



Large front casting platform and wide side decks give you plenty of fishing room. You can also see the optional rod locker fitted on the starboard side of the boat.



The layout of this boat has been designed to maximise your fishing experience.



Having a quick flick for flathead at the mouth of the Pine River.



Punching up onto the plane.

# Beaut little Blue Fin

## Blue Fin 4.35 Wildcat - 75hp E-TEC

**T**HERE are many factors to take into account and questions to ask when deciding to buy a new boat.

Are you going to fish inshore, offshore, one or two up, and do you need to have room to fit the whole family, are just some of the more obvious ones.

Finding the perfect boat that is ideal for all situations is nigh on impossible.

So this is where you need to prioritise and pick a boat that is going to best suit how you will use it most of the time.

In the case of Chris Stratford, brother of BNB writer Keith, he decided on a boat designed to lure fish, as that is what he mainly does.

The boat he chose and the basis of this review is the 4.35 Blue Fin Wildcat fitted with a 75hp E-TEC.

This boat has been designed with fishing in mind and can be easily handled by one person.

Alternatively you can comfortably fish three people out of it, which is what Chris often does.

Shortly after Chris bought this boat he asked if I was keen to go for a quick flatie fish.

The answer of course was yes, as what better way is there to test a boat than to go flick some lures around in it?

We launched at Deepwater Bend and darted out to the mouth of the Pine River.

The very punchy E-TEC shot the boat easily up onto the plane.

We did do some speed trials on the way out, with the boat topping out with two on board at around 65km/h.

I thought it might have gone a little faster, but there is a fair bit packed into this boat in casting



Boat Test  
by BEN COLLINS

platforms and storage areas that all add a little extra weight.

Chris told me one up he is just shy of the 70km/h mark.

Which when you think about it is actually pretty quick for a boat that is only just over 4m in length.

However in saying that, you get a lot of boat for the 4.35m and it actually feels a lot bigger than its size.

Whether this has to do with the layout of the boat, the beam (which is 2.05m) or a combination of both, I'm not entirely sure.

The side console layout is one I prefer as it opens up the boat, giving you more room to move around.

And if you are constantly up and down from the driving position to the electric motor on the bow, it makes your day's fishing that much easier.

The 4.35m Wildcat has two large fishing areas.

The one at the bow is slightly stepped down from the gunwales, which gives you a feeling of being a little more secure when fishing in rougher weather.

You don't lose any fishability by not having it higher, as the depth of the boat ensures you are still close to the water and able to work your lures.

Underneath the front casting platform you will find plenty of storage for safety gear, battery for your electric motor and a separate hatch for your anchor.

A massive 90 litre live-well has been built into the front deck as well, making the area big enough to

comfortably fish two up.

At the rear you also have a substantial casting platform with two hatches for storage and access to your crank battery.

The option of a rod locker has been fitted to the boat and is not something you'd expect in a 4.35m boat.

Chris has also added some upright rod storage points on the console, ensuring there is plenty of room to stow all his rods in easy reach yet out of the way when fishing.

The beauty of a boat this size, with its practical layout, is you can easily use it by yourself.

Launching and retrieving is a breeze, even in windy conditions.

You can also tow it behind most medium to large sized cars.

Conversely if you want to fish three people you can.

And if you were just having a day out boating, leaving most of the fishing gear at home, you could easily accommodate a family of four.

Performance with two people on board was good, and sitting close to the water you really felt like you

were scooting along.

The low centre of gravity also ensured good control when putting the boat through a series of turns, adjusting the trim as you went.

The 3mm plate sides and a quality paint job finish this boat off nicely.

Adding to the finish is the standard feature of wide side decks, which also make it easy to stand or sit on when getting in and out.

This model had the 4mm bottom, allowing for the maximum horsepower of 75 to be fitted.

With an overall length of 4.35m, a solid beam of 2.05m and 60 litre under-floor fuel storage, you end up with an awesome little fishing rig.

And the more you look the more quality features you seem to find.

These include a sports console, under floor floatation and electric motor bracket, all as standard features.

For more information on this well-performing, practical fishing boat, contact the guys at Logan River Marine on 3287 4888.

Prices start from around \$28,490 with the 75hp E-TEC, 4mm bottom, 3mm plate sides, trailer, all the decks and carpeted floors, plus many more standard features. ⚓



Storage under the front casting platform.



Large 90 litre live-well.



The spacious rear casting platform.