

## Boat Test



Words - Geoff Green

***The Legacy 30 Profish is a unique two-level boat purpose designed for sportfishing. The well-developed prototype, built using more than 100 production moulds, was launched in November 2001. Geoff Green went aboard soon after it was commissioned.***

Tony West, designer, plug-maker and managing director at Legacy Boats, says the Legacy 30 Profish was designed to provide an affordable, but offshore-capable fishing boat with two levels and reasonable height.

"I wanted to put as much as I could into a 9.3m boat, but retain walk-around facilities and a cockpit length close to 3m long. The only way to do that is by providing a sports-bridge with a separate accommodation level below it."

The concept of a two-level, walk-around boat arose from doing a lot of fishing. Tony finds it difficult to access the flying bridge on many small launches and wanted to produce one that was easy to move about on.

"Older tradesmen like myself often have creaky knees and delicate backs, so I wanted the easiest access possible to the bridge."

The 9.3m (30ft 6in) size range was selected to keep the boat affordable.

It was originally designed for local fishing conditions without losing sight of the American and Australian markets.

Legacy Boats was established three years ago. Since then, Tony has developed the Profish 30 in parallel with his other businesses. It uses an existing 8.53m (28ft) hull design - extended to 9.3m LOA - but everything else is totally new. Virtually every component in the boat - hardtop, shower liner, bunk modules, bait station, hatches, locker doors, trims and even the bases for the rolled

# TRADEA BOAT

upholstery that detail the bunk fronts - is made in a dedicated mould, custom designed and built to fill its particular purpose.

The detailing is extensive, although it has its own individual style and poses quite an investment to recover. But Tony says the comprehensive tooling enables production of a high-quality craft to tight specifications each and every time, cheaper than producing a semi-production boat.

Tony contracted a naval architect to detail the hull structure and he suggested it was possible to remove some of the bulkheads. There are twice as many bulkheads than required for survey, but Tony says he is happy to provide the extra strength.

"This boat is going to be used offshore in testing conditions. I want it to stand up to anything that's thrown at it."

All Profish 30s will be constructed to survey standard, and it will just be a matter of completing the inspections and paper work to have the hull passed as a workboat."

The layout is unusual, and the deep walk-around makes the narrow cabin and sports bridge structure look higher than it actually is. Tony says it's not much higher than a similar sized craft fitted with a fly bridge.

"I think the perception of height is generated by the narrow cabin and walk-around recessed into the hull. Your eye is drawn to the bottom of it."

Accommodation is accessed via doors set in a landing, two-steps down from the cockpit level. Two 38mm (1 1/2in) diameter drains deal with any water that finds its way into the companionway area and they discharge through skin fittings in the topsides (the companionway is 400mm above waterline).

"I think the drains are sufficient for normal sportfishing conditions, but for serious game fishermen who want to back-up hard, we suggest fitting another bulwark around the top step."

From the companionway, the interior floor is another two steps down. Large quarter berths with ample headspace are on each side of the companionway. They are about a metre wide by 2.2 metres long, and Tony describes them as a very comfortable big man's berth or a newly married couple's cosy berth.

The galley and shower/toilet are amidships to starboard and port respectively. The galley and the shower are both lit naturally with light filtering through a Sandbrook sliding window that opens into the walk around.

The galley is set up with a sink unit and a two-burner gas cooker (the gas bottle is in the portafino stern). Three cutlery/utility cupboards and drawers are built into the galley cabinets, and a 122-litre fridge and microwave are fitted forward of the sink and stove area.

The combination shower/head is constructed from a separate liner, incorporating structural bulkheads that brace the boat in two planes. The toilet is mounted at the front of the shower space and is positioned under the passenger's seat incorporated in the sportsbridge above. This reduces headroom above the toilet, but Tony says a 1.85m-tall man can use the facilities without hitting his head. There is plenty of headroom elsewhere in the shower unit and an external vent

# TRADEA BOAT

provides permanent ventilation to the head (as well as the opening window).

The vee-berths are forward of the galley and shower units. There is no dinette because Tony wanted to preserve comfortable access to the bunks, and he considers people will eat in the cockpit on a fine day and in the sports-bridge if it is raining.

The bunks are about 2m long with plenty of foot space, so two men can sleep on them comfortably. There's extensive headroom in this area as the space under the dash in the sportsbridge above is given over to the interior cabin. There is about 1.8m clearance above the aft end of the berths and this provides access to the boat's instrumentation fitted in the bridge. This design feature minimises moisture issues with the instruments and maximise ease of maintenance.

Two Weaver hatches, set into the front of the cabin, provide ample natural light and ventilation. One is a 500mm-square internal dimension escape hatch demanded by survey and both are rated for offshore work.

