

Fisherman & Boatowner FIELD TEST May 2003



Suzuki's **140** Is Here

Right upfront we should declare that F&B has had more than a passing commercial interest in this new Suzuki 4-stroke 140hp outboard.

As most readers know, F&B maintains a number of project boats, and for some time, we've had in mind powering our new 6.50m alloy cat with a brace of Suzuki 140hp 4-strokes. However, until a few days before writing this report, (mid-April 2003) we'd neither finished the new cat, nor had we even seen the new 140 Suzukis.

Well, not until Greg Haines turned up with the 600RF spruced up and ready to be entered in the 2003 **Australian Boat Of The Year Awards** judging process. The Award's judging was taking place just down the road from our office, and quite a few of the entrants came and left through Runaway Bay Marina - including Greg, in this stunning 600RF.

Needless to say we knee-capped him in the parking lot, and grabbed the boat for a morning's workout as soon as he returned from the judging.

As things worked out, it was a near perfect set-up. F&B's Fishing Editor Damon Olsen was involved helping the Haines Marine team set-up the Signature for competitive Tag & Release fishing, so Damon was able to have several really good offshore runs in the 600RF too, as part of his involvement with the fishing program - see his counter-point on Page 63.

***Time Out:** New readers should note our full test report on the HMI 600RF was published in F&B April 2002 #78).*

Trade Pressure

It's doubtful if any engine has created quite so much angst amongst Suzuki's competitors as this 140hp, 186 kg (L/S - 20") engine.

It's easy to see why, too. Yamaha, one of the world's biggest manufacturers of 4-strokes, simply doesn't have a competitive engine at the moment, and although they're advertising that they've got one coming, even their most optimistic dealers acknowledge there won't be stocks in Australia "for months".

This leaves Yamaha with a huge gap in their range, jumping from their 115hp 4-stroke straight through to their 200/225hp 4-stroke engines.

Honda are a little better placed, but

Introducing what is certainly the most talked about new outboard motor we've seen in Australia for some years. Being the same weight as many comparable 2-stroke outboards, the Suzuki 140 not only breaks down the few remaining 2-stroke barriers, it has so many advanced technical features, it steps forward well clear of comparable 4-stroke engines, too. After a few minutes aboard the Haines Signature 600RF, the test boat for this 140hp mission, we knew what all the fuss was about. . . Peter Webster reports.

their 130hp is now in the middleweight division, being nearly 39kg heavier than the Suzuki 140hp, with 10hp less in output.

Similarly, even the 2-strokes are struggling to compete with this engine - it actually weighs less than Mercury/Mariner's 135hp Optimax (201kg) and even more incredibly, weighs virtually the same as the 2.5 litre, 2-stroke Mercury/Mariner 140hp which weighs 184kg.

No wonder the other outboard companies are paranoid about this engine!

For the record, this Suzuki 140 hp engine has also been available, rebadged, through the OMC Bombardier network, but rumours persist that the relationship between Bombardier OMC and Suzuki is not going to survive too much longer.

These rumours have been fuelled by Bombardier's recent announcement that they have now decided to sell off the struggling Johnson/Evinrude outboard motor business. Despite all

the Bombardier hype over the past 12-18 months, they are now seeking bids from interested parties to buy the troubled outboard business off them.**

Just how this will impact on the Suzuki-Bombardier relationship was unclear at press time.

However, one would have to conclude that the relationship would be hard pressed to survive yet another round of corporate takeovers, mergers and changes.

Suzuki Settles In

In Australia and NZ, Suzuki has now found a real home with the Haines family, and Haines Suzuki Marine is going from strength to strength on both sides of the Tasman.

The tightly-knit Haines family has achieved small miracles with the re-supply and distribution of this popular brand of outboards throughout Australia, in a remarkably short space of time.

Of course, they couldn't do that if the product wasn't as good as it is; Suzuki has always had a really good "grass roots" reputation out on the waterways, where thousands of boat owners have been happily using these tough little engines for many years.

That the Suzuki brand is now wholly administered in Australia and New Zealand by the Brisbane-based Haines family, has been welcomed by the trade and boating public alike.

Suzuki Features

Contrary to what some outboard companies would have you believe, most real innovation in the world of outboards in the last couple of decades has come from Suzuki.

Probably their biggest achievement was the first development of a crankshaft driven, oil injection system that took away the hassles of having to blend outboard oil into the outboard's petrol for the first time.

Within a couple of years, virtually every outboard company in the world was forced to adopt the principle, and this and many other Suzuki features has given rise to the international respect this outboard company has in the marine world.

The 140 is another technical "tour de force".

It literally bristles with new technology and consumer benefit features.

