

The Xtreme XM500S is a lovely looking rig out on the water.



The side console leaves plenty of interior space, and the choice of seating positions adds to the versatility of the XM500S.



XTREME XM500S

By Dave Krantz

Darwin's GS Marine is a manufacturer of no-compromise, top-quality plate boats. Since they added the Xtreme range to the well-established Aquarat and Hydracraft lineup, GS Marine boats are becoming an increasingly common sight at fishing hotspots throughout Australia.

Our test boat was a XM500S. As the name suggests, this is the five metre version (available in centre or side console, bowrider, runabout and cuddy cab), and had a standard side console Xtreme set-up with a few minor variations. The test venue was the Elizabeth River near Darwin, on a squally day interrupted by welcome late wet season rain.

One thing that stands out about the Xtreme range is the wild paint jobs favoured by owners. This boat was relatively restrained, with a subtle navy blue finish, but it is not unusual to see Xtreme boats

The console has a clean and stylish layout, with room for electronics and all the controls close at hand.



Barra, Bass & Bream Rigs

A hatch on the big, stable forward casting deck provides access to a large storage compartment.



that need welding goggles to be looked at safely! Whatever the colour, all the Xtreme range come standard with quality two pack paintwork and eye-catching graphics that complement the overall quality of these boats.

Xtreme hulls are made from four millimetre marine grade 5083 aluminium plate and three millimetre 5083 plate sides, conforming to survey requirements. A heavy-duty, fully-welded 100 mil' keel forms an impressive backbone for the hull, so you know these boats are built to last. GS Marine offers a five year structural warranty on all Xtreme boats.

Positive buoyancy is a standard feature of the range; as is a bilge pump equipped with an auto float switch to operate it when required. The engine is mounted on GS Marine's Sportzbak transom, with a full height aft bulkhead. For ease of boarding, the transom has a foldaway ladder.

On the water, the XM500S offered a smooth, dry ride. The Sportzbak transom added to the stability of the boat at a range of speeds, enabled it to easily get out of the hole and up onto the plane, and provided a stable fishing platform at rest. The hull design is perfect for estuary, impoundment and river work, and the XM500S would be equally at home out on the bluewater when there's a bit of sea running.

Power was provided by a 90 horsepower Suzuki four stroke, which is the size recommended for this model. The hull is

rated up to 115 horses for anglers who enjoy life in the fast lane, but the 90 is more than satisfactory for an optimum balance of performance and economy. The 135 litre underfloor fuel tank offers good range between refuelling stops, with the tank located towards the bow for better trim.

The test boat had the side console arrangement, with a comfortable steering position and plenty of interior space. With a beam of 2.2 metres and a depth of 1.2 metres, there was ample fishing room for up to four anglers. The deck was flat from the aft bulkhead to the large forward casting deck, with five seating options available.

GS Marine can locate the console to suit the buyer. The side console gives plenty of open deck space, but a centre console still remains a popular choice.

The console itself was equipped with a standard sports steering wheel and handy windscreen, protecting the driver and the console-mounted electronics. A stylish instrument panel had all the gauges and controls at the driver's fingertips. The test boat was fitted with a sounder and a GPS, and although the standard model does not have a GPS, this popular extra is easily fitted. Another extra was the CD player mounted in the side of the console, with a neat



Horizontal rod racks keep tackle out of the way while travelling or fishing in close to trees.



The optional CD player is ideal for anglers who enjoy their creature comforts.

flip-top waterproof cover to protect it from the elements.

There was heaps of space for an icebox or fridge underneath a carpeted hatch on the forward casting deck. The anchor well is spacious and easy to get at, with room for a couple of anchors and plenty of rope. Roomy side pockets provided easily accessible storage for all the bits and pieces that tend to accumulate in a fishing boat, and the deck wash system was tucked neatly out of the way on the rear shelf.

A horizontal rod rack accommodated five rigged rods, and is standard on the Xtreme range. That should be enough for the most committed tackle collector! Another popular option available on these boats is one or two



The test boat had a twin heavy-duty battery setup.

inbuilt tackle lockers, each holding five tackle trays.

Four welded cast-alloy gunwale rod holders come as standard, and the test boat had an aft-mounted bait/filleting board with two additional rod holders. This feature would be very attractive to anglers who do a lot of bluewater fishing for reefies and pelagics.

Under the main floor was a twin battery setup, a freshwater tank, and a lift out kill

tank. These are all optional extras available to buyers, depending on their favoured fishing style and environment.

The level of finish and attention to detail was apparent throughout the XM500S — right down to a heavy-duty stainless steel sheathed winch cleat. This is a no-nonsense package with all the fruit, designed by anglers for anglers. Expect to see a lot more Xtreme boats out on the water in the future!



The Powercom team fished the recent Kakadu Klash in their GS Marine boat Two-Up.

The XM500S in the configuration tested (as supplied by GS Marine), with a Suzuki 90 horsepower four stroke motor, side console, SportzBak transom with ladder, two pack paintwork, graphics, bait/filleting board, a huge range of standard features and single axle brake trailer costs \$35,900.

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