

## Fisherman & Boatowner FIELD TEST

Proving when you're on a good thing you should stick to it, Melbourne boat builders, brothers Paul and Leon Savage have released another upgraded version of one of their most popular models. It is without doubt one of the most thoroughly worked out trailerboats built in Australia - and whilst it will take an experienced boatowner to realise just how good it is, for anybody starting out in boating, it's probably the best possible way of getting into the world of boating.



The next generation of brothers Paul & Leon Savage are now starting to emerge as managers in their own right - here Paul (L) stands with his son Paul - the man responsible for all the service work, fit-ups etc for Streaker boats.



### Price Check:

F&B readers can purchase this exact craft, totally fitted with a 130 hp Yamaha 2-stroke and everything you can see here (yes, INCLUDING the outriggers, live bait tank plumbing, Lowrance X-15 MT combo sounder & GPS, and the excellent Dunbier tandem trailer) for \$41,790 incl GST.

# Streaker 545 Bluewater Tournament - Series 11

**The 545 Bluewater Tournament Series 11 was recently in Qld for the judging of the Boat Of The Year Awards, so we had the unusual opportunity to test not only this boat, but a sister boat, the 485 Runabout which we'll feature in F&B in a couple of month's time.**

We chose to look at the 545 Bluewater Series II first because it is a particularly interesting craft in an extremely competitive area. Boats in this 5.0-6.0m range are selling like crazy at the moment, and this fibreglass sector is intensely competitive - and that's without even thinking about the droves of aluminium boats now built in the same size range.

So into all of this competition, Paul and Leon, along with a whole bunch of other Savage family members, still pursue their "Volkswagen" theory of management ie, they refuse to bow to fashion or trends and release new models for the sake of it. They've

basically sustained the same model line-up they've had for the best part of 20 odd years - 28 years, if you go right back to when they began in 1973.

It's an amazing philosophy, and completely at odds with the aluminium sector, and almost as contrary in the fibreglass sector, too. Even the most conservative fibreglass boat builders tend to change their models around every 4 or 5 years, and usually have new, bigger models on the way.

Not so with the Streaker range. The brothers Savage long ago decided that if you've got a really good hull, then it's not so much the water that changes, but the products around the boat.

When you think about it, this is such a common sense approach, it's only surprising that more manufacturers haven't adopted the same policy.

Not that the Streaker range hasn't changed in that time - far from it. Every 2 or 3 years, Leon and Paul release an upgraded version of the

particular boat in question. It's never a ground breaking change, in fact, sometimes you have to be told what the change is, because the boats tend to look the same from one model to the next. Only the real enthusiasts or Streaker owners know that the seats have changed, or the dash moulding is completely different, the gear shift is now in a better position, the flap over the 'whatsit has been changed so you don't crack your knuckles anymore, and so on.

This is the whole Streaker philosophy - take a really good hull, and continually refine it, upgrading it to suit the new technology as it evolves, to take advantage of new product and equipment as it comes on line, and to continue to sustain the boat's contemporary look by small running changes over quite a period of time.

Take this new 545 Bluewater Series II. Note the subtlety of the elliptical

cabin windows, the very sassy (and expensive!) toughened glass curved windscreen and the way young Troy Savage, Leon's son, and the resident shipwright of the family, has integrated this beautiful windscreen into the deck moulding.

This is a wonderful example of the Streaker philosophy at work - it is essentially the same, but in fact brand new tooling.

And a good thing becomes even better.

When you take this philosophy out to the max, the result, as we have here, is an unbelievably well fitted and developed craft.

I cannot recall having stepped foot onboard a trailerboat that is so well finished and developed for many years. In fact, I have never stepped onboard such a well finished and fitted boat other than those we have done ourselves as project boats for the magazine, to show readers how boats

should - and can be - fitted out.

Well, one has to observe that in future we'll just refer people to the 545 Bluewater Streaker, because for the first time in memory, Ruth Cunningham and the writer could not find a single thing we'd either change or modify - (Ye gods! Is this something special or what?)

**Design** The Streaker 545 Bluewater is not a half cab boat in the sense that it has two little berths in the cabin that pretend you can sleep on them. Streaker long ago recognised the futility of trying to get "sleepable" berths in a boat this size and still retain some sort of sanity in the cockpit.

Instead, the brothers Savage cut to the chase, put in two comfortable seats on the port and starboard side with nicely padded cushions, and built a wide walk-through passageway to facilitate stepping up through the big, man size hatch to reach the foredeck

anchor locker.

This is super good design and a very pragmatic approach to a common problem. The Savage's realised you need to go forward in your boat a thousand times more than you'll ever sleep in it - and they've provided the right priority to the spaces they had available to them.

Out front, incidentally, the anchor locker is a beauty, and will take one, possibly two anchors if you required them. Most people prefer to put the separate pick (a rock anchor, usually) on a special pipe welded to the bow rail (this is one of the few options this boat has listed).

Also of note up front is a very important feature - they have created a special bowsprit moulding in their deck mould to accept a separate bowsprit and bow roller.

I'd like to dwell on this for a minute. There is a trend in the Industry to integrate the bowsprit and roller with