Like so many of these Japanese

multi-national companies, Suzuki is almost obsessed with the principle of achieving success through the provision of more and better consumer benefits.

There's nothing wrong with that, either, and there's plenty of evidence that this consumer-focused strategy has helped the Japanese trio – Suzuki, Honda and Yamaha, grow to dominate the international world of outboard motors through innovative, often visionary engineering, commonly derived from their extensive motorsport R&D involvement.

This DF 140 is a terrific example. A fuel injected 2.04 litre (2044cc) in-line DOHC four cylinder engine, it offers the best power:weight ratio of any 4-stroke in its class.

It produces 140hp (103kw) yet weighs just 186kg (longshaft) fully rigged.

Innovative new features like the two stage cam drive (see pic on page 59) and an offset driveshaft make this an

extremely compact unit for its horsepower, so it is ideal for a wide variety of boat types and sizes.

Other key features include a very special engine cover design which features a large air induction port (at the back) to provide maximum airflow for maximum power. Underneath the tightly latched hood, you'll find Suzuki's multi point sequential fuel injection matched with an amazingly intricate "tuned" long track intake manifold and race proven 4-into-2-into-1 exhaust system.

The result is a crisp response throughout the rpm range, and the excellent fuel efficiency we've come to expect from these engines. It has solid-state ignition for smooth starting and a superb electronic idle speed control system which maintains an uncanny 700 rpm idle.

The overall 2.38:1 gear ratio means the DF140 can turn a larger prop than most competitive engines of this size, but even more importantly, it is the

first outboard to feature its own oil cooler. This, plus some of the intake air which is diverted to the flywheel (acting as a fan, distributing cooling air to key engine components) are all features that have led this engine to winning a string of Awards right around the world as the most advanced outboard of its kind on the planet.

Other important consumer features of note include the 5.5L sump, a 40 amp alternator, a very wide selection of excellent props, and an unusually good line up of binnacle controls and instrumentation.

For larger offshore boats, it's important to note that not only is the Suzuki 140 available with the 25" extra long legs, it's also available with counter rotating propellers – a very useful feature indeed for larger craft in offshore or rough conditions, let alone

(Continued Over on Page 62)

***Fisherman & BOATOWNER* Performance Graph**

Haines Signature 600RF /140 hp Suzuki 4-Stroke

R/Min	Fuel Consumption		Performance Data			
	L/ph	G/PH	N.Mpg	Knots	Kms	Range
1,000	1.8	0.39	9.48	3.7	6.8	487
1,500	3.0	0.65	6.92	4.5	8.3	355
2,000	4.9	1.07	5.51	5.9	10.9	285
2,500	8.7	1.90	3.52	6.7	12.4	182
3,000	14.4	3.15	2.60	8.2	15.1	134
3,500	17.1	3.74	3.63	13.6	25.2	188
4,000	19.3	4.23	4.46	18.9	35.0	232
4,250	21.3	4.66	4.35	20.3	37.6	226
4,500	23.4	5.12	4.39	22.5	41.7	227
5,000	26.4	5.78	4.48	25.9	47.9	232
5,500	30.0	6.57	4.32	28.4	52.6	224
6,000	41.40	9.06	3.44	31.2	57.9	178
6,250	46.80	10.24	3.24	33.2	61.4	168

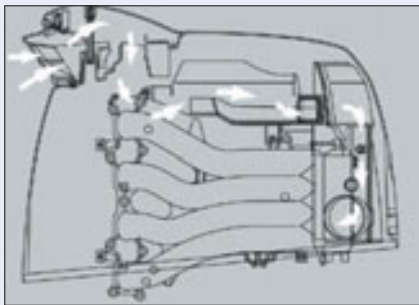
Range: *In nautical miles, calculated on 95% of the tank's 250L capacity*

Suzuki's DF 140 Technical Analysis

The DF140 four-stroke is a four cylinder in-line outboard motor that delivers smooth horsepower through advanced technology. Suzuki designed the DF140 to be compact and deliver power comparable or better than a two-stroke outboard. And of course, it is environmentally friendly. The DF140 produces less emissions, delivers excellent fuel efficiency, plus provides quiet operation, low vibration and superb reliability so that your boating experience is always a pleasurable one.

Delivering the Performance Obtaining more power from an engine can be done in ways such as increasing the number of cylinders, displacement, rpm, etc., but often the corresponding increase in size and weight detracts from the improvement in total power. With the DF140, our goal was to obtain 103kW (140hp) from a compact, lightweight four-cylinder engine without forfeiting reliability. Obtaining this from a 2044cc engine with an 86mm bore x 88mm stroke results in an engine that delivers nearly 51.5kW (70hp) per litre, giving the DF140 the highest power to displacement ratio the industry has ever seen in the 4-stroke category.

