

'VMR 613'

**Kirby Marine's
new 7.3m Naiad
for Denmark
Sea Rescue**



By MIKE BROWN

Denmark, on Western Australia's south coast, is a summer paradise for overheated Perth dwellers, a popular recreational fishing spot year round, and is subject to high-powered winter weather systems. All of which call for a competent and well-equipped sea rescue service.

A sand bar almost permanently closes Denmark's river mouth, and launching of rescue boats has to be achieved over an ocean beach. Tricky in heavy sea conditions, this encouraged the local rescue group to equip themselves with a 5.8-metre Kirby Marine Naiad fearing anything bigger could too often be impossible to launch. Experience with the 5.8 confirmed that a Naiad RIB was the appropriate boat, but something larger was needed in heavy conditions.

The local rescue group experimented with borrowed larger boats and tractor launching and decided that a 7.3 Naiad was a practical proposition. Acceptance of their new vessel has made southern Western Australia's sea rescue groups exclusive users of Kirby's 7.3 and 8.5 Naiads: testimony to the type's qualities.

As with all current sea rescue Naiads for rough water areas, the new 7.3 is laid out with cuddy cabin and foredeck. Rescues are often made in breakers and, although a forward cockpit has many practical uses, the possibility of filling it with seawater and impairing manoeuvrability rules out its use.

This 7.3 has been given a pair of bottom steps for speed enhancement, and Kirby has modified them for near foolproof trailer operation. A bar runs the full length of the keel, effectively removing the chance of the steps snagging during launching. Even without the steps this is a fast hull. Although nominal beam is 2.7 metres, wetted beam once planing is only 1.9 metres. The 7.3 effectively has a narrow racing hull.

Even when pressed hard it remains a quiet hull, thanks to scantlings well beyond USL requirements and to foam-filled voids.

The space between screen and top is filled by zip-out clears. In Kirby style the



forward section rakes forward to deter the entry of heavy spray. This gives added protection to the comprehensive electronics fit-out, which is based on Furuno's Navnet. All current functions are installed with the exception of forward-looking infrared that may be fitted later. Naturally a full suite of radios is aboard, including aircraft frequency VHF.

Lighting other than the spotlight is LED by Hella. With the considerable draw of other electrics aboard, the minimal Wattage requirements of the lighting is a great battery saver – and the far greater life of LEDs is just as welcome.

Most rescues involve towing, and the 7.3 is well equipped for the task with a tow post, a combined crash and guard cage over the motors, and stowage behind the folding rear bench for the tow rope.

Motive power comes from a pair of 112kW Yamaha four-stroke outboards, a near standard pairing for the 7.3. Top speed is over 45 knots for a cruising speed of pretty much whatever the weather will allow, although the low thirties is usually selected for reasons of range. At that speed range is around 200nm; far greater than a typical rescue calls for, but an advantage of it is the flexibility it gives to south coast rescue operations in general. The range from the different rescue centres has sufficient overlap that if one group is unable to launch an adjacent group can take over the task.

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SPECIFICATIONS

Type of vessel:	Rescue Naiad 7.3m
In survey to:	2C USL
Home port:	Denmark, Western Australia
Owner/operator:	Denmark Volunteer Marine Rescue, Western Australia
Designer:	Naiad Design, New Zealand
Builder:	Kirby Marine Fabrication, Western Australia
Construction material:	Aluminium
Length overall:	7.3 metres
Length waterline:	6.2 metres
Beam:	2.7 metres
Draught:	0.4 metres
Displacement:	1,900kg
Main engines:	2 x 112kW Yamaha outboards
Steering:	SeaStar
Maximum speed:	40 knots
Cruising speed:	25-30 knots
Range:	200nm
Electronics supplied by:	Taylor Marine
Radar:	Furuno
Depth sounder:	Furuno
Radio:	ICOM
Compass:	Plastimo
GPS:	Furuno
Other electronics:	FLIR
Paints/coatings:	International Paint
Windows:	Beta Marine
Safety equipment:	Taylor Marine
Fuel capacity:	450 litres
Crew:	2 plus 4