

Australian Boat Mags Field Test

# *The Makocraft 515 Frenzy Side Console . . .*

*Report & Pics By PW, working with JW on the water.*



## *With The Parsun 90 2-Stroke Outboard*



Following the success of the red Makocraft 440 Side Console in 2009-10, we've always been keen to pursue a bigger version of that excellent craft, with a number of specific objectives that took it out of the side console world and developed greater flexibility and the option of different functions. The key to our thinking was to explore the development of an overnight camping set-up on a side console, in such a way that all weather protection would be provided for one or two people, thus expanding the boat's capability to a whole new level.

**I**t's hard to believe how time flies these days, but in truth this boat has been on our minds for several years, going right back to when the red Makocraft 440 was on-sold to ABM contributors Di Ross and John Batty in Adelaide SA.

At that stage, the industry wasn't in quite the dire straits it has now fallen into, and there was still quite a deal of enthusiasm for projects of this kind. It wasn't too hard to put together a consortium of colleagues including our favourite ally boat builder, Alf Stess from Makocraft, plus Australia's leading trailer manufacturer, the Dunbier folk in various states of Australia, but headquartered in Melbourne (as is Alf Stessl's Makocraft) with Garry Baikovas

from Parsun Outboards very much involved providing the engine power for the project.

Parsun Outboards had just released their new 60/75/90hp series three cylinder outboards, and they were very keen to get it out into the mainstream, so the public would know that there is a practical, economical and affordable alternative to some of the high end outboards whose costs are starting to reach the stratosphere.

Dunbier have always made excellent trailers, but they too have a whole bunch of features that they wanted to incorporate in a mid-range single axle trailer, the benefits of which you'll see further along in this test report.

**Left:** This model Makocraft 515 Frenzy ticks many boxes in the determination of a true multi-purpose fishing boat. As a casting platform it is amazing - stable, heaps of space, choice of fishing positions. The wave-breaker added a bonus we didn't think of initially - it is a very re-assuring shin-height leg brace! **Right:** Have no doubt about the value of the trak rails. "Bilge keels" have been around in one shape or another since Noah fitted them to the Ark. They do give the Mako 515 better stability at rest, improved directional steering, and even better handling. The Mako 515 corners like it's on rails - which it is, sort of!





**Above:** This is a surprisingly big, full bodied boat, and from a fishing perspective, makes full use of its 16' length (in the old language!) - especially from the port side which is clearly the fishing side. It's a powerful, seaworthy shape with an excellent off-plane stance - vital for offshore fishing activities like trolling, or coming and going through river entrances.

**Left:** Not something you normally do intentionally, but Jeff puts the Mako through the reversing test which quickly highlights any weaknesses in the transom design. In this case the Mako has one of the best in the business (especially so for bluewater use) and was a principal reason this model was originally chosen.

Lastly, our long term friend and colleague Alf Stessl, has built more boats for the writer than any other manufacturer in Australia over a 40 year period. Alf is always up for a challenge - especially if it involves sitting down and nutting out particular requirements for fussy editors on the basis that these requirements may just flow into his production models. Thus it has always been, and we have all learned to work together very closely, with Alf willingly interpreting our sketches and drawings in many craft, the result of which has always been very pleasing.

This is no exception. Here, we took a standard 515 Makocraft Frenzy, a craft that is available with the console either in the centre or on the side depending on the customer, but with a number of features that are very important to the writer.

The most significant of these from the consumers' viewpoint is the transom arrangement. Far too many of today's side and centre consoles have real

vulnerability on their transoms because they are either cut down to allow the option of tiller steering which of course is unnecessary if the boat has remote steering (as most do) but also just in the structure of the transom the trend to open doors (and openings without doors) is quite worrying, but nobody seems to mind until they take a wave over the transom and the boat turns turtle and sinks.

We must keep in mind with boats like this that they are literally open boats without the floatation necessary to keep them afloat, let alone floating level in the water full of water.

The writer has always been very aware of the vulnerability of these boats and that's one of the main reasons why the Makocraft Frenzy series has such appeal. This model has a full height 'blocked' transom and with the right power:weight ratio in the engine department, it's capable of running through a bar quite safely without the risk of being swamped from the stern or having a wave overrun up against





***The Mako Frenzy is fitted with a bigger than usual 55 litre live bait tank, and we recommended that this be installed inside the boat - not out on the transom. We also dispensed with a transom door so we could develop extra storage aft across the transom - and that worked out perfectly, The boat is easy to get in and out of, and dry storage is terrific.***

the transom to destabilise the boat. This is also why we've got a 'wave breaker' up on the front – in a boat that of itself, has actually significant external freeboard.

