

# Superb Surtees 7.3



Neil Grose  
V&TFM EDITOR

vimeditor@fishingmonthly.com.au

New Zealand is a country renowned for wild mountains, wild fishing and some very wild seas.

The Kiwis are a clever bunch of people – their collective innovations and achievements belie the small size of this country.

This innovation is epitomised in Surtees Boats, a terrific imported boat brand from the land of the long white cloud.

New Zealand coastal anglers have to deal with some of the roughest seas in our part of the world, and as a result this demands capable, comfortable and safe ocean-going craft.

More often than not anglers heading out for a days fishing in New Zealand are faced with high chop, confused swells and strong winds. You can either shrug your shoulders and not go out, or you can, like Surtees, design and build a boat which thrives in such conditions.

And so it is with this boat – rarely do you step onto a boat and push out into the open seas with such confidence and comfort.

The Surtees hull is strong, sleek and brilliantly designed for rough open sea conditions. The day that Hadley Deegan from Deegans Marine in Ulverstone and I headed out from the Leven River into the southern parts of Bass Strait weren't at all rough, but there was certainly enough swell and chop to demonstrate the

weld when I see it, and the welds in this boat are better than first class. Perfectly even welds are not easy to achieve, but everywhere you look in this boat there are stunning welds.

But more than welds is the design that holds it all together.

Longitudinal stringers are the principal structure with Surtees, which are fully enclosed to provide airtight chambers, making the safety and strength aspect a practical part of this boat.

Simple innovations like a removable rain cover on top of the cabin that can be easily put into place, straps that hold up the internal hatches while accessing gear, massive front hatch to access the outside bow area and stunningly brilliant additions like a recessed cup next to the rod holders to put your rigs/sinkers in. No more rigs and sinkers bouncing around



Tight turns demonstrate the hull design and its terrific performance.

– just pop in into the cup – how simple is that.

Adjustable/movable vertical rod holders and scuba tank racks are also an awesome feature – simple



The trailer allows for very easy drive-on retrieving.

capability of this boat.

## FIRST IMPRESSIONS

First impressions of this vessel were super-impressive. This boat is unashamedly designed for serious offshore work, and some of the small '1%' features were astonishingly simple but add immeasurably to the effectiveness to the boat.

The first thing you notice about aluminium boats, and plate boats in particular are the welds. I love welding and I can recognise a good

very comfortable seat. For a big guy like me the seat was one of the most comfortable and easily adjusted I've ever sat in.

The massive dash houses the super-impressive Simrad touch screen sounder/plotter etc, combined with a network where you can even plug in your iPhone and push music and so on around the cabin – awesome.

The dash features the Garmin system networked to the Honda BF250, but more on this later.

Forward of the helm is the enclosed cabin, where a fully upholstered and fitted area – with two bunks and infill. A plumbed toilet is available as an option, as is a LPG hot water system, fridge, sink and so on.

Interior lights are mandatory, and being fully carpeted all round the area means no condensation if sleeping overnight.

Solid doors keep it private if needed.

At the stern the batteries are enclosed behind a full-width hatch, which folds down to be either a step or seat. The batteries are linked to provide reliable power, with a dedicated crank battery and a house battery. They are linked so that in the event of a low power situation they can be joined to give enough power to get you going again.

## ENGINE

This boat is powered by one of the super-amazing Honda BF250hp engines.

The BF250 has taken over from the BF225 as the flagship Honda engine and combines a new 3.6L V6 EFI engine. Built with a direct air induction system designed to reduce intake air temperature and increase air volume into the power head gives heaps more power and superb fuel economy.

The advanced ignition timing control system, known as Honda's BLAST technology delivers brilliant hole-shot performance and their ECOMo lean burn fuel control system combined with VTEC, which is the Honda variable valve timing technology Honda designed for Formula One cars makes for one very technologically

yet very effective.

## CABIN FEATURES

The cabin is fully lined with carpet – taking away that often-harsh look and feel of aluminium and giving a very effective feeling of comfort. There is a small galley on the port side and a massive storage area to the side and front of the passenger seat. The passenger seat itself is a top a big storage area.

The helm seat is a cushioned and adjustable seat that features the neat addition of a lumbar rest or a



On the plane in the river, the hull carves up the rough stuff just as easily.

advanced piece of power.

