



Free styling

Quintrex's latest aluminium bowrider is a versatile Aussie all-rounder

WORDS & PHOTOS ANDREW RICHARDSON

Aluminium boat experiences are welded into the earliest memories of many local mariners. But 'tinnies' today are a world apart. Quintrex aluminium boats can now confidently compete with imported fibreglass boats on all fronts. Admittedly, with the strong Aussie dollar, the imports are in a position to almost compete on price, but if you look closely, the locally built Quintrex aluminium boats are built to endure the test of time.

Quintrex continues to forge ahead with boats that not only deliver a softer ride than tinnies of the past, but also have the creature comforts more often found in fibreglass boats. Features like carpeted floors, integral stowage zones, a large glove box, designer drink holders and moulded interiors signify the Quintrex runabout's level of sophistication.

Hunts Marine's Damian Kerves explained that the 490 was the perfect family runabout—easy to launch, tough as nuts and with the capacity to take out the average family and more. I agree. A quick spin up the Georges River, after a long spell of very bad weather, revealed the craft also had the performance to keep the kids yelling out for more. The

whisper-quiet 90hp E-TEC eased the Quintrex Millennium hull out to a sweet 32 knots at 5000rpm and provided an efficient mid 20-knot cruise speed at around 3500rpm. The helm position felt comfortable and the moulded console was loaded with instruments right down to the fish finder and VHF radio.

MILLENNIUM HULL

The Millennium hull design takes the chop in the bow sections, producing a very soft ride even in tough conditions. The hull had the reassuring clatter of a solid aluminium boat and the 490's high flared bow suggested that the vessel would eagerly embrace a decent swell without soaking the passengers.

The bowrider's layout seats three forward, two around the helm and more aft on the bench seat. The 490 Freedom Sport includes rod holders and an easy-to-access open forward anchor well, which is a blessing for interior cleanliness, a feature rarely seen in vessels this size. When the fish aren't biting, the 90hp E-TEC combined with swim platform and ladder, create a very versatile tow boat. It is ideal for the tow toys that can be kept in the underfloor stowage areas.

MAXI 3 TRANSOM

The Quintrex 490 comes standard with the Maxi 3 transom. The idea behind the transom is to increase aft buoyancy by extending the hull over the boarding platform. This feature keeps on popping up in new boat designs all over the place as it allows the vessels to have larger engines (and heavier four-strokes) while offering a flatter ride combined with a longer waterline.

There can be trade-offs with this layout but they don't apply to this Quintrex bow focused Millennium hull design.



IMPRESSIVE OPTIONS

The Freedom Sport 490's base package was set up with a lot of standard features, including the sounder, radio and three-year warranty.

The mechanical steering was a tad off centre and a bit clunky at times, but for

“A 3mm aluminium hull will endure the rough and tumble of saltwater environs”

the fussy there is the simple option to install hydraulic steering.

Other standard features include: ski pole insert, cockpit lights, an 85L underfloor fuel tank and a reversible seat good for the ski observer. The 490's white hull comes standard with painted stripes and, combined with the optioned bimini, the vessel has classy looks.

The options list is as impressive as the list of standard features and includes the aforementioned bimini covers, live-bait tanks, stereo, additional fuel tank, twin battery box, bow mounted anchor winch plate, transom door and berley bucket. Full details are all available on the informative website.

EASY DOES IT

The 490 stands out as easy to use, versatile, and family friendly—isn't that what you want from a runabout? The 600kg hull implies easy solo launching and the injected 90hp Evinrude E-TEC outboard should keep the fuel bills in check.

Behind all the added mouldings and curvaceous upholstery is a 3mm aluminium hull that will endure the rough and tumble of our local saltwater environs.

The vessel's as-tested price was around \$38,000 but an entry-level craft with a 60hp could be obtained at just over \$30,000. Quintrex has really hit the mark with this all-rounder—no wonder it is one of their most popular sellers. ⚓



Hydraulic steering is an option.



The immaculate 15in Viper prop.



The Millennium hull takes the chop in the bow sections for a very soft ride.

Opposite, the Freedom Sport offers plenty of seating forward and aft.



QUINTREX FREEDOM SPORT 490

ENGINE ROOM

The tested vessel was powered by a single Evinrude E-TEC 90hp outboard spinning an immaculate 15in SST Viper prop.

PERFORMANCE

We achieved the following results in mild inshore conditions:

RPM - KNOTS

1500 // 5.5
2000 // 7.3
3200 // 18.5
4000 // 27
5000 // 31.5

Length maximum // 5.33m
Length of hull // 5.41m
Beam // 2.22m
Depth // 1.17m
Length on trailer // 6.05m
Height on trailer // 2.03m
Bottomsides // 3.00mm
Topsides // 2.00mm
Transom material // 3.00mm
Weight (boat only) // 493kg
Max hp // 90hp
Main motor weight // 203kg
Max load (basic) // 833kg
Max load (level) // 653kg
Price as tested // \$38,000
Contact // 1300 727 188
Web // www.quintrex.com.au

