



Stacer has redesigned their Proline Series of flat bottom punts. The new Striker hulls range in size from 399 to 449 versions, with a variety of options to suit angling needs.

## John Ford hits the Gold Coast to check out the new upgrades in Stacer's Proline series.

**W**ith the 2016 release of all new hulls for their compact range, Stacer is hoping to ride the wave of success that smaller boats are currently enjoying. River and estuary fishing on light spin gear is one of the strongest segments of the market and savvy buyers want a boat that's comfortable and fast on the way to the bite, while still providing superior stability at rest.

This new offering of flat-bottom punt-style fishing boats is ideally suited to both inland rivers and lakes, as well as the more sheltered estuaries

and creeks along the coast. Their low deadrise gives superb stability, but tends to give a harsher ride in deep choppy conditions.

Stacer claims to have enhanced the ride stability of this range with their new Striker hulls, which got their first airing at a press day on the Gold Coast prior to a January 1 debut in showrooms. It's the first major overhaul of their popular Proline and Proline Angler range since 2007.

Included in the Striker series are the entry level 399 and 429 Prolines, while the more

upmarket Proline Angler lineup has been expanded to a 409, 429 and 449, taking the range to five new models in the 70-boat Stacer range.

By introducing wider chines, relaxing the keel by 7 per cent, and redesigning the bow for a deeper entry point, improvements to ride and stability have been achieved, while bigger spray rails contribute to a drier ride. On the Angler models, a widening of the deck at the front also gives 11 per cent more space in the bow for more storage room and a bigger casting deck.

The basic range of Prolines are knockabout



The 399 Proline is now the entry level offering in the range and is shown here with white sides, although an unpainted version is standard.





To date, the most popular boat in the Stacer range has been the 399 Proline Angler. Its replacement, the 409, features a bigger casting deck and improvements to the hull shape.



Hold onto your hats: the 429 Proline Angler really gets along and comfortably accommodates four crew.

a few hours fishing alone when the opportunity presents itself. It's small enough to launch single-handedly and it will get into confined spaces without too much trouble.

Like all the boats in the Proline Angler range, its weight reflects the higher level of fitout over the standard boats. Length is 4.1m, beam is 1.87m and with a weight of 255kg, it needs a 30hp engine to get it moving. Mind you, on the test runs it managed around 20kts with three hefty journo's on board, and the ride was soft enough for us to keep sipping our morning coffees.

Those seeking a bit more room and more powerful engine options are catered for with the 429 and 449s in the Angler format, both with the new Striker hull. The 429 features a 4.36m hull length and a 1.87m beam with a weight of 264kg, while the 449 is stretched to 4.54m and a 2.05m beam, weighing 335kg, courtesy of heavier 3mm bottom and transom and 2mm topsides.

Employing tiller steer through the range leaves the whole hull area for fishing, but if you want a side console it's there as an option on the largest 429.

At the time of going to press, costs were yet to be announced, but they're said to be similar to the current pricing. Stacer is a long established brand with a huge following, especially on our inland waterways. It's good to see they are continually improving their range of tinnies, and given the number on the water – some of which have been passed down through families – they have proven to be reliable and long lasting in the true unbreakable tinny tradition. **FL**



The compact 409 Proline Angler has plenty of flat floor for fishing and good storage options under the casting platform.





Looking striking in a blue wrap and its new Striker hull, the 449 Proline Angler comes with features most anglers will want.

tinnies that come standard as unpainted, tiller-steer hulls with the bare necessities of a couple of foam filled bench seats, side rails, a glove box and drink holders. However, a long list of options allows buyers to customise a boat to suit their needs.

The Proline Angler range, on the other hand, is fitted out with standard features to a level that would make most fisherfolk happy. These include front and rear casting platforms, carpeted plywood floor, Sea Pro Seats with six positions, Roto-moulded anchor well, rod holders, transducer bracket, a side mounted rod locker, extended side decks and painted sides with funky stripes.

If you want to take the boat to the next level, options include vinyl wraps, bimini, live wells on the transom and in the front, casting deck and underfloor fuel tanks.

Boating journalists from around the country got hands-on experience of the Prolines on the waters of the Broadwater, swapping between all the different models and doing their best to search out any faults in the handling or ride.

Smallest is the no-frills 399, with a capacity of five adults, compared to four in its larger Angler stablemates. Available in only the basic Proline format, the 399 has 1.6mm bottom, sides and transom in a pressed alloy hull, with a beam of 1.79m and length of 3.99m. It weighs in at 111kg and will accept long shaft engines between 20 and 30hp.

Also a budget-friendly option, the Proline 429 also carries up to five passengers, and with a beam of 1.88m and a 4.36m length, there is considerably more room to move. Transom and bottom sides are increased to 2mm, and weight jumps to 155kg for the hull, which can support engines between 30 to 40 hp.

The biggest selling boat in the Stacer Range up till now has been the 399 Proline Angler, and for 2016 it has been stretched to a 409, which is available only in the higher spec'd version. It's a smart looking, well optioned and nicely finished boat and its small size will endear it to those who like to spend



Keen observers might see subtle differences in the hull shape of the 429 Proline Angler. Chines have been widened and the bow entry is sharper in the 2016 models.

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