But wait there's more! We also wanted to keep the boat small enough that it could be used in rivers, bays and impoundments – and somewhere around 5 metres pulls up that capability, because for that style of fishing, bigger than 5 metre is problematical – the size of the rig starts to become a handful in fresh water or specific inshore fisheries.

So we ended up with a 5.15 m Makocraft Frenzy side console that is essentially a stock standard model with a PW inspired (read: huge) 55 litre live bait tank inboard on the transom (and not hanging out off the duckboards) as well as a specially adapted casting platform that is exactly 1830mm (6') long measured fore and aft. Now, by adding a folding canopy off the wave breaker ledge, this area is quickly convertible into a snug overnight camping spot with a couple of swags or air mattresses rolled out from the cavernous storage areas underneath the casting platform.

That's one great feature of this style of boat – the amount of storage is amazing. It can easily store the forward battery driving the electric outboard, a spare tub or two of fuel, heaps of dry space for clothes,

camping gear and bits and pieces of cooking utensils should it be necessary – and also bear in mind we've got a toilet fitted just ahead of the console in this boat for real convenience. How good is that?

### **Design**

The Makocraft Frenzy is 5.5m LOA with a maximum beam of 2.10m. It draws about 300mm depending on load, and has a number of very interesting measurements. The main ones include noting that there is 1830m fore and aft on the casting platform which measures 1830 wide at its trailing edge, (the widest point) the lift-out fish box in there is 1770 x 510mm and will take several headed mackerel quite easily. Measured overall, there is 3.5m of cockpit from the wave breaker down to the transom, and 1830 mm between the gunwales for most of the hull. From the trailing edge of the casting platform back to the transom is a useful 1900, and by keeping the portside seat up on the casting platform, this creates a terrific fishing cockpit on the port side of the boat that measures 1900 by approximately 1300 of pure fishing space.

The live bait tank is a PW special, being 440mm deep, 490 wide and 300 long, for a total capacity of approximately 55 litres.

Other measurements of note include observing the freeboard in the back stern port quarter of the fishing cockpit is (internally) 630mm which is quite deep for a boat of this size, but this obviously drops away to 400 right up on the casting platform and even that is because of the raised wave breaker. But the casting

*Continued on Page 26*





## PARSUN 90 - The Best Value For Money Outboard in Oz?

The introduction of the new, much anticipated 3 cylinder 60, 75 and 90hp 2-stroke premix outboards from the giant Parsun factory in China is destined to create one of those 'moments' or change points in an industry in dire need of change.

With a recommended retail price of \$7,490, including controls, basic instruments, fuel tub, a little tool kit, propeller and pre-delivered ready to go, the Parsun 90 represents extremely good value.

Specifically, this will breathe new life into hundreds of older craft in Australia needing a new outboard motor in the 60-90hp category. For a long time now, purchasing a new outboard has been almost out of the question for hundreds of boatowners because the cost of new outboards, especially sophisticated 4-strokes, can often be as much as double the value of the boat itself.

Now there is a practical alternative that provides new engine reliability, safety, economy, a 2-Year comprehensive and transferable Engine Warranty, and ease of installation - all for a price point that makes it compatible with the value of thousands of secondhand craft across Australia.

Blind Freddy will work out that the Parsun 90 is a clone of the classic Yamaha 3 cylinder 2-stroke engine series that has been on sale in Australia for decades, and is widely regarded as one of the most reliable 2-stroke engines ever built. From all reports, this new 1141cc engine is totally parts compatible with the original Yamaha, leaving no one in any doubt about the origin of the Parsun 90.

If there is a downside to the new Parsun it is that as a premix engine, the owner will have to "pre-mix" the outboard oil into his fuel tub or fuel tank, on the classic 50:1 ratio. Given the savings of money involved, this doesn't seem too onerous, especially as it's something we have all done most of our boating lives. An oil injected model is going to be produced, but is not expected for quite some time.

Otherwise the engine is quite up to speed with all other 2-strokes, with CD ignition, power trim and tilt, and a total weight of 122kg in the 25" leg model, which is at the lightest end of the scale of comparable outboards.

Stocks of the engines are now arriving by the container load. By the time this magazine is in your hands, most Parsun dealers in Australia will have a 60, 75 or 90s on their showroom floor.

As well, BCF stores across Australia can arrange to supply pre-delivered outboards, too.

