



TRADER – A – BOAT

Australia April 2004

By David Lockwood

‘In the beginning...’

GENESIS 360 Targa

If it's good enough for the Good Book to open up with Genesis, we reckon it's good enough for Trade-A-Boat - Australia's marine bible - to kick off this month's boat tests with the Genesis 360 Targa. David Lockwood takes a ride on this heavenly sports cruiser.

Ian Dresner is one of an increasingly large number of Australians in big cities from Melbourne to Mooloolaba moving to apartments with private marina berths rather than buying holiday homes. The marina berth was included with the new abode but, sadly, the boat was not.

Dresner went shopping for something for the family and settled on a \$300,000-plus Genesis 360 Targa sports cruiser to fill the slot. Sensibly, he ordered an optional bowthruster to make light work of parking.

The Dresner clan has undertaken professional driving lessons and obtained the obligatory boating licences. They can now skipper the Targa 360 whenever the mood strikes them. In effect, the boat is like a holiday home.

His oldest daughter, 28, and her girlfriends recently had the best weekend they've ever had on his boat. And his 26-year-old son took the helm for Australia Day and several big outings thereafter. Now the youngest daughter, 19, is driving.

FOUR SEASONS

Why the Genesis? Dresner says he settled on the Kiwi sports cruiser after a business associate pointed him in that direction. A subsequent tour of the Sanctuary Cove Boat Show confirmed that it was a competitively priced boat.

But the Genesis 360 Targa is a good choice for Australian waters for more than its driver-friendliness. As an all-seasons sports cruiser, the Targa or moulded hardtop comes into its own.

Basically, the Targa provides protection from weather extremes. In fair weather you can crack the sliding ceiling hatches, open the side windows and cruise with the wind in your hair. The moulded hardtop provides shade from the summer sun too.

Conversely, if it's the great outdoors you crave, no worries - the Kiwi sports cruiser has an aft cockpit with amenities centre and a two-stage boarding platform for extra living and entertaining space.

But above all, the 360 Targa has been designed for New Zealand's changeable weather. That hardtop makes the boat as useable in a mid-winter gale as it is in a summer heatwave. Add optional air conditioning and the climate is at your fingertips.

OCEAN BOUND

First released across the Tasman in May 2002, the Genesis 360 Targa has only recently broken into our market. This was boat No 16 and the 185th Genesis to be born. It looked like something special with a navy-blue hull.

A popular boat in Kiwi waters, the 360 Targa evolved from the Genesis 335. The new model has the extended boarding platform, new interior and helm, and upgraded fixtures and fittings. Oh, and the Targa caters for boat buyers who want more than floppy canvass tops.

While the Sydney Genesis owner intended to cruise in enclosed waters, he mentioned he might venture outside at some point in time. Should the harbour - or whatever waterway - become ho-hum, there's no need to hesitate before taking the Genesis to sea.

Offshore, the Genesis travels very well, which isn't surprising when you consider the company's history. All hull designs hark back to the original boat that successfully set the Around New Zealand Speed Record of less than two and a half days.

In fact, all 32? 40ft models with either soft-top, Targa or flybridge layouts have been spun off that first Genesis. And many of these boats have gone on to win various boat-of-the-year awards in New Zealand.

The 360 Targa carries a moderate 17.5° of deadrise, but unlike accommodation-heavy sports cruisers it presents a sharp or fine entry to the water. Hence the reason for the smooth and dry ride.

The hull is also responsive to trim, with a wide range of running angles to suit head seas and following seas. Bennett trim tabs and Volvo Duoprop legs seem to be a winning combination on this and a lot of other sports cruisers these days.

BUILDING CODE

Construction is composite, with a polyurethane foam-cored hull, Targa top, deck and stringers. Solid GRP is used for the hull sides and there is GRP over timber for the keel.

Displacement is a bit lighter than, say, a twin-engine Cobalt 360 sports cruiser from America or, for that matter, a Sunseeker Superhawk 34 from the UK. Then again, the waterline length of the 360 Targa is considerably less than both these boats. The boat's long boarding platform sees to that.

On the engineering front, the Genesis appears well made. A surveyor inspects each boat three times before it leaves the factory, says the local agent. The boats meet or exceed US Coastguard standards and the Marine Safety Authority standards across the ditch.

The boat's 585lt fuel tanks are aluminium with a sight gauge, as is the 360lt water tank. Both tanks are mounted on the centreline down low to improve stability. Skin fittings are predominantly stainless steel.



There is shorepower and an inverter/charger for amenities like the microwave oven and to keep the 12V fridge and freezer kicking during the working week. The aft barbecue runs off its own LPG cylinder.

The boat has windscreen wipers with freshwater washers, auto bilge pumps, a crash bulkhead, and watertight bulkhead forward of the engine room at least. The wiring is coded and the boat manual has schematic drawings of the same.

Access under the floor to the engines and engineering - including hot-water service, water pumps and fuel filters - is straightforward. The battery box doubles as a step into the engine room.

I noted lots of sound insulation and a 2hp Honda outboard clamped to a custom bracket.

There was also a useful amount of space left over for storing fishing, diving or cruising gear below decks.

The outboard partnered a factory-supplied 2.6m Aquapro ducky, which was to be carried on aftermarket davits on the transom.

PLAY STATIONS

The Genesis 360 does an excellent job of promoting the virtues of the so-called Targa layout. Most other brands of hard-topped sports cruisers start at 40-something feet. Yet, despite size constraints, this modest Kiwi rendition isn't cramped. The boat's broad 3.5m beam helps see to that.

In fact, without an aft bulkhead or a raised bridgedeck, but with a level floor, there was a seamless transition between indoor and outdoor areas. Abundant windows, a big curved-glass windscreen and overhead hatches made the boat bright and breezy.

