

POWERCAT 3800 FLYBRIDGE WITH TWIN 225 YAMAHA 4-STROKE OUTBOARDS

At the top of the Powercat fleet, the 3800 Flybridge continues the marque's tradition of mixing functional practicality with a good finish and high performance.

By Wayne Kampe

Attention to detail is evident everywhere in this Powercat 3800 Flybridge Cruiser with unseen items such as separate fuel and water systems in each hull making the big cat a carefree operation. Double insulated wiring is another example.

Designed virtually for full live-aboard use or at least for extended travel (there are 900 litres of fuel and 300 litres of water aboard), this fast catamaran features twin master staterooms, twin dressing rooms, bathroom with toilet, saloon with seating for six to eight persons, a galley and a flybridge entertainment area. Also on the bridge is a comprehensive helm station packed with navigational aids plus heaps of seating. The bridge has its own workstation where preparation of refreshments would be a pleasure.

Boarding the Powercat is through a wide cockpit swing-door to starboard. This door locks to prevent opening under way. Stepping into the wide, almost metre high, self-draining cockpit brings to view a Granicote-topped workstation with sink and tap in each forward quarter, a Sovereign stainless steel barbecue, large side storage lockers, a hot/cold deck shower, overhead and side courtesy lights and removable rubber floor matting.

Access to the huge aft swim platform, which has its own storage area for water sports gear, is through a transom gate leading to the boarding ladder and associated hand rails set into the port quarter.

Dining For Six

A tinted, lockable, sliding door leads from the cockpit into the huge saloon. To starboard there is a dinette table with an L-shaped lounge that seats six to eight people. The table locks down into a recess to make up an additional double bed if required.

A roomy galley is to port opposite the table and a wide Granicote-topped bench provides an excellent work area. Other fea-

tures include a sink with hot/cold water, a 2-burner gas stove with oven, 140 litre refrigerator, microwave, cupboards below the bench and no less than ten overhead lights. Twin 240 volt power outlets are standard, and carpet with a rubber underlay adds to the luxury feel of the interior.

Even with the cabin's sliding door closed, there are large tinted, sliding, aluminium-framed side windows to allow plenty of fresh air to circulate. The fly screening of the entire saloon and cockpit is a wise precaution in a climate where biting insects thrive.

A comprehensive entertainment unit is aboard that includes a Majestic (12 volt) Super Thin LCD TV in company with a Majestic DVD-MP3-VCD-CD-AM/FM unit.

Right forward is a three-piece armoured glass windscreen which allows an excellent view over the foredeck and bows for saloon occupants. The space below the screen's centre section featured a small moulded dash area with a 27 MHz radio, a Clarion CD player, Navman Fish 4100 sounder and switches covering functions from the power winch to water pump.

Twin Master Cabins

The Powercat 3800's two master cabins are located forward with companionways to



The Powercat 3800 handles offshore conditions with ease and gave impressive performance on our test run. An inflatable is stowed above the cockpit awning.

LEFT: The helm is on the flybridge with excellent space and layout for the dash panels and controls.

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each on either side of the saloon. Carpeted stairs lead down to each lockable cabin door with a large hand rail on each stairway.

Inside the cabins is generous headroom with a queen-sized bed. The cabins are carpeted and fully lined, and also have reading lights, a fan, a large overhead hatch, large storage spaces under the bed and in sidepockets, and a tasteful decor with pastel-toned bed covers matching the other furnishings.

Each cabin features an adjacent step-down area or dressing room. These moulded modules were finished in gleaming white and common features included hand basins, vanity units, mirrors and storage units. The bathroom was located to port and featured full two metre height, electric marine toilet, hot/cold shower, auto sump pump, storage locker and separate cockpit entry while the starboard unit offered additional hanging space plus a 240 volt outlet.

Impressive as the lower decks may be, the flybridge area is also certain to impress. Going aloft is up six very easily negotiated steps, with integral side hand rails. On the bridge there is plush seating, a natty deck plank-pattern carpeted floor and plenty of safety rails. The helm station is to port with plenty of seating to starboard.

Right by the skipper's side is a large workstation with Granicote bench top, a sink, 55 litre Engel fridge, and storage cupboard. A neat padded seat is set up forward of the workstation so that the first mate can have a bit of chin wag while under way. Welcoming a host of guests, a very large six to seven person L-shaped lounge stretches full length to starboard and across the back of the flybridge around a table.

The layout allows the skipper to have plenty of company while under way, and



all hands can enjoy some refreshments while taking in a 360 degree panoramic view. A bimini canopy and full front and side zip-down covers provide various degrees of protection dependant on the weather.