ABM





## PAR SUN 90hp 2-stroke Outboard Features

- Quiet, efficient 2 stroke marine engine excellent power to weight ratio
- High grade marine aluminium alloy for ultimate corrosion protection
- Forward control system
- Easy forward-neutral-reverse gear shifting
- Start in gear protection for increased safety
- CDI ignition system for trouble free starting
- Safety lanyard with emergency shutoff
- Thermostat controlled water cooling system
- Vibration reduction system for smooth performance
- Quiet, through the propeller hub exhaust
- Low emissions, quiet operation
- 2 Year Factory Warranty

Two stroke, 3 cylinders, power trim, electric start and forward control

Item		T90BEX-D	T90BEL-D	T90FEX-T	T90FEL-T
Overall length	mm(in.)	1337(52.6)		726(28.6)	
Overall width	mm(in.)	398(15.7)		374(14.7)	
Overall height	mm(in.)	1548(60.9)	1422(56.0)	1548(60.9)	1422(56.0)
Transom height	mm(in.)	635(25)	608(20)	635(25.0)	608(20)
Weight	kg	122	119	122	119
Full throttle operating range	r/min	4500-5500			
Maximum output		68.2(90)@5000			
Idling speed(Neutral)	r/min	750-850			
Engine type		Reed Valve			
Cylinders		L3			
Displacement	cm <sup>3</sup>	1141			
Bore x stroke	mm(in.)	82.0 x 72.0(3.23 x 2.83)			
Ignition system		CDI			
Control system		Tiller control		Remote control	
Starting system		Electric start		Electric start	
Gear positions		Forward-Neutral-Reverse			
Gear ratio		2.0(28/13)			
Trim and tilt system		Hydraulic elevator		Electric tilt	
Fuel tank capacity	L	24			
Maximum fuel consumption	L/h	37			
Mixing ratio	Fuel:Oil	50:1			
Gear oil capacity	cm <sup>3</sup>	610			
Propeller options*	in	3-13.25" x 17" or 3-13 5/8" x 13"			

\*Propeller choice will vary by boat size and application.

\*B=Back control F=Front control E=Electric start M=Manual start W=Electric start/Manual start  
S=Short shaft L=Long shaft X=Ultra-long -D=Hydraulic elevator -T=Electric tilt







**Construction and development shots . . . Makocraft's pressed plate ally construction technique has been tried and proven in thousands of boats over the years. Note the huge lift out fish box, toilet under the casting platform, and (left) the reinforced mounting plates for the electric outboard and the 12v drum anchor winch planned for this rig.**

Continued from Page 23 . . . Mako/Parsun/Dunbier platform works superbly and the wave breaker is really good to stand against which is something the writer believes is often missing in many lesser craft.

Right forward is a useful anchor locker that will take a danforth or plough type anchor and at least 100m of rope and chain. In this case, there is also a special, reinforced pad for an electric winch, be it a drum winch or windlass style, the reinforced deck area is there already for it. Ditto the pad for the electric outboard and that's specially designed so that the outboard drops down to the port side and doesn't hit the wave breaker in the process.

The transom area is excellent, and comprises the usual cut throughs for throttle and steering cabling going to starboard behind the transom wall, plus the

engine battery, master switch and primer bulb – all this immediately behind the skipper's seat.

The Mako also has a very dry and deep storage locker on the portside transom ledge. This is particularly useful as it is dry, easily accessible and the sort of perfect place to put your camera, phone, car keys or valuable gear that you want to keep out of the weather, as distinct from trying to cram it under the console.

All of this works extremely well and the only criticism that we can offer is that it needs a spin-out in the outboard well to give easier access to bilge

pumps and bait tank pump wiring under the live bait tank ahead of the transom. This area is accessed at the moment by removing 5 or 6 self-tappers which allows the carpeted rear panel to be taken out, but one could argue that in an emergency situation or just simply to check connections, it would be much quicker to have a spin-out – a good quality one – set into the outboard well above the critical area where inspection is required.

Storage wise, it's everywhere – under the casting platform there is no less than five separate lockers, all lined, and I would think reasonably waterproof – probably “splash proof” is a more accurate description because whilst the hatches are a tight fit, I don't think it's right to call them watertight. That said, it would be very easy to work a sheet of plastic or some such across this area if you needed to keep it dry underneath, but again we've always had in mind



our fold up tent arrangement over this area which would achieve the same purpose.

The tent is really a bit like creating a half cabin or

cuddy cabin arrangement. Its height is set to enable the skipper to see across the top of it from the helm and/or have it fold back really quickly. This is why the wave breaker ledge is semi-circular; this way, the canopy craftsmen can create half-circle hoops that will fold down onto the anchor winch on the foredeck. All this has been very carefully planned.

In a perfect world, the vertical, trailing edge of the canopy would have a roll-up zippered door about 900mm wide, with a second roll up midge screen.