The covered part of the cockpit is just like a sunroom. But the roof hatches could do with sunshades for those occasions when you don't want the rays beaming through.

Walk around side decks backed by a bow rail, cabin rails and deck rails help with access to the foredeck, which is covered with a good grade of non-skid. However, there are no toe rails and the gunwales and bow rail are angled out. This doesn't help with footing when scampering around the edges.

Full marks for concealing the anchor winch from kiddie's hands and toes and for supplying all the anchoring gear including 50m chain and plough anchor with the boat.

LIVING SPACES

Back at the transom, the extended boarding platform provides space for deckchairs. Double transom doors around the amenities centre let you move about despite the comings and goings of, say, kiddies.

There is handheld freshwater shower and external saltwater washdown, optional removable cutting board, and rod holders for occasional fishing. Ease of access to the water will appeal to divers.

The central amenities centre includes that simple gas barbecue and a moulded sink with deck-shower rose/faucet and a soap dispenser. The barbecue and sink are intended to be used while standing on the teak-topped boarding platform. That is, the chef stands outboard while facing guests waltzing about the cockpit or seated in the saloon.

There is a 12V bar fridge on the port side of the cockpit and a hatch that reveals the battery switch and isolators. Courtesy lights, teak decking and nice, rounded mouldings are features elsewhere.

A buffet could be served from the small GRP table positioned under the hardtop. But if you had a folding teak table and deckchairs you could also do lunch in the cockpit proper.

There are hinged swabs in the cockpit that prop up on stanchions for impromptu seating. These seats will also come in handy when fishing.

When not in use, the seat bases cover the side pockets.

More permanent seating exists under the hardtop: the wraparound lounge to port is big enough for four people beside a moulded table; the L-shaped lounge and two-person helm bench seat to starboard can take four more. In other words, eight can travel undercover.

Headroom under the hardtop is 185cm, which is generous for a boat of this length. But you step up to the helm, so there isn't a great deal of standing room there. In fact, the boat is a sit-down driving affair. For parking, you can poke your head through the ceiling hatch if need be, but that's it.



INDOOR LIVING

Indoors, the boat has a lovely atmosphere, derived from any one of three carefully chosen factory-supplied soft furnishing packs, and rather impressive joinery.

This 360 Targa had American cherrywood galley cupboards - also jarrah, walnut and English tawa options - and American hardwood ginger (optional maple) flooring.

Lots of hatches and port lights lighten the mood, while surround storage lockers help keep things tidy. The buff-

coloured Warwick Macrosuede upholstery is stylish but practical.

Sand-coloured Corian counters, soft-touch vinyl headliners with hidden seams, and fitted navy-blue bedspreads help create an inviting interior.

Headroom is again 1.85m below decks, which is excellent considering the boat doesn't look top heavy.

The saloon has an L-shaped lounge to port for three to four people beside a timber dinette. The lounge converts to a single berth. When seated I noticed the portholes were positioned at such a height that you could enjoy the views. Nice one.

Back aft is an open-plan lounging area with U-shaped seating. You can do drinks, cards, or simply kick back and read - or entertain guests. The den converts to a double berth. Two hatches give cross-flow ventilation. There are reading lights and a privacy curtain. A hanging locker and cupboard is close by.

The portside head has a quiet-flush electric loo, a shower rose on a slider, timber lockers, and a moulded vanity and liner for easy cleaning. Most of the fittings throughout the boat are of European design.

While compact, the portside galley is perfect for weekends away. The microwave oven can be run at anchor thanks to the inverter, and there is a big sink, ample pantry and drawer space, top-loading freezer, two-burner stove and a 70lt fridge. Food-prep space is okay. No extractor fan, but there are lots of hatches.

The saloon lounges face an entertainment centre with a standard 15in flat screen television. It could do with a swivel bracket so it could be watched while lounging in the master bed.

Owners are treated to an obtuse-shaped double in the bow with a step that you could use as a dressing seat. There are more storage lockers, a mirrored bed head and a solar vent.

This boat has slept six before - that is, with a straggler outdoors on a cockpit lounge. It is a family boat foremost, but couples might consider it an entertainer by day and keep the interior to themselves at night.

GOING PLACES

Cool carbon dash inserts, a carbon wheel and stylish mouldings are a feature of the internal helm station. Beyond the dash are excellent views when seated. The owner, a shortie, had an extra cushion so he could see over the bow and the raised dash panels harbouring Volvo engine gauges.

I noted a chart holder, drink holders, glove box and under-seat storage. An optional factory-fitted Furuno GPS Chart plotter joined the VHF radio. Add an autopilot and you would have hands-free passage making.

Other options to consider range from generators and air-conditioning units to electronic controls and various engine upgrades. Vee-drives are among them.

Instead of the standard 170hp Volvo diesel engines, or base-model 260hp petrol Mercruiser motors, this boat had twin AD41D/DP 200hp diesel Volvos. With a touch of in-trim, these gave a 23kt comfortable cruise and great views.

With half fuel and four adults aboard, the boat slipped along freely at 31.6kt at 3600rpm. Top speed was 34.6kt at 3900rpm, which exceeds the 30kt speed limit that Waterways is planning on proposing for the harbour. Sigh.

Fast or slow, this is a competent escape machine; a veritable holiday home afloat and a boat that has improved the living quality of its owners. Virtually everyone in the family can take it out for the day or night.

"People ask me to head up the coast for the weekend and I say 'thanks but no thanks'. I mean, I now have a mobile holiday home tied to my marina. And if I wanted to head up the coast I would take my boat," says Dresner.

Website: www.boatpoint.com.au or www.boatpoint.co.nz