

# LIVELY LEWIS 590 WALKAROUND



The name Lewis has been associated with top quality racing and recreation ski boats for over fifty years. The company is now branching into fishing and general pleasure craft as well. The Gosford, NSW manufacturer has acquired moulds linked to the former Southern Star (which were originally the highly regarded Southwind) line of boats so we can expect to see Lewis craft actively carrying anglers offshore while their renowned ski craft are busy on more sheltered waters.

## OUTSTANDING HULL

The ride and handling of this craft impressed me so much I am going to mention it first.

The Southwind heritage comes through strongly. The hull's lines are sweet, and the ride and handling is exciting. There's a 23 degree deadrise which sees the hull well and truly into Deep Vee category but with a 2.3m beam, some 820kg dry weight, plus the incorporation of double chines on the water line, prominent longitudinal strakes plus a 33cm wide planing plank centrally the hull is not by any means tender. It will lean a little with two or more on one side, but not excessively or to the detriment of fishing pursuits.



Dull day, bright boat. Kieran Harland of Coastal Powerboats puts the Lewis through her paces.

open cabin doorway with a flip up top opening section for easier access. A door is optional; if a toilet is fitted either a fabric or solid door can be ordered. Inside the cabin there's ample head room and it's fully lined with handy bunks and back rest style storage shelves. A light is standard, as is an easy-access panel for helm wiring. Further storage is below the bunks, which are narrow but they are long enough to sleep an adult.

Up top and on each side of the cabin a non-skid, drained, walk around area allows access forward for anchoring. There are also easy hand holds from the bimini frame and a high side rail. The walk around area was wide and deep enough to be safe but careful footing is necessary.

The anchor well was quite large with a locking lid. A moulded bowsprit and associated fairlead were well set up to protect the hull's deep gelcoat finish.

## TWO GAUGE DASH

The first mate enjoys a side grab rail, footrest and side storage pocket. The moulded bulkhead to starboard was equipped with a very neat dash layout in the form of a compass at the top plus a pair of Mercury Smart Craft gauges which provide every engine function as well as ongoing fuel consumption at the touch of a button. Below the paired gauges a Navman



Mercury's Smart Craft gauges certainly make for a neat dash layout in the Lewis.

Taking things a little further we have Lewis built quality incorporated within some really great hulls, courtesy of the development of the former manufacturers, which is all a great bonus for the angling fraternity.

The real bonus comes via ride quality. Thanks to a very generous degree of rake in the fine bow and degree of flare that kicks in just above the stationary water line the hull can be pushed hard into chop or swells with very little



Left: Bunks are long enough to sleep on, and there's no shortage of leg room in the Lewis' cabin. Right: Mercury's Smart Craft gauges offer much yet take up little room on the dash.

Specifications	
Length:	5.90m
Beam:	2.30m
Weight:	820kg
Fuel:	150L
Deadrise:	23 degrees.
Engines:	115-175hp
Engine fitted:	135 Mercury Optimax.
Price:	\$44,880.

impact. Test runs were carried out within the Broadwater on a lucky morning (lucky it didn't rain on us) and with a fair degree of swell coming into the Seaway entrance it was nothing but fun to run the Lewis into and across pressure waves for the sheer enjoyment of it.

Displaced water never made it into the cockpit as we hit waves head on and it was only when crossing chop at good speed with wind from the side that a bit of spray was kicking up onto the windscreen. The cuddy cabin and windscreen provides a bulwark and we remained largely dry, but mind you a set of optional clears between windscreen and overhead bimini would round things off nicely. The bimini's aft section was equipped with five rod holders, easily reached from within the cockpit.

## MERCURY 135 OPTIMAX SHONE

The big 135hp Opti was mid range power (the boat is rated for an engine between 115-175) and thanks to the

hull's reduced wetted area under way – the degree of rake in the bow plus a cutaway stern effectively cuts water line considerably – I found the Lewis could virtually turn on it's own length without any propeller cavitation from the big 135 Mercury Optimax.

The strakes dug in as the wheel went hard over and the big Lewis whipped around like one of their ski boats.

The Mercury 135 Optimax was a very smooth and tractable beast, and made such easy work of powering the 820kg Lewis hull that I couldn't see the need for a larger engine under normal fishing applications. Powering on at 3000rpm brought instantaneous engine response, which saw the craft surging forward. The question arises, how much power does one need in a fishing boat?

The Lewis planed at 23.2km/h at 2600rpm, travelled at 33.4km/h at 3000rpm, 52.4km/h at 4000rpm and



Side pockets in the Lewis come with rod holders plus padding.

65.4km/h at 5000 rpm.

Moreover, the very solid construction of the craft with its underfloor fibreglass grid system and inbuilt foam flotation also meant that there were no rattles or vibes as we hit waves at speed. Owners of a Lewis 590 can rightly expect a silent ride as the norm.

Visibility from the well-padded bucket seats on robust pedestals was spot on and I also noted that one could stand to drive if required.

## V BUNKS STANDARD

There's a step down into a drained splash well via an

Track Fish 6507 sounder/GPS was set into the moulded fascia with ignition switch beside it.

The sports style Lewis wheel linked to hydraulic steering was a little lower, a set of waterproof switches to starboard. Both marine and pleasure radios were set a little lower again with the speakers for the radio/CD player being located in the side cockpit moulding, right up front. In the usual manner forward controls were side mounted and quite accessible.

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