At The Wheel

Seated in the big deluxe swivelling Reelax helm seat with the wood-grained steering wheel in my hand, I must confess to having a few fleeting thoughts as to how different boating is in a big flybridge cruiser when compared to my own 5.5 metre centre console which is a full-time full-sun sort of craft.

The wheel links to hydraulic steering and dual controls for the Yamaha 4-stroke outboards are just to starboard and within easy reach. The moulded dash is virtually a two tiered affair with comprehensive engine instrumentation set across the upper section while lower down there are a Furuno 1721 Mark II radar unit, a Navman Tracker 5600 GPS unit, Navman Fish 4500 sounder, electric winch controls, remote control for the Powercat's large spotlight, a speedometer, compass, VHF radio, and



TOP LEFT: The galley has full facilities and large sliding windows to give the Chef a great view as he (or she) prepares culinary masterpieces.

TOP RIGHT: The bridge has facilities for entertainment and this dinette or lounge area is in the aft port quarter.

ABOVE: The steps up to the bridge have a small wetbar behind them - a matching sink/cabinet is to port. All windows on the 3800 have insect screens.

LEFT: Each master cabin has a high standard of finish with a queen sized bed and ample storage.

Clarion radio/CD player with six speakers - two aloft, two in the saloon, and two in the aft cockpit.

Given my previous experience with other Powercats, I expected that the 3800 would certainly be no slouch, but I was quietly surprised with the level of performance achieved. As befitting a craft of this size, we

THE NUMBERS

Powercat 3800 Flybridge Cruiser

Length:	11.28 metres
Beam:	3.40 metres
Weight:	5,500 kgs approx
Deadrise:	28 degrees
Fuel:	900 litres
Water:	300 litres
Power:	Twin 225 to 250 hp outboards
Power as tested:	Twin 250 Yamaha 4-stroke outboards 187 kW (250 hp) each
Speeds:	42 kph at 4,500 rpm 58 kph at 5,800 rpm
Price:	from: \$413,000
Price as tested:	\$469,495 including many options



ABOVE: The dinette area is to starboard in the saloon with plushly upholstered seating.

tested her in the ocean off Bribie Island north of Brisbane. We had maximum rated power with the twin 250 hp outboards, but twin 225s are also recommended and would be a very viable option.

As usual for 4-strokes, the Yamaha 250s kicked into life at the first turn of the ignition key. Fitted with counter-rotating stainless steel props, the engines could hardly be heard as we eased out through a canal estate for testing in blue water. Once out of the six knot speed limit area, some forward motion of the throttle levers gave her an effortless 42 kph at 4,500 rpm which was a fine cruising speed.

When we had cleared the confined passage with its chop and moored craft, Powercat builder Steve Shaw really gave the boat its head and, with the throttles pushed to 5,800 rpm, the big cruiser sat effortlessly on 58 kph.

That's good performance, but it's not the whole story. The hulls, with their 1.07 metres freeboard, very fine entry, and 28 degree deadrise, were pushed up onto the plane in a manner that was very surprising given the size of the craft. Moving forward in displacement mode under modest power, all it took was for the throttles to be opened for the hull to simply commence planning. There was lift, no rise of the bows, just a seamless transition from displacement to planning and the smooth ride just turned smoother.

On the flybridge, fast travel was a very enjoyable sensation with the wind cooling us on a very hot day and the big cat loping across the substantial swells in fine style. Travelling in the saloon is just as pleasant with no stray vibrations - Powercats are built as tight as a drum. Stepping out into the cockpit as we cruised along confirmed my previous experience with other Powercats as there was a total lack of spray intrusion.

Given the large size of the Powercat flagship, the twin 250 Yamaha 4-strokes did a magnificent job. Response from the engines was amazing due to (as Steve Shaw pointed out) the lack of resistance from the long narrow hulls. The engines were whisper quiet at idle, quite subdued at cruise speeds of around 4,500 rpm, but were making their presence felt at full throttle. That said, the noise was never overly intrusive with normal conversation quite possible anywhere aboard ship.

Overall

The Powercat 3800 Flybridge Cruiser certainly lived up to expectations. With comfort levels and features usually only associated with far larger monohull craft, she packs a powerful punch under way yet is virtually a home away from home on the water.

The standard 3800 Flybridge Cruiser with twin 225 Yamaha 4-strokes is priced from \$413,000 while our test craft had been upgraded to the 250 Yamahas and fully optioned by the owner who kindly allowed us the use of her for our test day. As tested, the price is \$469,495 which reflects the options fitted - too many to detail all of them here. That's a lot of money, but then the Powercat 3800 Flybridge Cruise is a lot of boat. For further details call Powercat on (07) 5428 0043 or visit www.powercatmarine.com.au. ■

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