

Brig Falcon 500 HL

As noted in the last issue, inflatable boats have not been as popular in Australia for recreational boating and fishing use. However, there are signs this situation is changing with RIBs (rigid bottom inflatables) like the Brig Falcon breaking down prejudices against these craft.

The Eastern European-built Brig Falcon 500 HL is a good example of what is on offer in air-boats today. This is a sports inflatable with deluxe centre console steering and a proper moulded, self-draining floor and built-in bow locker.

The HL stands for the high quality Hypalon, which is what the material in the inflatable tubes are made from and is very durable and stands up well against abrasions and fish hooks!

The centre hull is made in moulded fibreglass and provides a soft ride due to the deep-Vee shape. The console gives you a two-person pillion seating not unlike a jet-ski. You also get an extra seat in the bow over the bow locker.

The Falcon 500 measures 5m overall and has a beam width of 2.15m and the sides can be deflated to make

it easier to park on a trailer, or store away over winter.

With a hull weight of just 185kg this is quite a quick boat with rated motor power of 50-70hp. The Falcon really flies with full power of 70hp and handles in a controlled manner due to the deep-Vee bottom.

Other features of the Falcon include heavy-duty gunwale rubbing strip, stainless steel bow and stern towing rings. There is also an anti-skid finish on the fibreglass deck areas and under-seat stowage in the console.

As standard, the Falcon doesn't come with any fishing features, however, these can be added by the dealer. Currently, these boats are being sold through Sirocco Marine South of Sydney with a Honda motor package.

The Falcon 500 HL is one of the most popular selling RIBs at present because it's a good size for towing. It has a rated load limit of eight people, or 900kg. That's considerably more than any rigid hull boat of similar length.

The big drawback with inflatable boats is the loss of space from the side tubes, however, the usable interior

space is still pretty good. Side tubes can also be used for seating and could be used for fishing as well.

Few boats could claim to be unsinkable but with all the buoyancy in the Falcon you get as close to the definition as you ever could!

Further information: Sirocco Marine South, Sydney, NSW phone (02) 8061 6475.

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