To get maximum power output from this in-line four, it was necessary to increase the supply of air to the engine. So we incorporated an enhanced air intake system to obtain maximum airflow into the engine (Left). Air entering



the intake is first channelled into a large silencer then on through the long branch aluminium intake manifold, and finally into the cylinders via the DF140's high performance, DOHC, four-valve per cylinder head.

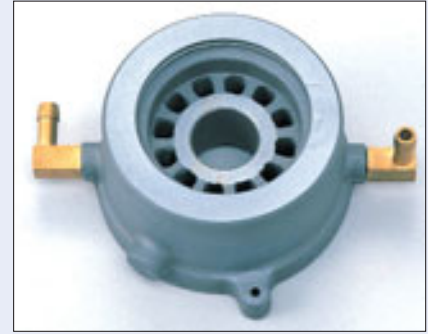
With an increased volume of air flowing efficiently to the engine, it was necessary to increase exhaust efficiency as well. We decided to do as we had done on the DF90/115, a "4 into 2 into 1" exhaust system.

Cast into the cylinder head and cylinder block, this race proven technology reduces drag in the exhaust system allowing smooth and orderly exhaust flow out of the cylinders.

The entire arrangement, from the shape of the air intake through to the exhaust system, is designed to increase low end to mid range torque and provide a wide, even, power-band.

Keeping the Outboard Cool The DF140 utilizes a comprehensive cooling system that

circulates water not only through the block but also cools the crankcase, the intake manifold, the fuel line and a specially designed oil cooler (Right). The first to be used on a Suzuki outboard, this oil cooler is a bolt-on type fitting between the oil filter and the block. Its compact and simple design is efficient at keeping oil temperature under control while providing ease of maintenance. Just as in the DF115, fan blades incorporated into the fly-wheel design efficiently expel heat from within the engine cover, out of the side of the cowl, keeping the temperature within the cowl under control.

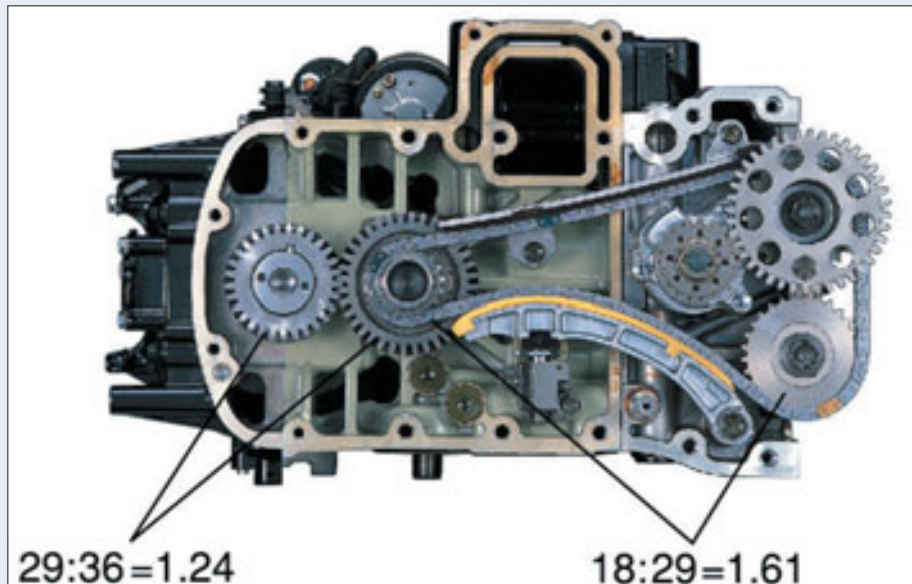


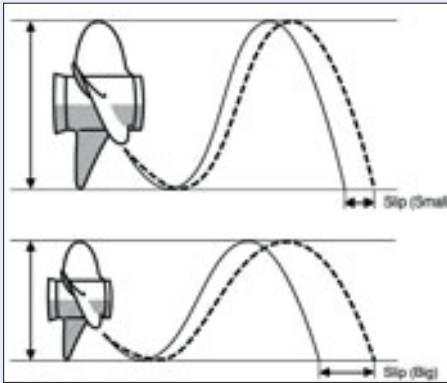
Delivering Efficient Propulsion With such a high performance engine now at our disposal, losing any power in the propulsion system would be a waste, so an efficient means of supplying maximum propulsion was sought out. Unlike rubber tyres on a road surface, a propeller rotating at a high speed in the water has a tendency to slip. As shown in the pic (top, P-60), when two propellers of the same pitch but different diameters are rotated, the smaller propeller will slip more than the larger. So to obtain maximum propulsion, spinning a bigger propeller with a suitable pitch is the answer.

