

BOAT REVIEW: ELITE 18M SPORTFISHER

SHINE ON YOU CRAZY DIAMOND

As Crazy Diamond will be used for game fishing, the retruse transom is set at 45-deg for backing up on a big fish.

Pink Floyd's lyrics to their hit song Shine On You Crazy Diamond starts with 'Remember when you were young, you shone like the sun. Shine on you crazy diamond'. Crazy Diamond 3, the latest Elite 18m Sport fisher to be launched and the 75th from the talented pen of designer Bill Upfold, is definitely young, and it certainly shines.

TEXT BY **BARRY THOMPSON**
INTERIOR IMAGES BY **BRYCE TAYLOR**
& AERIALS BY **RICHARD MILNER**

ELITE 18M SPORTFISHER



Being an enclosed flybridge, the upper deck will always be very much the epicentre of the boat when underway.

Interior fit-out is satin finish Walnut with interior colours coordinated by Parkhurst Design.

It is also the first full custom new build for Weber Marine of Gulf Harbour. Designed by Elite Marine Design for an Auckland businessman for sport fishing and family cruising, the 18m, Crazy Diamond is a timber composite build, utilising the best materials available for strength and weight-saving, such as epoxy resins balsa and foam cores where applicable. A variable deadrise monohedren hull form, it has been developed by the designer over the years for his sport fishing series. The last third of the hull has a constant deadrise of around 14 deg, with a massive flared bow and silent chines. Being Braden Weber’s first new build, you might expect a few clichés during construction and the presentation of the boat. Not so. The fitout is exemplary, and the attention to detail from the Weber Marine team is as good as I have ever seen on a custom build. The owner’s expectations have been fulfilled to the highest standards by a very talented group of boat builders. Both Braden and Bill also had high praise for the owner, who they said was a dream to work with and was able to appreciate some of the problematic issues during construction caused by Covid-19. “Everything went smoothly from the day we laid the keel to launching the boat, and even with two Covid-19 lockdowns, with all its issues, he was a pleasure to deal with”, said Braden.

SISTERSHIP

While in discussions with both the builder and designer, the owner had the opportunity to check out Peregrine, another 18m Elite Sport Fisher recently launched. “We took him for a ride and showed him through the boat. He liked what he saw, and the result is Crazy Diamond which in many respects is a sistership to Peregrine,” says Bill. However, while the basic format of the boat is very much the same, there are some significant differences. Most notably, Crazy Diamond has an internal staircase to the bridge, whereas Peregrine’s access is from the cockpit. There is also more rod storage in the cockpit, plus a set of stabilisers, and while the engines are the same, they have been tweaked from 735hp to 800hp.



Power comes from twin MAN i6 800 engines and features full hydraulics and EJS manoeuvring system, which incorporates bow and stern thrusters and both engines for joystick controlled close quarters manoeuvring. The power is transmitted through conventional shafts into shallow tunnels, running ZF 5B propellers. As Crazy Diamond will be used for game fishing, the retruse transom is set at 45-deg for backing up on a big fish. While 1600hp is an excellent match for the 18m Elite, Bill says that the design will easily handle a lot more and even suggests a couple of 1000hp engines to give the boat a speed well over 32 knots. Initial sea trials saw the boat easily reach design parameters. The maiden voyage was from Gulf Harbour to Whitianga just four days after launching. This was to have the remainder of the upholstery

fitted due to Covid-19 not allowing the upholster into Auckland to be open. A case of taking the mountain to Mohammed. Braden Weber reported the boat ran perfectly at 21kts. Crazy Diamond has maximum speed of 28.5 knots and uses 280L total. Interestingly the lpm changes very little change between 15kts and 21kts, which is around 8.0 lpm. Fitted with TRAC stabiliser fins for passage making and trolling, it will be an asset for planed Pacific Island trips. Crazy Diamond is also equipped with long-range tanks negating the need for bladders. “If you just want to sit in a bay and have no roll, then the gyro is the way to go. But if you are underway, and especially considering this owner plans some serious offshore passages, I recommend fin stabilisers every time. This is the first of my boats to be fitted with stabiliSers”, says Bill.

A variable deadrise monohedren hull form, it has been developed by the designer over the years for his sport fishing series.



ELITE 18M SPORTFISHER



Just like the split-level cockpit, the rest of Crazy Diamond set up to entertain.

Power comes from twin MAN i6 800 engines and features full hydraulics and EJS manoeuvring system.

You can completely customise the accommodation layout.

A dedicated systems space comes with racks for the game rods.

