

'RESEARCH 7'

High performance monohull from Rambla Boats

By BILL BEECHAM

The high speed monohull 'Research 7' is the result of a successful collaboration between Queensland-based Sealife Designs of Hemmant and Rambla Boats of Gladstone.

Constructed of marine grade aluminium to USL Code 2C, the vessel has an overall length of 11.00 metres, beam of 3.50 metres, and a draught of 0.6 metres.

Built for the University of Sydney, the impressive craft is operated by the One Tree Island Research Station from its home port of Gladstone.

"I am extremely proud of 'Research 7'," said Blaise Ramsay, the obviously delighted owner of Rambla Boats. "So too is the team of tradesmen who worked on the project, while others who have inspected the finished craft have been lavish in their praise of the boat's construction quality and finish."

The overall fitout is impressive, with high quality upholstery and an electronics layout that is the result of close attention to detail.

The command station in the cabin is complete with a helm chair centrally positioned so that electronics, instruments and controls are within easy reach and ensuring clear lines of sight.

A Coursemaster autopilot joins a package of Furuno electronics including radar, depth sounder, GPS and plotter, while ship to shore contact is maintained by two VHF radios.

A full width windscreen and large windows to port and starboard ensure excellent visibility for the occupant of the helm chair.

A central hatch aft of the command station opens to reveal an under deck storage area, while day lockers each side of the cabin double as single berths, providing overnight accommodation in addition to the vee berths in the fore cabin.

Access to the fore deck and the anchor hatch is by walkways each side of the superstructure, with a large bow rail also offering safety and stability as and when required.

The spacious cockpit has a compact galley to port against the after bulkhead, with a sink occupying a similar position to starboard, while the central doorway allows easy access to the cabin, helm station and fore cabin.

The lid of a seat centrally positioned ahead of the transom lifts and reveals the battery storage area, while doors to either side provide access to the marlin board and the twin 225kW Yamaha 4-stroke outboards.

This power package ensures high performance that includes a maximum speed of 33 knots and a 26 knot cruising speed.

Extensive sea trials offshore from the Queensland port of Gladstone were carried out from a 6.30 am start with conditions including 20 knots of south easterly wind and a 1.80 metre swell, conditions described by Blaise as a great way to thoroughly test the monohull's seakeeping capabilities.



"Manoeuvrability at low speeds was excellent and the acceleration from a standing start could only be described as awesome, with the vessel reaching its top speed of 33 knots within 20 metres.

"High speed manoeuvres showed the hull could be turned quite sharply with no sign of cavitation."

Speed was increased to 27 knots as 'Research 7' ran beam on to the sea without any sign of uncomfortable pounding and little tendency to rock or roll.

The good behaviour continued when the bow was turned into sea and the nose trimmed down hard to let the entry display its performance capabilities, which it did quite well as speed was increased until 24 knots was reached when larger waves produced signs of an occasional pounding, so speed was pulled back to cruise at 20 knots and the course maintained for over an hour with all on board very impressed by the ride.

Blaise then decided it was time to turn and head home to see just how the hull would handle a following sea.

The sea had flattened and the wind dropped to a 10 knot nor-easterly.

The throttles were opened and the motors trimmed out to see what speed the GPS would show. This was a surprising 33 knots that occasionally ticked over to 34 knots.

Then the speed was reduced to 28 knots, almost halving fuel consumption during the cruise home to Gladstone.

After travelling 151 nautical miles, gauges revealed 581 litres of fuel had been used for an average of 3.8 litres per nautical mile.

The combination of Sealife Designs and Rambla Boats has obviously fashioned a

craft well suited to a range of offshore applications including commercial fishing, crabbing, day charter operations and diving.

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'Research 7'

SPECIFICATIONS

Type of vessel:	Research monohull
In survey to:	USL Code 2C
Home port:	Gladstone
Owner:	University of Sydney
Operator:	One Tree Island Research Station
Designer:	Sealife Designs
Builder:	Rambla Boats
Construction material:	Aluminium
Main Engines:	2 x Yamaha 225kW outboards
Length overall:	11 metres
Length waterline:	9.50 metres
Beam:	3.50 metres
Draught:	0.6 metres
Tonnages:	4 GRT; 6 DWT full load
Steering:	Hydraulic
Radar:	Furuno
Sonar:	Furuno
GPS:	Furuno
Plotter:	Furuno
Depth sounder:	Furuno
Autopilot:	Coursemaster
Radios:	2 VHF
Fuel capacity:	1,800 litres
Fuel consumption:	90 litres/hour (cruise speed)
Range:	475 nautical miles