

SOUTHERN YARD BUILDS SECOND NEW TRAWLER

BY KEITH INGRAM

It would be fair to say that the New Zealand inshore fishing fleet is today only a shadow of its former self. The introduction of the quota management system in 1986 can be held partly accountable, as inshore quota was sold with the larger companies buying out most of the smaller operators.

Today it's a much different fishing world from what we knew in the 1980s, and as our ageing inshore fleet deteriorates, few fishermen have either the confidence or the investment capital to build new, replacement vessels. The fact that we still have many of the old JBL boats afloat is a credit to the shipbuilders of the day and the owners who have maintained them. But the days are numbered on just how long these vessels will continue to give economical service. Likewise, their wooden counterparts have equally not fared well as the years mount, with many now lying in various stages of decay around our ports. Nothing rots a fishing boat quicker than lack of use or tender loving care, and as the steel plates or wooden hulls are left unprotected by paint and regular maintenance these vessels are quickly becoming part of our dying skeleton fishing fleet.

Meanwhile, larger vessels, many of them secondhand imported

replacements from foreign shores, are catching the fish. So it is always nice to record the launching of a new New Zealand-built fishing trawler. The recent launching of the 16m steel fishing trawler *Jubilee* by Stark Bros in Lyttelton is their second new build in 3.5 years.

In November 2004 they launched their 19m steel fishing trawler *Frontier*, the first new build for the inshore trawler fleet for many years. The *Frontier* was to break new ground with her many new innovations. An enclosed working deck, stabilising fins deployed from both sides of the hull, a large fish hold with an ice-making plant and the latest fishing gear and electronic technology made her stand out from the rest of the fleet.

The conversion to a 50:50 blend of biofuel has not affected her horsepower and has improved her fuel consumption. When matched with improved crew accommodation and comfort, along with more powerful winches, the end result was better catches and higher profitability for the owners and operators.

Once this was realised, Stark Bros decided to build a similar but smaller trawler to replace their other vessel, the *FV Cressy*, which was also 16m long and designed to be run by a skipper and

Launch day showing her underwater lines



The engineer gives some perspective to the size of the propulsion unit



The main helmstation



two deck crew. Such was the shortage of good quality inshore fishing trawlers that when she was advertised in *Professional Skipper* magazine she created excellent buyer interest and was sold within a few days of the magazine coming out. There is a message here somewhere and I guess the question is, why are we not building more new trawlers?

The *Jubilee* is the second new-generation trawler from Stark Bros for the company's subsidiary fishing arm. She is obviously much smaller than the *Frontier*, at 146 tonnes grt, whereas the *Jubilee* weighs in at 91 tonnes grt. Clearly, she is unmistakably a smaller sister, and one from the Stark design table.

To get a better handle on the ship we asked the manager of Stark Bros Ltd, Andrew Stark, a number of questions. We noted that the bluff bow is retained and asked what impact does this have on seakeeping and transit times versus trawling and hauling speeds? ▶

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