

SAVAGE 435 JABIRU PRO

Reviewed by Andrew Norton

When Gold Coast-based Telwater took over the manufacturing and distribution of Savage aluminium boats it made some modifications to the existing designs while retaining the individuality of the brand that has made Savage unique on the Aussie market.

One of these hulls was the 435 Jabiru Pro, which was always very popular amongst anglers on sheltered waterways needing a stable but reasonably soft riding fishing platform. The 435 measures 4.35 by 1.84 metres with a hull depth of 0.72 metres. Including the optional side console, the hull weight is 230kg, and the bottom sheeting is 2.0mm with 1.6mm topsides. The hull is rated to 40hp or 120kg on the transom.

Unlike comparable hulls such as Stacer's SF Barra 435 or the Quintrex 435 Hornet, the 435 has a conventional vee nose entry with convex bottom sheeting sweeping from the bow down to the bottom. This creates a harder ride into a head sea because there is less 'give' in the shape but does provide more buoyancy forward when standing on the casting platform and better tracking in a following sea. Also, because the water flow doesn't have to change from a concavity to a conventional vee-bottom deadrise at the transom, the hull is easier to push and requires less power to achieve good planing performance.

Standard features include a massive raised carpeted casting platform forward with anchor stowage (though no bow roller) and a socket for fitting a lean seat. Aft of this is a deep fishwell that can be plumbed, and being so far forward, when full it counters the aft weight bias of the hull when a hefty low emission outboard is fitted. Either side of the platform is a low side rail for tying-off ropes and fenders. A nice touch is the rolled sidedecks that have long been a Savage feature.

The main carpeted floor is full width and runs aft to a small raised platform ahead of the transom and atop the fuel tank and battery rack. Alternatively, a 40 litre under-floor fuel tank may be fitted but this just adds to the cost of what is a very affordable boat.



The two swivelling, upholstered bucket seats have folding backrests to increase casting flexibility. The compact side console has sufficient space for full engine instrumentation and a sounder, and sensibly the strongly-framed windscreen is clear for night navigation. The helm seat is well placed in relation to the console with good legroom beneath it, and on the demo hull the remote control box for the Mercury four-stroke 40 fitted was well positioned in relation to the seat and soft-grip steering wheel.

The carbie 40 was a good choice of engine for this hull and provided a very good blend of performance and fuel efficiency without adversely affecting fore and aft hull trim. At 98kg it's 18 percent lighter than the maximum transom loading, and had another four-stroke such as the Suzuki DF40 been fitted (110kg) there would have been a distinct lack of freeboard at the engine mounting pad, which is a concern because no outboard well is fitted. The only other low emission outboard that's lighter is Tohatsu's TLDI 40 (96kg), while the Evinrude E-TEC 40 weighs the same as the DF40.

The Merc started instantly hot or cold with no oil smoke appearing at any time. However, the Merc control box was notchy and frankly Mercury Marine should modify the cable action to provide smoother shifting

into gear. Power astern was good providing the anti-ventilation plate was kept at least three quarters immersed; useful for backing off sandbars.

Spinning a 13 inch pitch Quicksilver Black Max alloy prop and pushing a total of 570kg including two adults, the Merc trolled us at an almost vibration-free 2.8kt and 750 revs using 0.6lph, and held its course well. A clean plane was achieved at 13.0kt and 3,500 revs with the passenger sitting amidships to overcome the stern-heavy nature of this hull, although with the fast-acting power trim this wasn't really a problem.

Cruising quietly at 4,000 revs the averages were 18.2kt and 5.5lph, and through full lock figure of eight turns at these revs no prop ventilation occurred. The mechanical steering was direct but reasonably light, and the hull cornered fairly flat.

At Wide Open Throttle the averages were a surprisingly good 30.4kt and 12.5lph at 6,000 revs with the engine slightly under-propped to handle heavier loads. The Merc was quiet at these revs and we could talk normally. Vibration levels were also low as expected of a three cylinder four-stroke.

The 435 tracked well across or downwind with minimal helm corrections needed, but due to the convex entry rode harder than the SF Barra into a chop or 20cm. With the waves on the port or

starboard bows, the boat was fairly wet over the 'washing machine' slop common to the Gold Coast Broadwater. The relatively slab topsides and low freeboard do have their limitations in these conditions and frankly the 435 would be better suited to sheltered estuaries and lakes than a big-boat location like the Broadwater.

Back at rest the 435 was again in its element, and two adults (200kg) could safely fish from one side. With its low freeboard the drift rate was very slow.

The hull was easily retrieved on its Savage

TQLITE bilge skid and keel roller trailer, which has 13 inch wheels and moulded mudguards. On this trailer and with the Merc 40, battery, ground tackle, safety gear and a full 25 litre portable fuel tank, the towing weight is 530kg; easily handled by a current model Toyota Corolla.

Overall the finish and attention to detail were good, and as of October, 2009 the package price was \$17,700 from Hastings Marine, Port Macquarie NSW. Call Ph: (02) 6583 5511 for more details on this stable fishing platform. **SWF**



or visit our website at www.thermalcookware.com

thermal