SOCIAL LOUNGE

Interior fit-out is satin finish Walnut exquisitely executed by the talented master craftsmen at Weber's yard with interior colours coordinated by Parkhurst Design. Kim Forkert of Parkhurst Design, has had a long standing relationship with the designer and was once again commissioned to give he magic touch to the interior. Her expert knowledge of the practical nature of marine design, coupled with attention to detail, the awareness of use of space as well as in depth knowledge of products that can withstand the environment, has created a reputation unrivalled in marine interior design. From the custom made furnishings to the window treatments and fabrics, the environment surrounding Crazy Diamond reflects the owners individuality.

The layout is somewhat conventional and, as you would expect in a sport fisher of this style. Being a full-custom build, you can configure the interior to suit your desires. While many serious sport fishing designs inherently have no forward windscreen, Crazy Diamond has broken with convention and features a curved central screen, but still with plenty of structure on either side. This still gives the feeling of a sport fisher but has the bonus of letting in more light.

Crazy Diamond has a very social lounge, with two separate spaces that blend seamlessly together and give the saloon a big open feeling. The pop-up TV is placed so anyone can watch it from either of the lounge suites. To starboard is a large dining table

with a wet bar and icemaker aft.

The port side U-shape galley is finished with all the necessary equipment to feed all aboard and includes a convection oven, fridge-freezer, pantry and drop-down rear window for server to the cockpit.

Like the rest of Crazy Diamond set up to entertain, the split-level cockpit has a small settee and table on the upper deck with twin Kenyon BBQs opposite. However, it is also functional when it comes to fishing. A central island in the transom has the obligatory live bait tank, plus there is provision for a fighting chair and dedicated rod storage. To starboard is a deep refrigerated kill tank in the sole. Cavity doors on either side lead to the fixed boarding platform. This can be changed to a rise/fall if you prefer.

THREE CABIN LAYOUT

I am so used to seeing a full-beam master in a boat this size it was refreshing to find that Crazy Diamond bucked the trend replacing it with a master and a guest cabin. Add to this a VIP stateroom forward, and you have three cabins complete with sleeping for eight. You can completely customise the accommodation layout.

Bill says by moving away from the full-beam master, he has been able to keep the boat's profile a lot lower, and the structural integrity is not compromised from having such broad, unsupported surfaces.

The starboard side master stateroom comes with an en-suite complete with a large shower stall, vanity



The engine of choice when performance matters

Discerning boat owners around the world enjoy the unrivalled benefits of MAN engines:

- High power
- Low fuel consumption
- Low operating costs
- Low emissions
- Extreme reliability

MAN i6, 12.4L Common Rail 300hp – 850hp

MAN V8, 16.2L Common Rail 680hp – 1300hp

MAN V12, 24.2L Common Rail 750hp – 2000hp

Visit: www.mandiesel.com.au

For full engine and dealer details for Australia and New Zealand.



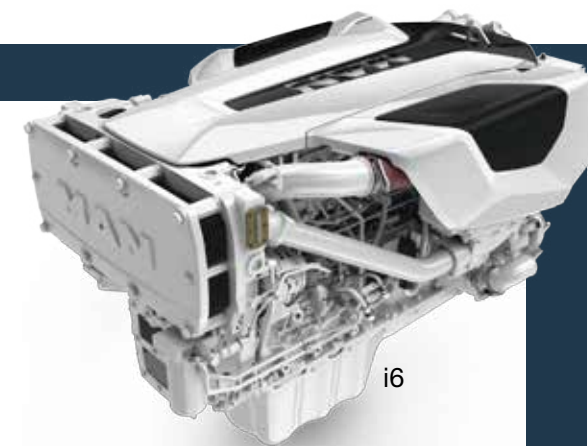
Supported in New Zealand by:



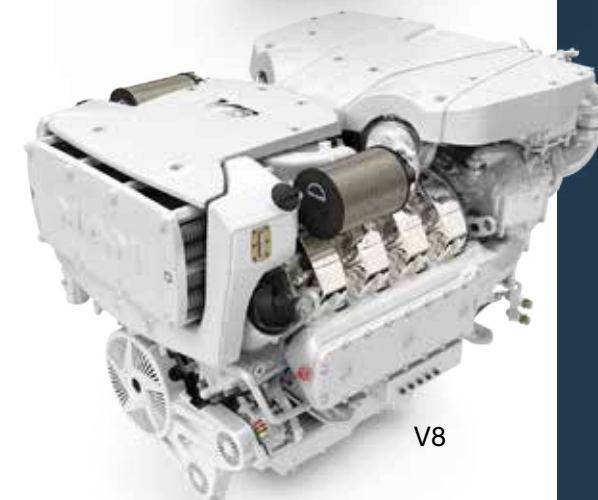
- Factory Trained Technicians
- Genuine MAN Tooling
- Private and Commercial
- NZ based Genuine Parts Stock

