

boating

# Game on for luxury Hatteras

■ There are game boats and then there is Hatterascal, all 21 m and \$6.5 million worth of sheer luxury. **Kevan Wolfe** says it's the ultimate game boat and undoubtedly the only way to go fishing

**H**atterascal is a new Hatteras 68 convertible that has just landed on the Gold Coast.

The Hatteras brand has been the benchmark for game boats for almost 50 years and started when textile manufacturer, Willis Slane, wanting a rugged boat he could take into the treacherous waters off Cape Hatteras on the Atlantic coast of North Carolina.

The area is known as the Diamond Shoals and is home to some of the most turbulent and untamed waters in the Atlantic.

It is also where some of the best sportfishing in the world can be found. A traditional wooden craft couldn't do the job, so Willis decided to build his own in the garage at home.

Departing from tradition, he built his first boat from a new product that had just appeared on the market – fiberglass. It worked and the Hatteras legend was born.

Hatterascal is only the second craft to depart from the traditional Hatteras styling. The first was the 16.4m, but there's no mistaking the 68's (20.7m) parentage. Hatterascal is easily distinguished by its huge 21ft 6in (6.57m) beam and the bigger flare in the bow.

The cockpit, all 58sqm of it,



The saloon is as big as a lounge room

has the same area as the deck of a 26ft (8m) boat.

One of the problems the engineers had was the positioning of the Release game chair. This is the Rolls Royce of game chairs, but the cockpit is so big that there was a danger that the tips of the short game rods would snag on the transom.

The stainless steel outriggers are so long that they are hydraulically controlled.

Up behind the cockpit is what can be termed as a mezzanine deck, where crew and guests can sit during those boring times



The luxury master bedroom

when the fish are not interested in the multi-coloured lures being dragged behind the boat to tempt them. It's constructed in a modular fashion so that it can be customised to take freezers, tackle boxes and bait preparation stations under the seats.

Slide open the cockpit door and it's another world... a six-star saloon warmly finished in gloss cherrywood and leather. It's as big as some Gold Coast lounge rooms. Forward of the lounge is the galley, which again would rival many domestic kitchens with a dinette opposite.

It's downstairs, though, in the sleeping cabins that the sheer opulence of this craft is evident.

The owner's cabin is amidships and occupies the full beam of the boat with an island king-size berth, a walk-in wardrobe no less and its own bathroom. The guests are just as well catered for in a cabin up front, although a little smaller, naturally, than the owner's, and another with two bunks that convert to a double.

The crew don't do too badly either in a separate cabin with single bunks.

Hatterascal has an enclosed

flybridge, which can be accessed via a circular stairway from the main saloon or an outside ladder from the cockpit.

The flybridge becomes a bridge deck and is one of the most elegant helm stations in the business. The view through the three-panel windscreens and frameless windows is magnificent and the driver has all the electronics for monitoring the ship's systems, navigation and fishing he could wish for all on multi-window flat screens.

At the back of the bridge is an observation deck with another control station where guests can cheer on the action going on below them in the cockpit.

When the fishing gets serious there is a control station at the top of the marlin tower. This is high and not for the faint hearted.

The first impression of the engine room is how much space there is around the two C32 1650hp Caterpillars, and then it dawns, there are no space filling air boxes and – have a closer look at the hull, there are no air vents either. This is because Hatteras uses a forced-induction system that draws air from under the cockpit coamings.

Hatteras have a reputation for loving the sea and the 68 is no exception. According to Hatteras Yachts president and CEO Mike Harakal, who made the trek from North Carolina to deliver the boat to its new owner, it was a challenge for the factory engineers to build a boat of such complexity and many were the late nights spent getting it right.

The CATS drive a couple of Michigan Wheel eight-bladed props that sit in tunnels with very tight tolerances. Normally some vibration can be expected from hulls with tunnels, but not this one. The hull rides on top of the water giving it a smooth and remarkably quiet ride, as would be expected from a craft of this pedigree. The underwater exhausts help too.

Hatterascal sits comfortably on the plane at 10-12 knots and cruising at 24 knots it eats up the sea miles. Hatteras say that about 400 nautical miles can be expected at this speed from the 7950-litre fuel tank. Open up the throttles and the boat will record a genuine 30 knots on the GPS with a fuel flow of 125 litres per hour/ per side.

Hatterascal is a fine example of what can be produced, provided you are prepared to spend the necessary dollars.

■ Hatterascal provided by Geoff Lovett Brokerage at Marina Mirage.