This boat surged out of the hole and adjusting engine speed to cope with sea conditions was a breeze.

Honda's newly developed high performance gear case increases hydrodynamic efficiency and a new gear reduction ratio of 2:1 will give greater all round engine performance.

marine electronic displays.

This boat had all the engine gauges as part of the Simrad sounder/GPS combo – reducing dash clutter and making life all that much simpler. As mentioned before, the Garmin displays in the dash are neat and efficient.

The BF250 also is backed by Honda's full five-year warranty, which I guess is something we expect from Honda these days!

## ON THE WATER

This boat eats rough water. I've been in offshore boats where the main task for the driver is to constantly manipulate the engine trim and the trim tabs. Not in the Surtees. The swell was about 1m and a small chop didn't really stretch the hull at all, but at no stage did I have to touch the trim tabs at all, and the engine trim didn't need much adjustment at all. Basically it was trimmed in to jump out of the hole, pushed out to get the sweet spot and then that was it.

At around 3,000rpm the boat sat so easily on around 20knots – it seemed slower, but GPS doesn't lie. Wound out to full noise the swell was swept away, and tight turns, runs across the swell, down the swell, over wash and this hull passed every test.

Slowed down to trolling speed of 6.5-7knots and this

boat was so comfortable. I am certainly not the greatest sailor when it comes to boats moving around, but I am very certain that I could spend a whole day out bluewater trolling and still keep breakfast where it belongs.

The confidence that this boat inspires is tremendous – I started out just pottering about here and there and within 10 minutes I was racing down swells, popping the boat over waves and more.

Hadley is a very good boat driver and gave the boat a great workout before I got to have a steer. I have a dodgy back and stuffed knees and this boat, even when flung over waves landed with a very soft swoosh – no bangs, thumps, jars or any other of those painful parts.

There are plenty of boaters that know more about bluewater boating than I perhaps ever will, and everyone I've spoken to recently about the Surtees all rate them extremely highly.

This boat didn't display any signs of being loose or fidgety on the sea, and the hull cornered like on rails, even under full power.

## STABILITY

The Surtees has a deep V, as any serious bluewater boat does, but this does always present the issue of stability at rest or while trolling.

Continued page 91



The helm is very spacious and superbly laid out. The seat is super-comfortable.

From page 90

The technique that Surtees use is with a 450L water ballast, which can either be kept in the hull to enhance rough water travelling if desired, or automatically evacuated with the simple opening of a hatch with the well-placed cord.

It does work extremely well, and the boat hardly tipped much at all when we stood on the same side. At trolling speed the hull stability was sensational –

uncluttered work-space means three anglers can go toe-to-toe with big bluewater brawlers, but still store everything safely but within easy reach.

As to be expected, there is plenty of toe room so that your thighs can rest against the coamings, and a massively wide gunwale with neat storage for rigs and lures as well as perfectly angled road holders really seals the deal.

Rod racks above the roof were standard in their position, and while the rain cover did

designed, well built and awesome performance, that ticks all the boxes.

**TRAILER**

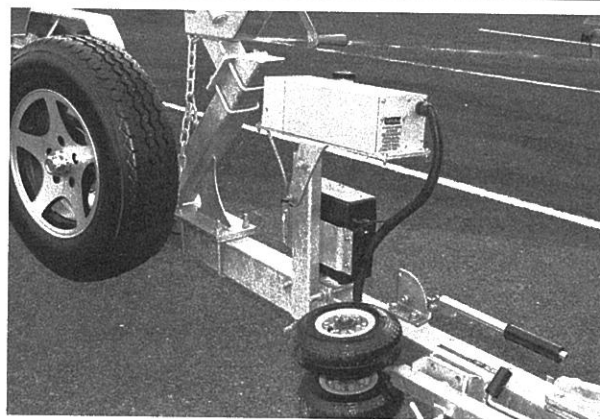
One of the great truisms in boating is that the boat spends far more time on the trailer than on the water.

This trailer is one of

where he had to manually winch the boat on at the shallow Mussleroe Bay ramp – the boat slid on very easily indeed, which is testament to a well designed trailer.

**CONCLUSION**

There are so many feature of this boat that anglers will



The electric brake setup.