Tel: +64 21 265 6617 | e: jesse@dieselmachine.co.nz
12 Dryden Place, Mount Wellington, Auckland 1051

info@seapower.com.au



i6



V8



V12



Hybrid

www.mandiesel.com.au

ELITE 18M SPORTFISHER

Crazy Diamond is the 75th Elite to be launched.

and head. There's a queen-size central berth with storage lockers on either side, plus a deep hanging locker. The forward VIP has both a central queen berth and a full-size pilot berth on either side. The port side guest cabin has single upper/lower bunks and shares the same bathroom as the VIP. Again, the best use of space has been made with plenty of storage options. This area also provides easy access to the utility room, which in Crazy Diamond houses the washer/dryer freezer, air-con system and water maker. Vybar insulation is used on the bulkhead to help keep the engine room noise to a minimum. Continuing that attention to detail, all the internal surfaces not covered in fabric or lining are finished in high gloss white International paint. Clean, clinical and very user friendly.

ONE STATION

Being an enclosed flybridge, the upper deck will always be very much the epicentre of the boat when underway. Crazy Diamond's layout lends itself to be enjoyed by everyone aboard, with the helm aft and a massive wrap-around lounge forward. The centre point of the fascia is a trio of Garmin 17" screens, with Fusion entertainment on hand to pump the sounds around the boat. Twin aft helm seats back onto bi-fold doors that open onto an outside upper deck. The owner of Peregrine chose clears for this area. Following the owner's interest in sport fishing, there is another set of engine controls on the aft railing to go along with another set in the cockpit. While sport sedans are certainly more popular than sport fishers, we are seeing a resurgence in the flybridge sport fishers, and Crazy Diamond is an excellent example of those latest trends. ⚓



SPECIFICATIONS

Boat Design Name: Elite
18m Sport fisher
Year Launched: Nov 2021
Designer: Elite Marine Design Ltd
Interior Designer: Parkhurst Design
Builder: Weber Marine
LOA: 18.2m
LOH: 18m
Beam: 5.4m
Draft: 1.2m
Displacement (full): 26800kg
Max Speed: 28.4kt (full)

Construction: Epoxy/wood composite
Fuel Capacity: 6200L
Water Capacity: 800L
Engines Make/HP: MAN i6 800hp
Gearboxes: Twin Disc
Drive Train: Conventional
Shaft in tunnels
Propellers: ZF 5b
Generator: Onan
Inverter/Charger: Mastervolt
Air Conditioning: Webasto
Watermaker: Aqua 200
Bow Thruster: Twin Disc

Stern Thruster: Twin Disc
Stabilisers: Trac
Anchor Winch: Maxwell
Anchor: Ultra stainless
Steering: Twin Disc BCS
Engine Controls: Twin Disc
Remote Eng Control: EJS
Lighting: Hella
Underwater Lights: Lumitec
Paint (Topsides): Awlcraft 2000
Paint (Antifouling): International 99
Hatches: Cule
Wipers: Exalto

Windows: Seamac
Davit Crane: Davco
Tender: Highfield
Saloon Doors: Seamac
Helm Chairs: Stidd
Searchlight: Jabsco
ELECTRONICS
Autopilot: Garmin
MFD: Garmin
Radar: Garmin
VHF: Icom
Entertainment Sys: Fusion
Base Price of Boat: POA
Contact: Elite Marine Design
info@elitemarine.co.nz



The Experts in Marine Technology



SUPPLIERS OF:
GARMIN FURUNO SIMRAD ICOM
AIRMAR Intellian FUSION

E: sales@bme.nz | P: 07 577 0250 |
f: facebook.com/baymarineelectronics
www.baymarineelectronics.co.nz

parkhurstdesign
INTERIOR DESIGN

UNRIVALED MARINE INTERIOR DESIGN



BESPOKE INTERIOR DESIGN



Kim Forkert: +64 (0) 27 252 0080 | E: info@parkhurstdesign.co.nz
www.parkhurstdesign.co.nz

elite for a reason

Elite 18m SF



WM WEBER
MARINE
www.webermarine.co.nz

Elite
MARINE DESIGN

Lloyd Stevenson
BOATBUILDERS
www.lloydstevenson.co.nz

Custom design Sedan, Mid-Pilothouse and Sportsfisher Motor Yachts

www.elitemarine.co.nz • +64 (0) 9 530 8501