

NO BULL ABOUT THIS SHARK



Wayne Kampe
NSWFM

wkff@bigpond.com.au

My 3.8m tinny with its 15hp two-stroke outboard has seen a lot of impoundment use over the years, with the odd stint into bay or estuary waters, but as our fishing horizons grew ever larger the craft just seemed to be getting smaller.

The little tinny was fine for shorts stints but it was just too small for two adults in extended use situations, especially with the necessary gear for a full day on the water.

The idea of replacing the rig with a more stable punt style outfit had been simmering for a fair while but it came to a rapid boil when I took the TABS P420 saltwater punt for a run on the Tweed River on a windy day with plenty of chop.

TICKING THE POSITIVES

The P420, or Bullshark as TABS Boats call it, took me by surprise.

Firstly, it was a definite departure from the run of plate alloy TABS rigs I was familiar with as it was constructed from pressed alloy in lieu of plate. While the straight sides of the P420 certainly made it look as

though it was a plate rig and I also found that the customary TABS ride quality had not diminished at all.

Mentally, I ticked off the desirable points as I drove, fished, or photographed the P420 on the Tweed River.

Number one point was that the craft was right sized for the wife and I. First tick. And we could still tow it with a four cylinder sedan if necessary.

The stability was brilliant. Tick again. We could fly cast anywhere at any time in this four person rig and the large forward casting platform would also be good.

The P420 also featured sufficient storage capability for our needs. Beneath the 38cm high forward casting platform there were three compartments; the anchor resting in a carpet-lined well, while two large side opening compartments allowed access to an under platform compartment that could swallow up safety gear, spare clothing bags and an ice box. There were also dedicated flat under floor areas on which to fit the electric motor's deep cycle battery plus an extra tote tank of fuel. More ticks.

The Bullshark also has a central fore/aft situated live



Sleek lines combine with high levels of sea keeping and ride quality to make this craft a pleasure to fish from.



A barra's view of the Bullshark's hull: note the strong pressings.

well for the catch, another huge bonus.

The cockpit was well set out. Standard are four variable seating positions with a pair of strong pedestal seats able to be moved as required. All floor areas were carpeted throughout with two off-floor shelved and carpeted storage compartments in the stern for the battery and fuel tank. There was also a 1800mm long side pocket to port and a pair of rod holders set in the 27cm wide decks atop the gunwales. More ticks again all round.

MOST IMPRESSIVE RIDE

All of these things seemed like small change compared to the P420 Bullshark's ride and handling. Powered by a 25hp two-stroke outboard the rig was scooting along with three aboard at 40km/h, ironing out the short river chop and pressure waves in a manner that eliminated jarring and pounding while keeping us dry at the same time. Turning sharply and heading back over our wash was just so much fun, as the P420 was like a gokart on the water.

I've seen my fair share of punt style rigs but this craft really impressed me. Especially considering the price tag – the rig as tested was around the \$12,500 mark, which included the boat, motor and trailer – a very sharp price indeed.

Reflecting on these positives, I took up the invitation to visit the TABS factory after leaving the water as I was keen to have an in-

depth look at the Bullshark's construction.

P420: A SALTWATER PUNT

I was informed that these punt style craft of 3.85, 4.00 and 4.20m respectively were the company's first departure from plate to pressed alloy boats. TABS were keen to

formed bow with plenty of rake to keep wave impact to a minimum was also a special design feature and one, I might add, that worked very well.

A generous freeboard of 60cm was designed to provide enhanced sea keeping ability and, along with the special bow treatment, as dry a ride as



I ordered a walkway on the Swiftco trailer so Denise can keep her toes dry. Here you can see the large under hull pressings on this strongly built punt.

go head to head with other manufacturers within this very competitive market segment.

Stepping up to the mark TABS designed what they referred to as a saltwater punt with several distinct factors.

First was a very heavy-duty standard of construction to guarantee as much hull rigidity as possible. This makes perfect sense; if the craft was to be used away from the sheltered waters in which we usually see most punt style rigs it needed to be able to take a bit of punishment.

Secondly, a high and well

possible.

Stability was ensured thanks to a 1.87m beam combined with no less than 12 longitudinal bottom pressings and a small outer reversed chine and I noted that even with two people on one side the hull hardly leaned, which was a huge improvement on the 3.8m tinny back home.

The Bullshark's hull has only a small amount of vee section at the stern to ensure maximum stability at rest plus ease of powering by an electric motor.

Lastly, the craft's high transom is equipped with an engine well, another feature enhancing sea keeping ability and a feature not always seen on craft of this size.

During my tour of the factory I was impressed with the P420's construction, which involved no less than nine cross ribs slotted to fit into the twelve pressings within the 2.5mm sheet alloy bottom with its 6mm thick and 50mm high central keel.

Heavy-duty construction was also evident within the very solid framework of the live well and forward casting



Large side storage compartments adjoin the large live well up front of the Bullshark. All are accessed via finger tab hatches.

SUPERVISION LED SPREADER LIGHT

Exclusive to SAW

BOATING

Applications
Off-Road Racing, Construction, Industrial, Agricultural, Mining, Commercial, Forest Service, Marine, Military, NASA

Specifications
• Mounting Depth: 57mm
• Housing: Aluminium Extrusion
• PC lens
• Stainless fastenings
• CE certified

Features
• Designed to Mount on rails, rocket launchers or flat surfaces
• 30 Degree Adjustment from Mounting
• Rugged Aluminum Extrusion
• Rubber Shock Isolators (vibration proof)
• Easy 2 Wire Install / waterproof deutsch plug
• Patent Pending
• 12 - 24 Volt
• IP65 waterproof
• Low-Profile



4WD



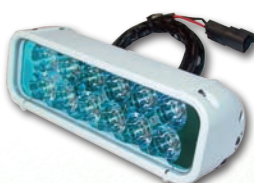
PART NO. 709712

Lumens: 720
Watt: 12
Beam Pattern: Flood
Dimensions: 102mm x 78mm x 70mm
Weight: 0.90kg
Amperage Draw: 1@12 Volt
Number of LEDs: 4 x 3 Watt LEDs
Equal to a 55W Halogen flood light



PART NO. 709724

Lumens: 1440
Watt: 24
Beam Pattern: Flood
Dimensions: 152mm x 78mm x 70mm
Weight: 1.10kg
Amperage Draw: 2@12 Volt
Number of LEDs: 8 x 3 Watt LEDs
Equal to a 110W Halogen flood light



PART NO. 709736

Lumens: 2160
Watt: 36
Beam Pattern: Euro (Spot)
Dimensions: 229mm x 78mm x 70mm
Weight: 1.50kg
Amperage Draw: 3@12 Volt
Number of LEDs: 12 x 3 Watt LEDs
Equal to a 200W Halogen flood light



Available from your local marine or tackle store
Email us: sales@samallen.com.au
Visit our website: www.samallen.com.au