



Big bait board with rod holders. A live bait tank is also fitted.



Racing along with the economical 70hp Yamaha.



There is plenty of fishing room for a boat under 4.5m.



The well equipped centre console.



Battery isolation switch.

SPECIFICATIONS

Length: 4.49m
 Beam: 2.05m
 Depth: 1.10m
 Bottom Sides: 3mm
 Topsides: 1.6mm
 Boat Weight: 340kg
 U/Floor Fuel: 70L
 Price as Tested: **\$34,950**
 including options and electronics



Large side pocket for convenient storage.

Stacer 449 Northern Fisher is designed for fishing



Boat Review
 by JASON COMINO

SO far as great opportunities go, moving into the boat sales team at Northside Marine was high on my list and recently I was given the start I was looking for.

Using all of my long hours of boating and fishing experience to help customers pick the right boat for their needs has been particularly rewarding, and I've met some exceptional people along the way too.

Lately, I have noted a real swing back towards basic boats and in particular the centre console layout, due to the ultimate fishability and simplistic nature of the design.

The Stacer Northern Fisher range of hulls offers anglers an open cockpit for serious fishing, at a price that won't break the bank!

The range starts at the 449, followed by the 489, with the flagship being the 529, which is more suited to serious offshore work.

The most popular is without a doubt the 449 and probably the most obvious reason behind this is that it's the perfect all-rounder.

This boat is just as at home in a northern estuary chasing big saltwater barramundi as it is in Moreton Bay hunting the annual run of spawning snapper or big cobia.

So far as boat tests go, the 449 Northern Fisher has the best of everything, all the way from the 70hp Yamaha 4-stroke bolted to the transom, to the Lowrance electronics sitting proudly on the sturdy little console.

I have worked with my clients for a number of weeks to put together the ultimate barra fishing platform, with numerous alterations to the original options to suit the exact style of fishing that the guys do.

Stacer were really helpful through the whole build process, and pushed the boat through in record time to meet a deadline that was set by the guys for their annual barra trip.

First on the list of alterations was the horsepower upgrade.

Generally speaking the

449 hull is only rated to 60hp, but the upgrade to 70hp was essential to cater for the huge northern tides and to allow for quick navigation to the best spots.

I have tested the 449 with even a 40hp Yamaha 4-stroke and was stunned at how well it performed.

The lower horsepower is well suited to mainly estuary work, with the odd trip out into Moreton Bay on the right sort of days, but with 70hp on the back, this 449 is a different animal altogether.

When dealing with long distances, more weight or big tidal movements the bigger power is a smarter option, but the optional 70 litre underfloor fuel tank is a must if you opt for 60 or 70hp.

This provides exceptional range and keeps the deck clear of fuel drums to allow more space for the serious stuff – fishing.

A generously sized rotomould live bait tank has been deck mounted on the port side at the transom to keep even the most fickle baits alive, and the pump has been upgraded to a Rule system for longer run times.

Beside the bait tank is a well thought out bait station complete with underlying shelf for all the necessities such as pliers, BogaGrips, knives and spare rigs.

The bait board can be removed for travel to allow for the use of a travel cover for extended journeys, and four bushed rod holders line the back of the board for extra rod storage or another troll rod.

The height of the board is perfect and it still allows for total trimming of the Yamaha 70hp 4-stroke to avoid scratching or denting the new shiny cowl cover.

Centre console position has been altered slightly forward to allow for more seating in the cockpit area, and ultimately more fishing space upon arrival at the chosen location.

Moving the console forward by 80mm doesn't

sound a lot, but it's amazing how much bigger the cockpit area feels.

Having more weight further forward also negates the need to use a hydrofoil on the engine to keep the bow down, and gets you up on the plane quicker.

The port side pocket has been deliberately removed to allow for rod storage under the extruded side decks, and the anchor light has been smartly tucked away under the starboard pocket.

At the helm a SeaStar hydraulic steering system provides the crucial link to the engine and is certainly a must on any centre console due to the amount of twists and turns required to make this connection.

This allows for extremely light steering and means that you can operate the sounder, GPS, or radio while steering the vessel.

A Lowrance HDS-7 caters for all navigation and sonar needs, and this one has been fitted with Structure Scan to allow for a much clearer image of both structure and fish life.

A Fusion RA200 and iPod dock provide entertainment during those long hours of trolling, and a GME VHF radio keeps constant contact with rescue authorities and surrounding vessels.

Plenty of storage is available aft of the centre console in the locker under the casting platform and this allows for easy storage of safety equipment, tackle bags and other essentials.

From past experience I know that centre consoles can be a little wet in the wrong conditions, but to my surprise the 449 provides an exceptionally dry ride.

The alloy skirts on the chine deflect water away with ease, and even with a strong cross-bow wind only minimal spray was noted coming into the cockpit.

The deep vee hull design of the Northern Fisher range makes easy going of a following sea, and even

travelling directly back into bad conditions isn't an issue.

This offers anglers peace of mind knowing that if the weather does turn for the worse, they can get home safely.

The extra torque provided by the Yamaha 70hp 4-stroke is exceptional on this package and will easily provide the power required to pull out a skier or tow a tube on those family days.

With a top speed of 59km at 6200rpm the 449 Northern Fisher moves along quite nicely and gets out of the hole and on the plane in an instant, even when laden with a full fuel tank and fishing gear.

I was suitably impressed by how well the package handled and even at full lock there was little sign of cavitation, which in turn gives the skipper complete control even when avoiding obstacles at high speeds.

This same control allows the skipper to simply drive the boat onto the V-loader trailer after a long day on the water with little fear of over or under steering.

At rest the 449 Northern Fishers offers a stable fishing platform, but the highlight for me was the gunwale height which sat just above my knees.

This offers maximum support to the angler when fishing in rough conditions or when fighting a monster cobia somewhere in Moreton Bay.

The other good thing with the design is that no space is wasted, with all batteries, battery switch and fuel filter tucked away for maximum access to the fishing space.

Even the motor well is directly below the bait board so that no internal space is wasted, and this allows access right the way to the transom.

All in all the 449 Northern Fisher offers a great ride, plenty of space and a package that is simple to maintain.

For further information or to organise a test run call me at Northside Marine on (07) 3265 8044 or visit Stacer online at www.stacer.com.au