

Whittley CR2800 – the adventure begins



FMG
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The Whittley CR2800 is the largest Australian-made towable boat in its class. At *Fishing Monthly* we usually take no longer than a day to test a boat, but with the CR2800 we decided to go about it in a slightly different way. Beautiful Lake Eildon in central Victoria was the venue for the test, and the idea was to spend a couple of days using the boat, as we would expect a consumer

boats for many years, and here is his advice.

Vehicle

The car you tow with can make all the difference. Alan uses a 200 series LandCruiser for all his larger boat towing, and says it has been the best option for the business over the years. However, these days there's a number of other cars that are suitable.

Trailer set-up

All Whittley Cruiser models come on a custom Mackay trailer, and in the case of the 2800 it's a dual-axle trailer with electric brakes. Electric brakes are an essential



Main: The CR2800 is a compact luxury cruiser with a sleek modern design and look.

Above: Alan Whittley can be very proud of their flagship boat the CR2800.

SPECIFICATIONS

Overall length	9.0m
Length on trailer	10.10m
Height on trailer	3.30m
Width on trailer	2.49m
Fuel capacity	200L
Water capacity	100L
Dry towing weight	approx. 3.35 ton
Standard engine	Volvo Penta V6-280hp DPS
Max hp	380hp
Max people	9

to do. Stay on board as we explore everything that Eildon and the CR2800 has to offer.

TOWING

I can imagine that people would have concerns about towing a boat this big, and fair enough too. The size of the boat is daunting, however being under 3.5 ton and having a 2.5m beam means all you have to worry about is having the correct set-up and vehicle, not whether you need lights, signage and permits any time you want to go somewhere.

Alan Whittley and his family have been towing these

component of safe towing with a boat this size.

The Mackay is also a drive on, drive off trailer; winching this boat by hand would not be ideal. We had no difficulty driving it on and off, it's just a matter of taking your time. The supplied trailer made that easier.

Think long

Alan's biggest tip for towing the 2800 was to 'think long'. It is a big boat and you need to give yourself room to turn or turn around. You should also give yourself a little extra space from vehicles in front. Although the trailer

has assisted breaking, you still have over three ton behind you, so stopping on a dime is not going to happen.

LAUNCH AND RETRIEVE

As with the towing, some care and a little practice is required when getting the 2800 on and off the water. It is by no means difficult, however. We launched at the Jerusalem Creek ramp at Lake Eildon, and at around 64% capacity this ramp is safe but not very steep. Other than needing to have the vehicle in the water (there were plenty of smaller craft needing to do the same), getting the boat on and off the trailer was a simple two-person job. Once off the trailer, front bow thrusters assist with maneuverability. Who would have thought it could be so hassle-free?

A CRUISER WITH ALL THE TRIMMINGS

Whittley Marine has been at the forefront of building cruisers since their inception, and the CR2800 is the

culmination of many years of boat-building experience. This boat combines a sleek, modern look with a clever use of space, and because the designers understand what boaters want, they provide features and options to fulfil those needs. And feature packed it is.

Above the deck

Ladders are situated at the

front and rear of the craft. The forward ladder is optional to provide assistance getting to and from the shore if you are parked on the bank, and the rear ladder gives easy access into and out of the water.

Complementing this is full walk-around side decks with rails at the bow of the boat, and a large marlin board with rails at the rear. The

rails provide some peace of mind for anyone who's not accustomed to scampering around a vessel.

Above the cabin there is a pack rack for additional storage of larger items, and it's a great place for any towable products or inflatables to keep them out of the way.

Marlin board

The marlin board was most probably the most used area of the boat over the couple of days we were at Eildon. We cooked meals on the BBQ, we cast lures and soaked baits from it, and with the weather as good as it was on the first day, we spent plenty of time swimming from the back of it. The addition of the bait station adds to the fishing component. It has some rod storage and keeps the bait preparation out of the main cabin and away from your food and living area.

Rear cabin

The rear cabin is a wonderful space to sit, relax and enjoy your surroundings.



First light at Jerusalem Creek, Lake Eildon. Time to go and explore.

