

SURTEES 750 GAME FISHER

STATE-OF-THE-ART PRIZE BOAT

When we talk about \$250k plus Hutchwilco NZ Boat Show grand prize vessels, it is easy to focus on the major components that make up such a great fishing rig. While the big-ticket items might take the limelight – the hull, trailer, motor and electronics – there are many smaller, and sometimes just as important, features that make up the package, writes Managing Editor Grant Dixon.





The upgraded Surtees helm station has everything at the skipper's fingertips.

One of the tools found on many of the best fishing boats today is an electric motor. These are used in several ways – to determine a drift along a favourite reef, to hold over a school of fish and to prospect shallow water in a way that doesn't unduly panic the residents!

The prize boat is fitted with an 87" MinnKota electric motor, deployed from the helm station. These motors are designed specifically for bigger craft and once you have one on board, they will help improve your results, be it jigging for kingfish, deep dropping for 'puka, or micro-jigging for inshore species such as snapper.

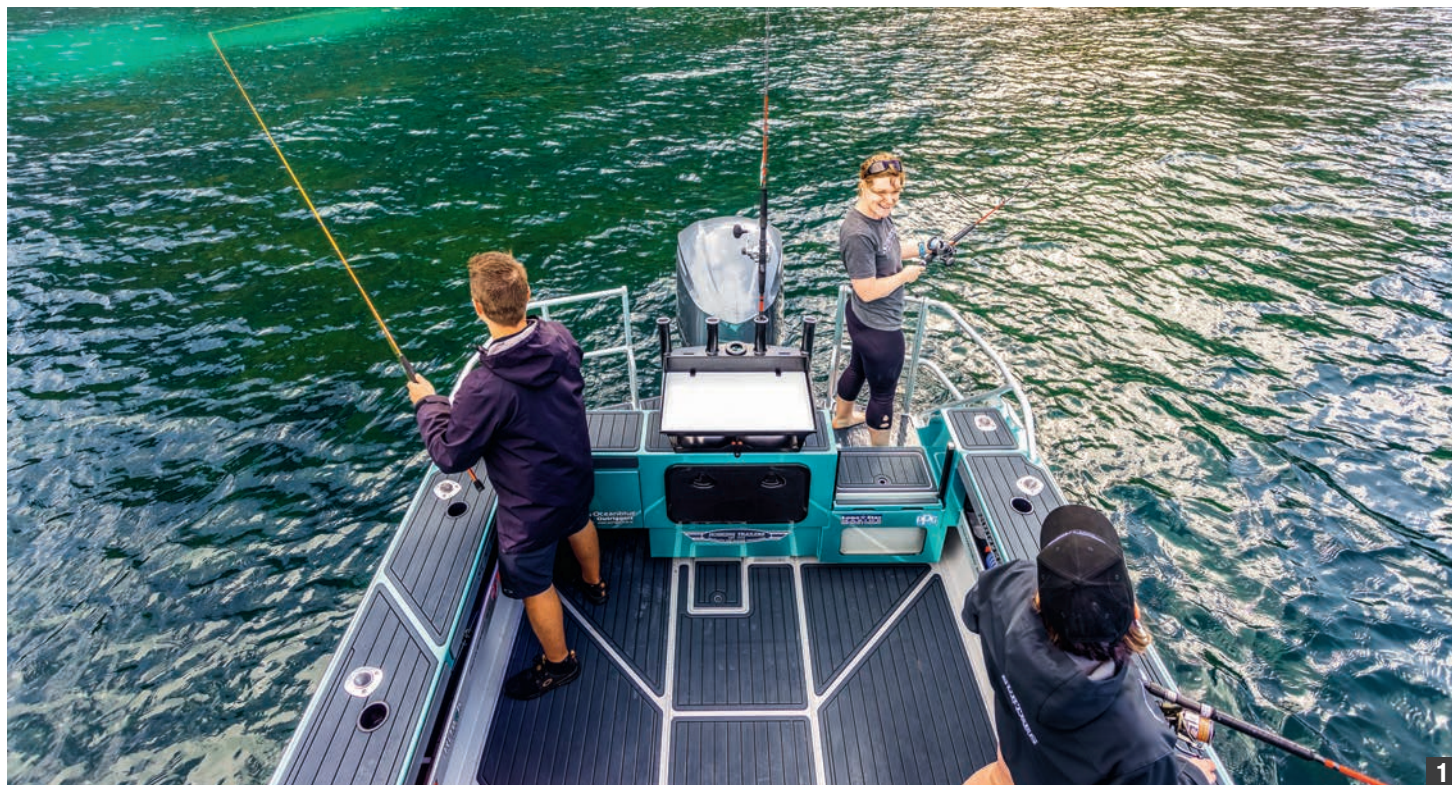
And for those bait and berley sessions, the boat is fitted with a Lone Star GX3 drum winch, which is also controlled from the helm. No more 'armstrong' ground tackle retrievals for the winner's crew – they will be anchoring in style!