**Specifications**

<b>Water ballast</b> .....	450L
<b>Fuel tank</b> .....	300L
<b>Beam</b> .....	2.5m
<b>Overall length</b> .....	7.3m
<b>Weight</b> .....	1350kg
<b>Fresh water</b> .....	75L
<b>Recommended hp</b> .....	200-300hp
<b>Freeboard</b> .....	810mm
<b>Price as tested</b> .....	\$132,000

find terrific. Space prevents me from including them all, but this boat is as good an offshore boat as I've driven, maybe even the best. The hull performance and

engine are one thing, but what makes this boat really stand out is the way the small 1% features contribute to the overall boat.

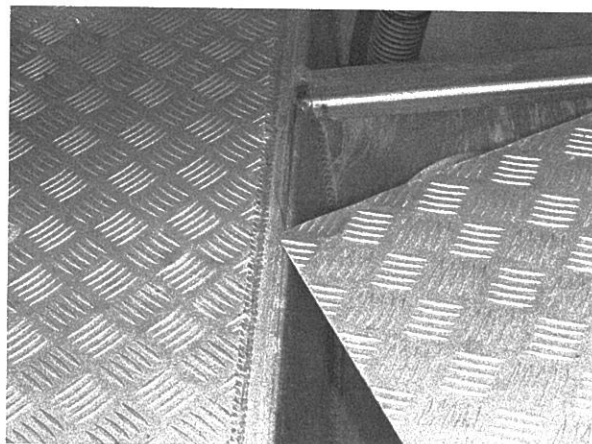
I thoroughly recommend a test at Deegans – Hadley runs one of the most professional dealerships in Tasmania, and a friendlier man you've probably never met. Jump on the website at [www.deeganmarine.com.au](http://www.deeganmarine.com.au) or ring the dealership at (03) 6425 2238.

*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.*

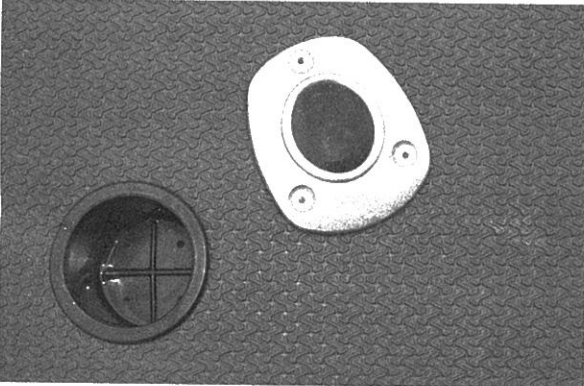
the best designed and built examples of a boat trailer I've seen. The rollers are perfectly spaced and are placed on the main structural rails on the trailer – not on the generally weaker cross members.

The brakes are stainless steel disc brakes on each wheel, with electrically activated brakes. There is also a manual over-ride handbrake that can be actuated from the trailer.

The easy catch seals the deal with a trailer that is so very simple to launch and retrieve. Hadley tells a story



Superb welds and structural integrity – this builds confidence in an offshore boat.



Simple and effective – a cup to drop the sinker in when you store the rod.

and that is pretty much all you can say. I'm not sure it gets much better than this.

**FISHABILITY**

This is an anglers boat. Make no mistake, even though there is a lot of creature comforts, the main deal is for anglers. The

obstruct their access, the cover can be pulled out of the way in a blink.

The anchor is automatic, and the fishing electronics are perfectly positioned and the all-too-necessary grab handles are in the right spots.

Well optioned, well

# 7.3 Sports Fisher

**In-House Boat Show**  
18-19 AUGUST

FULL RANGE OF SURTEES BOATS ON DISPLAY  
**SENSATIONAL SHOW DEALS**  
**ON ALL MODELS**

**MULTI Award Winning DEALER**

This demonstrator model  
**NOW AVAILABLE P.O.A**

**NEW**  
WEBSITE &  
ON-LINE  
STORE  
**Coming Soon**

**HONDA**  
The Power of Dreams

102 EASTLAND DRIVE ULVERSTONE TASMANIA  
03 6425 2238 info@deeganmarine.com.au

[www.deeganmarine.com.au](http://www.deeganmarine.com.au)

**DEEGAN MARINE**  
"We take Tasmania Boating"