

Quintrex 610 Topender

You can go after bigger offshore prey with this new super-sized version of the Quintrex Top Ender range. Test report by JAMES HILL.



It's not hard to fathom why Quintrex remains our top selling alloy boat brand. Even in these tough times the 'biggie' of the tinnie scene continues to impress and surprise the market with new and innovative boats.

And Quintrex seems to have done it again this year by refocusing itself squarely back onto the smaller, and more affordable fishing boats.

Realising that people are much more reluctant to part with hard-earned dollars these days they've come out with a number of high-value fishing rigs.

Three new models that really stand out to my mind are the 430, 440 and 610 Top Enders. These are all brand new models and cater for the fastest growing sector of the market - lure sport fishing in estuary and semi-open coastal waters.

With their wide, vee bows and high sides the Top Ender is a brilliant boat for estuary waterways and gives you the 'fishability' of a low punt and convenience of 'plug in' pedestal seats.

The Top Ender also provides a great casting platform for lure fishing, plus a hull that can cope with choppy waters.

The open interior layout with raised casting deck front and back is also just what the doctor ordered for barramundi, mangrove jacks and other northern sport-fish pursuits.

Now the concept extends further with the release of the new 610 Top Ender. This is the biggest model yet and surpasses the previous biggest Top Enders - the 560 and 590.

Ostensibly designed for tropical Australian waters, the 610 Top Ender Tournament can be used inshore/offshore in more temperate latitudes like the Gold Coast Broadwater where we recently tested the boat.

This will be an ideal boat for coastal bay, or close-coastal reef work. The for'ard casting deck is not that high you can't safely use it most days. And the extra interior space makes it ideal for tournament events as the name implies.

Best of all, the 610 Top Ender is very keenly priced and is one of the most 'affordable' big fishing boats with a ready-to-go price of under \$50,000 (ex-Sydney).

OK this is anything but peanuts, however, considering what you're

getting it's still excellent value. And, maybe within the scope of a few fishing mates going for their first offshore boat.

Quintrex has really tried to inject value into this new Top Ender. Importantly, they've given it the highest level of buoyancy - positive, level flotation thanks to foam flotation in side panels as well under the floor. Essentially, this means the 610 will stay afloat in a level manner with the crew aboard and not have tendency to capsize if swamped by a wave.

Obviously this is great news if you're fishing in shark, or croc infested waters. Importantly, crew can stay within the boat safely till help arrives.

Coupled with a very practical interior with innovations like a lift-out kill tank, the 610 Top Ender looks like a pretty good choice for today's hard-working boatie.

A few months back I had the pleasure of testing the first Top Ender model on Gold Coast waters. From the outset I was impressed by the level of inclusions at the standard level - including a 115hp Mercury four-stroke motor, VHF marine radio, Lowrance X125 sounder, live bait tank and kill tank.

Tournament



Design: The new 610 Top Ender is quite an impressive package on the trailer, measuring some 6.1m in total including the bowsprit roller and maxi-pod M3 transom. Beam is 2.4m and the hull depth a generous 140cm.

Looking good in gleaming white with contemporary graphics the 610 also features Quintrex's latest Millennium hull with hollow bows, plus topside flare to throw the water back and make for a softer, drier ride.

The 610 also incorporates the latest smooth-look Quintrex hulls with clinker pressings removed from the middle area of the topsides. Coupled with attractively rounded transom pod it makes for a pretty modern-era craft.

Access aboard is enhanced by the large landing deck, which also has a checkerplate flooring for safety and a folding boarding ladder.

There's no walk-through like the cruiser models, but you get a lot of other modern touches in this new Top Ender like roto-moulded plastic rear live bait well and anchor locker up front.

Other great class-leading features include composite honey-comb alloy

hatches and the very latest USA slot-in pedestal seats.

The open interior feels cavernous compared to smaller boats and it's no surprise this boat is rated to carry six people even under the strict level-flotation standard.

The hull features a slightly fuller bow than the standard Quintrex. However, with the addition of the Millennium bow entry you're getting a reasonable ride quality in bumpy, choppy waters. The Vee'd entry flows back to shallow Vee sections aft and the extended pod stern.

In keeping with offshore requirements the 610 Top Ender has sturdy 4mm gauge bottom panels and 3mm topsides. The transom is also 4mm to cope with bigger size motors up to a maximum rating of 175hp.

The unpainted bottom is protected by both a small external keel and small chine edges. The latter help to deflect spray and keep water running cleanly over the bottom.