SeaDek comfort underfoot

One of the features I have enjoyed in many of both my personal and magazine project boats in recent times has been the application of SeaDek on all areas where I have wanted a firm grip underfoot. There is SeaDek throughout the prize boat –

Few destinations will be off limits for the winner of this rig.





1) One of the features of the Surtees 750 is the excellent cockpit space and layout. 2) Part of the comprehensive Garmin package is a 'slave' screen which is easily seen by the anglers from the cockpit. 3) The very latest Yamaha outboard systems are on board, including a fly-by-wire throttle and Helm Master joystick controller. 4) Anchoring is controlled from the helm via this Lone Star drum winch. 5) The skipper and navigator will enjoy helping their new Surtees in style, courtesy of Hi-Tech Plastic's carbon bolstered seats. 6) Retrieving the prize boat is a breeze thanks to the Fulton electric winch. 7) The custom-built Hoskins trailer will safely get the prize boat to the ramp and back.

cockpit, side decks and transom swim steps – and it is a product that not only offers a safety aspect, but also an element of comfort. If you have ever spent a day fishing on a bare alloy chequer plate tread floor, you will appreciate what SeaDek has to offer.

Also fitting in the safety and comfort basket is good lighting. The Surtees is fitted with a comprehensive Hella package that includes not only the conventional navigation lights and red/white lighting in the

cabin for night vision, but cockpit floodlights, blue lights for the livebait tank and strip lighting for when more subdued illumination is required. The latter is great when targeting snapper at the change of light when you want to be as inconspicuous as possible, keeping reflections off the water.

Staying with comfort, the helmsperson and navigator will be supported by Hi-Tech carbon deluxe bolstered seats. The view from the helm is improved with the addition of three Pantagraph wipers. Charging devices will be

easy via a scan strut waterproof 12V phone charger.

Having the right sounds on board adds to the enjoyment of a day on the water. Fusion have contributed a MS-RA770 Apollo marine stereo connected to four-inch cabin speakers, 7.7-inch LED deck speakers and a 10-inch LED subwoofer, all run through a wireless remote. Some suggest a strong bass beat helps raise fish, especially on outboard powered game boats – and there will be no shortage of 'boom, boom' on the Surtees!

Safety first

Safety is not forgotten. An Oceansignal EPIRB is on hand should the unthinkable happen and the crew finds themselves in a spot of bother. Show naming right sponsors Hutchwilco have included a full set of lifejackets along with the grab bag and dry gear bag. While on the 'unthinkable' subject, Yamaha Marine Insurance have the new owner's back should there be an oops, insuring the vessel for 12 months.

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This rig is fully set up fishing, with a livebait tank and baitstation already installed.



membership backs up the safety gear and there is a Day Skipper course in the mix as well should the winner be new to boating or want a refresher on basic maritime safe practice.

As mentioned above, the MinnKota electric motor is a great feature for holding over the fish, but you still need the gear to catch them.

To this end, Composite Developments have contributed a comprehensive set of tackle, designed specifically for targeting snapper and kingfish. This includes eight Okuma combos made up of Makaira livebaiting outfits, Cavella and Tournament Concept jigging rigs, Azores 65 topwater and Coronado/Nanomatrix Plus strayline sets – together worth \$5000.

A large IceyTek bin will ensure the catch is kept cold and in pristine condition. Reel Rods have added a set of Ocean Blue outrigger bases and poles for those wanting to hunt even bigger quarry.

