

■ By Nick Jones

EXTREME 616

A NEW LITTLE HARDTOP IN TOWN



The backstory

Six metres is a great boat length; small enough to be manageable and economical yet large enough to handle family excursions and a spot of inclement weather. So, it comes as no surprise that Extreme Boats have decided to remodel their 605 Game King after its many years of popular boating service.

Extreme's Marketing Manager Mat Cranswick says the redesign is more about evolution and refinement rather than dramatic changes. The 616 is the new model which will replace the 605 Game King, and the overarching brief was to deliver the best ride possible while retaining the stability and predictability that Extremes are well known for.

Design and construction

My first impression of the 616 was that she looked stunning for a six-metre aluminium hardtop. Hardtops on smaller trailer boats typically look out of proportion or just a bit 'off', but the 616 manages to maintain visual appeal while still delivering protection from the elements and an impressive 1935mm of headroom. There is also a nice shape to the shear line, which undoubtedly adds to the aesthetic.

However, the most noteworthy design advancements relate to the hull: "The deadrise has been increased to 22 degrees providing a smooth ride in a head-on sea, and smaller chine flats with less angle have been designed into the hull also adding better performance in a head-on sea," says Mat.

Typical of other models in the Extreme Boats range, the 616 features a self-flooding keel and large underfloor buoyancy chambers. Transom and hull thickness of 5mm, and 4mm plate on the sides and deck round off the solid construction. The overall build quality and finish are excellent, and the new-style machined Extreme alloy rod holders and cleats are a nice touch.

An angled lead into the bilge well has been designed into the aft end of the deck to help water run into the bilge and not collect in the corners while at rest, and the full-width bilge grate will save you from groping around for lost objects in the bilge!

With 180L of underfloor fuel provisioning and a modest towing weight (including engine and trailer) of around 1,500kg, the 616 is well-positioned for big adventures.



Layout and Fishability

The hardtop has been extended from the 605 Game King design, providing more shelter from the elements and better access to the rocket launcher. Mat notes this is a handy improvement: "The extended hardtop replaces the upholstered rear pop-out bimini that was the previous option for getting more shelter and made it a little tricky to access the rods in the rocket launcher and the towing lug on the hard top when using the boat for water sports."

There's no shortage of aluminium rod holders on board, with the rocket launcher, baitboard and coamings collectively housing 13 in total. The four cup holders will also come in handy for many, I suspect!

The cockpit is a nice size and would comfortably fish up to four anglers, and the generous swim platforms accessed through the walk-through transom with transom door would see plenty of use in calm conditions. The livie tank in the transom would house plenty of baits for a good kingfish session. Extreme has incorporated a large underfloor locker that can hold a removable plastic moulded bin to store your ice or catch – handy for those like me who don't enjoy a chilly bin taking up too much cockpit space.

A couple of cool features of the redesign are the taller cabin squab framing which allows more storage room underneath for things like electric trolling motor batteries, and the reshaped anchor well wall, which enables longer cabin shelving in addition to rod storage below the cabin shelving.

With the squab infills, there is enough



room for an afternoon nap but not enough for comfortable overnighting (for my 6'3" rig, anyway!). The 616 has a lockable sliding door option for locking gear away in the cabin while travelling or while the boat is parked up.

The helm station is well-appointed, with plenty of room for flush-mounted gadgets, sliding side windows, good forward visibility, adjacent arms-length storage, and adjustable bolster seats. The design includes a larger dash that houses up to a 16-inch plotter/finder screen.

Performance

Having been on both the 605 and 645 Game King models, I was intrigued to see what appreciable performance differences could be attributed to the new hull design. Luckily, our Tauranga test day threw up various conditions, from the early morning harbour calm to the 1.5m swell bouncing off the shore at the base of Mauao outside the harbour entrance.

Our 616 test boat was matched with a Mercury 150hp four-stroke. While at the upper end of the horsepower rating, the balance felt good and unsurprisingly, she jumped up on the plane very quickly and had plenty of top-end speed up the harbour. Handling was very predictable, and the hull tucked in beautifully around turns. In fact, we managed some



very tight turns whilst maintaining planning speeds, and the hydraulic steering made things easy.

But onto the main event – does the 616 fill the brief of delivering a smooth ride in head-on seas? In a nutshell, she sure does. The redesigned hull and new angles cut through the chop with precision, rarely pounding and never porpoising. For art's sake, we

jumped over plenty of swell 'ramps' while the lensmen went about their business, and there were no hairy landings, and the chines deflected spray nicely away from the hull.

Efficient and comfortable cruise speed seemed to be around 24 knots, but the 616 can also navigate through the chop at 30 knots if you are in a hurry.

Aside from initial positioning, the Lectrotab trim tabs were barely adjusted while underway, which is a good indicator of a sure-footed hull. Stability at rest is good but maybe compromised ever so slightly when compared to the 605 Game King – a trade-off I suspect most would willingly make for the improvement in underway performance.



Specifications

Model	Extreme 616
Builder	Extreme Boats
Construction	Marine grade aluminium
Transom and hull thickness	5mm
Side and deck thickness	4mm
LOA	6.16m
Beam	2.34m
Deadrise	22.0 degrees
Dry weight	1,500kg (approx.) (incl. engine and trailer)
Length on trailer	7.70m
Width on trailer	2.45m
Height on trailer	2.85m
Fuel capacity	180L
People rating	5
Recommended horsepower	115-150HP

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