### Construction

The Frenzy's built of 3mm ply bottom sheet and 3mm topsides using the now familiar pressed rib plate building technique. Given that Alf Stessl is the man who largely invented this system, and has been building ally boats consistently for longer than almost anybody in Australia (with an output measured in thousands of craft) few other boat builders in Australia have anything like this man's experience in aluminium boat building.

This boat is a terrific example of the ally boat builder's craft, and the reason why boats like this are so hugely popular in Australia. It looks good, it's finished well, yet it retains the pragmatism that we need in Australia for the sort of things we do in our boats.

Makocraft's work standard is very high, and whilst it's tempting to think they might have tried a bit harder for us, the truth is that all of these boats come down the line to a very uniform build standard; we've seen so many of them over the years we know the standard doesn't really vary from one boat to another.

*Continued on Page 30*







*Superb engineering and design for either drive-on or winch retrieval techniques - with the critical keel support aluminium boats MUST have. Note too, how the clever design allows the boat to come ONTO the trailer, miss the centre - and slide down into position.*

## **Dunbier's Seriously Clever GP5.3m-14B Single Axle Trailer**

Boat trailers have come a long, long way in recent years, and there is no better example than this single axle trailer Dunbier recommended for the Mako Frenzy project.

Critical considerations included ensuring this aluminium console rig has full support along its keel; sensible full size alloy wheels (we're over rusted trailer wheels) and good quality new tyres with a 125 k/ph speed rating at full load, a self-aligning guide-on system, spare wheel, walkway, hub oilers, and galvanised everything. Add in snap-up dolly wheel, waterproof lights and GRP mudguards - and we're talking about trailerboating in 2014, as distinct from the 1980s.

Can you get a cheaper trailer? Or one in ally? Or . .

Look, there are many much cheaper trailers, but we've learned (the hardest way, invariably) that with boat trailers you get what you pay for; with Dunbier, that's a first class trailer with excellent back-up.

*Jeff Webster hows how it's done - and with a trailer as good as this, and Jim positioning it at the perfect depth in the water for a drive-on (see above) Jeff then centres his weight to keep the rig level, and to offset the starboard thrust of the prop.*







**Above & Right: Now this is seriously clever. This is Dunbier's "If you're going to have a spare wheel - then take advantage of it!" system. Wind the dolly up, drop the 'spare' wheel down - and presto, a third working wheel to roll the rig around the back yard, driveway - or across the beach on the winch. It's still the spare wheel for the highway - and an extra set of inner and outer wheel bearings. It is also available as a retro-fit for just about any trailer with the usual gal steel box-section drawbar. Full marks to the Dunbier team!**

**Fitting the Dunbier under the Trak-Rail equipped Mako Frenzy 515 added to the challenge for Dunbier team, but between the factory in Melbourne and the fit-up by Queensland Dunbier Manager Shane Kite and his blokes here in SEQ, the end result is a superb trailer marrying real long distance, off-road touring strength, with convenience, dry feet (gotta lurve walkways!) and easy on-off functionality.**





## Performance

Performance wise it's a cracker – of course, having the original cam profile of the 1141cc, 90hp 124 kg 2-stroke, it comes out of the hole like a rocket, with that wonderful snap, crackle and pop that you can only get in a 2-stroke and a very good one at that, pushing an easily driven hull.

This rig does not need one more horsepower; the 90 is an absolutely perfect fit for this project and it's a very willing, lusty engine that sits beautifully around 3800-4000 revs for hours. It's smooth, it's quiet, it's smoke free – in terms of value for money, it's impossible to beat with the other brands. Especially if you're contemplating the 2-strokes from (say) Tohatsu, Mercury or Yamaha. In that context, you have to sit down and ask yourself why am I paying so much more for the same thing?

To make this point quite clear, this is not to compare the Parsun 90 with anybody's 4-stroke 90-

### Performance, with the Parsun 90hp 2-stroke

r/min	k/ph	knots
1,000	(7.8)	4.2
1,500	(9.6)	5.2
2,000	(12.2)	6.6
2,500	(16.2)	8.7
3,000	(22.6)	12.7
3,500	(33.5)	18.0
3,800	(37.6)	20.3
4,000	(38.8)	20.9
4,500	(46.1)	23.7
5,000	(51.8)	28.0
5,600	(59.8)	32.3

100hp outboard – obviously, they are smoother, a bit quieter and don't use the classic 50:1 oil mix, as all 4-strokes have small sumps and normal crank case oil lubrication like a ar.

