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REVIEW

February 16, 2018



Quintrex 530 Frontier Review

A smooth-riding, stable side-console fishing boat with a unique forked-bow variable deadrise hull and plenty of great fishing features

The Quintrex Frontier range has proven popular with anglers since the launch of these innovative craft in early-2017. Available in six sizes, from 5.1m-6.3m in length, the Quintrex Frontiers are each built on the innovative and impressive Apex hull. This incorporates a concave, variable-vee shape with substantial flare and a wide beam carried forward to a pickle-forked bow. Though the second smallest boat in the range, the Quintrex 530 Frontier tested here measures a substantial 5.5m overall. With the seaworthiness of the Apex hull, you can easily range from the estuaries to the offshore fishing hot spots and tap into the full spectrum of fishing opportunities along the way.

OVERVIEW

Quintrex launched the Frontier series of coastal fishing boats in April 2017, alongside the Freestyler sports bowriders. The two different model lines are aimed at slightly different markets, but share the same innovative new Apex hull shape — notable for its forked bow shape, sharp entry, variable deadrise, and extreme flaring from the keel line out to the wide chines. These all add up to improved performance and seaworthiness.

Since the launch of the new Frontier range, family boaters and anglers

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What we like!

- Comfortable ride in chop
- Excellent handling with tight cornering
- Large cockpit with ample freeboard
- Great inshore boat with coastal ability
- Carpeted hatches, front and back

Not so much!

- Battery located below the floor



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topsides for more internal and external treeboard.

The two new Quintrex Frontier and Freestyler model lines come in 510, 530, 550, 590 and 630 lengths. As you can glean from that, the 5m-plus hulls create substantial boats. The Freestylers have a bowrider runabout layout that can carry plenty of crew, while the Frontiers can be optioned with either a side console or centre console configurations for the fishing side of things.



Some months ago, we tested the [Quintrex 530 Frontier](#) model and, before that, the entry [Quintrex 510 Frontier SC](#) with a side console layout and packaged with an Evinrude E-TEC 115hp DFI two-stroke outboard. For this review, we have stepped up to the 530 model combined with a Suzuki 115hp four-stroke outboard and a Quintrex single-axle alloy trailer.

PRICE AND EQUIPMENT

The Gold Coast's Surf Coast Marine is a leading Quintrex dealer with a range of the latest Frontier and Freestyler boats on display. Most are fully set-up with Evinrude or Suzuki outboard engines and available for test drives on the nearby Broadwater.

Our 530 Frontier test boat was one of several of these demonstrator models. In standard form the boat comes paired with a 90hp Evinrude or 90hp Suzuki outboard. With the latter, customers can get aboard one of these superb new boats for around \$47,990.

The drive-away package also includes a Quintrex alloy trailer with mechanical disk brakes, 12 months registrations, a sand anchor kit and a


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water, 7ft radio, transom corner live bait tank, included helm console, three comfy lift-out pedestal chairs, cockpit lighting, drink holders, rod holders, bow and stern cleats and rails, a boarding ladder, 98lt sub-floor fuel tank, and more.



Our demonstrator model was upgraded with a range of options and a larger 115hp Suzuki four-stroke outboard, lifting the price to \$55,990. The extra money also gets you a Lowrance Elite 7Ti Touch fish finder/GPS, a Fusion stereo system, deluxe rod locker, Mega chopping board, bow-mount electric trolling motor plate (with battery box), ski pole, and a transom door.

DESIGN AND LAYOUT

The interior design of the Frontier models is similar to the longstanding Quintrex Top Ender models — albeit with a wider, squarer bow shape which allows for a larger casting platform and more storage space.



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The Frontiers also have higher topsides for more internal freeboard in the centre and rear cockpit of the boat. The minimum freeboard in the 530 Frontier, for example, is 585mm down at the transom. Along the sides there is around 665mm between the carpeted plywood floor and the new, raised coamings.

Another point of difference between the Frontiers and other Quintrex open boats is the enclosed anchor well. The 530 Frontier has an alloy hatch to retain the anchor and rode within the large, roto-moulded plastic anchor well.

A grippy rubber matting has also been laid down to each side of the anchor well hatch so you can step off the bow onto the beach or bank without slipping over.



The casting platform aft of the anchor well is situated 400mm above the rear cockpit floor. Beneath it is a series of storage lockers for safety gear, and a platform in the forepeak locker for an electric trolling motor battery.




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The optional trolling motor plate is ideally positioned close by on the port side "tong" of the forked-bow.

With a bow-mount trolling motor in place, and one of the three included pedestal chairs mounted up on the boat, the casting deck should prove an excellent spot for pitching lures or fly fishing for any number of fish species — from bass and barra through to tuna and trevally.

Thanks to its size and depth, the rear cockpit should also serve anglers very well. It stretches 2.58m from the bow casting deck aft to the transom wall by 1.8m wide.



In our test boat this good-sized cockpit was flanked by a side storage pocket on the port side and the optional full-length rod locker over to starboard, beneath the 112mm wide side coamings.

