



TABS 4.85 Territory Pro (April 2009)

Words - Rick Huckstepp

Slotting in the practical under-five-metres category, the stylish plate alloy TABS 4.85 Territory Pro also impresses with otherwise big dimensions inside and out

Burly bantam

You don't have to be a pro or hanker for the tropical rivers in the Northern Territory to surround yourself with a nice boat. Just do it - with a TABS 4.85 Territory Pro!

At that practical size of less than five metres you won't need a gas guzzler to drag it around either and it won't be hard to find somewhere in the yard to store it.

Climbing aboard the TABS 4.85 Territory Pro, I noticed its internal usable space defies its true measurements with heaps of room to move. The first thing you appreciate when doing so is the walkthrough, half-height transom door that makes life easy if you are finding it difficult to throw the leg over the gunwales - age does that!

Handy rails are welded to the inside of the aft quarter structure that has the smooth cabriolet lines of the latest Maritimo.

The convoluted tubing housing the engine looms passes through the transom bulkhead to one side of and under the door sill, and travels across the cockpit step on the inside of the door. While not a real hassle, it would have been nice to see this walkway totally uncluttered.

Once through the door one steps onto a short deck that runs abeam under the transom bulkhead. It is on this ledge that the cranking battery is mounted in the port corner under the isolator switch and fuel filter which are fixed to the bulkhead. This section and the rear boarding platform base are constructed from nonslip checkerplate making for safe use and easy maintenance rather than some of the nonslip paint products available which tend to look untidy after a bit of abuse.

A neatly contoured rebate in the TABS 4.85 transom bulkhead allows the outboard powerhead to tilt forward and contains a livebait tank of about 70lt.

What you notice when moving about the 4.85 Territory Pro is its high gunwales which make for a steady lean when standing and fishing.

The coamings are wide in the forward two-thirds of the boat and aft of that, heavily rebated on the inside edge to give those seated more room to swivel on the comfortably padded pedestal seats.

A second seating position on the lower deck for the optional third padded pedestal seat is forward of the helm passenger's position and allows for some human trim factor when running awkward seas.

A sidepocket runs between the forward casting platform to near the aft end of the cockpit on the portside while there is no pocket on the starboard side, although it is an option like many other additions.

AT THE WHEEL

The console on the TABS 4.85 is fixed to the deck on the starboard side of the cockpit and takes on an interesting shape.

With the helm wheel and switches on the lower fascia, the Yamaha instrumentation looked pretty lonely on the top panel where there is plenty of room to flush-mount medium sized electronic cabinets.

The top of the console dash will handle gimbal-mounted electronics, provided they are not overly deep in dimension. A vertical Perspex windscreen is fixed to a surrounding rail that will prevent deep cabinets from being placed here.

The forward casting deck is raised about 250mm off the cockpit deck. A reticulated live fishwell sits central in the aft end of the casting deck and features a perforated divider so that competitors' catches can be kept separate until weigh-in. Volume of this well would be approximately 90lt.

In the forward end of the platform is a large hatch that opens each side of a seat-post base. Inside, one finds a carpeted false floor that will keep safety gear and other items out of a wet bilge. A support post interrupts this void to provide strength to the deck in the vicinity of the seat-post base.

The anchor well is slightly off centre to starboard to cater for an electric motor mount, and the base for this forms part of the bow section where a basic bowsprit roller assembly with a locking pin is installed. A heavy-duty cleat is welded to the inside edge of the lip of the anchor well leaving the topside relatively uncluttered and fly-fishing line friendly. Should you go down the path of electric propulsion there is ample room under the forward casting deck for a brace of batteries and chargers.

UP AND RUNNING

On the plane, the steering on the 4.85 Territory Pro was surprisingly easy for a manual cable operation. It exhibited very little torque coming through the cable from the 80hp four-stroke engine and we checked this at various levels of trim and all was in order. This will be a relief to some of you who are budget conscious as hydraulic steering can add about 900 bucks to the purchase.

With no GPS instrumentation fitted we relied on the Yamaha speedometer to advise us of 21kmh at 3000rpm and just over 38kmh at 3900rpm. WOT realised 58kmh at 5500rpm and you will enjoy the peace and quiet of this four-stroke outboard.

At various speeds and in full-lock turns there was some aeration at the propeller detected but we think that it only requires the motor to be dropped one bolt hole on the transom to remedy this.

Having only the relatively calm Tweed River, on the border of NSW and Qld, to test the TABS 4.85 Territory Pro we cannot offer any reports on its big-sea worthiness, but judging by its big shoulders forward it could handle some adverse conditions. We did run it over plenty of boat wash and chop, and it was smooth motoring to say the least. Off the plane and mooching in the mangroves you will appreciate the stability at rest too.

If you are in the plate boat market, this one needs to be in the top five to look at.

LIKES

- High quality finish
- Stable
- Good usable deck space

DISLIKES

- The transom door moved to the port side might help clear the walkthrough

TABS 4.85 TERRITORY PRO
HOW MUCH?
Price as tested: \$34,500
Options fitted: Black paintwork, tournament live well, Motor bow mount
Priced from: \$32,514
GENERAL
Material: Plate alloy 4mm bottom and 3mm sides
Length overall: 5.15m
Beam: 2.35m
Weight: 680kg hull only
CAPACITIES
Rec. max. engine weight: 194kg
Rec. max load: 635kg
Rec.max hp: 90
Rec. min hp: 75
Flotation: basic
ENGINE
Make/model: Yamaha F80 BETL
Type: EFI in line 4-cyl. 4-stroke outboard
Weight: 181kg
Displacement: 1595cc
Gear box ratio: 13:30 (2.31)
Propeller: 13 x 17 stainless steel
VELS rating: 3-star
SUPPLIED BY: Tanner Marine 1 Ducat Street Tweed Heads NSW 2485 Telephone (07) 5536 5312 Facsimile (07) 5536 6609 Email: sales@tannermarine.com.au Website: www.tannermarine.com.au

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