These boats also feature quite a bite of internal framing, while additional strength comes from the internal





running down-sea. This boat is less likely to broach than many pointed-bow boats.

The centre console steering position also strikes a nice note with everyone that takes the helm. You not only have a comfortable position to drive from a standing/or seated position but also an excellent all-round view of the water and waves. There's also hydraulic steering to lighten the steering load and side throttle control for quick, easy control.

Quintrex has deliberately kept the console small and free of a high windscreen for a good reason. In serious sport fishing action for barra or other active fish you don't want any structure to get in the way. So the console just has a low handrail to stop any line from hooking up.

The high sides means the 610 has plenty of internal depth for fishing the sides of the boat. And the floor self-drains to stern scuppers on what's called a wash-deck.

Even up the for'ard casting deck has enough depth to give the angler some sort of protection. And there's also a seat position up here so you can fish away in comfort.

It's important to note the 610 Top Ender is right at home fishing estuary, or mangrove creeks despite its size. It's not too heavy, or deep to fish shallow waters. You also get an optional bow-

flooring and welded side decks. Quintrex also backs the boat with a three-year hull warranty.

Hull weight is not excessively heavy at 681kg and the trail package only tips the scales at around 1500-1600kg fully loaded, so it's going to be OK for towing behind your Holden Commodore, Ford Falcon, or even the Toyota Aurion.

And despite being a big boat, a low console profile ensures the 610 Top Ender should still be 'garage-able.'

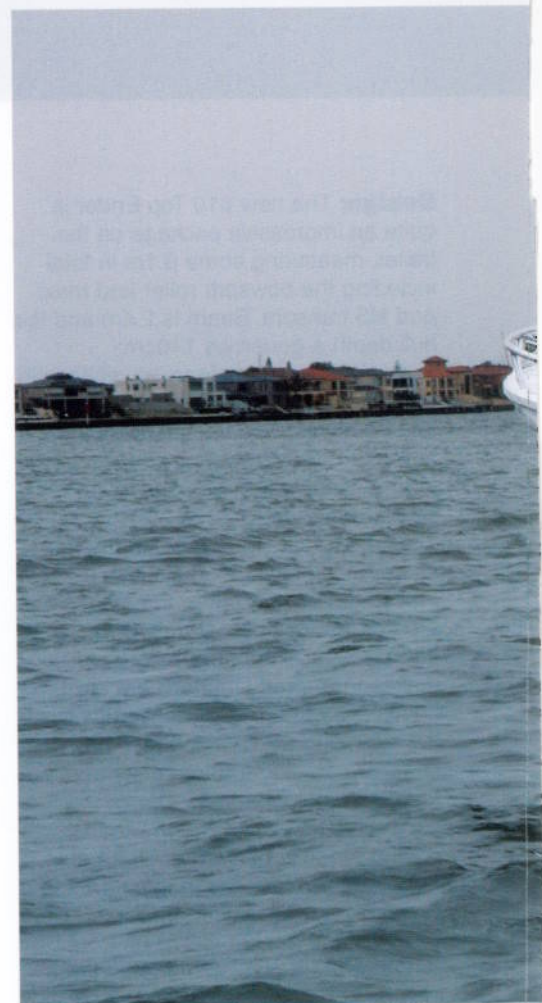
Performance: Rain was hanging around when we slipped this brand new model into the waters of Runaway Bay Marina. There was every sign we might get a little wet but with spray jackets packed we wasted no time getting out on the Broadwater to give the 610 Top Ender Tournament a spin.

From the very outset I was impressed by the size and steady feel of this boat on the water. It's not an overly heavy boat for its size, but still has the reassuring big-boat feel, which you will appreciate when going into open water.

Speeding down the mangrove-lined waters of the Broadwater I was also impressed the way the 610 Top Ender came easily to the plane. Keeping in mind we only had a 115hp motor on the transom, it was an impressive performance and suggested moderate fuel consumption.

There wasn't much rough water around for our test but enough to show this big boat isn't fazed by a dose of choppy water or ocean swell.

The ride seemed in no way compromised by the fuller bow and actually seemed to make it better for



thruster plate for an electric motor at the bow.

Stability is not an issue in a craft this size and we had no problems moving ourselves to one side of the boat in fishing mode. Typical of boat tests we saw quite a few fish but didn't have a scrap of tackle aboard!

Power: In keeping with market trends the new 610 Top Ender is designed to carry four-stroke motors up to a maximum size of 175hp.

