

# FORMOSA 480 CLASSIC



**Wayne Kampe**  
BRISBANE

wkff@aapt.net.au

Brisbane based Formosa Marine have been turning out quality alloy fishing rigs since 1998. No surprise then to find that their Classic range of craft offers a mix of low maintenance and sheer fishability that sees them very well placed in a highly competitive market.

A close look at the Formosa 480 Side Console, the smallest of the four craft in the range, reveals that the 480 has the potential to be right at home anywhere from impoundments to the estuary environment with a run offshore in the right conditions also on the cards thanks to ample freeboard for length, a decent kick in the bow sheerline and a full height transom.

Factory features within the Classic Side Console range include 4mm plate

bottom and 3mm plate sides, painted hull with eye catching graphics, sports style side console, a forward casting deck, four seat positions for the paired swivel seats, wide and fully welded side decks, side pockets, full carpeted floor, self-draining anchor well, grab rails, mechanical steering, split bow rail and associated bow sprit and stainless steel roller. Four rod holders plus a 75L underfloor fuel tank are also standard inclusions. In all, it's quite a comprehensive package and offers a lot for the owner whether a long term or first time boater.

#### LAYOUT

I'd see a couple of anglers fishing up front on the elevated casting deck with ease, their work made easier by the foredeck being rounded at the bow to provide not only extra room but both easy and comfortable anchor access. The craft's split bow rail would not, in my view, inhibit fishing pursuits but would be appreciated when tending the anchor in rough conditions. A large underfloor storage area,



Excellent design features allow the Formosa's hull to slip through the water with minimal fuss.



A two metre long side pocket is installed to port within the main cockpit area.

with flat base, is accessed via a forward opening hatch. There were also a pair of seat spigots up front as well.

Side console craft emphasize work area and there is certainly plenty in the 480's cockpit. With the grab rail and windscreen equipped console tucked to starboard, options include moving one of the craft's pedestal seats forward, as we did on the day of test runs, or leaving it aft opposite the skipper's seat. The skipper's pedestal seat, incidentally, is well placed behind the console to offer plenty of leg room, easy visibility through the windscreen when driving, and a clear view of the console mounted gauges linked to the 60hp Evinrude E-Tec astern. Side mounted controls for the E-Tec were in ideal reach, as were a bank of switches for various functions, these being mounted to starboard of the

wheel on a lower section of the console's front. In all, a very user friendly helm area with everything where it needed to be.

Side pockets were

rails, paired rod holders to match those up front, and a full width off-floor shelf on which the craft's engine battery was mounted to, with an isolator switch nearby

#### Specifications

Length of hull	4.95m
Overall length on trailer	6m
Height on trailer	1.9m
Beam	2.22m
Hull construction	Plate alloy 4mm bottom, 3mm sides
Freeboard	750mm
Weight of hull	460kg
Deadrise	8 degrees
Fuel	75 litres
Engines	60-90hp
Engine fitted	90hp Evinrude E-Tec
Persons	Five
Towing	Family six sedan

standard: to port being almost 2m long, and to starboard being necessarily smaller due to the console's location. Other aft features included sensibly low grab

well off the floor.

The craft's full height transom made for great sea keeping ability but should an owner desire a transom door it's on the options list along with bait board, live bait tank, deck wash and other items.

Completing the stern treatment was a boarding platform each side of the 60hp E-Tec mounted on the craft's pod, plus a grab rail in each quarter.

#### RIDE AND HANDLING

I expected no surprises here, given my experience with Formosa craft previously, and found the 480 Side Console was up to their usual standard so far as ride quality was concerned. Formosa Marine have stuck with a simple formula featuring a bow design that is fine enough to take the impact out of chop encountered at speed while reducing spray from the hull while under way; most important in an open boat.

Handling was entirely predictable. Throwing the craft into tight turns was fun, the hull tracking very smoothly thanks to the



A user friendly dash/helm set up is a feature of the Formosa.

**“Don't let a marine breakdown lead to a**



**marriage breakdown.”**

A day on the boat can often end up with marriage on the rocks if you don't take the right precautions.

To keep your relationship afloat, become a Sea Tow member. Most men don't think they'll ever have a flat battery, run out of fuel, but most women know better. If you join Sea Tow now you'll not only save your relationship, you'll also receive a gift voucher for your next purchase at Whitworths.

**JOIN NOW AND RECEIVE A \$25 WHITWORTH'S GIFT VOUCHER**

Offer valid till 28/02/2011.

**SEA TOW**

"Your Road Service at Sea"



**www.seatow.com.au Phone 1800 SEATOW**  
7 3 2 8 6 9

◀ From page 112

generous full length keel and general configuration. The non feed back mechanical steering was light and very responsive.

**PERFORMANCE**

The 480 side console is rated for engines from 60-90hp which placed the Evinrude 60hp E-Tec at the base of power ratings. Nonetheless the smooth running and smoke free two cylinder 864CC direct injection E-Tec acquitted itself very well so far as getting the craft up onto the plane. Once knocked into gear the 60hp pushed the 460kg rig with two of us aboard onto the plane at 3,100rpm at a speed



Left: While minimal power the 60 E-Tec had no problems in powering the craft at speeds up to 50km plus.