The interior is compact, but workable and comfortable. So too is the sportsbridge. Considerable spatial overlap is designed into the bridge and accommodation areas. Some sections of the bridge (the raised central walkway, helm seats and aft lounge) are used to developing headroom in the accommodation area below. Others (the driver's and passenger's foot wells) draw space from non-essential areas in the accommodation. There is about 2.1m headroom when standing at the dash in the footwells and 1.65m headroom in the centre walkway.

The bridge has a large opening in the back. The lures, platform, bait station and cockpit can be seen from the lounge in the rear of the sportsbridge (it's a great spot for a snooze). When standing at the steering station, the centre and port aft corner of the boat can be seen. The starboard aft corner can be viewed by putting your head out the helmsman's window.

Two Weaver hatches in the hardtop provide additional ventilation and light. The dash directly in front of the helm seat is devoted to engine monitoring and the electronics are installed in the centre of the dash. Tony says there is enough space to fit virtually any electronic package.

Entry into the sports-bridge is through a hinged half-door that sits against coves on both sides and has draining space underneath. Any water that gets in to the rear of the sportsbridge drains back out into the walk around. The door is retained by a catch and a clear is fitted to close off the opening above it (all catches, hinges and fittings are high quality, but strong man-sized items).

There's an opening in the side rails immediately adjacent to the bridge entrance that can be closed off with wire lifelines. It's designed so you don't have to climb over the rails when accessing the boat at a marina.

"I watched a lot of older guys struggling to climb down from a flybridge and get to the marina quickly to tie the boat up," says Tony. "On the Profish, you're straight out the side of the sportsbridge and onto the marina. It's made for solo berthing."

Tony is considering fitting a dual station in the cockpit, next to the starboard tackle locker. He envisages a toggle steering system and an electronic throttle connected into the main wiring loom routed just below.

# TRADEA **BOAT**

"It would be ideal for charter operators and game fishermen, and would make solo berthing even easier."

The first Profish is powered by a 250hp Mercruiser D'Tronic diesel and with a 21-inch prop on the Bravo 2 leg, Tony says its doing around 30 knots top speed.

"With a 300hp V8 diesel, it will probably achieve somewhere around 33 knots. That equates to 37mph, which I think is quick enough for a boat of the Profish's size and weight."

He says the boat's 495-litre fuel capacity will take it from Auckland to the Bay of Islands and halfway back.

The fish bin in the bait station also doubles as a live bait tank when the pumps are installed. It's a generous fish bin and comes standard with a choice of bait board top. The bait station also carries a sink unit and the rod holders are designed to carry a barbecue.

The locker in the front of the bait station was designed to store a small outboard and a front-loading freezer can be fitted in this space as an alternative. This set-up would provide a big-volume, compressor-driven front-loading freezer in the cockpit and an electric fridge in the galley.

The stern doors either side of the bait station are a two-piece moulding built with some E-Glass and Tony says they are virtually indestructible. They are supported on a cove on both sides and at the base, and there are no direct water paths because of the overlaps. The more the water pushes against the door when reversing, the better it seals. Both doors have large scuppers to discharge any spray or water that may come into the cockpit via the walk around in difficult conditions.

The walk-around is comfortable and also has good shoulder clearance off the cabin. The rail comes to about hip-height and anglers could walk a hard-running fish around quite happily. Tony says many overseas fishermen fish from the front of their boats and the Legacy is well suited to this application.

Tony says there are two sides to the fishing fraternity - the bottom fishermen want a platform, but the game fishermen don't.

"I tried to design a duck-board that would suit both styles of fishing. It's an integral part of the hull, and along with the scuppers and the back doors, it's designed for backing up. I knowing you can't please everybody all the time, but I've tried to culminate all my fishing information and produce a craft that pleases 80% of the market."

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The Profish 30 is a uniquely styled fishing boat and because it's aimed at the middle market, fishermen looking to optimise it for a particular purpose may want to look at re-siting or redeveloping a few features. Tony says he expects to optimise the boat for each client and



changing the placement of fittings is not a problem.

For a turnkey package, equipped with electronics worth \$12,000 and a 250hp Mercruiser D'Tronic diesel with a Bravo 2 stern leg, the Profish is priced at about \$255,000, including GST.

<b>Specifications</b>
<b>LOA: 9.3m (30ft 6in)</b>
<b>Beam:</b> 3.2m
<b>Fuel capacity:</b> 495 litres
<b>Water capacity:</b> 260 litres
<b>Recommended power:</b> 250hp Mercruiser D'Tronics / Bravo II drive 300hp Yanmar / Bravo II drives 260hp Volvo Penta Duoprop
<b>Speed:</b> 30 knots estimated
<b>Price:</b> Packages from NZ\$255,000, including GST

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