

BIGGER & BETTER

The 620 takes over from the popular 650.



In the previous issue of Alloy Boat, I reviewed the Kiwi Kraft 520 Fisherman, one of a trio of three all new models from this established Invercargill builder. In this issue, I look at two of their latest hardtop models, the 590 Hard Top Sport and the 620 Hard Top Sport. While in many ways similar boats, the big difference is the overall size of each model.

The 590 Sport & Fisherman replaces the 590 Explorer.



KIWI KRAFT 590 HT & 620 HT SPORT

Both the 590 and the 620 come with wide side trays set into the pontoons and flat coamings with Tuff Deck covering.



The 620 provides a little more cockpit space than the 590.

*Both boats use
drum winches neatly
hidden under the
foredeck.*



When I went to Paraparaumu and met with Ian Coutts, Sales Manager for Boat City, the New Zealand distributors for Kiwi-Kraft, he was adamant that while the 590 Hard Top Sport and 620 Hard Top Sport were very closely related, there was enough difference in layout and size to make them worth considering as two separate reviews. Apart from that, we were also doing videos on all three of the new models and the difference in ride and handling would be better appreciated if I looked at each boat on its own.

However, the two models share a lot of common features, especially when it comes to the hull layout and pontoon design. These areas that have undergone special attention and really set the new models apart from the previous Kiwi-Krafts. The boats are wider and higher than the models they replace; the 590 Sport & Fisherman replaces the 590 Explorer and the 620 takes over from the popular 650.

The original 590 was a big seller for Kiwi-Kraft, but customers were commenting that it needed more internal space, something that was only possible with a design change. Plus the styling was becoming out-dated and a more modern look was required.

"We spent a lot of time working on the aesthetics and totally redesigned the layout and look, but without altering the running surfaces, as we didn't want to lose the great ride and handling that the Kiwi-Kraft is known for", says Ian.

The upper sections of the pontoons were reshaped, although the rounded lower profile was retained. The 590 and 620 are both constructed using 5mm plate on the hull and 3mm topsides. One thing that really stood out for me was the excellence of the welding and the high-quality finish achieved in all areas.

Builder, Rodney Harris is meticulous about the quality of all his boats and it shows. Faultless is the only way to describe them. Both have the Kiwi-Kraft HUSH Technology hull, which is an acronym for; H for Hi-performance, US for Ultra-smooth ride and H for Hull. Put them all together and there's no question you do

get great riding hulls, as I experience over a few hours off the Kapiti Coast. The hulls feel stiff and solid and certainly handled the choppy waters we experience for the boat reviews.

The cushioning pontoons work as they should and the big hardtop means you stay dry and warm no matter what's happening outside. I was impressed with not only the soft ride we got from both boats in the choppy water, but also the lack of spray over the deck and on the screen.

The boats run high and are very nimble at speed. All Kiwi-Kraft boats are positive buoyancy boats, making them virtually unsinkable, even when full of water and with a full contingent of passengers.

This is achieved by a system of pontoons between the hull and the floor. Each of these pontoons contains up to nine compartments, depending on the model and is tested to 5 PSI during construction.

The secret to the Kiwi-Kraft excellent on-water performance is the unique hull design, which features a variable dead rise and long bow. This leads to fine entry characteristics and the soft dry ride that Kiwi-Kraft is renowned for. Twin planing strakes that run the full length of the hull attribute to quick and smooth planning, plus better grip and stability on the turns and in following seas.

The 590 Sport is rated for outboards 115hp-150hp and with a Mercury 150 4S, we hit a top speed of 34.5 knots, which is plenty for this boat. You could go bigger but why would you! Drop a 115hp on the transom and you would still have plenty of power across the range and even better fuel economy. At 4000/4500 rpm the 590 Sport returned a range of 120 nm based on 90% of the 150-litre underfloor tank. More than enough I would have thought for a boat this size.

The 620 takes you up another step, with an outboard range of 150hp-225hp. Our 200hp Yamaha EFI gave the larger model of the two, a speed of 39.5 knots and an even better range at 4000 rpm of 130nm. While the 590 Sport recorded 24.5 knots @ 4000 rpm, the 620 ran at 27 knots and an even better fuel economy.

KIWI KRAFT 590 HT & 620 HT SPORT

LAYOUT DIFFERENCES

The 590 Sport has a deep recess to allow comfortable seating between the two full-length berths. There is a unique stringer system under the floor for added strength. The 590 is also available as a Hardtop Fisherman model that doesn't have any bunks and all the forward area becomes one big dry storage space.

While the 620 bunk arrangement is the same as the 590 Sports, there is the addition of extra storage shelves in the pontoons either side thanks to the extra beam and height available. The interior is fully lined in both models and there is good storage under the berths. One reason that the berths can be carried well forward is that both boats are fitted with a Lonestar drum winch, so the depth taken up with the anchor locker is greatly reduced, allowing for the squabs to carry further forward to the bow.

Seating in the 590 Sport is a single swivelling helm seat with a grp moulded back to back opposite, with storage under. There is an opportunity to have different seating layouts, including twin swivelling bucket seats as is standard in the 590 Fisherman, or even twin back to backs.

