

# REVIEW: Surtees 700 Game Fisher Hardtop

WORDS & IMAGES BY: FISHING SA MAGAZINE

## PERFECT PLATFORM!

If you're after a serious offshore rig check this out

**A**re you looking for a serious open ocean platform that will have you fishing in comfort and style, while putting you in some of the most fishy locations in the state? Also a fishing machine perfect for overnight trips through to taking the family out? Then we may just have the answer for you with the Surtees 700 Game Fisher hardtop, sold by Goolwa-based South Coast Marine.

If you have ever been to New Zealand, and particularly the Whakatane area where Surtees are built, you'd be well aware of the hostile offshore waters along this spectacular coastline, where anglers travel vast distances to battle giant kingfish, blue-eye, hapuka, marlin, swordfish, tuna and many others. It's no surprise that Surtees are proving popular here in SA given their proven background in such a testing yet fish-rich environment. They're clearly made to tackle big seas, and for landing serious fish if you wish.

A bleak but relatively mild day saw us with the South Coast Marine guys putting the Surtees 700 Game Fisher hardtop open cabin in the water at Cape Jervis, for an on-water test for potential buyers, but it also provided the time for us to throw a few laps.

The sleek lines and build quality of these boats will immediately stand out, and reassure you that you're getting what you paid for inside and out. The classy, minimalist black

and grey colours also just look cool in our opinion! South Coast had fitted the 700 with its maximum recommended power rating, a very impressive Yamaha 4.2L, V6 F250. It's a reliable and powerful outboard great for covering vast distances, super quiet, and more than ample to get the 700 up and out of the hole with typical Yamaha responsiveness.

Out on the water the 700 was eating up the mild swell and chop conditions, and in no time we were out into Backstairs Passage. The Game Fisher is equipped with Anti-Roll Stability Ballast Technology (taking on up to 380-litres of water for ballast) and an Anti-Roll Lock Shut-off Gate for further stability while underway. In the low swell and wind conditions it probably wasn't an acid test for the 700's stability, so we decided to improvise and deliberately stacked several guys onto the side and tried to rock it. As a comparison we did the test with ballast water and with drained tanks and it was downright impressive the difference the additional ballast made – a clear tick for this key feature on the Surtees when conditions are lumpy.

As their slogan suggest, Surtees are 'built to fish', with ample deck space on the 700 and wide gunnels you could easily sit on while fishing. There were also more rod holders than you could ever want (it's impossible to have too many) well placed on the gunnels, the bait station, with extras added via clip-on shelf holders. Great for the guys and gals that



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## SURTEES 700 TOP OF ITS CLASS



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**SURTEES  
700  
GAME FISHER**

like to bring every rod they own on a trip!

There's countless fisho friendly features on the 700, too many to list, but the walk-through transom with a lift-out door was one, and ideal for loading gear onto the boat or dragging in big fish like a shark or barrel tuna, or if you want to go for a dive off the back. A livebait tank with viewing screen, deluxe bait station including storage underneath for nitty-gritty items, and cup holders were all on the test boat. There was ample storage throughout the interior, including a wide carpeted dash area, shelving in front and to the side of the passenger and driver seats, and more space under the fixed driver seat. This is on top of the usual side pockets and forward storage options. A clip-on seat was added for extra seating while a convenient area for storing a large cooler was under the passenger seat.

For those looking to do extended trips the test 700 had a built-in toilet, bunk infills, and a hefty 325L fuel tank. Given the roomy deck you could easily roll out the swags, with people up the front as well.

The test boat wasn't fitted with a sounder/mapping unit, just essential gauges and Yamaha's Command Link 6YC gauge, but there was ample dash space for even the biggest of sounders on the market or multiple screens, which South Coast would



*"As with all Surtees models there's a heap of extras that can be purchased to pimp your ride"*



happily help you out with.

The ergonomic layout of the 700 Game Fisher is one of the most impressive features. Everything has its place and is well thought-out, right down to the storage of the battery system and switches in a sealed hatch, giving them great weather protection. There's plenty of well-placed grab rails, the cabin is more than generous space wise with easy forward access, and it's plain to see how this could be a serious fishing weapon.

As with all Surtees models there's a heap of extras that can be purchased to 'pimp your ride' some of which were mentioned. There's also various customisations that can be requested at the time of purchase including open or closed cabin if you wish.

This boat was awarded winner of 'Australia's Greatest Boats 2017' by Trade-A-Boat publication, and with even more improvements since then it certainly ticks a lot of boxes for offshore fishos and is one to check out!

**For further information on the 700 Game Fisher, or other models from the Surtees range, contact South Coast Marine on (08) 8555 2211. **