



**the new 3000 Platinum Sports
certainly looks the part**

Above: Two narrow hulls with sharp bow entry provide stability while softening the ride and adding space aboard.

Right: Uncluttered helm can house large electronics and gadgets.



Sailfish is a prominent player in the manufacture of larger aluminium power cats in the Australian market. Based at Kirrawee on the southern outskirts of Sydney and manufactured by Webbe Marine, Sailfish has earned a reputation for quality in terms of build, presentation and fitout, with demand now strong enough to support production of more than 30 boats per year.

I've always been impressed by the high degree of finish, attention to detail and thought that has gone into Sailfish cats, and was more than happy to accept an invitation to sample its latest model, the 3000 Platinum Sports.

Sailfish power cats range in size from 6.9m right through to 10m in length and can be fully customised to suit sportsfishing enthusiasts or luxury cruisers.

Primarily, Sailfish craft offer a wide range of capabilities. Whether you enjoy a weekend or a week away, meandering along the coast or cruising the Whitsundays, or even barnstorming out to the Shelf for some hardcore sportsfishing, a Sailfish can deliver with aplomb, providing a considerable amount of comfort for crew and passengers.

CREATURE COMFORTS

Set up as a sports fisher and with a plethora of creature comforts to suit extended time on the water, the new 3000 Platinum Sports certainly looks the part. In profile, in particular, its sleek lines give it a sporting look and the new-to-the-range stylish metallic paintwork gives it a fresh appearance.

There are a few advantages for going the catamaran, as opposed to the monohull route. Firstly, there's the inherent stability offered by the twin hull layout. When you're spending a lot of time dealing with big seas, cats come into their own, and at rest they provide a stable, comfortable and flat platform.

Having two narrow hulls means the bow entries are sharper, softening the ride somewhat. Additionally, a cat will generally rise to the plane easier and at lower revs, which has a positive effect on economy.

The air cushion effect created between the tunnel and the sea also helps to soften the ride significantly.

Then there's the added space offered by a design that carries its beam from the stern to the bow. In comparison to equivalent length monohulls, there's enough room to sling a whole

hat full of cats, if you'll pardon the pun. It also means more room for socialising, accommodation, fishing and food preparation.

Twin engine set-ups also offer superior manoeuvring in marina and other tight situations.

Disadvantages can be handling that takes a little while to get used to, especially when running across a sea, and comparative cost for the same hull length. Wide beams can also mean that owners will be subject to wide load restrictions when towing. But when you talk to the guys at Sailfish, and take one of their craft for a run, it can make the argument for cats very compelling indeed.

For people who like to escape land whenever and wherever they can, the new 3000 Platinum is absolutely packed to the gunwales with enough creature comforts to ensure you won't want to be returning to terra firma any time soon.

Thanks to the more than generous 2.8m beam, which can be expanded to 3m for even more onboard space, the large cockpit is designed for relaxation or action stations – depending on your mood. It's a spacious and uncluttered area, with enough room to add a few chairs and a small table



for outdoor dining and entertainment. But when the bite is on, there's plenty of room to muscle large fish without getting in each other's way.

For avid anglers, there are plenty of rodholders spread around the cockpit as well as twin livewells, a deluxe bait-board, burley bucket and chomper, huge kill-tanks, and large side-pockets for gear storage.

Access is via the walk-through at the transom in between the motors, or via the starboard side

Above: Plenty of fishing features in the cockpit, including a pull-out barbecue for cooking the day's catch.

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Above and below: The 3000 Platinum Sports makes good use of its 2.8m beam, including a very spacious cockpit.

gunwale door, making it a breeze for boarding from the trailer, dock, or from the water.

COOKING OPTIONS

Built into the bulkhead on the portside is a servery incorporating a slide-out barbecue, sink, storage and stone bench top to take care of the freshly caught fish of the day. For me, nothing beats the sizzle of a barbie on a boat but, if the weather's a bit inclement, the Platinum 3000 Sports also offers the option of retreating to the enclosed cabin with its glass-top gas stove



incorporated into the starboard mini-galley. Underneath is a built-in 65lt stainless steel fridge.

Opposite is a small bench-type seat, with storage underneath.

If you do choose to cook indoors, the large portside rear window hinges upwards to open up the cabin to the cockpit for food serving. In combination with the lockable cabin door, it's also a great way to create one large area for socialising.

The fully enclosed cabin boasts a portside corner lounge with table that converts to an extra bed, along with an ergonomic helm station with ample dash space to mount the largest of electronics and gadgets – in this case an upgraded Furuno GPS/Sonar. The large screens and side windows channel abundant natural light and for the summer months the side windows and dual hard-top vents provide ample airflow to keep the cabin cool.

FULL BEAM CABIN

Up front, there's a full-beam cabin that is accessed via a central door next to the helm. It boasts a double bed, plenty of storage, and LED down-lighting, as well as a separate head and hot-water shower with small vanity. The accommodation really does give the big Sailfish genuine overnighting ability enjoyed in comfort and style.

While every Sailfish I've tested has impressed with the quality of its ride and handling, the 3000 Platinum Sports is my new favourite. It's virtually a self-driver in terms of its on-water behaviour, and proved itself by running true and smooth in the rough seas we encountered during the test.

We were faced with a 15-20 knot offshore slop and swell off the front of the Gold Coast, which the Sailfish annihilated with ease, maintaining a constant cruise speed between 20-25 knots (37-46km/h) into the swell and chop. Running side-on with the swell, I found I could crank her up to close on 30 knots (55km/h) without comfort or handling suffering, although I was constantly on the throttles to deal with the conditions.

Wide open throttle on the flat waters of the Broadwater produced a respectable 46.5 knots (86km/h).

For its size, the 3000 runs nice and flat in turns and resists the urge to roll outwards that can sometimes be a characteristic of power cats.

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Overall, the ride is impressive and is very quiet for an aluminium hull. For its size, it's an easy boat to drive and lacks nothing in power and grunt from its twin 250hp Hondas. If long-range adventure trips are the go, the twin 300lt fuel tanks will provide in the vicinity of 500km at average cruise speeds.

The solid performance and handling combine with obvious social and fishing credentials to give owners almost unlimited options as far as destinations and activities go.

Finish and fittings are of the highest quality, providing confidence for those wanting to push their limits.

For anyone thinking of covering road miles before dipping the big Sailfish in the water, she tips the scales at around 4200kg and, like any boat of this size with a 2.8m beam, you'll need to abide to the oversize road rules and regulations. Examples of suitable tow vehicles would be something in the order of the new Ram 1500 V8 or 2500, the Ford F250 or similar.

The Sailfish 3000 Platinum Sports is priced from \$299,000, which may raise a few eyebrows, but in the overall scheme of things it represents a lot of boat for the money. There's quality everywhere you look, it has truckloads of

standard inclusions that add to its comfort and luxury, and it delivers all of the advantages of a big cat while providing immense safety and stability. **CM**

SAILFISH 3000 PLATINUM SPORTS

Length:	9.2m
Beam:	2.8m
Weight:	4200kg (3400kg plus trailer)
Power as tested:	twin 250hp Honda outboards
Fuel capacity:	600lt
Water capacity:	200lt
Price from:	\$299,990
Price as tested:	\$349,000 with numerous upgrades and extras

More information, contact Webbe Marine, tel: (02) 9521 7944, web: webbemarine.com.au.

