Perspex forward cabin hatch or by climbing around the cabin sides. The latter is quite easy as the sidedecks are wide and there is a very useful handrail on each side of the hardtop.



The test rig was fitted with the optional Savwinch 1500w electric drum anchor winch, mounted on a special plate within the large anchor well. Although you could get away without an electric winch to raise and lower the anchor, having one definitely makes life a little easier – especially if you intend to fish regularly from an anchored boat.

## HARDTOP SHELTER

It is evident that Quintrex has put some thought into the size and design of the hardtop on these new Yellowfins as they are close to perfect in size. There was plenty of headroom beneath the hardtop and it was neither too big nor too small. While it is large enough to comfortably shelter the skipper and forward passenger, it doesn't extend too far back into the cockpit and so does not intrude too much on your fishing space.

Built into the hardtop is a two-front, toughened-glass pane, glass front windscreen, as well as sliding glass side windows, cleverly designed so they open from the front and slide back, providing maximum ventilation to the skipper and navigator.

Other hardtop features include a windscreen wiper for the helmsman, aft grab rails, roof grab rails, outrigger mounting plates and five storage rodholders on the trailing edge of the hardtop. Although hard to reach, they have been designed so they can pivot downward to make it easier to fit rods into and back out again.

## AT THE HELM

A well-designed helm layout is essential when fishing wide offshore as you will spend plenty of time behind the wheel. Quintrex has used its experience in this area to create a comfortable environment in this regard. The 6700 was easy to drive, particularly while standing at the helm, with the steering wheel and side-mount throttle perfectly positioned to provide excellent, 360-degree visibility.

Unlike most other hardtop boats we have tested recently, the dash is painted a matt black and covered with a black rubber matting material, preventing reflection or glare off the windscreen. The matting also provides a grippy surface so anything on the dash is unlikely to slide off in normal conditions.

The seated driving position was not as good as we had hoped. Despite being fitted with a fore and aft slider, I could not move the chair far enough forward and therefore had to lean forward to reach the steering wheel.

**"Telwater's expertise in the design and manufacture of aluminium boats cannot be questioned."**



"The big Evinrude is an absolute weapon, offering up a top speed of 42 knots."



Space for engine gauges and electronics is well catered for in the Yellowfin. The test boat was equipped with the standard GME VHF radio, the optional Simrad NSS9 Evo2 chart plotter/fish finder and an Evinrude Icon Touch 4.3-inch CTS touch screen digital instrument display, which comes standard with the mighty E-Tec G2 DFI 2-stroke outboards.

Other features to the helm/saloon area include an excellent all-over dash grab rail, cup/drink holders, foot rests for the skipper and co-pilot, as well as carpet lining to the sides and ceiling.

The test rig was also fitted with optional seat storage boxes rather than the standard pedestal bases. Another option is to have the chairs mounted on an alloy frame so you can slide an icebox under each of the forward seats.



The sealed, fully welded, self-draining cockpit is large and uncluttered. There is plenty of freeboard and the side pockets are elevated above the floor to provide toe-rails underneath.





**Top:** The transom layout works very well. The batteries are sheltered in a locker behind the transom wall, while overhead is an open shelf for stowing lures. Note how the starboard-side transom door has been laid flat to create a useful step. The port-side livebait tank has a capacity of 60 litres and a front viewing panel so you can easily check the condition of your baits.

## AN ANGLER'S COCKPIT

The cockpit in the 6700 Hardtop has clearly been designed by fishermen and this is reflected in the excellent layout. Boasting plenty of freeboard (730mm), there is also 1.8m of space aft of the helm seat boxes, with the overall length from the cabin bulkhead to the transom a spacious 2.9m by 2.03m wide.

The checker-plate cockpit floor surface is a little glary in bright sunshine and is likely to get hot underfoot in the middle of the day. Still, the cockpit will be easy to hose out after a day's successful fishing, as will the 110-litre underfloor fishbox.

There is also a recess directly underneath the transom where water in the cockpit will collect before flowing out the self-draining cockpit drains. Having this lower level stops any water in the cockpit from sloshing about your feet before it drains overboard, another clever design feature.

We also appreciated the extra wide 255mm side coamings – which can double as seats, as well as the six in-deck welded rodholders and the full-length, above-floor side storage pockets.

The hefty looking bollards on the rear corners may catch a stray fishing line, but the raised positioning of the above-deck rear coaming rails should help to deflect lines away from these stern tie-off points.