But to spin a large propeller, an increase in propeller shaft torque is necessary. To obtain the necessary increase in torque, the corresponding increases in weight and resistance due to the use of larger gears and a larger gearbox does not always provide effective results. Utilizing a two-stage gear reduction system provides the necessary torque without adding unwanted bulk and weight.

The reduction ratio used in our two-stroke DT140 is 2.08 (12:25).

By comparison, the DF140 utilizes a first stage gear reduction (29:36) between the crankshaft and the drive shaft and a second stage reduction (12:23) in the lower





unit's gear case resulting in an overall gear ratio of 2.38.. Such powerful reduction allows the DF140 to turn a propeller that is one inch larger than the propeller utilized on the two-stroke DT140, delivering greater acceleration than the DT140 (*Above*). Along with greater

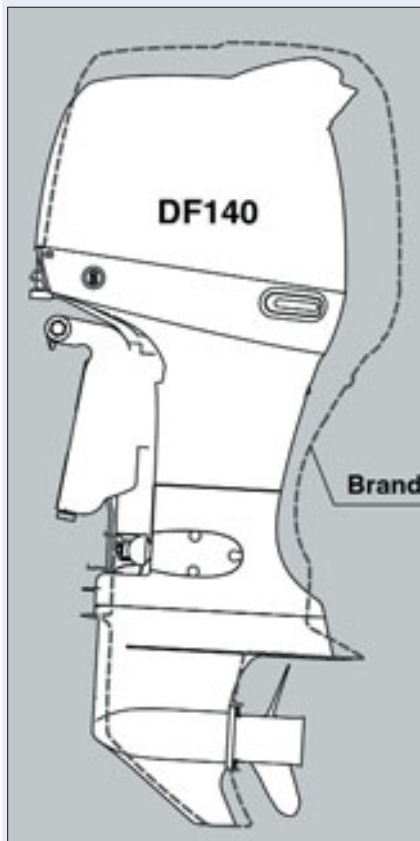
acceleration, the gear reduction in combination with the four-stroke engine's wide power band is capable of handling a wide variety of loads, which is a significant benefit to boat owners whose loads vary from day to day.

Making the DF140 Compact Utilizing a small displacement, high output engine contributed greatly to keeping the size and weight of the DF140 to a minimum. But to keep the outboard's size and weight down, we also took a fresh look at each component, often redesigning parts we felt could be improved. Parts like the clamp brackets, which are now designed lighter than those previously used. Such intense scrutiny left the DF140 at an impressively light weight, weighing slightly less than the DF115. Delivering nearly 51.5kW/t, the resulting power to weight ratio (1.85kg/kW, UL transom height) broke what had been the 'norm' in four-stroke outboard motor design.

Also contributing to the compact size of the DF140 is the use of an offset drive shaft. While making the DF140 more compact than competing outboard models (*Left*), this system positions the crankshaft in front of the drive shaft (*Top Right*), moving the outboard's centre of gravity forward, thus improving power performance as well as reducing vibration.

Further size reducing contributions can be found in the utilization of a two-stage mixed camshaft drive system. Incorporating both gears and a chain, the system's first stage gears transfer power between the crankshaft and the drive shaft (29:36) while the

second stage utilizes a chain to deliver power from the drive shaft to the camshaft (18:29). This allows for the use of smaller diameter cam sprockets, which in turn allows a reduction in valve angles, also reducing the size of the cylinder head.



Low Emissions

As found on the DF40 through DF115, the DF140 incorporates an ECM (Electronic Control Module) and Suzuki's Multi Point Sequential Fuel Injection.

The ECM constantly monitors crucial data, in real time, from a series of sensors placed in critical areas on the engine. The sensor system is made up of the manifold absolute pressure sensor, crankshaft position sensor, intake air temperature Sensor, Cylinder Wall Temp Sensor, Camshaft Position Sensor, and Exhaust Jacket Temp Sensor. The data from these sensors is conveyed to ECM's computer, which instantly calculates the optimum amount of fuel to be injected at high pressure by the Multi Point Sequential Fuel Injection system into each of the cylinders.