Right: A flat carpeted shelf sits under the bow underfloor storage area.

of 16.8kph. 4,000rpm saw 38.2kph on the hand held GPS with 5,000rpm registering 47kph; 5,500rpm

a brisk 53.3kph.

What I did like about the 60hp E-Tec was the rapid response to throttle application, a push on the lever saw the craft surging ahead very rapidly. And yet when the power came off the hull settled down off the plane in very short order as well.

One question arises: how fast would this rig go with a 90hp E-Tec on the transom? Food for thought, that!

Two up or three up, I'd see the 60hp E-Tec as ideal power for the Formosa 480 side console and would probably only advocate more power if regular crew in excess of three persons were likely. Rating is for five, incidentally.

**FISHABILITY**

The Formosa 480 side console Classic is quite a lot of boat for the money. With a beam of 2.22m, hull depth of 750mm externally and 600mm internally thanks to the full height transom, the 480 offers quite a deal of sea keeping ability. The hull is virtually all work room, with neatly rounded internal corners for comfort and a degree of stability at rest that makes it ideal as a fishing craft for more than two to enjoy. Factory options are on hand for further enhancement of a basically sound package which will suit a lot of anglers. Launch and retrieve from the Redco roller and skid trailer supplied was without any difficulty.

**SUMMING UP**

With fully welded side decks, a reinforced floor structure featuring ribs

300mm apart mated to longitudinal bearers, the Formosa 480 Classic, backed by a three year factory structural warranty, is a rigidly built craft with potential for a long and useful fishing life. Overall finish was good, with full welds visible but smoothed, while the paint and graphics were well executed.

With full safety gear plus the smooth 60hp E-Tec the rig, supplied by the Australian Marine Centre of Springwood, would come home for \$28,500, which is excellent value. Contact details are phone (07) 3808 7333, fax (07) 3808 7300 or the net at sales@australianmarinecentre.com.au.



Side console craft offer plenty of room for anglers to enjoy their fishing and the Formosa certainly does not skimp in this department.



The Formosa sweeping out of a turn to port.

**BEST PRICES IN BRISBANE ON**  
**YAMAHA EVINRUDE**  
**REPOWERS**

**AUSTRALIAN**  
**MARINE**  
**CENTRE**

**YARD STOCK CLEARANCE SALE**  
**ONE-OFF DEALS**  
WHILE STOCKS LAST

<p><b>FREE</b> DIGITAL EPIRB</p> <p><b>AQUAMASTER</b> ALLOY BOATS</p> <p><b>440 RUNABOUT</b> - Yamaha 40hp 2 stroke - Trailer</p> <p><b>1 ONLY</b> <b>\$19,900</b></p>	<p><b>SAVE</b> \$2000</p> <p><b>AQUAMASTER</b> ALLOY BOATS</p> <p><b>460 CENTRE CONSOLE</b> - 50hp Evinrude E-Tec - Redco Trailer</p> <p><b>1 ONLY</b> <b>\$23,900</b></p>	<p><b>FREE</b> GARMIN 551 COMBO</p> <p><b>Tomahawk</b></p> <p><b>550 CENTRE CONSOLE</b> - Yamaha F115hp - High tensile plate - Self draining - Dunbier Trailer - Alloy T.Top</p> <p><b>1 ONLY</b> <b>\$47,900</b></p>	<p><b>FREE</b> ALLOY BAITBOARD</p> <p><b>FORMOSA</b></p> <p><b>520 CENTRE CONSOLE</b> - Yamaha 70hp 2 stroke - Trailer</p> <p><b>1 ONLY</b> <b>\$27,900</b></p>
<p><b>FREE</b> GARMIN 750 TOUCHSCREEN COMBO</p> <p><b>TOURNAMENT</b> PLEASURE BOATS</p> <p><b>2000 BLUEWATER HALF CAB</b> - 150hp E-Tec - Tandem Dunbier Trailer - Lock-up Cab</p> <p><b>2 ONLY</b> <b>\$63,500</b></p>	<p><b>FREE</b> GARMIN COLOUR SOUNDER</p> <p><b>TOURNAMENT</b> PLEASURE BOATS</p> <p><b>1800 HALF CAB</b> - Yamaha F115hp - Tandem Dunbier Trailer - Hydraulic steering</p> <p><b>2 ONLY</b> <b>\$48,900</b></p>	<p><b>FREE</b> GARMIN COLOUR SOUNDER</p> <p><b>TOURNAMENT</b> PLEASURE BOATS</p> <p><b>1750 HALF CAB</b> - 90hp Yamaha - Dunbier Trailer</p> <p><b>2 ONLY</b> <b>\$34,900</b></p>	<p><b>FREE</b> GARMIN COLOUR SOUNDER</p> <p><b>TOURNAMENT</b> PLEASURE BOATS</p> <p><b>1600 HALF CAB</b> - Yamaha 60hp 2 stroke - Dunbier Trailer</p> <p><b>1 ONLY</b> <b>\$30,900</b></p>

**www.australianmarinecentre.com.au**

Pictures are for illustration purposes only.

**YAMAHA**

**EVINRUDE**  
E-TEC

3491 PACIFIC HWY SPRINGWOOD QLD 4127  
sales@australianmarinecentre.com.au

**3808 7333**

**WE HAVE OVER**  
**100** FROM 2.4M  
TINNIES TO  
24FT CRUISERS  
**PACKAGES AVAILABLE**