



A boat with a future:
B63s look set for healthy
competition



TY TEST: BOOMERANG B63



COMING
BACK
TO

Win

A PART from the Hartley TS16, probably the best remembered trailer sailer in Australia would be the Boomerang 20. Since 1968 it has provided many people with their first taste of trailer yachting and has been an ideal stepping stone for those wishing to get into keel boats.

The combination of low cost, easy trailering, low maintenance and a simple but efficient rig ensured its success. With the advent of radically shaped, lightweight racing TYs in recent years, however, the Boomerang was looking decidedly outdated.

For Graham Prowd of Boomerang Yachts it was also becoming uneconomical to build the decks because the original moulding had come from an early timber boat and was nearly worn out. So in early 1986 the first B63 was launched.

Not just a facelift, the B63 is a substantially new boat utilising the tried and true Boomerang hull, but

Boomerang is a familiar name to the many who started their sailing in one.

The latest model, Boomerang B63, looks set to follow the marque's tradition.

JEREMY BANNISTER report and pics

with a new deck and rig. As Graham reasoned, there was no point in altering a successful hull shape with the added consequence of increased cost to the client.

The most obvious change has been to the cabin top with a sleek new shape and integrated flush-fitting

perspex windows to give it a much more contemporary look.

By starting afresh he was able to include a large (standard) pothop without upsetting the lines; it's also much stronger and provides full headroom when open.

The cockpit is the same size as before and can seat four adults as long as they know each other well, but has been moved aft a few inches thanks to the removal of the transom seat which used to house the mechanism for the drop keel winch. This operation is now performed by a 3:1 pulley system directly above the keel, the tail of which runs along the roof of the cabin and can be adjusted and cleated while sitting in the cockpit.

It is surprisingly easy to lift the 120kg keel with this system because of the Teflon plate in the case and a moulded lip in the hull for strength and to guide it more accurately. It can be fitted at 4:1 or a higher ratio if required, but with extra rope needing



B63 dashing along without drama. LEFT: Graham Prowd, B63's builder, demonstrates the Boomerang's interior appointments



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better protection from spray (and a higher backrest) and more cockpit room.

Sailing

With a storm approaching and a gusting wind — unheard of in Melbourne waters of course — the B63 did everything asked of it without drama and with complete predictability, which is why its predecessor has remained such a good beginner's or family boat and why this, no doubt, will continue the tradition.

The transom-mounted rudder was a little heavy through the tiller, but this was more because of fine tuning than an inherently heavy helm.

Summary

It can be sailed happily by two people until the wind really gets up or can accommodate a whole family.

There are at the time of writing 12 units sailing and already the new boats have been beating Boomerang 20s in club races. There has always been strong competition among those who race the Boomerang 20s regularly, so it looks like the changes have paid off. If the past 19 years are anything to go by, the B63 should enjoy a rosy future. ☺

stowage as a consequence.

Because of the common hull, the keel is in the same position as that of the Boomerang 20 and is the same size, but has more of an aerofoil shape to give better lift to windward. It is also considerably lighter than before and the rest of the ballast is located either side of the plate case in the bilge. Total ballast on the B63 is up 40kg but the overall weight of 940kg is still the same: weight 690kg, ballast 250kg.

Accommodation

The emphasis is on value for money so the cabin is sparsely fitted out and in its basic form the boat comes with bunk cushions and teak storm boards, step and compression post. Available as an option is the galley unit which is a one-piece moulding and can be fitted in various locations according to the client's wishes.

With the aft-moved cockpit and no interior bulkheads there is more interior room and it will sleep a family of four comfortably as the rear quarter berths extend well under the integral cockpit floor and seat unit. There is provision for a portable WC under the cushions in the forward V berth. As with most TYs, the keel case serves as a base for a drop-leaf table; a horseshoe-shaped one can be ordered instead.

The Boomerang can be fully fitted out at the factory or bought in a semi-kit form for those who want to do most of it themselves.

The other major changes on the B63 are to the spars and sails. It is a fractional ($\frac{7}{8}$) rig with a larger mainsail of 11.6m^2 (up from 7.8m^2 on

the old drop keel or 9m^2 on the swing keel) and a smaller headsail of 7.2m^2 (down from 9.2m^2). The No. 1 genoa has also been decreased 1.8m^2 to 11.1m^2 .

The extra area in the main comes from a longer boom and an increase in the luff, giving a slightly lower aspect ratio. The mainsheet is a 4:1 system and the traveller moves on a rather ingenious removable track which provides an uncluttered cockpit when at anchor.

Two Maxwell winches are located on the cockpit coamings and these double up for the headsails or the halyards when rigging. Erecting the mast can be easily accomplished by two people and backstay tension is simple yet effective with a pulley system on a strop to the transom. Straight section Kelley spars with single straight spreaders on the mast are standard as are Horizon sails.

Decktops have moulded-in non-slip surfaces and our test boat had teak grab rails on the cabin top which are a wise addition, as were the pushpit, pulpit, stanchions and lifelines. As you would expect on a 6.3-metre yacht with a 2.2-metre beam, there is not unlimited side-deck access to the bow, although it was certainly adequate.

Thanks to the new cabin shape there is a roll deck effect which makes it easier to traverse and the foredeck is large and uncluttered. The forward hatch is of sufficient size for sail transfers and anchor stowage.

The coamings running from the rear of the cabin to the transom have been raised and moved outwards to give

BOOMERANG B63

LOA.....	6.3 m
LWL.....	5.73 m
Beam.....	2.2 m
Draft	
keel up.....	0.3 m
keel down.....	1.3 m
Weight.....	690 kg
Ballast.....	250 kg
Mast.....	7.62 m
Sail area (main).....	11.6 m ²
Manufacturer: Graham Prowd, Boomerang Yachts, 8 McClelland Drive, Langwarrin, Vic 3910, (03) 789 1746.	
GIO insurance premium \$303.15	