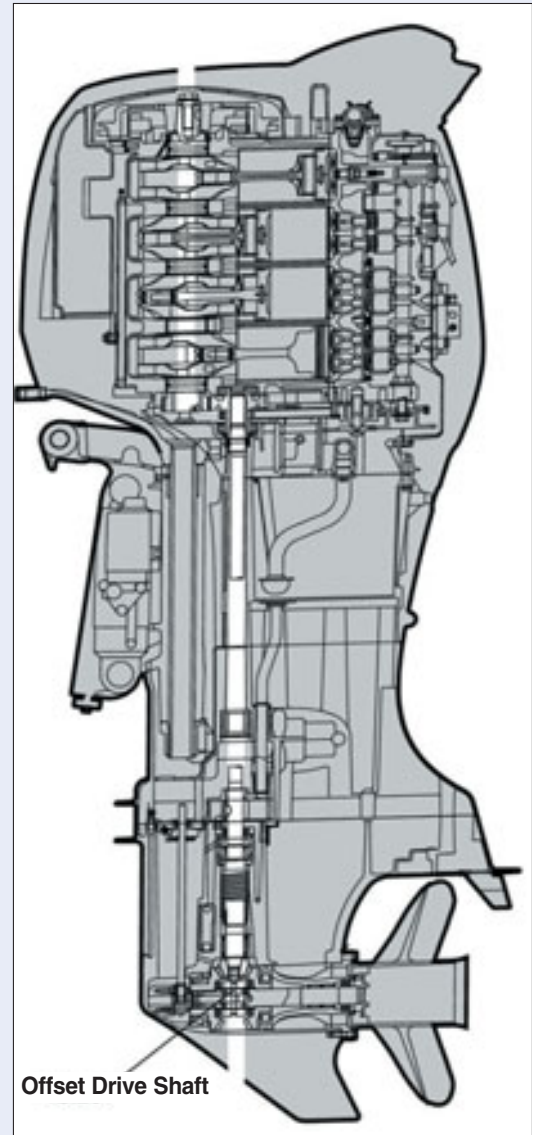
This system greatly reduces exhaust emissions allowing the DF140 to pass both the 2006 EPA regulations and CARB 2008 regulations, the strictest exhaust regulations to date, while providing lower fuel consumption, smooth starts, crisp acceleration, smooth performance and maximum efficiency.

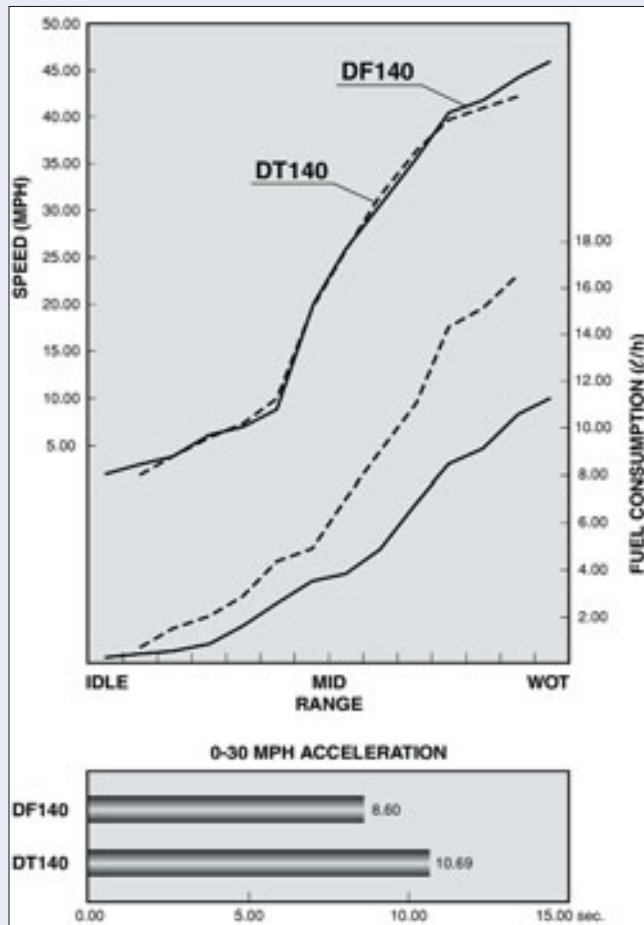
The Idle Air Control with its Fast Idle Function provides enhanced performance and operation. A quiet linear solenoid system that is programmed to let the engine idle at 700 rpm regulates intake air under different running conditions, increasing intake air when the engine's rpm's are low and decreasing when they are high.

The Fast Idle Function provides smooth, quick starts and stable engine warm-ups. When the engine is started, the IAC valve fully opens to let an increased flow of air into the cylinder.

Excellent Fuel Economy

The graph (*Above, next page*) shows a comparison in the performance of the DF140 engine with the two-stroke DT140. At idle, fuel consumption of the DF140 is over 60% less than the DT140. Even when operating at





maximum performance levels, the DF140 consumes over 30% less fuel than its two-stroke counterpart. A comparison in performance levels also shown in the graph illustrate the DF140's wide power range and its ability to deliver power even from lower rpm. Powerful acceleration is also evident with the DF140 reaching the 30mph mark approximately 2 seconds faster than the DT140.