In the 620, the only seating layout is a single swivelling helm seat, with a second seat mounted above an alloy storage bin. This has a rear cushion, with enough space under for a 90-litre isky bin with dual access.

Another thing customers were asking for was a larger dash, capable of taking big MFDs. Both boats certainly offer plenty of real estate on the carbon fibre imaged dash to run large MFDs and still leave ample space for instruments and controls. Hydraulic steering is standard and in the case of both our test boats only minimal fuel management instruments were installed. The rest will be added when the boats are sold.

Standing headroom under the hardtops of both boats is generous, around 2m, so even if you are extra tall, you shouldn't have a problem when driving. Kiwi Kraft has used the same hardtop design for both boats, with sliding side windows and a two piece forward safety glass screen. Whereas the 690 has full walkaround decks at the same height, the 590 Sport has split height decks. With the large SoPac deck hatch, there is probably no need to go around the outside.

Hella LED lights illuminate both the cabin and hardtop area, as well as a spot light, is standard to give light into the cockpit. I particularly liked all the handrails, especially around the rear of the hardtop, which is a bonus when you are coming home in rough weather. You always need something to hang onto!

MORE FISHING SPACE

Another difference from the previous 590 and 650 is not only the wider internal beam, but also higher coamings and transom (800mm high). Both boats come with wide side trays – the 620's are obviously longer – set into the pontoons and flat coamings with Tuff Deck covering. Tube matting is used on the flat chequer plate floor, that has a built in fuel tank – 150 litres for the 590 & 180 litres for the 620 – and a large wet locker beneath.

There is quite a difference when it comes to the transom area, although both boats have been designed with fishing and diving in mind. The 590 Sport has port side access with twin lockers in the centre and a starboard bait board. While this same configuration can be used for the 620, our boat had the upgraded custom bait station, complete with rod holders, cutting board and tackle drawer. The 620 also has a fold down transom seat as standard but is an option on the 590.

The trio of new models from Kiwi-Kraft is only the start, with an extensive revamp of the entire model line up planned to be rolled out in the future. I look forward to heading back to the Kapiti Coast to review the latest 705 Hardtop, the new flagship of the range. If it's anywhere near as good as the 590 and 620 Hardtops, Kiwi-Kraft will have another winner.



The 620 also has a fold down transom seat as standard but is an option on the 590.



The bunk arrangements are the same but there is the addition of extra storage shelves in the pontoons.



There is plenty of open fishing space on the 590.

Kiwi-Kraft

NEW GENERATION



620 Hard Top

LOA 7.10 Meters

From \$78,295



590 Hard Top

LOA 6.60 Meters

From \$59,995



520 Fisherman

LOA 5.65 Meters

From \$39,995

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KIWI KRAFT 590 HT & 620 HT SPORT

The 590 Sport has port side access with twin lockers in the centre and a starboard bait board.



SPECIFICATIONS

Model:	Kiwi Kraft 590 Sport Hardtop
Price As Tested:	\$70,815
Priced From:	\$64,295
Type:	Hardtop
Construction:	5mm/3mm
LOA:	6.60m
LWL:	5.90m
External Beam:	2.40m
Internal Beam:	1.80m
Deadrise:	20 deg
Trailerable Wgt:	1530 kgs (est)
Power:	Mercury 150 4S
Propeller:	19" Vengeance
Power Options:	115-150 Outboard Only
Fuel Capacity:	180 Litres
Trailer:	Mudgway

FUEL & PERFORMANCE DATA

Kiwi Kraft 590/ Mercury 150 4S
Fuel capacity: 180 litres

RPM	Knots	L/h	L/NM	Range (NM)
1000	1.0	2	2.000	81
1500	3.0	5.5	1.900	85
2000	4.5	9	2.000	81
2500	8.5	11	1.300	120
3000	13.5	15	1.100	130
3500	19.5	20	1.100	140
4000	24.5	30	1.300	120
4500	30.5	38.5	1.300	120
5000	33.0	48	1.500	100
5200	34.5	52	1.600	100

SPECIFICATIONS

Model:	Kiwi Kraft 620 Sport Hardtop
Price As Tested:	\$92,995
Priced From:	\$78,295
Type:	Hardtop
Construction:	5mm/3mm
LOA:	7.10m
LWL:	6.25m
External Beam:	2.45m
Internal Beam:	1.85m
Deadrise:	20 deg
Trailerable Wgt:	1870 kgs (est)
Power:	Yamaha 200 EFI
Propeller:	19" SST
Power Options:	115-150 Outboard Only
Fuel Capacity:	220 Litres
Trailer:	Mudgway

FUEL & PERFORMANCE DATA

Kiwi Kraft 620/ Yamaha 200 EFI
Fuel capacity: 220 litres

RPM	Knots	L/h	L/NM	Range (NM)
1000	4.5	4.5	1.000	190
1500	6.0	6	1.000	190
2000	8.0	10.5	1.400	140
2500	11.5	14	1.300	150
3000	16.5	18.5	1.200	160
3500	21.0	23.5	1.200	160
4000	27.0	31	1.200	160
4500	33.0	44.5	1.400	140
5000	36.5	54	1.500	130
5200	39.5	68	1.800	110

This boat could be protected against the effects of corrosion, oxidation and discolouration.

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