

# Stabicraft's SOFT BAITER

Stabicraft has answered the call of Kiwi soft baiters with the release of their purpose-built 1750 Frontier.

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**WITH THE RISE** in popularity of shallow-water soft baiting, centre-consol boats are becoming more and more commonplace on New Zealand waters. Stabicraft recognised this and have spent countless hours designing a boat that would meet soft baiter's needs yet still maintain the safety and quality that their brand has become associated with since the beginning. So the Stabicraft 1750 Frontier was born and it has quickly become a hot seller, for a number of reasons.

## A ONCE-OVER

A centre console boat appeals to soft baiters for a number of reasons. A solid walk-around obviously allows fishermen to walk the full length around the boat and cast baits without having to worry about snagging a cabin or getting in the way of each other. It also makes it possible to follow a fish around the boat to avoid any issues with tangling or the line rubbing against a hull. The 1750 allows plenty of space between the

gunnels and console so even the largest of fisho's wouldn't have difficulty walking from the stern to the bow or vice-versa.

## HULL

Stabicraft have created one of their best hulls yet on the 1750 Frontier. With the Stabicraft pontoon design, this hull was created to maximise stability, an area that other centre console boats have had some difficulty with. With weight in the bow the pontoons remain flat on to water, keeping the boat's altitude completely level. But of course, as with all Stabicraft hulls, safety has been one of the main concerns. And once again, they have gone to great lengths to achieve this.

In the upper-outer areas of the boat, Stabicraft have created what they call a 'life ring' of buoyancy through a series of continuous tubes of individually sealed floatation chambers. This, coupled with an airtight chamber between the floor and hull, make this hull virtually unsinkable. At 4mm, the hull is thick enough to provide comfort and enough resistance to any small knocks it may get while fishing in close to the sand and rocks.



THE HELM IS WELL SET OUT AND PROTECTED BY THE OPTIONAL BIMINI



THE EVINRUDE 90HP E-TEC IS A GRUNTY OPTION FOR THIS SIZE BOAT



CENTRE CONSOLE BOATS ARE A LOT OF FUN, ESPECIALLY WHEN THEY'VE GOT THIS KIND OF POWER AND STABILITY



CENTRE CONSOLE BOATS ARE PERFECT TO SOFT BAIT FROM

## LAYOUT

This is a boat that seems small from the outside but has an amazing amount of space available once you are onboard. At 5.25m long, this is not a small centre console boat in anyone's books and provides plenty of room for a few people to cast their soft baits from. Up in the bow there is adequate space for one fisherman to cast from, there is even a seat placed in front of the console that he/she can use while waiting for the bite or to sit on while moving from spot to spot. However, this is an upgrade option.

The length of the boat is filled with storage so there is no shortage in this department. And with a dry storage locker under the console and the 105L chilly bin/padded seat, there is plenty of room to store valuables and a lot of fresh fish, food or drinks.

## OUT THERE TESTING IT

I'm a big fan of these boats and I really see them having a big part to play in New Zealand's fishing scene. With the rise in popularity of lure fishing, particularly soft baiting, as well as an increase in the price of gas, smaller, economical boats like this really do tick the boxes for inshore fishing here. However, on a

calm day there is no reason why the 1750 Frontier couldn't head a reasonable way offshore and jig for kingfish or even tow lures for bigger game fish. All it would take is an extra one or two tote tanks.

So I was looking very forward to testing this one, particularly because it had been built from the ground up by Stabicraft who have earned themselves a very solid reputation here in New Zealand and around the world.

We would be testing the boat with Paul Dunn from Marine North of Whangarei, so we steamed up to the Marsden Point marina where he would be waiting with the boat. We would also be taking out Marine North's Stabicraft 2150 Supercab as our camera boat, a very fine vessel in itself and one that has sold extremely well since its launch in 2010 and picked up a host of awards.