However, for a huge number of boatowners in Australia, the cost of today's sophisticated, high end 4-strokes is almost at the ridiculous level.

Commonly, 4-stroke engines now cost more than the boat is worth, so in that environment, the Parsun

60/75/90hp is a godsend, financially.

As you can see from the attached performance box, we pulled a very easy 59.8 kilometres (32.3 knots) top speed @ 5600 r/min but the most interesting figure for the writer was the 37.6k/ph (20.3 knots) @ 3,800 r/min when the rig was just humming along

## Specifications

### 5.15 Mako Frenzy

Length Bow-Transom	5.15m
Length Overall	5.15m
Max Load	440kg
Number of People	5
Length on Trailer	6.4-7.0m
Min. HP	50
Height on Trailer approx	1.7 (+)
Max HP	90
Beam	2.10m
Transom Shaft Length	Long Only
Depth	1.10m
Max Transom KG	172kg
Bottomsides	3mm
Transom Material	3mm
Topsides	3mm
Weight (boat only)(approx)	475kg
Rec.retail std Mako Frenzy	\$15,400

## Standard Features

Anchor Well	Side Pocket – Portside
Bollard (Foredeck)	Soft rider Transom
Bow Eye (2xHole)	Steering System
Bow Rails – Low + Nav	Sports Steering Wheel
Brackets	Sub floor under cast deck
Bow Sprit & Roller	Trak Rail Hull System
Bungs (2x40mm)	Transducer Bkt
Carpeted Floor	Transom Cable Guide
Foredeck	Under Floor Flotation
Front Cast Deck & Hatches	Upholstered bucket seats on pedestals (2)
Fuel filler – Side deck	
90L Under floor fuel tank	
Painted Hull	
Rod Holders (2)	

### Options Available

Stripes	Two Tone Paint
Side Decks (Fully Welded)	Electric Bow Mount Bkt
Seat Floor Sockets (4)	Electric Kit
Sports Side Console +	40L Live Bait Tank
Screen	100L Tournament Live Well
Side Rails – Low	Rod Locker

**Interesting 'long shot' of the Mako 515 Frenzy just cruising down the bay, one-up. Nice clean wake, good running angle. Likes to be trimmed UP running head-on, to get air in between the trak rails (we think - more testing needed to be definitive) and trimmed DOWN running downhill in bay chop. The Mako Parsun combo is pleasingly responsive to trim changes.**







softly, riding beautifully, cleaving its way through the Broadwater chop in a totally impressive performance.

Downside? Well the obvious downside is that we're back to pre-mixing the oil into the tubs of fuel or the underfloor tank, and there's no doubt that is an inconvenience. The clue is to work in batches of 50L where you know you put in 50L of unleaded petrol, and bung in 1 litre of outboard oil so the ratio is maintained at 50:1. Now, seriously, how hard is that?

I find this is quite a difficult argument because I've done it for so long. We've always had to add oil to 2-stroke fuel systems. We did this until the oil bottle system emerged for 2-strokes, before going across to the 4-strokes, which don't require this technique at all. But for the cost saving benefit here (and remember, we're talking thousands of dollars) it really doesn't bother me at all.

I would happily deal with the slight inconvenience of chucking in a litre of oil for every 50 (or half a litre for 25) litres of petrol, to make this level of cash savings in the purchase price, to get a brand new engine with a 2 Year Warranty. For many people, the savings involved will pay for their boating and fishing trips for YEARS ahead.

However, I'll acknowledge it's not a big deal for the writer, as I've been doing it all my life, so to me, it's second nature.

### Handling & Ride

This was a surprise – and of interest, the boat was

***The Mako Parsun 90hp combo is ideal, with the 122kg Parsun having just about the perfect power to weight ratio for this size hull. Putting the big live bait tank INSIDE the boat across the inner transom makes for a much better balanced boat. Being a light weight two stroke, the Mako Parsun combo takes off like a scalded cat from a standing start, and does not need any more horsepower with family loads.***

markedly softer running uphill straight into the wind (about 20 knots, too) across the chop in the Broadwater, than it was coming about and running the other way with the wind on the stern going "downhill".

I suspect the boat does get some small wind lift advantage with water and some air trapped between this boat's Trak Rails. Like little bilge keels, there's no doubt about the advantage of the Trak Rails in several areas.

For example, the Mako 515 hangs on like a limpet through the turns, and it's almost impossible to get side slip in the boat without chucking everybody overboard. Side grip is fantastic, directional stability is significantly improved - it steers on and off the waves on the quarter, superbly.

