



Horizon Allrounder 420 Pro (April 2012)

A well-sorted, budget-priced open boat for sheltered water fishing

LIKES

- Great price and value for money
- Full length, flat floor
- Plenty of uncluttered space
- Optional wide side decks
- Rear boarding step

NOT SO MUCH

- Raised/elevated full floor has resulted in some loss of stability when compared with the standard model
- Fuel tank was loose on floor – needs a tie-down strap
- Would prefer a traditional under-foredeck anchor shelf

OVERVIEW

- Big range, big choice of models

The Gold Coast's Horizon Boats has been in the alloy boat manufacturing business for several decades. The company has a full range of car topper and trailerable pressed alloy models, starting at just 2.4m and extending to the 5.7m Sports Fisher Walkaround.

Horizon specialises in open boats in both vee bottom and v-nose punt styles. Popular models include the Pathfinder and Stalker series of v-nose punts, and the Angler and Northerner vee bottom, rounded bow models.

Joining the vee bottom, open boat range is the new Horizon Allrounder 420 and 420 Pro. For this test report, we secured the popular 420 Pro version from Brisbane Yamaha.

PRICE AND EQUIPMENT

- More standard features, great value

The Horizon Allrounder and Allrounder Pro are both budget-priced models, but are equipped with features that are options with most other brands.

Included with the standard Allrounder are two foam-filled thwart seats, a carpeted low floor between the thwart seats, elevated forward casting deck, a full-length rear fuel tank rack, side pockets, rear boarding step and rail, bow and side rails, foredeck anchor well, double towing eye, transom handles and a transducer bracket.

Fitted with a manual start, tiller steer Yamaha 30hp CV (Customer Value) outboard and on a single-axle trailer the standard 420 Allrounder is priced at just \$9400.

That's great value for an entry-level inshore fishing rig – but I reckon the Allrounder Pro (the model we tested) offers yet greater value for a package price of just \$11,160.

The 420 Allrounder Pro has all the features of the standard boat but is equipped with a full-length carpeted floor, underfloor foam flotation (to basic flotation standard), two lift-out pedestal seats, four seat bases, and front and rear underfloor storage lockers.

For the additional money, The Allrounder Pro also comes with Yamaha's three-cylinder 30hp four-stroke outboard, which is a smoother running engine than the cheaper two-cylinder 30hp CV model.

The test boat was also fitted with rolled side decks (235mm wide) and the topsides alloy was upgraded from the standard 1.6mm thickness to 3mm heavy duty alloy. These optional extras are included in the \$11,160 package price.

Among the other options for the Allrounder Pro is a bimini cover, elevated front and rear carpeted casting decks, full-length side rails, painted hull with striping, and longer side storage pockets.

INTERIOR LAYOUT

- Single-level floor for safety and uncluttered deck space

The Horizon Allrounder Pro is designed as a multi-purpose boat. With its single level carpeted floor (3.15m long) and uniformly high freeboard (around 500mm to the coaming top) the boat is safe enough to fish open bays as well as calm water rivers and estuaries.

Another plus with the single level floor is the feeling of open space inside the boat. There is nothing to trip, fall, or climb over.

Competition anglers and specialist fly fishers might prefer the optional elevated front and rear casting decks, but I personally would stick with the single level floor – both from a safety and fishing viewpoint as I believe it is more versatile.

The anchoring and anchor storage set-up in the Allrounder differs to most competitor models. Instead of a traditional under-foredeck anchor shelf, the Allrounder has a polyurethane plastic anchor well flush-fitted into the foredeck. It is big enough for an anchor and nearly enough rope for this size of boat.

Excess anchor rope is fed down from the foredeck anchor well into a rope locker built into the floor, effectively creating two small anchor lockers. The trouble with this system is that you are left with the anchor rope permanently dangling down from the foredeck to the lower locker, which I believe looks rather untidy.

Having noted the above, with the anchor kept in the well on the foredeck, anchoring the boat is as simple as plucking out the anchor and lowering it over the bow.

On the negative side, there is no hatch on the foredeck anchor well so it is possible the anchor could bounce out when the going gets a bit rough – though it remained firmly in place during our test.

The Allrounder Pro comes standard with two folding plastic pedestal chairs that slot into four seat bases or sockets located in different positions

around the cockpit floor.

The seats are comfortable enough, hard wearing, and you can buy extras if needed.

