

NEW ADDITION

Since re-joining the market two years ago, Lazercraft is back and has launched its second new model in just a matter of months. Freddy Foote checks out the Lazercraft GT 650 H

I The Lazercraft GT 650 HT is one of two new models the company has released this year, having also launched the 580 Divemaster. The first public showing of the craft was at the Hutchwilco New Zealand Boat Show in May, and according to Lazercraft General Manager Jono Bakker, the initial response was good. "We were happy with the initial response at the show. It was very well received by the public, and we've now sold five," says Bakker. Two years ago I tested the GT 640 Sport, where I commented that the only thing that could make it better

would be the addition of a hard top. Well, now we have it in the form of the GT 650 HT and is now the biggest model in the Lazercraft range. Lazercraft sits alongside its sister brand Southern Boats – both craft coming out of the same factory in Mosgiel. With 13 staff busily building the boats, the company is doing roughly 15-20 Lazercraft boats a year alongside 35-40 Southern models. The two brands work alongside each other well, production Lazercraft's taking care of models from 5.8-6.5m with more customisable options looked after by Southern over 6.5m.

The newly released Lazercraft GT 650 HT underway on Auckland harbour.

LAZERCRAFT GT 650 HT



The Lazercraft GT 650 HT will handle outboards from 150-200hp.



The forward cabin is roomy and provides ample storage opportunities.



Plenty of storage is available under both seat bases.

The helm seat is well positioned so that there is adequate room to stand to drive and is easily ventilated via the large sliding windows on either side. The seat itself is also adjustable and can slide fore and aft – same for passenger side seat.

The cockpit is very generous, with wide painted side shelves running the length of the cockpit. The cockpit floor is carpeted as an option, though there is still access to a 150L underfloor storage locker.

The carpeted look may not suit the hardcore fisho's, but it is only there as an option, plus it lifts out when not in use. Underneath is an easy to care for and tread plate floor.

Four-rod holders adorn the coamings, which themselves are fitted with a non-skid rubber finish, while above a rocket launcher provides storage for a further six rods.

Our test boat had the ski pole fitted, however, a bait board can slot into its place. There is a walk through to starboard, where a sizeable extending T-bar boarding ladder is fitted. The walk through comes complete with a drop in door to close it off. In the port corner is a sizeable live bait tank, fully plumbed with a viewing window facing into the cockpit.

Also, aft are two cavernous storage compartments underneath the transom that run right into the far corners of the boat. These are designed to take a 70-litre Ikey-Tek chilly bin. All of the onboard systems, such as batteries, switches, wash down pump, are housed inside the transom and can be accessed via hatches.

PERFECT POWER

Our test boat came fitted with a Yamaha 150hp four-stroke outboard, while the hull is rated up to 200hp.

The GT 650 HT achieved 40.2 knots at wide-open throttle of 6000 rpm and was using 63 lph – fed from the 200L fuel tank.



Coming at ya! The Lazercraft GT 650 HT has one of the best performing hulls in its segment.

MIXED DNA

The GT 650 HT is probably one of the more aesthetically pleasing alloy hardtops on the market – if you can, in fact, call it a true alloy hardtop because it isn't. Like most Lazercraft models, the 650 features an alloy hull, with a fibreglass deck and gunnels. The gunnels and top decks glued and screwed onto the alloy hull.

Overall in the interior finish is one of the best you'll come across and is a credit to the Lazercraft builders down in the Mosgiel factory.

In the very roomy cabin, you'll find velour squab upholstery and good sized side shelves for extra storage. Further storage space can be found under the vee berth squabs, and a toilet can be fitted as an option should you wish.

At the helm, there is a comfortable bucket seat mounted on a GRP base with storage underneath. Opposite is a similar King/Queen arrangement, with more storage space available below.

At the helm, the Yamaha engine instruments are mounted into the fibreglass dash section as well as a Garmin MFD. The Maxwell RC6 auto windlass controls and Lenco trim tab controls are alongside with a Garmin VHF fitted below.



Sizeable storage options located under the transom also.

LAZERCRAFT GT 650 HT

3500rpm will see a comfortable cruise of around 23 knots using 20.7 lph. Our test day saw us run the boat with two passengers and around 170 litres of fuel on board.

The Yamaha 150hp four-stroke performed well and would be more than adequate for most purposes. Of course, if you are planning on hauling quite a bit of gear, dive bottles, etc. and passengers then you might look into opting for a 175hp outboard for a few extra dollars.

The Lazercraft hulls have always liked horsepower and are the kinds of boats that like to be pushed hard – the faster you go, the better they perform. Underneath, the GT 650 HT gets a 5mm alloy hull and runs a series of full-height stringers to the floor, which stiffens the whole boat – eliminating all that banging that traditionally is received with an alloy boat. The hull feels very confident underway and more than ate up the short chop we encountered on the Hauraki Gulf on our test day. It was easy to trim and only needed minor adjustments of the trim tabs. I have found that the performance of a Lazercraft hull is so good, and that it's very easy to forget that you're in a boat with an aluminium hull.

Stability at rest is superb - we put two of us to one side and achieved very little lean. The cockpit is spacious and provides enough room for four anglers to fish in relative comfort.

As tested, this rig is \$99,995 with the 150hp Yamaha four-stroke, and for the price, I thought it was incredible value for money. The finish is excellent, and some features included in the package are fairly significant. If you're looking for an alloy hardtop in the 6-7m range, then the Lazercraft GT 650 HT would be at the top of my list. ⬇



SPECIFICATIONS

Model & Model:	Lazercraft GT 650 HT
Priced from:	\$89,995.00
Price as tested:	\$99,995 (LIMITED SPECIAL)
Type:	Hardtop
Construction:	Aluminium/GRP
LOA:	6.50m
Beam:	2.39m
Deadrise:	19 degree
Height on trailer:	3.10m
Trailerable weight:	1800kg
Test Power:	150hp
Propeller:	17" Reliance
Power options:	Outboard
HP Range:	150-200hp
Fuel Capacity:	200L
Trailer:	Tandem Axle Alloy Braked

Notable Options on Test Boat Maxwell RC6 windlass with anchor and rope/chain pack, LENCO trim tabs with LED Indicators, VHF, Garmin VHF radio, Garmin 75SV Sounder/Plotter,

Boat Supplied by: Family Boats
<http://www.familyboats.co.nz>
Ph. 09 274 0511
Email. sales@familyboats.co.nz

Contact: Southern Boats
Ph. 0800 SOUTHERN

FUEL & PERFORMANCE DATA

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

RPM	Knots	L/h
1000	4.5	2.6
1500	6.5	5.1
2000	7.5	8.9
2500	10.5	11.9
3000	16.5	15.9
3500	23.0	20.7
4000	27.0	26.6
4500	29.5	32.8
5000	31.5	42.5
5500	37.0	52.0
6000	40.2	63.0

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

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