As noted, I suspect, but I'm not sure, that it does get a small benefit of lift trapped under the hull between the 'rails' going straight upwind. So that when you turn around and go the other way and you're not getting the lift under the bow and through

between the Trak Rails, it reverts back to being pretty much your standard 5.0m-5.5m platey going downhill – and that then depends on the trim and crew location, where the ice box is positioned, and so on.

In an overall sense, there's no question the Makocraft Frenzy is not just 'as good' as the rest of the market; I really do think it is the market leader in the otherwise conventional 5.0m-5.5m class of boats of this kind.

### **Application**

I have to confess I'd really like see this boat fully developed with the fishing equipment, the tent arrangement over the casting platform and our famous bimini frame. Throw in a downrigger, a good electronic combo GPS/plotter unit and by crikey, this would be a fascinating craft of enormous capability and potential.

As it is, without the accoutrements of the PW dream – and let's face it, putting up tents over the casting platform, installing our bimini frame with fore and aft canopies, all of that today comes under the "Yes, but it costs so much . . ." accountant's scrutiny that is very hard to justify unless you've got the reddie to do it – and we don't have them at the moment.

The Makocraft 515 Frenzy Parsun Dunbier combo is "state of the art" in every context. It really doesn't get much better than this and it's been a privilege to work with these companies to develop a project that sets benchmarks we'll be using for many years to come.

This particular rig is capable of almost anything – offshore, inshore, bays, dams, and rivers. Whatever the fishery, this boat can handle it, and do so easily with safety and stability.

### **Cost**

Putting this rig together today would set the reader back about \$15,000 for a standard Makocraft 515 Frenzy, about \$7,400 plus installation (\$500-\$800) for the engine, although you'll probably get a 90hp Parsun package with installation and a new battery for approx \$8,000.

The trailer component here is a top drawer Dunbier trailer with the unique third drop wheel system which is absolutely brilliant. But Dunbier themselves can sell you different model trailers ranging in price from about \$3,500 to this one, which is a \$4,500-\$5,000 trailer depending on where you are, and the standard of trailer involved.

So, as an entry level package, without electronics but with sensible basic gear such as nav lights, bilge pump, steering controls etc, the boat's going to cost about \$28,000-\$29,000 at the entry level point. But with a 4-stroke 90/100hp, it will very quickly jump into the high \$30Ks and it would be easy to push it

well over \$40K with all the good gear onboard.

### **Conclusion**

In truth, this Makocraft 515 Frenzy, Parsun and Dunbier combo rattled our cage.

It's been widely publicised that Alf Stessl invented his Mako Cats about 12 months after we'd ordered and Makocraft started building this boat, when the first of Alf's new single-engine cats emerged - about the time this 515 Frenzy was being finished.

Our extensive trials of the single-engine 4.85m cat (ABM May #210) then confirmed that Alf Stessl has once again created a unique, exceptionally good product that went on to generate more reader interest than any other story we've run this year.

As a result, we are keen to develop one of the 4.85 or 5.30 cats as a long term project boat, so we thought we'd sell this boat before it was fitted out with our project stuff, to fund the Makocraft cat project. This would then be the permanent 2-3 year work boat and test platform for the magazine.

In general terms that's still the plan, but with everybody's financial restraints, a depressing lack of support and interest from the industry in projects like this, and the reality that the Makocraft 515, Parsun and Dunbier combo is actually even better than we dared hope, has created a high degree of uncertainty about how we move forward.

That's a hell of a compliment to everyone involved, but the fact is that the Dunbier is the one of the best trailers on the market today, the Makocraft Frenzy is a superb hull with its unique Trak Rails for extra stability and directional control at sea, and a transom and wave breaker system that sets it quite apart from everybody else's side or centre console – and it's all pushed by a remarkable 90hp outboard that goes like the clappers, and represents unbelievably good value for money.

So as a project, although it's only just been launched, it's still achieved more than we hoped it would, because everything that came together with it has 'clicked' and we've developed a package of equipment that is second to none – and yes, that includes the acknowledgment that it's a 2-stroke outboard, and not a 4-stroke.

Parsun already build quite a big range of 4-strokes too, and they are slowly working up to embrace bigger horsepower 4-strokes outboards in future. However, we have to acknowledge there's no way known they're going to be able to build a 90-100hp 4-stroke that doesn't cost thousands of dollars more, either.

This is a big issue for boating consumers everywhere. How much are we prepared to pay for an outboard, and what level of disadvantage are we likely to suffer by having a 2-stroke instead of a 4-stroke on an outboard that will probably not be used



for more than 30 or 40 hours a year?

I don't think you have to be a Mensa genius to work out the answer.

If you can afford a 4-stroke easily, and want the best for your new Mako 515 Frenzy, there are several excellent units on the market to consider.