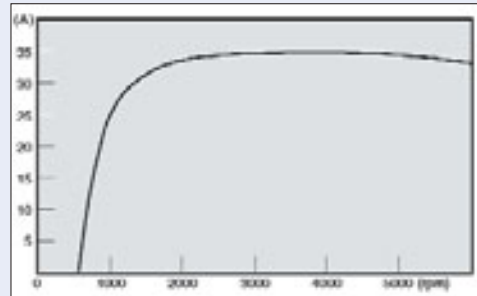
Pleasure Boating

Of course, the DF140 provides the same level of reliability that Suzuki's entire two and four-stroke lineups have long been known for. Quiet operation, on par with the DF115, further enhances your boating experience allowing conversation even at speed. Easy engine access makes maintenance easy and there is no need to mix oil with the fuel as is necessary with a 2-stroke outboard. This eliminates the smell and mess associated with two-stroke operation while saving both time and money at the fuel pump.

Suzuki utilizes an electronic Dash Pot System where other manufacturers generally use mechanical systems. The Electronic Dash Pot System only functions when there is a sudden throttle transition, from open to closed, smoothly reducing rpm's to reduce stress on the engine.

The timing chain is equipped with an automatic hydraulic tensioner to keep the chain properly tensioned. This system provides years of maintenance-free operation.

While contributing to the compactness of the outboard engine, the offset drive shaft moves the engine forward



placing its axis of inertia, the point where vibrations produced by the engine are at a minimum, up over the

upper engine mount thus greatly reducing vibration. Larger motor mounts - compared to our two-stroke V-6, the DT150, 1.8 times larger on the upper and 1.6 times larger on the lower - provide a further reduction in vibration.

The DF140's high output alternator delivers a total of 40A (12V) of electrical power. The alternator is designed to deliver a majority of that power at lower rpm so there is plenty of power to keep an assortment of electronics up and running.

The distinctive styling found throughout Suzuki's DE series is evident in the DF140. Smooth, flowing lines present a refined image that promotes their clean running characteristics. The upper cover incorporates a large air-intake duct that is designed to increase airflow into the engine while helping to prevent moisture from entering inside the engine cover. The lower cover separates into two sections; the port and starboard, to allow easier access for maintenance to the 4-stroke engine (*Below*).

An oil change reminder system, built into the Multi-Function Tachometer, informs the user with a flashing oil lamp that it's time to change the oil. Oil changes are easy since the oil drain plug is located on the front of the oil pan allowing draining of the oil with the engine in the vertical position. Also, a spin-on oil filter is used for easy



maintenance and the oil filler cap is located on the top of the cylinder head for easy access from the boat.

Along with its oil change reminder system, Suzuki's Multi-Function Tachometer includes a comprehensive monitoring system to provide you with an excellent backup to the performance of the outboard engine. Using data supplied from each sensor to the ECM, this system detects abnormalities in the running or the outboard giving you the needed information and alerts, so that appropriate measures can be taken before the problem becomes serious.

A counter rotation model is also available to keep your boat on a straight course with good handling, manoeuvrability and maximum speed on twin engine configurations.

F&B

Continued From Page 58. .

low speed handling in and around the launchramp or marina.

Impressions The writer is not a motorbike rider, but I've heard the new, larger 4-stroke motorbikes on the road often enough, and there's no doubt this engine tends to sound a bit more like a motorbike than an outboard.

It is incredibly quiet at low speed, whether the boat is just mooching along (in which case you can scarcely hear the engine at all) or trolling up to about 1500-1800rpm.

Once the boat starts to get weaving, the engine obviously works harder, but the overall sound levels will be at least

virtually eliminated the "gap" that used to exist between the lag in acceleration of the early 4-strokes compared to the **Zap-Pow!** performance of the old V-4 and V-6 2-strokes.

Or to put it another way, this is the first of the new generation 4-strokes that can easily be used for water skiing at a professional level such is the delivery of the horsepower and resultant torque.

Performance The performance of the 140hp Suzuki was so impressive, we're having second thoughts about putting two of them on the new F&B camera boat – at 6.5m LOA, and about the same weight as the HMI 600RF, the CCC cat will become something of a missile with *two* of these engines on

20 L/ph (as close as you like to 4.5 g/ph) for 4.5 n/mpg at a constant 19-20 knots.

Turn up the wick a little, and run the boat at 4,500 rpm, the speed comes up to 22.5 – 23.0 knots, but the fuel burn is still only 23.4 L/ph.

In fact, wind it out to flat chat, we couldn't get more than 46.8 L/ph into the engine, for a top speed touching 35 knots along the back channel.

Time Out: *It's really interesting to study the amazingly 'flat' range and n/mpg figures we've achieved from these last two Suzuki outboard tests. If ever we needed evidence of the nearly 'straight line' torque curve, this is it. As you can see, the range of the boat doesn't really alter whether you're*

going at the most economical 4,000 rpm, or flat out in the 5,500 rpm range – isn't that interesting to think about in terms of the fuel burn and available time it takes you to get home? Fascinating stuff, the implications of all this will need to be thought about very carefully.

