

HAINES SIGNATURE 620F



This is another of Signature's 'F' models, designed to suit the needs of serious anglers while still appealing to family users. It's kitted out with a number of fishing-friendly features directly from the factory, eliminating the need to dive too deeply into the optional extras schedule. Designers have obviously listened closely to their customers' input, coming up with a very neat and functional layout to accompany the unique variable deadrise Signature hull.

The 620F is indeed a handy size. It's big enough and capable enough to take well offshore, but you won't need a Landcruiser to pull it safely and legally. The hull is rated to a maximum of 175hp and will still perform adequately with a

115, although most I've seen on the water have been fitted with a 150. Our test boat, supplied by Pacific Marine at Royal Park, was wearing maximum 'grunt' in the form of a new Honda BF175, complete with drive-by-wire controls.

Like most of Signature's larger cuddies, the 620 catches the eye immediately with its sleek lines and very tasteful colour scheme. This one was a little more understated than other models I've seen, presented in a tone called 'silver shore' with white decals – quite sophisticated, in fact, and a combo I found very appealing.

The 620F is offered in standard cuddy format, with lockable cabin, short berths and a cockpit that will fish four in comfort. Although it's an optional extra,



I found a chemical toilet to be a great inclusion, particularly in a family boating situation. There's well-proportioned forward hatch in the cuddy that enables easy anchor access if required, but these days you don't see too many larger trailer boats not fitted with an electric anchor winch.

Like most of the bigger Signature models, the 620F comes with that rather clever cockpit console that folds down in an instant to reveal and provide access to all helm wiring. It's a simple concept I haven't seen anywhere else to date, and certainly makes a great deal of

sense. I know the guys at Pacific Marine who fit out these boats absolutely love this feature, as it makes their job a whole lot easier and cleaner.

The cockpit is full of clever bits and pieces that fit well with the 620's 'F' designation. Beneath the driver's and passenger's seats are stainless steel risers that accommodate a pair of 80 litre iceboxes. Once again, these were extras ordered specifically for this boat, but I'd suggest they are well worth considering. You can also opt for seats on top of tackle lockers, or merely stick with the traditional pedestal-mounted



swivelling bucket seats that come with the standard package.

There is plenty of side pocket storage in the cockpit, as well as a forward sub-deck locker set just aft of the cabin entrance. A couple of small tackle lockers are included in the



aft section of the cockpit, and on the starboard side of the transom you'll find a decent live bait tank. Plumbing for this tank is an optional extra, but really is a no brainer if you're serious about chasing big fish offshore.

A detachable deck wash hose can be fitted to a nozzle located out back in the motor well, and on the port side of the transom is a handy walk-through gate. While many anglers aren't keen on these, I find them convenient for boarding and, if you're lucky enough to hook a 'barrel' bluefin or big kingy, they definitely make the landing process easier.

I've already touched on a few of the optional extras Signature produces for the 620F, but there are several other items worth thinking about if the budget permits. An underwater lighting kit is available, Signature's brilliant fold-away bait board is up there with the best you'll find, Lectrotab trim tabs help balance

the load quickly and efficiently, and clip-in cockpit carpet provides comfort and an easy clean up after a messy day's offshore fishing.

This would be my first ride in a 620F with maximum power on the transom, and I was keen to see if there



Both seats are mounted above ice boxes

was a noticeable difference over the more traditional 150 horse fit-ups. Honda's BF175 is the smallest engine in the range that offers drive-by-wire controls, and I can tell you it's a real winning feature. The BF200 powering the magazine's Bar Crusher 670 is equipped with drive-by-wire, as was the BF250 on our Bar Crusher 780HT, and I really can't imagine life without it now. Shift and throttle action is so much smoother and more positive than the traditional alternative, making life at the helm a lot more enjoyable. I understand Honda will soon introduce this feature to the 150, and then onto smaller models in the range.

As I'd anticipated, the Signature variable deadrise hull leapt onto the plane the instant I dropped the throttle. It loves big horse power – as do I! Although we didn't have much wind to contend with as we exited North Haven Marina, there was still a considerable

roll left over from the 20 knot southerly that had dominated for a couple of days. Powering directly into the roll, I trimmed the bow well in and, as expected, was treated to a soft, dry ride. That hull deadrise diminishes from 33 degrees at the forefoot down to 21 at the transom,



The Honda BF175 offers drive-by-wire

carving its way into the sea and throwing spray well clear of the cockpit.

Top sped in these conditions was a handy 70kph (close to 38 knots) at 5600rpm, and optimum cruise speed seemed to be about 45kph (25 knots) at 3300rpm. At cruise the Simrad computer indicated a fuel burn of around 27 litres per hour, which was pretty damn impressive. There's no doubt Honda has the fuel economy issue well sorted these days and, with a seven-year unconditional warranty on non-commercial use, it's easy to see why the Japanese giant continues to kick goals in the marine marketplace.

Stability at rest is certainly impressive, assisted in part by hull weight, and it was easy to move around the boat for photography, even in roly conditions.

As expected, the Haines Signature 620F isn't cheap, but it has to be right up there with the best offshore boats currently available.



The bait table is brilliantly designed

HOW MUCH?

Packages start at around \$98,000
As tested, with a considerable inventory of extras fitted, \$106,560

GENERAL INFO'

Length – 6.28m
Beam – 2.38m
Deadrise – 21-33 degrees
Dry weight – 1017kg

CAPACITIES

HP range – 115 – 175
Fuel – 180 litres

SUPPLIED BY

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