That said, the writer has become incredibly money conscious these days, and frankly, I'm struggling to understand why these new 4-stroke outboards cost so much; why they all went UP together when the \$A was up to \$1.05. I would happily re-install the Parsun 90 as the savings involved would easily pay for half a dozen major fishing expeditions I'm keen to do . . . and we will be back in with Parsun again in the next project boat.

Similarly, if you are watching your retirement savings closely, and do about 50-60 hours a year fishing locally in the estuary, river or bay, and have a beautiful boat you love and know intimately – but it needs a new donk – the Parsun 60/75/90 is the way to go.

By the way, if one of the other outboard dealers tells you “2-strokes are going to be banned next year” (a common ‘yes - but’ rebuttal about the Parsuns) be aware the Federal Government has no timetable for tougher outboard emissions (most pundits think it might happen in 2016 with 2-3 years notice of intent) and no government would EVER make the Legislation retrospective.

*Go fishing. Enjoy. Save.*

Especially in a Makocraft Frenzy 515 side console with Trak Rails.

## Comment . . .

Broncos and Cowboys – *you get the picture!*

And yes, the odds of winning in Tasmania are much better than they are in QLD or WA, but they are STILL pretty darn good.

Oh – and I nearly forgot – even if you don't win one of the 7 cylinders, you still get 12 terrific issues of Australia Boat Mag . . . to enjoy over the following 12 months!

See the official comp details on the next couple of Pages (11-13) and good luck!

### The Parsun 90 Epiphany

We've wanted to try the Parsun 90hp 2-stroke ever since it was released. The engine is based on one of the real classics of the outboard world, the long serving Yamaha 3 cylinder 2-stroke outboard, to the extent that most parts are interchangeable between the manufacturers.

*Okay, this is a bit on the personal side of things, but this SeaRay 230 is here for a reason - it belongs to Gordon, Ruth (and Dug the retriever) and is for sale for a very realistic price. As many readers will recognise Dug, we're happy to confirm that yes, it's 'Ruth' who was our partner in publishing F&B, PAB, PCA and a zillion other magazines and books for 20 years (!) before retiring from publishing in late 2012. Their bridgedeck Searay is immaculate - and just a terrific boat for a family to use and love for those dreamed of weekends 'down the bay'. Dug is okay with the plan to downsize to a smaller trailerboat, providing they do carry out their plan to start exploring further afield - and he can still chase dem pesky fishes in the shallows! See the ad, P-95.*

Working with the Parsun 90 was always going to be controversial, because there are powerful forces in the boating industry determined to do their level best to put the kybosh on the Parsuns, because they are so much cheaper than most of the other manufacturers' products, especially when compared to 90-100hp four strokes.



In truth, this month's featured Makocraft 515 Frenzy aluminium side console was actually built (and coloured) with the new Honda 100 hp in mind, but after many, many delays getting those engines to Australia and then (finally) learning the new Honda 100hp was going to land in the \$17,000-\$18,000 range, plus installation (\$1,500-\$2,000) we realised the rig was going to end up costing well over \$50,000 without any of the special fittings we wanted to purchase i.e., the for'rd "tent", the (essential) road





cover, a sun canopy (never mind our unique strapless bimini) and base electronics.

The final straw came when Honda's new management decided it was unable to support the program as they have done so many times in the past, leaving us with the full burden of the project's depreciation if we went ahead. Although the project's new cost might be (say) \$55K, we knew there was no way known we'd pull up more than about \$35K for it in 12-18 month's time. In the end, we did what so many consumers today are doing, and decided the project was unrealistically expensive.

Around the same time, Parsun finally released their 90hp 2-stroke outboard they too had coming for about 12 months.

It's certainly been a rocky road for everybody in the international boating industry since the GFC hit in 2007-8, with production schedules disrupted, R&D scrubbed, and deliveries to Australia all over the place – and that's with every one of the outboard companies.

So the \$7,500 Parsun 90 finally arrived, and we were all duly impressed by how it was all put together. ABM's accountant (our daughter Tracey) astutely observing we could buy and install about three Parsun 90's for the price of the single Honda 100 . . . *Hhhmmmn, point taken.*

Arrangements were made for Jim at Paradise Point Marine, our local Parsun and Evinrude dealer to do the installation as soon as we could get one up in Queensland.