In most instances buyers go for the standard package that gives you a Mercury 115hp, which we have no trouble with given the following speed results:

3500rpm	18 knots
4500rpm	25 knots
5500rpm	31 knots

We squeezed a bit more speed out of this rig with the motor at maximum revs (5600rpm) but were pretty happy with what we got at the 5500rpm mark. It's not super fast but quite in keeping with a bigger size boat carrying a few people aboard.

Some anglers may want a bit more top end speed, especially on Northern Territory big rivers and will probably go for the bigger 150hp, or 175hp size



motors. Performance in the latter case would be up near the high 30 knot range and cover a lot of ground.

I would judge the above rig better suited for someone doing more offshore work, such as you'd get in south-east Queensland, or coastal NSW.

The boat comes standard with a 120-litre in-floor fuel tank that should

give quite sufficient range on a 115hp motor. There's also a raised battery rack aft to take one, or two batteries and a battery well for'ard to support a bow electric 'thruster' motor.

Interior: Attention to detail is again in evidence with this new Top Ender. Up front there's a welded bow anchor roller





and split bow rails designed to help feed the anchor line to the correct spot.

The craft also has its own self-draining anchor well, roto-moulded in plastic to stop chain rattle and make for easy cleaning.

Behind this is the carpeted cockpit incorporated a raised casting deck that's an easy step up from the main floor area. This makes it very easy to move around the boat especially when you have a 'hot' hookup and are trying to concentrate on keeping the fish.

There is an extruded curved coaming right around the inner cockpit edge and carpeted lockers under the fore casting deck with web tabs to open.

These lockers have plenty of capacity for personal fishing gear.

Within the cockpit floor is also a moulded kill-tank that can be removed with the catch when you come back home. It's a great feature and very neatly incorporated into the design.

The for'ard cockpit also has two more floor slots for the three pedestal seats provided and plenty of fishing space down either side of the console.

Moving further back there's a raised side pocket for fishing gear and the carpeted side walls are ideal for attaching your various lures.

There are also low side rails suitable for attaching keeper-nets and clam-on rod holders for trolling.

The console meanwhile, gives you a nice sloped dash with factory-fitted motor instruments and space for the Lowrance sounder and VHF GX600 GME radio. There's also an attractive sports steering wheel and handy under shelf stowage.

There are some more seat slots aft and six in all so you've got lots of choices where to sit in the boat. The boat is not short on fishing gear either with six rod holders (three aside).

The boat also comes with live bait tank on the back deck, transducer mount and maxi-bracket for auxiliary motor/ and or berley bucket. There are also navigation and cockpit lights for nocturnal fishing action.

Summary: Quintrex is offering a very tempting fishing package with this boat, no doubt about it. And it's sure to appeal to a lot of anglers. It's a pure

fishing boat so there's no pretence of it being a family cruiser, though I did notice a pole mount insert on the stern deck for skiing, or optional cutting board table.

Overall, it's good to see Quintrex expanding the Top Ender family. If nothing else it will make more anglers focus on this very versatile range of fishing boats.

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BOAT TEST ANALYSIS

Boat supplied with Quintrex dual-axle braked trailer, 115hp Mercury four-stroke motor, tie-downs, nav/cockpit lights, 3 fold down seats, VHF radio, Lowrance X125 sounder, kill-tank, hydraulic steering, inshore safety pack. \$48,990, Sydney Powerboat Centre ph 02 9999 1566.

SPECIFICATION CHART

Brand	Quintrex	Bar Crusher	Trailcraft	Campion	HainesHunter
Model	610 TopEnder	620XS	610CC	Explorer 602	Prowler 520
Material	Alloy	Alloy	Alloy	Fibreglass	Fibreglass
Style	console	console	walkaround	console	console
Length	6.1m	6.2m	6.3m	6.3m	6.6m
Beam	2.4m	2.35m	2.5m	2.3m	2.4m
Power as tested	Mercury115	Suzuki150	Mariner150	Evinrude150	Yamaha225
Hull weight	681kg	840kg	855kg	1043kg	1070kg
Fuel capacity	120L	200L	250L	240L	210L

STAR RATING

Finish	★★★★☆	Helm Set-up	★★★★
Fitout	★★★★★	Fishability	★★★★★
Ride	★★★★★	Safety Features	★★★★★
Dryness	★★★★	Value for Money	★★★★★

*Data ESTIMATED by the TBF team when accurate information is unavailable. Maximum star rating 5 stars.