

'FPV Canunda'

Kirby 8.5 Naiad patrol boat for South Australian Fisheries

By MIKE BROWN



The Fisheries Division of South Australia's Primary Industries and Resources Department has experienced similar problems to their Western Australian counterparts, and they are taking the same steps to counter them: they are starting to re-equip their small vessel fleet with Kirby Naiad RIBs.

Fisheries has an enlarging role of talking to amateur fishermen afloat, their boats getting up close and, in the eyes of the customer, not friendly. The possibility of a nudge or worse by government aluminium is as unwelcome to the fisheries officers as it is to the recreational boat owners, and fendering systems only go so far.

The current fleet also causes occupational health and safety concerns, with back injuries from hard riding boats a constant possibility, particularly in the area where the latest vessel will be based. The waters off Port MacDonnell on the Limestone Coast are well known for providing some wild weather.

The first Naiad for the Department is an 8.5-metre, possibly the most-built hull in the Naiad fleet. The aluminium hull is foam filled using SOLAS-approved Microlen. The 500mm inflatable collar has seven compartments, and its heavy grade material is reinforced at all possible wear points. The motors, a pair of 112kW Yamaha four-stroke outboards, are towards the lower end of power options for reasons of gaining range through fuel economy, and for saving weight. This boat will be trailer mounted and had to be held below 3.5 tonnes trailing weight for towing by a standard large four-wheel drive.

Kirby principal Rob Kirby makes the point that customers realise the potential of Naiads and ask for an equipment and fit-out scale that sometimes makes it difficult to bring the completed vessel down to weight. New NMSC requirements for increased scantlings in the slam area contribute to the problem. He gave the further examples of a dedicated HF radio battery, separate starting batteries for each motor, and a large capacity deep-cycle bank for the electrical equipment.

Weight-saving measures include an aluminium trailer instead of steel, a fabric canopy instead of a hardtop for the driving position, and detail measures everywhere.

The boat's layout is mid cabin, which gives a forward cockpit or well in addition



to the main working cockpit. This is reached through a watertight door from the cabin or over the side decks, and is the preferred position for communicating with other boats. The cabin is mainly for storage purposes, with shelves and fiddle rails to suit, and its position fairly well back from the bow means a minimal effect on trim.

The driving position features a pair of suspension seats, abundant handholds, and a Raymarine electronics package. Among the abundant but logically laid out minor controls is one for a fitting unusual on a Naiad: an autopilot. As part of the package for reducing crew fatigue it makes much sense.

Other parts of the package besides the suspension seats are the cockpit fatigue membrane and the qualities of the hull itself. The slow decelerations given by the steep deadrise narrow aluminium hull are complemented by the shock absorbing abilities of the inflatable tubes – something absent from rigid buoyancy boats.

Kirby equipped the working area as nearly as possible to commercial fishing standards. A good deal of pot pulling is in this boat's future, and it gets a full sized pot tipper, stowed behind the rear seats when not in use, that protects the hull as well as providing a working table. The pot winch is powered by a 12V motor (hence the powerful deep-cycle bank) driving through a forward and reverse gearbox and equipped with an electric brake. Pots will be pulled and skinned with the operator in a normal standing position, and with plenty of clear space around the operation.

Although main power is only 75 percent of the usual for an 8.5, top speed still exceeds 40 knots. This means easy cruising in the high 20s, with range being more important than outright speed anyway. Standard fuel capacity for an 8.5 is 520L, but in order to hold fully equipped weight below 3.5T this has been reduced to 400L. Range, though, is still a respectable 200nm.

Kirby Marine has two more fisheries patrol boats on order.



For further information contact:
Kirby Marine Fabrication, Western Australia.
PH: (08) 9410 2270, FX: (08) 9410 2280,
Email: office@kirbaymarine.com,
Web: www.kirbaymarine.com

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SPECIFICATIONS

Type of vessel:	Fisheries patrol boat
In survey to:	2C USL
Home port:	Port MacDonnell, South Australia
Owner/operator:	Fisheries South Australia
Designer:	Naiad Design, New Zealand
Builder:	Kirby Marine Fabrication, Western Australia
Construction material:	Aluminium
Length overall:	8.5 metres
Length waterline:	6.8 metres
Beam:	3.0 metres
Draught:	0.45 metres
Displacement:	2.7 tonnes
Propulsion:	2 x Yamaha outboards, each 112kW
Steering:	HyDrive closed loop hydraulic
Maximum speed:	40 knots
Cruising speed:	25-28 knots
Range:	200nm
Electronics supplied by:	Taylor Marine
Radar:	Furuno
Depth sounder:	Furuno
Radios:	ICOM
Autopilot:	Coursemaster
Compass:	Plastimo
GPS:	Furuno
Winches:	Muir
Capstan:	Muir
Windows:	Beta Marine
Safety equipment:	Taylor Marine
Fuel capacity:	400 litres
Crew:	2 + 4