It was my first time to this marina and I was very impressed. It has to be one of the most sheltered I have come across and launching here was an absolute breeze. Finally, as we made our way out through the marina and into the Whangarei Harbour, I got to have my first proper look at this boat.

The helm itself is very well set out with everything you could possibly want on a boat this size. We were sheltered from the custom-built Manta bimini that is an optional extra on this boat. I was soon

to find out that you can upgrade this boat drastically including live bait tanks, hydraulic steering and custom paint jobs. You only have to look at the Stabicraft 1720 Matt Watson Signature to see what can be possible, but that's another story.

This particular boat had been fitted out with a Lowrance HDS- 7 GPS fish finder combo, VHF and Fusion radio. The Lowrance HDS range is perfect for boats of this size and are a pleasure to use, so finding fish wouldn't be too much of a problem. I like the idea of a stereo on these types of boats as well. After all, they are supposed to be fun aren't they?

The ignition was on the left hand side of the helm which I am not used to, but I could see the logic once it was explained to me that these often get knocked when they are on the right and close to the throttle.

Once into the harbour and away from any speed restrictions I took the helm to see how well the boat shot out of the hole and how well it handled. So I gave the throttle a quick punch and held on as the Evinrude E-TEC 90HP came quickly to life and had us really moving in no time. This is great fun, I thought to myself as I played around with the trim. It is amazing how much of a difference even the slightest change in trim can make to a boat like this. We were soon skipping across the surface at a great number of knots. The handling was equally as impressive

and was very responsive and able to turn sharply yet retaining the smooth ride. I was absolutely loving it. The only problem being that it was mid-winter and with a very brisk south westerly wind blowing straight at us, my face was so numb by the time we arrived at our fishing destination that I could barely speak. So I mumbled something that none of the others could understand and went about rigging up my soft bait set.

The 1750 Frontier is a fantastic casting platform and we had plenty of room to get our baits out into the water with nothing obstructing us at all. It was here I also got a fair idea at just how stable this craft was. With both of us leaning heavily over one side, there was barely any pitch at all. The pontoons really do the trick and are a key asset on this boat because with soft baiting you will often have two, three or more people over on one side at the same time.

While it was a pleasure to fish from, the snapper weren't playing ball by any stretch and no matter how hard we tried, we had no luck. Although the camera

boat managed to catch a couple, and boy did they let us know about it!

We finally called it quits mid-afternoon as the southerly had strengthened and the chop was lifting. The 1750 Frontier had no difficulty cutting through the chop on the way home whatsoever, and Paul even got behind the helm and really put it through its paces, flying over each side of the wake.

This is an incredibly stable boat and one that really impressed us all. For a boat of this size, which is actually pretty big, along with a 70-75HP outboard from any of the leading manufacturers and a trailer, you could drive away with this whole package for less than \$40,000. That's not too extravagant given all the work that has gone into making this vessel what it is. And then of course there are the available options to really pimp this boat up to make it a lethal fishing machine. This boat is a tribute to Stabicraft and their commitment to New Zealand fishermen, no wonder they have already sold over 20 since its launch in May. It will become a soft baiter's best mate. 🎣

## SPECIFICATIONS:

**MAKE AND MODEL:** Stabicraft 1750 Frontier

**LENGTH:** 5.25m

**MAX ADULTS:** 6

**BEAM:** 2.15m (external)

**HULL THICKNESS:** 4mm

**TUBE THICKNESS:** 3mm

**RESERVE BUOYANCY:** 1515L

**TOW WEIGHT:** Approx 825kg

**MAX ENGINE:** 90HP

**FUEL CAPACITY:** Tote tanks

### ENGINE

**MAKE:** Evinrude E-TEC

**POWER:** 90HP

**TYPE:** 2-Stroke

**WEIGHT:** 138kg

### PACKAGE PRICE AS TESTED:

\$55,000

**Contact Marine North on**

**(09) 438 8927 for more information**

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