

Fast, strong, very manoeuvrable bluewater

It's not every day that we go to test a boat and come away thinking that maybe the boat was, in fact testing us, but that's just what happened late last month off The Bluff.

We had met with Striker Marine's Peter Germanis and the owner of the first Striker Offshore 650 at the ramp, then headed out on the camera boat. In typical seas-on-swell conditions, the owner, with another three adults on board, powered past us at high speed, leaping off crests, surging through troughs and generally having a whale of a time.

Then the Offshore 650 came alongside, we transhipped and were offered the helm, but first took a look around onboard.

Peter was planning to use this, his first hull (from the Allison moulds he had bought last year), as a "demo.", but as it happened, a Victor Harbor businessman turned up and

bought the boat from under him. Having had his previous 5.75 boat given its last rights by the insurance company, he heard of the Offshore 650 from Cheetah Concepts of Goolwa, who build the hulls for Peter.

Peter's client, already impressed with the mould, liked the hull and deck even more, particularly for the fishing room it offered. Also, the use of timber-free 'glass stringers was "the clincher".

The Offshore 650 on its dual-axle Dunbier trailer was taken to South Coast Marine, who drilled the transom before the engine from the client's previous boat, a 2004 175hp, V6 direct-injection Evinrude, with 890 hours, HyDrive hydraulic steering and spinning a 17" prop. was hung.



A study of power and grace – the Striker Offshore 650 relished lumpy conditions off The Bluff, running smoothly and staying very dry – handling was precise and sure-footed with excellent stability at rest...

Back at South Coast Marine the engine gauges (speedo, trim, tacho, fuel, engine hours) were installed, before trimmer CBS of Victor Harbor fitted the bimini (1.87m headroom) and clears. The owner wired in his Raymarine C120 combo and both the cockpit and cuddy LED lights. At the helm, twin swivelling, adjustable seats were mounted on "Soft Rider" hydraulic aluminum pedestals. Peter had already fitted the moulded helm footrests, nav. lights, bow rail and 260 litre underfloor fuel tank.

That was about it, because the Striker Offshore 650 was bought strictly for fishing, primarily in Encounter Bay and Southern Ocean waters so no fuss, no frills. In time, the boat would also join the local Sea Rescue Squadron fleet.

There was considerable fishing room in the cockpit, which measured 1.80m long and 1.90m wide (3.42m²). The hull provided 780mm of inner freeboard, while external freeboard came to 930mm. There was a full-length cockpit



There was no stopping the incredibly strong, efficient hull of the Striker Offshore 650 – we just went for it with enormous confidence...



Boarding platform, grab rail, proper ladder with flat steps...



Deep-V 21° deadrise hull with lengthy strakes, wide chines...



S T R I K E R
M A R I N E

Striker Offshore 650 tested the tester

shelf to each side and just ahead of the transom, a huge kill tank under the sole. Two rod holders were set into each side deck.

On the transom we found a bait tank to each side and the fuel filler located sensibly outboard in the engine well. Set into the boarding platform to port was a telescopic two-rung ladder and both platforms had a stainless steel grab rail.

The cuddy cabin was spacious and very well lit by a large 700 x 700mm tinted Lewmar overhead hatch. There was also the LED light along with full length side shelves, bench seats and a dry storage area forward.

On the foredeck was a lidded, draining anchor well, not fitted with an electric winch as the owner used the buoy anchoring method. Large bow rails led a third of the way aft from the bowsprit.

Having accepted the helm we turned the *Offshore 650* into half metre seas on 1.5-2.0m

swells and opened the throttle. The 175hp Evinrude produced a smooth power band which had us getting air-borne in next to no time. It had been good to watch and now was proving even better to do, with the owner's blessings and encouragement of course.

No matter where we pointed the hull, it simply carved up the conditions, the *Offshore 650* seemingly pushing us harder and harder, not the other way round as usual.

The immensely strong hull entered beautifully, with no scuttle shake, very little noise and only a few spots of water hitting either the hatch or screen. As well, it cornered with total composure.

The steering was perfect for these conditions, allowing for easy, instant manoeuvres yet not being influenced by the many, considerable pressures on the hull. At rest, with four adults to one side, the hull heeled just 2 - 3°.



A proved performer over many years, good enough to win the respect of commercial fisherman around the country – classy new logo too...

Inshore, the *Offshore 650* delivered 8 knots (15 kph) @ 2500 rpm, 21 knots (39 kph) @ 3500 rpm, 30 knots (56 kph) @ 4500 rpm and 40 knots (74 kph) @ 5500 rpm. Out of the hole we reached 40 knots at maximum revs. in less than 20 seconds.

Then a perfect wave moved in, we aimed for it, accelerated and the *Offshore 650* soared gloriously yet again.

Peter was already working on hull No. 2, his demo boat which he plans to power with a fire-breathing 200hp (150kW) E-Tec H.O. – good grief!

STRIKER Offshore 650 SPECIFICATIONS:

- Length overall: 6.95m (22' 10")
- Beam: 2.42m (7' 11")
- Length on trailer: 7.75m (25' 5")
- Height on trailer: 2.40m (7' 10")
- Weight on trailer: 1950kg
- Max. power: 200hp (150 kW)
- Fuel capacity: 260 litres
- Accommodation: 6 adults

Priced from:
\$59,900

(with 150hp E-TEC and on a Dunbier tandem trailer)



Not only plenty of room aboard but also remarkable sea keeping and hull efficiency – 175hp Evinrude provided plenty of seamless power...



Clean, uncluttered helm station with nearly 2m headroom...



Big 3.42m² cockpit fitted with 2 bait tanks & large u'floor kill tank...



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Manufacturer of 6.5m Fibreglass "Striker" Boats
Offshore 650 and Vision 650 (Sports Cruiser)

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As Austin Henstridge, editor of SA Waters & Leisure points out – "The Striker Offshore 650 has an incredibly strong and efficient hull. It's ideal for fishing the unpredictable South Australian waters."