The dual batteries are mounted on an elevated shelf behind the transom where you will also find the fuel filters, steering and pump plumbing in this well-protected locker.

Importantly, this whole rear shelf – like the side pockets – is elevated several centimetres above the checker-plate deck, so you can wedge your feet underneath to lean and fight a fish over the transom of the boat.

Above the enclosed battery locker is an open shelf which I can see as the perfect spot to quickly stow a skirted lure or two when changing your trolling spread. There is also an enclosure for lures and/or terminal tackle at the rear of the overhead bait cutting board, which is fixed into position and included as standard. The baitboard is a first-class unit and is bolted rather than welded into position, so it can be removed. It comes complete with two drink holders, five rodholders and a nylon cutting board. A raw-water deckwash hose can be found behind a hatch in the rear transom wall.

Completing the array of fishing features and equipment is the poly-plastic berley bucket with muncher, and an excellent livebait tank mounted on the port side transom. At around the 60-litre mark, the tank will easily hold at least 20 yellowtail-sized livebaits and comes with a clear front window so you can keep an eye on the condition of your baits.

For easy boarding there is a transom door on the starboard side, which folds down into a step leading out to the boarding platform and ladder.

## PERFORMANCE

The Yellowfin 6700 Hardtop can accept a range of extra-longshaft (63cm) outboard engines from 130hp through to the 225hp. With the minimum power fitted in the form of an Evinrude E-Tec 130hp, you can purchase the boat/engine/trailer package for just under \$70,000. While this is remarkably good value, you would probably be better served with at least 150hp on the transom. This would give you ample acceleration and a top speed in the low 30-knot area. It would also give you a decent range on the standard 200-litre fuel tank.

However, the Yellowfin is likely best powered with an outboard around the 175hp mark, although if you're really into your performance, consider going all-out and fitting the boat with an Evinrude E-Tec G2 225hp DFI two-stroke outboard as tested.

The big Evinrude is an absolute weapon, offering up a top speed of 42 knots, as well as astonishing acceleration. The remarkable torque of this G2 Evinrude slams you back in your seat when you gun the throttle, while the hole-shot acceleration is simply exhilarating.

By all reports, the G2 Evinrude combines this remarkable performance with excellent fuel economy. The best we could achieve on the day was a maximum on-plane efficiency figure of 1.02 nautical miles per litre while running at a speed of 24.5 knots at 3500rpm. Using 95% of the standard 200-litre fuel capacity, this gave us a range of 193.15 nautical miles. If you doubt that will be enough for fishing wide offshore all day, consider optioning the boat with the additional 75-litre fuel tank, which slots in underfloor in place of the fishbox.

**"The 6700 Hardtop can be comfortably towed behind a 4WD vehicle on a 2-tonne-plus trailer with break-away brakes."**





## HANDLING & RIDE

Although the addition of a hardtop to a trailerboat can sometimes alter its handling and upset the boat's stability, this was never going to be an issue with the new Yellowfin range, with all boats designed for a hardtop cabin configuration from the outset. The moderate, 19-degree hull works in combination with a wide waterline beam to keep the hulls rock-solid at rest and underway. A stiff cross breeze will have these hardtop boats listing slightly when underway, but this is easily corrected with the included Volvo Penta trim tabs.

Despite the moderate transom-vee angle, the entry shape at the bow is quite sharp and aggressive. With no flat spray/planing strakes to catch the waves and firm up the ride, we found the ride to be generally pleasing and comfortable throughout.


As noted earlier, the test rig accelerated like a bullet out of a gun from a stand-still, with the stainless-steel Rebel 17-inch pitch propeller finding plenty of grip in the water.

The Evinrude G2 outboards come with their own integrated hydraulic power-steering system, which is adjustable in strength. Even on the stiffest setting we found the steering to be wonderfully light and responsive, making the test boat a joy to drive. The combination of effortless steering and huge grunt from the 225hp Evinrude G2 was addictive, making the boat great fun to drive. I found myself gunning the throttle at every opportunity.

## GREAT VALUE FISHING PACKAGE

The new Yellowfin boats from Quintrex are certain to be a popular choice among offshore anglers. These are full plate-alloy boats, built like the proverbial outhouse and with enough features and standard equipment to satisfy the most discerning angler.

Our test rig felt great on the water, proved very stable at rest and was responsive and sure-footed in a seaway. It also had more power than you are likely to need.