Setting the whole rig off is a great hull wrap produced by Brave Design.

Garmin at the helm

Garmin is the electronics brand of choice for the prize boat. The system begins with a GPSMAP 8416xsv 16-inch multi-display

unit. This links to GPSMap 952xs, Blue Chart g2 in the cockpit, a great feature enabling anglers to see exactly what is happening underneath them via a 'slave screen' without having to trapse into the helm station to find out.

Connected to these display screens is a GMR Fantom 24 radar and a Garmin GT51M-TM, Xdcr, 12pin, Trad:mid CHIRP fishfinder, complete with an Airmar TM185M, 8-pin, 1kw CHIRP transom-mounted transducer. The latest in cartography and a VHF radio are also part of the package. In fishing terms, the sounder can work the deep hapuku reefs and broadbill canyons and is a key feature in the boat's 'fishability'.

On the road again

Without a decent trailer built for purpose, towing a big rig can be something of a stressful experience. There is a Hoskin custom-build trailer under the prize boat, featuring a Credo Direct Brake system, run through a wireless controller which is plug and play. The controller can be taken from vehicle to vehicle as it is not hard-wired in, a great advantage. A good braking system gives the driver the confidence to stop quickly in a controlled fashion.

The system operates the Trojan brakes, the components



More and more vessels are using an electric motor as part of their angling weaponry.



A hot-water shower, toilet and fridge are all part of the package.

of which are all stainless steel to minimise corrosion. Hella have provided the lights and retrieving is made easy thanks to a Fulton XLT 4.5 tonne capable electric winch which is backed up with

a conventional winch. The fully rolled trailer is set off with some smart alloy rims and Treadway light commercial tyres.

The hull has the Quick Hitch hitch system for those who like

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to drive their boats on and off the trailer.

Yamaha power and control

On the transom providing the go-forward – and reverse and sideways! – is the new Yamaha F250XCA outboard, coupled to a Yamaha Helm Master. This system, the world's first fully integrated joystick control system for single engine boats, has the

likes of Drift and Fish Point to keep the vessel stationed where the skipper wants it to be.

At the heart of the prize package is the Surtees 750 Game fisher enclosed cabin. There are hatches in the roof to aid air flow and the rear windows slide to make comms between skipper and crew that much easier. The helm station has had a redesign around the dashboard with switches and gauges now more

visible and accessible.

Surtees Fishability

From a fishing perspective, having 400 litres fuel capacity is a big plus when contemplating overnight or multi-day trips. Other useful overnighting features include an 80-litre freshwater capacity connected to an electric hot-water system, which runs the shower hose and sink. An Engel electric fridge is a part of the set-

up, as in an electric toilet – all the comforts of home.

Fishing from the Surtees is not just confined to the cockpit. Anglers can walk through the transom to the gated swimstep and if you don't mind getting wet feet, this is a great place to fish from.

Beneath the transom door is a decent-sized livebait tank and beside it as part of the transom is the Surtees baitstation that



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*New Zealand's most trusted marine engine 2017-2020 Reader's Digest Trusted Brands survey. ¹Refers to major warranty claims for powerhead, lower unit, or trim/tilt unit only. Warranty claims data on subject outboards was collected between January 1, 2014 and November 9, 2020. This data incorporates outboards that are still covered under warranty and which may generate additional warranty claims prior. ²F225 comes in non-integrated steering only.



Hella have supplied a comprehensive lighting fit-out for the prize boat.

includes four rod holders and a handy drawer for all the fishing tools and gear you need to have handy. A Jabsco washdown system is also part of the fitout, making the final clean-up job that much easier as the blood and guts can be washed away during the day.

A signature feature developed by Surtees many years ago was its flooding keel. On the 750 Game Fisher, 530 litres of water can be

trapped in the keel compartment to add stability at rest, as well as improve its already excellent blue water performance in rough weather.

The rig is valued at \$250,000, and at the end of the show, the prize is drawn live. Everyone who has purchased a ticket and completed the entry form is in with a chance to win a vessel that can truly be called 'state-of-the-art'.



A Hutchwilco safety grab and cooler bags are part of the prize list. Right: The Surtees is well set up for sportfishing, including Oceanblue outrigger bases.



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