Conclusion The Suzuki 140hp outboard is destined to be recorded as a turning point in the boating industry. With this engine, Suzuki is introducing new benchmarks of efficiency, technical advances, reliability and performance.

It has application across a very wide range of craft, but probably none more so commonly applicable as Australia's growing fleet of

5.0-6.5m Quintrex, Stacer, Savage, Stessl kind of boats – all of which will find this just about the ultimate engine.

As well, plate alloy boat fishermen and owners of the big twin rig fibreglass boats will find these engines offer a breathtaking combination of fuel efficiency and performance – offering upwards of 280hp with 4-stroke reliability and a fuel burn at a cruising speed of around 40 L/ph – and that's from two engines!

There's no doubt about it, this engine is certainly going to redefine the way we think of outboard motors in the future.

F&B



A great feature of the Haines Signature 600RF is the fact that it is so easily trailered by any of the 6 cylinder 4WDs, and many regular family cars fitted with heavy duty towing packs. Typically, it has a BMT weight of 1.84 tonnes

20-30% down than comparable 2-stroke outboards and pretty much the same as most of its 4-stroke counterparts, such as the Honda 130 and to a lesser extent, the Yamaha 115 – two engines we've spent a great deal of time with in recent years.

The test boat was beautifully set up. The stock 18"p x14"d Suzuki (3 bladed stainless steel) propeller thrust this quite substantial 600RF cleanly up and out of the water almost in a boat length, with a wonderful surge of uniform power right through to the maximum revs – all in a shade under 9 seconds. The speed or acceleration time is only relevant in that it highlights how Suzuki's engineers have

it! As a working platform for photography and fishing, I suppose 2 x 115's would be enough . . . *but gee, 2 x 140's, well, that'd be the duck's guts!*

With three of us and all our test equipment onboard the HMI 600RF, we logged an average 33.2 knots with best runs in the 34 and 35 knot zone depending on the tide and piece of the channel we used.

The tabulation sits at 33.2 on average, which we thought was an outstanding figure for a 4-cylinder 140hp engine in such a big boat.

Fuel consumption was pleasing too. In the rev range from 4,000-4,200, the engine was an absolute gem, just purring along for a fuel burn of around

F&B's Editor has requested my piscatorial input this month into the review of the latest offering from Haines Signature in the "hard core" trailerable fishing boat department - the 600RF.

During the course of assisting Haines Marine with the final fishing fit-out of this vessel, prior to its entry into the Boat Of The Year Awards, I have been able to get well and truly acquainted with this vessel.

It was with some degree of enthusiasm that I approached the task of fitting out the boat for the Awards. It has been some years since a run in a Haines Signature had been on offer, and I was very keen to see how applicable this latest boat was to its role as an offshore fishing platform.

A live bait tank, rod holders, kill tank, deck wash, bait board, sink and the in-dash ice box were all present when I first saw the boat.

It was nearly perfect, but just needed some outriggers and a few other fishing essentials.

After assisting Greg Haines with placement of outriggers, tag poles and the like, the boat was truly set up as a fishing machine.

Fishing Application

The 600RF has obviously been designed first and foremost as a fishing platform, but like all Signature boats, it also fills the role of a family day boat very nicely, as well.

By simply adding the rear lounge, the boat converts from full-on fishing, to a comfortable day cruiser. This is not to say that it is any less of a fishing boat simply because it has application to other boating domains as well. Haines Marine has simply recognised that not all fishermen want to be uncomfortable during a day's fishing. Or more to the point, a fishing boat does not have to be spartan and uncomfortable. The boat's many creature

COUNTERPOINT

By F&B Fishing Editor
DAMON OLSEN

comforts, incorporated into what is clearly a dedicated fishing boat, is a real credit to the company.

As far as a trailerable fishing boat goes, it is possibly as good as any I have ever been on. Now I haven't been on a heap of smaller GRP fishing boats, so this isn't that big a statement, but I've sure been on some pretty good ones over the years, including my family's long serving 680SF and later, our Kevlacat 7.2 "Reelsport".

The 600RF is something I would be very comfortable taking offshore for a day's fishing for billfish out from somewhere like Mooloolaba.

As the boat stood when Greg presented it for the Boat of the Year Awards, I would have had no hesitation in taking the boat out billfishing the very next day.

It's really the little things that make a difference in a sport or gamefishing situation, and this boat had everything sorted out right from the word go. The bait tank was plumbed correctly and effectively, the deckwash was practical, there was storage for all the important items like rods, tag poles and gaffs.

