



was on hand to see this 3200kg trailerable rig being launched off the back of a 4.8lt Nissan Patrol into the Mooloolaba River. But the new Powercat 2600 Sports Targa was in the estuary for only five minutes. You see, the boat could sniff the open ocean and there was no holding it back.

A multipurpose cat, the 2600 has at least nine lives. The boat would make a neat fishing or diving platform for heading off into the wide blue yonder, a maxi trailerboat to tow to neighbouring ports and discover new grounds, and an innovative family cruiser for finding that picture-perfect, palm-tree-fringed tropical island we all imagine somewhere.

I entertained these thoughts and more as I circled a modest island on my own voyage of discovery down near Maroochydore.

FAMILY PEDIGREE

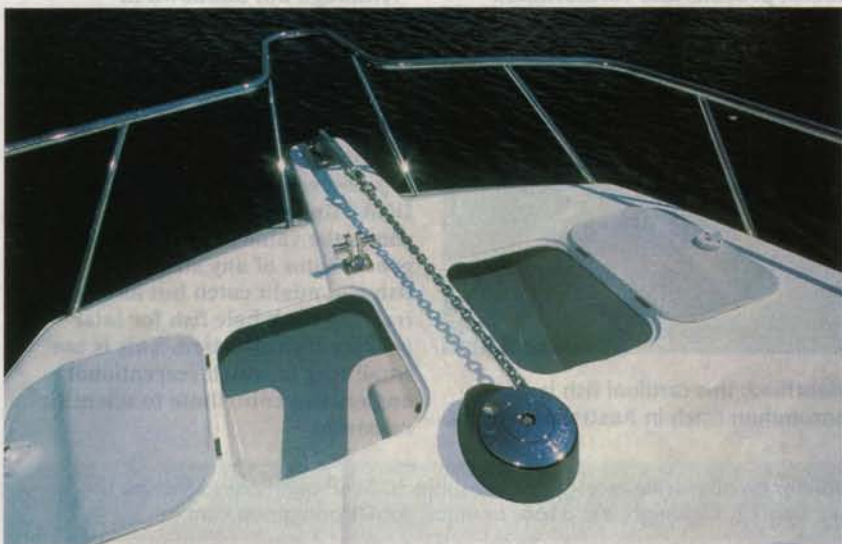
While it's the smallest hull in the long-time catbuilder's range, the new Powercat 2600 Sports Targa flaunts the racing bloodlines of its famous sisterships.

The great offshore handling is inherited from



9 lives

Family cruising, fishing or diving, on the estuary, bay or open ocean — the Powercat 2600 is a true multipurpose cat...



Powercat's 28-footer, which has for many years competed in Production Class and Class 2 offshore race events. There are still a few of these boats going hell for leather in the offshore series today (and for a while there, I was among them in the new 2600).

The new 2600 has the kind of sure-footed ride that will seduce anglers and divers. But with built-in cruising amenities and optional clip-in furniture, you can convert the sportsboat into a family flier or social conveyance.

The hull has heavily-veed sections with 28° of deadrise aft. In other words, it presents two very fine cutting edges to the ocean, hence the smooth ride without banging. But the really clever thing is how the boat travels without digging in or throwing spray around.

Big reverse chines (70mm) running the length of each hull are used to generate lift. A high tunnel, meanwhile, ensures that displaced water doesn't choke up in between the two hulls. And when travelling, you can sit on the aft quarter seats and not get wet with spray.

Under way, the boat rides on a cushion of air for one of the fastest and smoothest trips at sea

you are likely to experience, especially in a vessel that's only 26ft long. I report this having run offshore from Mooloolaba for a good hour or more.

SOLID GLASS

Hull construction is solid GRP and there is not a splinter of timber to be found under the floor. Bulkheads, including a collision bulkhead up front, and bearers or stringers are fashioned from fibreglass. The floor and deck are foam cored.

Corian is used for the counter on the outdoor amenities centre and top-quality UV-resistant vinyl is used on the lounges. Cool safety-glass is used on the windscreen. The cabin liner is simply a Fronrunner.

STAY ONBOARD

While you can go as fast or as slow as your mood dictates, the Powercat 2600 Sports Targa is more than just a great drive. Once you arrive at your destination, there are amenities on board as well as a cabin in which a couple can sleep.

The self-draining cockpit, which allows you to leave the boat in the water during a monsoon, has a walkthrough moulded deck between the outboards and a giant fold-down ladder than will encourage you to take a dive.

There are storage wells nearby for the mask and snorkel and nice details like fender baskets in the enginewell. The decks have four rodholders, fuel fillers, amidships cleats and a water filler.