With a starting price of less than \$70,000 up to our top-of-the-line test rig packaging for around \$100,000, the Yellowfin 6700 Hardtop represents great value for money. It is pretty much ready to go fishing in standard form. All you need to do is add a set of outriggers, select your electronics package and you are good to go. 

The 6700 Hardtop package weighs around 2200kg with fuel – so it requires a trailer with break-away electric hydraulic brakes. This tandem-axle aluminium Yellowfin trailer also has an optional 'Catch 'N Release' towing eye latch mechanism for easier drive-on and drive-off retrieval and launching.

## < SPEC CHECK

### YELLOWFIN 6700 HARDTOP

#### PERFORMANCE

| SPEED              | RPM     | FUEL                         |
|--------------------|---------|------------------------------|
| 5.3kt (9.80km/h)   | 1000rpm | 2.2L/h                       |
| 6.1kt (11.28km/h)  | 1500rpm | 5.2L/h                       |
| 8.8kt (16.28km/h)  | 2000rpm | 9.2L/h                       |
| 13.7kt (25.34km/h) | 2500rpm | 12.5L/h                      |
| 19.9kt (36.81km/h) | 3000rpm | 19.7L/h                      |
| 24.5kt (45.32km/h) | 3500rpm | 24.1L/h                      |
| 29.2kt (54.02km/h) | 4000rpm | 33L/h                        |
| 32.5kt (60.12km/h) | 4500rpm | 40L/h                        |
| 36.1kt (66.87km/h) | 5000rpm | 49.4L/h                      |
| 40.1kt (74.27km/h) | 5500rpm | 64.1L/h                      |
| 42.4kt (78.44km/h) | 5900rpm | 73.6L/h (wide-open throttle) |

#### PRICE AS TESTED

\$100,790

#### OPTIONS FITTED

Evinrude 225hp E-Tec G2 HO DFI 2-stroke outboard, Yellowfin tandem axle aluminium trailer with electric hydraulic break-away brakes (and Catch 'N Release latch), Simrad NSS9 Evo2 GPS chart plotter/fish finder, GME GX750B VHF radio, Savwinch 1500w electric drum anchor winch with anchor and rode, helm seat storage boxes, cabin berth cushions and side-pocket upholstery, carpeted cabin ceiling and surrounds, two-tone paint, inshore safety gear pack and QLD boat and trailer registrations.

#### PRICED FROM

\$69,032 with Evinrude E-Tec 130hp 2-stroke outboard, galvanised steel tandem axle trailer with electric hydraulic break-away brakes, inshore safety gear pack and QLD boat and trailer registrations.

#### GENERAL

|                                     |                           |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Type: Monohull enclosed hardtop     | Material: Plate aluminium |
| Bottom alloy: 6mm                   | Transom alloy: 5mm        |
| Topside alloy: 4mm                  | Length overall: 7.05m     |
| Hull length: 6.75m                  | Beam: 2.4m                |
| Depth: 1.25m                        | Deadrise: 19 degrees      |
| Hull weight: 1186kg (dry)           |                           |
| Weight on trailer: 2200kg (approx.) |                           |
| Height on trailer: 2.92m            |                           |
| Length on trailer: 8.23m            |                           |

#### CAPACITIES

|                              |
|------------------------------|
| Maximum power: 225hp         |
| Maximum load: 955kg          |
| Maximum engine weight: 325kg |
| Fuel capacity: 200 litres    |
| People: 7                    |

#### ENGINES

|  |
|--|
| Make/model: Evinrude E-Tec G2 HO 225hp   |
| Type: 74-degree V6 DFI 2-stroke outboard |
| Rated hp: 225                            |
| Displacement: 3.4 litres                 |
| No. cylinders: 6                         |
| Weight: 253kg                            |
| Shaft length: Extra-longshaft (25")      |
| Gearbox ratio: 1.85:1                    |

#### TEST BOAT SUPPLIED BY

|   |
|---|
| Motosport Industries  |
| Phone: (07) 3297 8200   |
| Email: <a href="mailto:gyula@motosport.net.au">gyula@motosport.net.au</a> |
| Website: <a href="http://www.motosport.net.au">www.motosport.net.au</a>   |

#### HIGHLIGHTS

- Sturdy construction.
- Good value for money.
- Blistering performance from the Evinrude G2.
- Easy, lightweight hydraulic steering.
- Well-designed, uncluttered cockpit.
- Secure, comfortable ride.