The outriggers were placed in an effective and practical manner and the bait board made a very useful rigging station.

The big difference here is that all these items either come as standard, or are a "tick the box" type option. What I mean here is that if you tick the bait tank box on the order form, you get a bait tank that works and you don't have to even think about it yourself.

Other significant fishing features were things

like stability at rest, a soft, dry ride, the bouyancy built into the transom, the anchor well and forward access, good gunwale height and an overall good, easy-to-clean finish.

The boat's stability at rest is something which is clearly linked to the soft ride of the Haines' trademarked "variable deadrise hull" (VDH). This hull was truly remarkable in the Gold Coast Seaway on the day of the test, and in conditions which were far too rough to even contemplate a day's offshore fishing.

Having not been in a Haines Signature for a few years, I must say I was surprised by the softness of the ride in a boat of this size. Combined with the excellent stability (a stand-out feature of this VDH business, I could feel underfoot) and the dry ride, it was a thoroughly impressive experience.

The access to the anchor locker at the front has obviously been very well thought out. The forward cabin 'roof' (on deck) opens to allow a walkway up the centre of the boat to access the anchor locker.

The ability to anchor the boat while being supported at thigh height by the boat at all times is a very useful feature in an offshore vessel. The anchor locker is more than big enough to accommodate a large foam ball to retrieve the anchor and there's room for a good 300m of anchor line.

The fishing nature of this boat means that the cabin is only big enough for a day bed situation, but it's not designed as a weekend cruiser. The cabin has a heap of room for storage, a toilet, tackle boxes and life jackets. It's pretty much exactly what one would expect in a trailerable offshore day fishing boat.

It's not often that I am inspired enough by a trailerboat to have my 2-bob's worth about it in the pages of this magazine. But the fact is this: the HMI 600RF is really something quite unique in the Australian boating landscape. Haines Signature boats have always enjoyed a

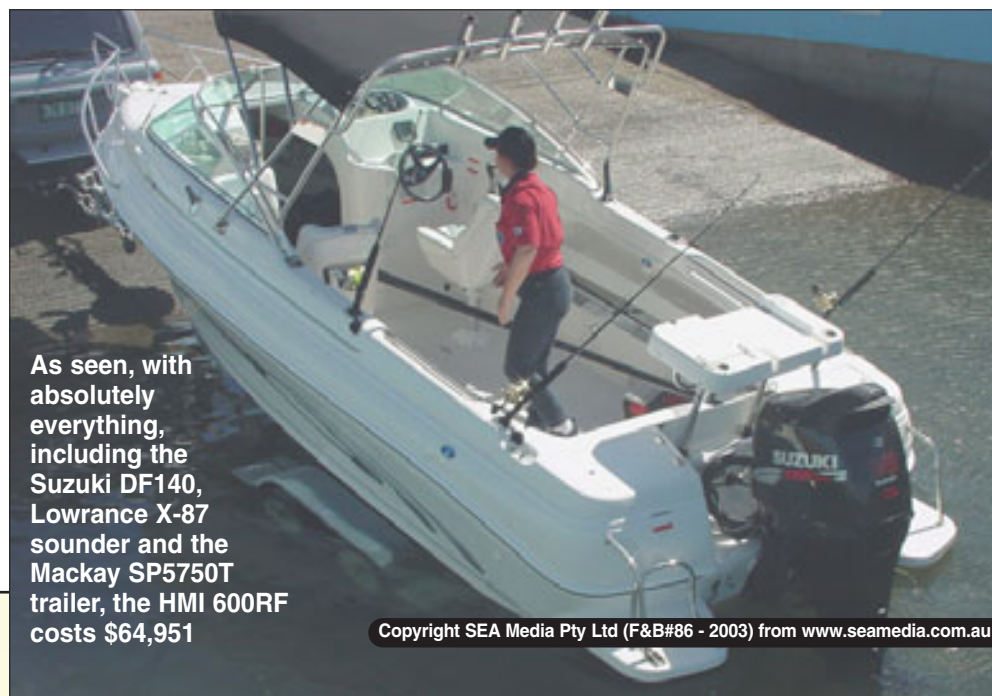
good rep for their hull designs, but so do many other boats in Australia. That's what makes the 600RF so special – the factory didn't just try and get by with a damn good hull.

All the little internal issues have been sorted out and all work very well. The ergonomics of the boat are excellent, and this is very apparent when you step aboard.

Summing Up

This is a thoroughly practical, comfortable and effective fishing platform for chasing anything from snapper to blue marlin.

F&B



As seen, with absolutely everything, including the Suzuki DF140, Lowrance X-87 sounder and the Mackay SP5750T trailer, the HMI 600RF costs \$64,951