

New to Australia – Is This The Ideal Tender or Jet-ski Lift?



What would we do without our 'tenders'!

Our Ubiquitous Tenders, Dinghies & Jet Skis

Whatever its purpose, our tender, dingy or jet ski is indispensable when needed. But when it is not needed, what do you do with it? Back on a trailer? Hang it on davits, tow it, pull it onto the swim platform, carry it on deck or, if it is an inflatable, deflate and stow it?

For nearly 4 years, I towed an AB 3.7 metre rigid inflatable (*Fig. 1*), behind my Grand Banks 42. I readily admit I habitually looked aft, hoping *not* to see only the broken painter trailing in the wake, or in a following sea, the tender surfing and whacking me on the stern, or a strong wind getting under it and flipping it over. Towing worked well when I was nimbler - launching and retrieval at the boat ramp was just part of boating! When the total time (i.e. to launch, retrieve, wash-down and store on-land) started to exceed 60 minutes, I researched other options, but wished to retain the same centre console RIB. The RIB's weight would clearly determine the final choice and size of the 'lifter' I needed. I had no idea what the tender weighed with its 20HP outboard, full fuel tanks, battery, anchor, chain, flares, life jackets, etc. You can guess my surprise when the scales tipped **254 kgs!** I needed a *powered* 'lifter'.



Fig.1 AB Mares centre console

I believe I found the 'perfect' solution, but only after a lot of research, which in itself was not an unpleasant task.

What Were the Options?

In Australia, I believe they are:

- davits on the marlin board or swim platform

- davits on the transom
- a crane/davit on the flybridge or fore deck
- a hydraulic lift fitted underneath the marlin board/swim platform
- a hydraulic platform, *or*
- a *new-to-the-Australian market*, **Presto Marine** hydraulic lift installed on the existing marlin board/swim platform.

At the end of my research, the **Presto Marine** hydraulic lift, *stood out from the crowd, especially on cost competitiveness, superb Swedish engineering and manufacturing, ease of installation, quietness of operation, radio/remote controlled, no components permanently in the water, aesthetics and outstanding operational performance.*

I believe this new-to-Australia powered lift addresses most reported shortcomings of other options, has some distinct advantages, and has proven to be a well-executed and cost effective, retrofit design - exactly what I was seeking. This was my choice and here is why.

It is a simple hydraulic lift and storage solution. It effortlessly launches, retrieves, and stores tenders, dinghies, RIBs or PWCs. It comes in three different models/lifting capacities - 200 kgs, 500 kgs & 1000 kgs, benefits from patented design, has in-built safety features, and high quality manufacturing in Sweden. The lift can be factory-installed or retro-fitted to a wide variety of boat models and have been installed on boats manufactured by Fairlane, Princess, Grand Banks, Sunseeker, SeaRay, NordWest, Delta, Azimut, Grandezza, etc. Over three hundred and fifty units have been installed, worldwide.

The service from Presto Marine is first-rate, including airfreighting the lift from Sweden to Australia. It arrived within 6 days! See *Figs. 2, 3, 4 & 5.*



Fig. 2 Exquisitely simple Presto Marine lift mechanism



Fig. 3 Presto Marine Lift on my Grand Banks 42

There are two types available, *fixed* (F type) for boats with narrower (<600mm) platforms/marlin boards (see *Fig. 4*) and *rails* (R type) for boats with deeper (>900mm) platforms (see *Fig. 5*). The R type allows the tender to slide inwards and be secured close to the transom. Both types are easy to install. I selected the XL500F (fixed) unit.



Fig. 4 PM L200 Fixed lift on narrow platform/deck



Fig. 5 PM XL500 Rail Lift on deeper platform

One person can operate the lift using the hand-held remote control (retained on a lanyard around your neck). The tender can be launched in less than 1 minute and retrieved and stowed in under 2 minutes; all done silently, safely, speedily, and securely. My 12 year old grandson launches and retrieves the AB Mares tender singlehanded!

My reasons for selecting the XL500F lift were:

- Ability to lift 500kgs – double the working weight of my tender (254kgs) - a comforting safety margin.
- The lifting arms and rams do not appear above the transom cap rail (see *Fig. 3*) - 'sundowner' views from the aft deck remain unrestricted and enjoyed.
- The lift brings the centre of gravity of the tender close to the transom, improving weight distribution, storage, mothership handling, and increased safety in following seas.
- Only the two lifting arms and rams are exposed to the marine environment, well above the waterline; all other components are tucked away in the dry lazarette.
- During operation, the hydraulic cylinders or hoses do NOT enter the water, therefore problems associated with underwater gear (e.g. barnacle fouling, seal and hose deterioration, electrolysis, possible corrosion, etc) are absent.
- Underwater maintenance issues and associated higher costs are eliminated.
- Boarding and disembarking the tender or dinghy is essentially unobstructed.
- Drifting off and sliding back onto the chocks are easy for one person driving the tender. When retrieving, the hydraulic arms are raised slowly to ensure the tender is correctly positioned onto the chocks, before stepping on to the marlin board/swim platform and raising to the stowed position.

- Replacing the two centre brackets under the marlin board with two stronger stainless steel brackets, allowed the XL500F model to be fitted effortlessly onto the existing platform. The two new brackets were tied internally to in-hull stringers. I did not need to do this, but I am a conservative boat owner who likes to be 'at ease' when on-board.
- With the professional support of [Pro Marine WA](#), a local marine engineering firm, the installation was extremely straight forward; the electrics and hydraulics are essentially 'plug and play', and the remote control for the unit comes pre-programmed.
- The total cost was less than 50% of two quotes I received for a hydraulic platform.
- The last three reasons are less easy to articulate. Firstly, Grand Banks' reputation worldwide is that they build a model, traditional, trawler style power yacht that is in every way, high class, using time-honoured workmanship. There is a general acceptance amongst discerning boat owners, that Grand Banks boats are at the pinnacle of traditional and classic trawler designs, one of the best of the best. Countless Grand Banks owners are lifelong sailors, turning to a trawler when the realities of later years arrive, as well as a need for plenty of room, comfort, and style. It was important that the ageless lines and profile of the Grand Banks design remained unimpeded, when the lift was fitted. The quiet dignity of the well-founded design should not be interrupted. I spent many hours contemplating what would be the equivalent of Grand Banks in the world of hydraulic lifts. Many of the other options listed above are undoubtedly suitable for many owners, and in their own way, define contemporary tender lift engineering.
- Secondly, the Presto Marine lift, I feel is a hallmark of the fusion of old and new world craftsmanship, creating a safe, enduring, and classic style. Together they make a decidedly conservative statement, of attentive construction and solid design, yet embodying a modern technological solution.
- *Finally, motoring from and returning to Grand Spirit in my tender, now uplifts my soul even higher – perhaps the greatest test and finest reward of all.*



Fig. 6 Mares RIB on PM XL500F Lift on my Grand Banks – a perfect marriage.



Fig. 7 Timeless lines & profile of the Grand Banks design are maintained

I have prepared a list of *Frequently Asked Questions*. To read, click [FAQS](#).

To view a few helpful videos of the lift in operation, click [VIDEOS](#).

I would be pleased to answer any queries from readers. I am based in Western Australia and my contacts are:

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