Actually, in the end, Jim did a lot more than just the engine installation, as right in the middle of this saga, ABM's MD and our Subscription Manager, Mary Webster, did her now infamous swan dive into the garden hedge and adjacent pathway, busting her shoulder, left arm and her ability to mow the lawn, do the shopping, washing up, cooking and house cleaning in the process. (*Hell, I even had to get my own beers outa the fridge! Sigh . . .*)

So the writer was thrown into the unfamiliar role of being a nearly full time carer for next couple of

months, and we were pretty happy when Jim volunteered to take over much of the fitting out that I was going to do.

In the final analysis, it was Jim who worked up the live bait tank, the base electrics, instruments, etc, to get a very well fitted rig assembled and ready to go.

But what was the Parsun like we all wondered? After months and months of delays we found out – and that's what this month's very special report is all about – and our sincere thanks to Jim, his wife Sharon, (pictured, left) and our son Jeff, for all their

## Coming Home . . .

### Black Rhino 660 WalkAround



Black Rhino Boats has teamed up with a top NZ designer to build a unique range of plate boats between 6.10m and 8.10m LOA, utilising the customer's choice of outboard(s), diesel or petrol sterndrives.

Tony Bramich heads Black Rhino production on the Gold Coast, one of the few plate ally teams regularly building boats in Survey for commercial work. Featured here is the stunning Black Rhino 6.60m Walkaround powered by the smooth and 'torquey' 150hp Mercury Four Stroke - the complete package. Terrific performance, blue water capability, real fuel economy, exc finish - all in a mind-blowing, 'outside' fishing platform. Book a test run, today.



**Most Models Available in Survey for Commercial activities such as charter fishing, diving, eco tourism.**



**Latest news? See us on FACEBOOK soon!**

BR 610 WalkAround



BR 760 Hardtop



BR 810 Hardtop



# Black Rhino

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## Comment . . .



help pulling this together at last.

### And the Parsun?

It's terrific.

There has never been so much bull-dust spread about engines that equals the amount that's been tipped on Parsun by the outboard establishment, the

Club of the Big Five, over the past couple of years.

These guys reveal their monumental hypocrisy with their constant chanting about Parsun being "*that Chinese outboard motor*" when nearly every outboard in Australia under 60hp is made in China, anyway! Two strokes *and* four strokes. For them to denigrate Parsun because it is from an original Chinese company is ludicrous.

Ironically, Parsun's parent company is a ginormous business (they build vast, city-sized, hydro electric generators used in dams all over the world) that employs something like 25,000 people, and in financial terms, is way bigger than several of these multi-national outboard companies.

But the local outboard guys are frightened about their jobs, and the future, as the scope and volume of the Australian boating industry is halved in the wake of the GFC era. It's not going to be possible to sustain five multi national brands at the level they've enjoyed in years gone by, and they know it. Like so many other manufacturing-based sectors in Australia, the manufacturing heartland of the boating industry has been decimated, and society is moving away from the boating and fishing world like never before.

No wonder the local branches of the multi-nationals are terrified of Parsun – and I use those words advisedly. With BCF selling Parsun outboards by the container load through 110 stores, plus a growing dealer network in Australia and around the world, Parsun is now one of the biggest volume outboard producers on the planet – and their pricing attitude is awesome.

This is really the first major, national application of what I call the "Bunnings Pricing Philosophy" we've seen in the Australian boating world, and thanks to the Parsun - BCF pairing, it's only the beginning. We're now seeing the prices for electronics, life jackets, chandlery of every kind, and now, finally, outboard motors, tumbling down to almost unbelievable levels.

This new Parsun 90hp outboard costs between \$6,500 and \$7,500 in a box, about \$800-\$1,400 to install (depends on issues such as the steering system, state of the boat's batteries, etc) and for thousands of boatowners with 1980s, 1990s and early 2000 model boats, this is the perfect solution they've been waiting for, to repower their boats.

### What's it like?

Well, actually, it's identical to the Yamaha 3 cylinder 70-90 we've all been using for decades. The minute we started it up on the Mako 515 Frenzy at the Slades Point boat ramp last week, and slowly motored away from the ramp into the main stream, Jeff (my son) and I looked at each other and grinned; it was just like going back in time, to dozens of other boats we've tested and run with the 3 cylinder



Yammies on them, with that exact same vibration pattern, engine noise and at initial start-up, the 2-stroke smoke!

*Ah, you've gotta lurve 2-stroke smoke early in the morning . . .* but again, by the time we were 50m from the launch ramp, the smoke had gone, the engine had settled in and this was still on the 25:1 running-in oil mix because it hadn't even done 10 hours work.

When it goes up to 50:1 it will be like every other 2-stroke 3 cylinder we've ever used for the last 40 years or so. And no better or worse than any of the two strokes from Tohatsu, Mercury or Yamaha.

**ABM**