

Formosa 430 Classic



Garry Smith
CAIRNS

From the first sight of the Formosa 430 Classic, I hit the 'like' button. Its high sides, smooth lines and great finish caught my eye.

The saying that sometimes a little is a lot, certainly applies to the Formosa 430. It came with a minimal fit-out, which suits my style, as I like to have considerable input into the design. Others prefer to purchase a turn-key boat,

where their only input is the fuel in the tank.

The boat test trio consisted of Carla Grieve from the Tinnie Shack, Rob Erskine and yours truly, and after a quick look over the Classic we slipped it into the water.

Backing and launching was a breeze with the Dunbier trailer. The combination skid and keel roller system launched the boat with minimal effort. Boarding from the ramp was quick, easy and very safe via the telescopic fold down ladder onto the broad duck board, with non-slip foot

pad and over the full height transom. The low profile grab rail, which runs down over the fastback transom, offers a solid hand grip from boat ramp to cockpit. For the more agile, over the nose of the low profile bow rail is also an option.

The 430 Classic is basically a cut down version of the Formosa 520, which has gained a solid following since being released in 2009. The 520 has proven to be an excellent open water boat, while the 430 is designed to be a more multi-function rig. The smaller size makes it more of



From the first sight of the Formosa 430 on the trailer the author hit the 'like' button.



Heading out the front of Trinity Inlet looking for some seas; as expected the Formosa handled the conditions excellently.

an inshore/island boat that can slip out wide on a good day or shoot up the estuary when it's too blowy.

I busied myself taking internal shots while Rob drove. Rob picked up on the boat's sensitivity to weight distribution at rest and slow speed, which is not unusual for this type of boat. Rob has a young family who fish with him, so his major priority is stability, for me being an empty nester and just fishing with mates, I am more interested in the ride.

The deep vee at the nose, with a vee that carries right

the rough stuff, producing a rig more suited to estuary/impoundment fishing.

The internal layout is a centre console with the rest up to the buyer. The boat, as

Standard Features

Standard features: casting deck as standard, fastback transom, transom storage compartment, reverse chine hull, raised sheer line, aluminium anchor well, bow sprit and roller, fully welded side decks, 32mm rail tubing – front and rear, side pockets, casting deck with storage, sounder bracket, folding dive ladder, steering system NFB, fully carpeted marine ply floor, buoyancy foam filled hull, painted hull, graphics, 6 way switch panel, nav lights, anchor light, bilge pump, 4 rod holders and battery box.

Optional extras: folding screen, two tone painted hull, rear folding lounge, transom door and bait board.



The tall narrow console uses minimal floor space.

tested, simply had a large esky as a helm seat, which worked fine. It would be just a matter of budget on how this set up was enhanced, right up to a built in esky with padded seat and forward and reverse back rest or pivoting single or twin bucket seats. A single storage shelf under the console, side pockets and under transom storage, mostly taken up by the battery to starboard, completes the standard storage. How the buyer options up would have a significant impact on built-in storage options.

The Formosa 430 is a very fishable rig even as tested.

Although there are only four rod holders as standard, two at the stern and two mid-ship, the layout offers excellent 360° fishing with good thigh-height gunwale support when fighting that dream catch. The tall narrow console uses minimal floor space and the broad flat gunwale top provides a solid feel and look to the boat. The angler can also easily step out onto the full width duck board on either side of the motor, should a fish dash under the transom. The single level

Continued page 113 ▶

through to the transom, forecasted a smooth ride. Like any design there is a compromise between stability and ride. While the hull responded noticeably to movement from side to side, you could still sit two of us on the gunwale. Rob's suggestion of a second version of the 430 that reduces the vee throughout, especially at the transom and increases the reverse chine, would produce a far more stable hull but at the expense of ride in



The anchoring system is simple but very functional.

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◀ From page 112

floor, while not offering a raised platform at the front for casting, means the angler can walk comfortably around the

roller and an internal tie-off for the end of the rope, so the whole lot doesn't end up in the drink.

The inside of the anchor

well is carpeted to reduce noise and dings to the hull. The navigation lights are tucked in under the bow rail for protection when mooring against jetties or other boats and the anchor light is mounted at the starboard rear and is easily removable for storage above the starboard side pocket when not in use.

We headed out the front of Trinity Inlet looking for some seas and as expected the Formosa handled the conditions excellently. It behaved itself with no sign of ducking or diving at all angles to the sea and was a pleasure to drive, turning like a dog chasing its tail, with no misbehaviour.

On the plane the boat was very stable and firm in the turns. The 60hp Honda 4-stroke was the ideal power unit, getting the hull on the plane in a snap and producing a top end speed of 22.6 knots, which isn't mind blowing but fast enough for a boat.

The short, wide hull meant it took quite a few revs to get the Formosa up on the plan with 4000rpm producing 12.4 knots; 4500rpm providing 15.6 knots; 5000rpm went to 17.2 knots; 5500rpm produced 19.4



The layout offers excellent 360° fishing.

knots; 6000rpm got 21 knots and it maxed out at 6200 rpm doing 22.6 knots.

All up the Formosa 430 Classic is a great inshore

fishing rig for the boatie who wants to get places in a hurry when the seas are a bit uncomfortable. They will love the smooth ride at all angles

to the sea and will be able to get to their favourite fishing grounds without feeling like their kidneys have gone 10 rounds with Mike Tyson.

For further information about the Formosa range of plate alloy boats and the Honda outboard series, contact The Tinnie Shack on (07) 40 886 125.

• *Quoted performance figures have been supplied by the writer in good faith. Performance of individual boat/motor/trailer packages may differ due to variations in engine installations, propellers, hull configurations, options, hull loading and trailer specifications.*



Boarding from the ramp was quick, easy and very safe via the telescopic fold down ladder onto the broad duck board, with non-slip foot pad and over the full height transom.

▶ **Trailer**

Make:	Dunbier
Model:	CL 4.5-13B
Rollers:	Skids and keel rollers
Number of axles:	Single
Gross vehicle mass boat/motor/trailer:	869kg including fuel + 10% extras
Suitable tow vehicle:	4WD
Length of rig:	5.5m
PRICE AS TESTED:	\$25,000

boat without worrying about tripping on the step-up and still having good thigh support when fighting a fish over the nose. There are a stack of full height ribs for hull rigidity, with large foot plates ensuring sinkers and swivels can't get inside the hull and cause corrosion.

The anchoring system is simple but very functional, with a cross bollard welded onto the rear side of the self-draining anchor well, for easy reach from the floor, a low profile bow rail that feeds the rope straight onto the bow



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The anchor light is mounted at the starboard rear and is easily removable for storage above the starboard side pocket when not in use. Large foot plates ensuring sinkers and swivels can't get inside the hull and cause corrosion.

▶ **Boat Specifications**

Length Overall:	4.45m
Beam:	2.1m
Transom Shaft Length:	L/S
Weight Boat only:	420kg
Hull Deadrise:	2 degrees
Persons capacity:	4
Fuel capacity:	75L underfloor
Cockpit gunwale height:	Freeboard 550mm
Max horsepower:	Single 60hp, 120kg
Construction:	Plate aluminium, 4mm bottom, 3mm sides

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