

Stabi-Craft Marine Limited

Adventure with Confidence

Media Release
(For immediate release)
September 11, 2008

Two Stabis up for grabs

If you've ever woken in the dark hours just before dawn, you may have idly turned on the radio and heard mention in the marine forecast the words "Bream Head".

Located just south of Whangarei, the seaside town of Bream Bay is now being placed prominently on the map by a young woman called Leesa Quann and an event which lures enthusiasts from around the globe.

Leesa is the driving force behind the annual Lion Red Carters Beach and Boat Competition. Hailed as the biggest fishing contest in New Zealand, next year's event features two Stabi-Craft Marine boats – an 589 Super Cab and a 389 Frontier – as major prizes.

Stabi-Craft's association with the tournament, to be staged on February 27 and 28, is sure to thrill anglers well aware of the benefits the innovative Southland manufactured boats offer.

"The tournament is sponsored by leaders in the New Zealand boating and fishing industry and we're really pleased to have two Stabi-Craft boats as prizes," Leesa said.

"Stabi-Craft make good boats and it's a great brand which is well recognised. And it's great to have representation from the south."

Everyone has a chance to win the draw for the 589 Super Cab, whether they catch a fish or not, while the 389 Frontier will be awarded to the fisher with the heaviest snapper overall.

Originally held for 20-odd years on a farm on Kawau Island in the Hauraki Gulf, the tournament was forced to move when the farm sold five years ago. Leesa saw its potential for Bream Bay, took a concept plan to major sponsors and won them over.

Next year will be the fourth at the Bream Bay site. The tournament draws 2000 senior entrants from around the world with 3000 entrants and spectators crowded into the main marquee for the prize-giving. The categories have now been extended to include kayakers and, for the first time, a prize for the woman who lands the biggest snapper.

Involving up to 200 volunteers, one of the main tasks is cleaning the on-site professionally catered restaurant where chefs start cooking at 3am and the table tops are not cleared until after the big buffet meal at night. Local groups whose members volunteer get donations from the money raised by the tournament.

Together with organisation, fishing comes naturally to Leesa, the daughter of keen anglers Carol and Stuart Johnson.

"My brother Nick and I have a long, strong fishing background. Most weekends the family went fishing. I think I could hold a rod before I held a knife and fork," she said.

Leesa encourages the ideal of family fun: "It's an everyman's tournament to celebrate our varied recreational fishing community. As long as you've got something that floats safely and a rod, that's all you need."

Along with daily catch prizes, overall prizes are awarded at the gala ceremony which also features a line up of comedians, a band and the chance to share a drink or two and talk about the one that got away.

Stabi-Craft's New Zealand sales manager Sean McColl said the Invercargill-based company was delighted to be a principal sponsor of the contest which was both well promoted and organised.

"I'm looking forward to heading up there for the contest," he said.

"It's a great opportunity for us to showcase two of our top boats," he said. "They'll be up there on show at Marsden Cove in October. The Super Cab is a top prize and it's **the** prize in the competition that everyone tries to win. It's a great boat for off-shore fishing.

"The 389 Frontier is a very good seller here and around the world, including Alaska. It's a great entry level boat for anyone heading out on the water."

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