With regard to storage, the Horizon has two underfloor lockers and two short, above-floor side pockets. The rear locker is more of a bilge area and is best used as a fishbox as it will collect water.

Dry gear, towels, jumpers, etc., are best kept in the side pockets where they are most likely to remain dry.

Life jackets can be fitted in the forward in-floor locker, but again, I would be worried they would get wet. For more dry storage, I would recommend optioning this boat with the longer side pockets – or fitting a centre cockpit fishbox/storage unit.

On the subject again of options, I would definitely order the rolled side decks. They look good, you can sit on them, and you can install flush-fitting rod holders, and perhaps a downrigger.

POWER & PERFORMANCE

- Performance aplenty with a Yamaha 30hp

The Horizon Allrounder 420 Pro is rated for a long shaft (20") outboard with a maximum of 40hp.

You can fit a two-stroke or four-stroke outboard so long as you don't exceed the boat's maximum engine weight limit of 95kg.

We tested the 420 Pro with a Yamaha three-cylinder, manual start, tiller steer 30hp outboard and I was pleased with how it performed.

Like most two-strokes, the Yamaha was a bit grumbly at low rpm, but it had plenty of power for the Horizon, pushing the boat to a top speed of 25 knots.

This top speed was achieved with two adults and a light load so the boat could easily handle the maximum 40hp – and I would be tempted to go the extra power if I had a third fishing mate, or wanted to fit a lot of extra gear.

The Allrounder 420 Pro is intended as a budget model so there is no option for an underfloor fuel tank. Instead, the Yamaha 30hp test engine was fueled from a portable 25 litre Yamaha fuel tank.

In the test boat the fuel tank was not strapped down or held in place by any means; it sat loose on the floor in the transom corner. Some kind of tie-down is needed here to keep the tank in place and to prevent it from sliding about when it is near empty and light in weight.

ON THE WATER

- A capable performer in enclosed waters

Conditions were pretty calm on the Gold Coast's Broadwater for the test of the Horizon 420 Allrounder, but there were a few boat wakes to jump over and the wind and chop picked up late in the test. This was enough to confirm the Horizon to be quite a capable performer.

In the ride department the Horizon is much softer than an identical sized v-nose punt that I have been using myself of late, and comparable or better than most similar-sized alloy boats in this lightweight class.

Underway, the boat is also quite dry and stable – though stability is not quite as good at rest. This is due in part to the high topsides and relatively narrow beam of the boat, but mostly to the raised internal cockpit floor.

The standard Horizon 420 Allrounder will feel more stable because it does not have side decks to stand up against, and it has a lower floor and therefore a lower centre of gravity.

Taking the above into account, I was happy with the handling, ride and performance of the Horizon, and would certainly recommend the boat for sheltered-water boating and fishing.

VERDICT

- A lot of boat for your hard-earned dollar

The Horizon Allrounder 420 Pro is a good quality product and a great value package. For just \$11,160 you get a well-built, solid-performing open tinnie with plenty of standard features and accessories.

Apart from some fishing accessories, there is not much that I would change or add to this rig.

Stern cleats would be useful, and I would personally prefer a traditional under-foredeck anchor shelf, but otherwise the package is very good as tested – and there is plenty of scope for some home DIY work.

As funds permitted you could add extras like rod holders, a cutting board, knife and lure racks, and perhaps a centre cockpit fish box/live bait tank to create a very functional inshore fishing rig.

RATINGS

Overall rating: 4.7/5.0

Mechanical/equipment: 4.7/5.0

Packaging and practicality: 4.8/5.0

On the water Performance: 4.7/5.0

Value for money: 4.9/5.0

X-factor: 4.5/5.0

Specifications:

Price: \$11,160 including 30hp three-cylinder Yamaha two-stroke outboard, galvanized Dunbier trailer, 3mm alloy on topsides (standard boat has 1.6mm alloy) and super wide, rolled side decks.

Priced from: \$9400 (Std. Allrounder 420) with two-cylinder 30hp Yamaha CV two-stroke

LOA: 4.2m

Beam: 1.85m

Depth: 1.0m

Hull weight: 176kg

Towing weight: Approx. 650kg

Bottom alloy: 3mm

Topsides alloy: 1.6m (3mm upgrade on test boat)

Maximum power: 40hp

Maximum engine weight: 95kg

Engine as tested: Yamaha 30hp three-cylinder two-stroke

Fuel: 25 litre portable tank

Maximum Persons: four

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Published : Monday, 30 April 2012

Issue : April 2012