



Sportsman Reef 19

Fast and exceptionally stable - the big Island Reef cuts clean lines on the water.



By Dominic Fry

The Sportsman Boats journey began in 2011 in the USA with a small team of 11 hard-working and dedicated boat builders. The line-up of models, number of staff and the size of the factory have all grown tremendously since then and the current headquarters is now based in Summerville, South Carolina.

The gradual spread of these beautiful boats across the globe has led to some of them now being manufactured in Melbourne, Australia. Currently the Melbourne operation is focussed on the Island Reef range however in due course more models will be built down under.

When the invitation was issued by Andrew Camilleri from Reef Marine Mackay to head out on the water

for a test drive I could hardly refuse such a rare opportunity. These boats have already established themselves in Australia as classy, functional and safe whilst being eminently suitable for a broad range of boating uses.

The day on the water in Mackay was cool and crisp, however a stiff 25 knot breeze messed up the water outside the Pioneer River mouth in spectacular fashion. This was going to be a real test and the performance in serious slop and swell was going to be interesting.

The big 19 foot fibreglass boat sat atop a dual axle alloy Savage Trailer. Its sleek lines, and very interesting athol blue colour oozed class. The 150 horsepower 4 stroke Yamaha sat on the back and I was itching to turn that key!

For a 19 foot boat it was exceptionally roomy.

There were storage lockers galore and the spacious floor was certainly well utilised with hatches all over the place. A large live bait tank was cleverly concealed within the rear starboard corner. The opposite corner housed a large and drainable kill tank/esky.

Littered with rod holders the chunky Island Reef is a fishermans dream. I counted 14 and of course more could be added for those that need multiple set ups at the ready. There is room galore and a huge casting platform at the bow, once again with storage lockers utilising the opportunity as well as a covered anchor well.

The centre console is large and roomy and the reversible backrest on the wide helm seat was a classy touch and would provide superior comfort for anglers needing a seat.

Handy stainless steel grab rails are in place there for additional safety.

The centre console also included more storage including a couple of handily stashed tackle boxes.

There is plenty of room for large electronics, either built into the dash

or atop it in between the handy stainless steel cup holders.

Perfectly set up you could say with plenty of available space for customisation.

Continued next page

There is a most convenient seat in front of the centre console. Of course there is storage underneath.



The stern comes complete with a swim platform and ladder.

