



The helm area has very comfy seats with good storage.



This storage compartment is a handy spot to keep all your hooks and swivels.



Underfloor icebox near the helm.



The walkaround cab provides access to the bow.



The 115hp Honda provided plenty of punch.



The deep-V and wide transom on the hull gives you a smooth ride and stability at rest.

# Evolution 552 Platinum

**A**LTHOUGH reasonably new to Queenslanders, Evolution Boats has already gained a reputation for building high-quality boats designed to suit fishos and families alike.

Based in Melbourne, Evolution boats are built by PM Marine, a company that has been involved in the fishing and marine industry for several years.

Headed by husband and wife team Paul and Melinda Junginger, it originally specialised in making functional and innovative fibreglass bait boards, seats, live bait tanks, hard tops and many other marine accessories.

This side of the business continues today with its quality products in high demand from boat builders all over Australia.

However Paul, a qualified shipwright with two decades experience in building boats for another well-known Australian boat manufacturer, took the natural progression and decided to start making Evolution boats.

The first Evolution built was the 550 with the Platinum edition winning the 2008 AMIF Boat of the Year award (Fishing Trailerable – Fibreglass/GRP under 6m).

Since then the stable has grown and there are several models in the range varying in size from 5m to 6.5m hull lengths.

Evolution Boats has built its reputation from its hull design which incorporates a deep-V, with wide reverse chines giving a smooth, dry ride and stability at rest.

I recently took the new Evolution 552 Platinum series for a run in the Broadwater and out the Gold Coast Seaway for a bit of a play.

One of the first things I noticed when peering over the gunwales as we hooked the boat up at Logan River Marine was the extremely large amount of fishing room.

Although badged as a 552, this model actually has an overall length of 6.2m and an external beam of 2.49m (which is just under maximum width of 2.5m for towing regulations) and an internal beam of 2.1m.

These numbers certainly explain why the boat looked so big – because



Boat Test  
by BEN COLLINS

it is.

The test model was fitted with the new 115hp Honda, which had plenty of grunt for that size engine.

The 115hp Honda performed well with two people on board, about half a tank of fuel and the required safety gear, hitting a top speed of around 70km/h which is higher than the conditions generally allow.

Pulling onto the plane around the 3000rpm mark at a speed of about 27km/h indicated a hull that is performing.

I am still a firm believer in having extra horsepower and not having to use it, rather than wanting it and not having it.

But once again this comes down to how you are going to use the boat.

Are you going to have six blokes on board and a heap of gear for a day out fishing?

Well if you are you can power up to the maximum rated 150hp.

Alternatively, a family of four out for a day on the bay or a few mates heading offshore for a day's fishing will find the 115hp Honda a good match with enough power and good economy.

Underfloor there is a 150 litre fuel tank, kill tank and separate icebox.

You also have the option of upgrading the size of the fuel tank to 200 litres which would then replace the icebox.

So how did it ride?

Well conditions were OK as we headed out of the Seaway but there was a little bit of swell starting to form as the tide began to run out, perfect for a quick play or test.

We maintained a steady pace, allowing the boat to hold the plane as we crossed the bar through clear unbroken swells.

Offshore we were able to give it a little more throttle as the swells weren't as sharp and the 552 seemed to like the conditions even more.

Strakes that run the full length of the hull assisted in deflecting spray as we put the Platinum through a series of turns in various directions to the waves.

With a bit more power for a bit of a squirt, the

boat jumped up higher on the plane, again improving the ride.

While offshore I ran through some basic fishing procedures although there were no rods on board to wet a line.

Along each side of the deck are two huge pockets with ample room to put things like your sinkers, bait, rods and tackle trays.

For your terminal tackle like hooks and swivels there is a compartment at the stern that stores three in-built tackle trays.

A live bait tank with a Perspex front is located in the stern as well.

In addition a solid and functional bait board provides ample working space for rigging your bait.

This model also had the rear lounge as standard, which could be folded down or removed.

You will find four rod holders in the gunwales of the boat and an additional two on the bait board.

I'd also probably option up and get a rocket launcher for more rod storage.

The sides of the boat are at a good height to rest against when you are fighting a fish yet not too high that it would be hard to reach over and pull in your catch.

Overall this was a very good fishing platform with minimal list when two of us were leaning over one side.

Moving forward, the helm is fitted with some very comfy chairs which have storage compartments underneath.

These compartments

would actually make a good spot to keep life jackets as they are more at hand than when stuffed under cushions in the cabin.

The dash was well finished and there was room to mount the necessary electronics.

Another standard feature of the new Platinum series is the fully carpeted side pockets and cushioned backrest in the cabin.

It is these little finishing touches that give you a quality end product.

The cabin was big enough to easily access the anchor well or to have a bit of a lie down.

You can also add an infill to make it a larger bed.

Overall the Evolution 552 Platinum series is a well-constructed fishing and or family boat and certainly worth a look.

Evolution boats come with a couple of different package inclusions so there is something for all budgets.

With prices starting from

\$58,260 for the 552 Gold series, you get a capable offshore fishing vessel.

Price for the boat as tested with bimini, front and side clears, rear lounge, safety pack and boat and trailer regos was \$65,400.

If you are interested in having a look at this model or other Evolution Boats models call in and check them out at Logan River Marine.

Alternatively give LRM a call on 3287 4888 for a full list of inclusions with the different packages available. ⚓

## Performance

RPM	KM/H
3000	27
3500	37
4000	46
4500	51
5000	60
5500	70



Large side pockets and grab rail.



Removable rear lounge and functional bait board.