The foredeck is best accessed via the cabin hatch, but with a Maxwell windlass as standard there's no need to go forward.

The overhead targa arch supports the aerials and grabrails. Courtesy lights surround the cockpit, sidepockets supply storage and a central amenities centre feeds the crew. It contains a stainless-steel sink, hot and cold water, a food-preparation area, two drinkholders, and an esky space or optional 12/240V fridge.

There is storage in the amenities centre, a house battery contained within, and separate batteries and isolator system for the outboards. A voltage regulator takes care of charging the

Opposite page, from top: The helmstation is suited to driving standing up; Self-draining cockpit has a fold-down ladder that tempts swimmers and divers; Foredeck access is through the cabin hatches. Below: With a slippery 38kt top speed the Powercat 2600 Sports Targa can take you where you want to go — in a hurry.



Top: The optional aft lounge can be unclipped and left in the garage during fishing trips. **Below:** The lock-up cabin contains a queen-sized bed. **Inset:** Electric loo comes with a holding tank option.

house battery. Oil bottles, hydraulic steering rams for the Seastar and tie-bar system, and water separators complete the engineering.

MODULAR LIVING

Just as smart is the optional moulded aft lounge that can seat five people around a moulded lunch table. Being fully modular, the lounge can be unclipped and removed in five minutes and left in the garage during fishing trips.

Helm seating comprises a two-person lounge with a bolster so you can drive in high-speed, on-your-feet mode. The moulded dash has a dedicated brow for the twin sets of Yamaha outboard gauges, fuel gauges and compass.

This particular 2600 was fitted with a Humminbird GPS/sounder, GME 27MHz radio, and Yamaha 704 dual-outboard remote throttle. The co-pilot gets a nice big grabrail.

The lock-up cabin and outboards that trim clear of the water allow you to leave the boat on a marina or let the boat dry out on the beach at low tide without worrying.

Reading lights, storage pockets and a cupboard flank the queen-sized bed. There is even an electric loo with direct pump-out or the option of a holding tank.

The boat carries 400lt of fuel in two tanks and 80lt of water. It also has a deck shower plus an optional single-burner portable gas cooker.

With full camper covers and conversion of the aft lounge into a double berth with an infill, it is possible to sleep four people. Considering how far-ranging the boat can be, in a few days and nights you could see an awful lot of, say, the Whitsundays, the Keppels, Kangaroo or Rottneest islands.

“... the boat rides on a cushion of air for one of the fastest and smoothest trips at sea you are likely to experience ...”



POWERCAT 2600 SPORTS TARGA

SIZZLING PERFORMANCE

The ride and drive were the highlights of the day. Spinning 17in props, the twin 130hp Yamaha Saltwater Series outboards took us to a sizzling but composed offshore top speed of 38kt at 6000rpm for 104lt/h.

More realistic long-range cruising can be enjoyed at 23kt and 4000rpm, at which the motors consume just 50lt/h or a little faster at 28kt/4500rpm for 57lt/h. The boat stays on the plane down to 3000rpm and 14kt, in case things get really ugly.

There are two things that really charmed me about this cat. As mentioned, it loves the open ocean. But rather than wandering about aimlessly, you can run to a destination and use this boat as a camper.

At the end of your weekend away, you can tow it back home, leave it at the marina, or perhaps haul it out of the water on a cradle in front of the private waterfront or cane farm. So, without stretching the imagination, this cat has at least nine lives.

Priced As Tested

\$127,641 with twin 130hp Yamaha outboards, trailer options, electronics, EPIRB, regos, etc

Options Fitted

Engine upgrade, 55lt 12/240V fridge, single-burner gas cooker, removable lounge, Humminbird electronics, Powercat custom long-range trailer, and more

Priced From

\$104,300 w/twin V4 115hp Yamaha outboards

General

Material:GRP with glass stringers, foam-cored floor and cabin
 Type:Twin hull
 Length (overall):7.90m
 Beam:2.50m
 Draft: ...0.51m (outboards up)
 Deadrise:28°
 Weight: ...Around 2200kg dry, 3200kg on trailer

Capacities

Berths:Two plus two
 Fuel:300lt
 Water:80lt

Engine

Make/Model: .Yamaha V4 130hp Saltwater Series
 Type: .Two-stroke loop-charged 90° vee outboard engine
 Rated hp (ea): ...130hp @ 5000-6000rpm
 Displacement (ea):1.73lt
 Weight (ea): ...Around 163kg
 Gearboxes (Make/ratio): ...2.0:1
 Props: Four-blade 13in x 17in S/S

Supplied by

Powercat Marine Australia, Caboolture (Qld), tel (07) 5428 0043 or visit www.powercatmarine.com.au