If that's not enough storage space for you, there is a sizeable roto-moulded fish box under the cockpit floor near the casting platform, along with a separate sub-floor storage bin aft.




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Beyond that, there is another underfloor storage locker which houses the battery with a bilge pump alongside it. The battery is secure in this location, but we would still prefer it to be situated on a shelf above the floor level, clear of any water that may flood the cockpit.

Other features here include the excellent port side transom live bait tank with viewing window, non-return scuppers for the water drainage system, and the optional starboard side transom door, boarding ladder and chopping board.

The starboard side helm console is compact in size and made from rotomoulded polyethylene. It looks to be strong, durable and is large enough to accommodate the required engine gauges and a mid-sized, flush-fitted electronics display.

Other helm features include a vertical rod rack on the front side of the console, a handy grab rail, storage compartment, and a well placed steering wheel.

The Suzuki throttle box was situated close by, secured up against the side coaming. Skippers will also appreciate the space beneath the helm console to place your feet, which adds to the comfort of the seated driving position.

ON THE WATER

Measuring 5.50m overall, the Quintyrex 530 Frontier — as with all boats in the frontier range — is certainly capable of handling some mixed up coastal sea conditions. No problems heading offshore with the Apex hull.



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Proving as much, we took the test rig offshore to use as a camera boat for another, larger boat on test - and the little Quintrex performed beautifully! The sharp bow entry shape cleaved through the chop, and provided we kept the hull in the water (as opposed to leaping off waves) the ride proved quite comfortable.

In a following sea the 530 also works a treat. The gentle, or gradual sloped stem and wide chines allow the boat to surf down waves and rise out of troughs without digging in or broaching. Highly commendable.

At rest and underway, the Apex hull is also stable, well balanced, dry, and easy to drive.

We also appreciated the high freeboard in the cockpit of the Frontier. It allows the boat to be used in coastal offshore waters as you can stand and lean up against the coamings with some security.



The 530 Frontier is rated for a single longshaft outboard up to 135hp, but performs admirably with a 115hp motor. Our Suzuki 115hp four-stroke powered test rig felt strong from idle through to wide open throttle — achieving a top speed of 35.4 knots.

Anything above 35 knots is plenty for a 5.3m boat — whether you intend to use it inshore or offshore. You might also consider saving a few bob by


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VERDICT

Quintrex is the dominant player in the aluminium trailerboat market at present — and there is a very good reason for that. Parent company Telwater is constantly developing new, innovative and interesting new boats... like the new 530 Frontier SC!

This versatile new fishing craft is quite superb: well designed, perfectly sized, nicely finished and stacked with good gear and equipment for serious inshore fishing. It's among the pick of the new bass, barra and bream boat pack. - Jeff Webster words and photos.

PERFORMANCE - SPEED

3.5kts (6.5km/h) @ 1000rpm

4.3kts (7.9km/h) @ 1500rpm

6.2kts (11.5km/h) @ 2000rpm

6.8kts (12.6km/h) @ 2500rpm

15.0kts (27.7km/h) @ 3000rpm

19.1kts (35.3km/h) @ 3500rpm

22.6kts (41.8km/h) @ 4000rpm

25.8kts (47.7km/h) @ 4500rpm

29.2kts (54.0km/h) @ 5000rpm

33.2kts (61.4km/h) @ 5500rpm

35.4kts (65.5km/h) @ 6000rpm (WOT)

PERFORMANCE - ECONOMY

1.9 l/ph @ 1000rpm

2.8 l/ph @ 1500rpm

4.7 l/ph @ 2000rpm

7.4 l/ph @ 2500rpm


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20.9 l/ph @ 3000rpm
 34.9 l/ph @ 5500rpm
 37.9 l/ph @ 6000rpm (WOT)

MAXIMUM RANGE ON 95% OF 98lt FUEL TANK: 149.42nm @ 3500rpm

Specifications: Quintrex 530 Frontier SC

Price as tested: \$55,990 including Suzuki 115hp four-stroke longshaft (20") outboard, single axle Quintrex alloy braked trailer, two-tone paint, Lowrance Elite 7Ti Touch fish finder/GPS with mapping (no transducer), Fusion MS-RA70 stereo system with Bluetooth and speakers, deluxe rod locker, Mega chopping board, bow-mount electric trolling motor plate (with battery box), ski pole, transom door, 12 months QLD boat and trailer registrations, sand anchor kit, and an inshore safety gear pack.

Priced from: \$47,990 including Suzuki 90hp four-stroke longshaft (20") outboard, single axle Quintrex alloy braked trailer, 12 months QLD boat and trailer registrations, sand anchor kit, and an inshore safety gear pack.

Length overall: 5.51m

Hull length: 5.30m

Beam: 2.31m

Depth: 1.3m

Deadrise: 13 degrees

Hull weight: 668kg

Weight on trailer: Approx 1,150kg

Bottom & transom alloy: 4.0mm

Topsides alloy: 3.0mm

Maximum power: 135hp

Maximum engine weight: 206kg

Engine as tested: Suzuki 115hp four-stroke

Fuel capacity: 98L

Flotation standard: Basic

Maximum persons: Six

Supplied by:

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