

From the Fisher's Mouth

8th February 2010

Launching and retrieving your boat is one thing you learn by trial and error. Every boat is different and each boat ramp has its own character with wind, current, gradient and a host of others factors impacting how you get your boat in and out of the water. Unless you are very familiar with your boat & trailer and know how to reduce the impact of limiting factors, launching & retrieving is a challenge.

Practice is the key to making sure you're capable under trying conditions. For example, launching and retrieving off a quality concrete ramp in still water with no breeze is



relatively straightforward, but add in a stiff onshore breeze, rain and no-one else to assist you and it becomes extremely difficult to get the boat on or off the trailer and often results in damage to your craft.

As a rule of thumb, you want your trailer half submerged for both launching and retrieving. Deeper than this and the boat will float over the top of the mudguards and not sit straight on the rollers (or skids), whilst too shallow

and the boat will likely hit the bottom when you slide it off. Ski boat trailers need to be quite deep in the water as many ski trailers are designed to float the boat off, and not have it slide or roll on or off the trailer.

For retrieving your boat, take notice of which direction the wind and/or current is coming from. Your boat will always be blown in that direction, so one little trick is to angle your trailer so the boat comes on to the trailer from downwind or down current.

If you drive your boat on to the trailer, again have the trailer half submerged. Drive slowly up to the trailer and make sure the keel of the boat is in the middle and the boat is straight, before you apply power. Don't get a run-up at the trailer as if you miss, the boat will skew sideways and damage boat, trailer and possibly your car. Also when driving your boat up the trailer, take care not to apply too much power, else the boat may end up through the back window of your vehicle.

On the fishing scene, the Murrumbidgee is pristine at the moment. Clear, warm water is ideal for lure fishing and the fish are active. Not much news from the dams, but early mornings and late afternoons/evenings are the time to fish so as to avoid ski boat traffic. On the south coast, its marlin time. For the latest reports and to find a quality charter boat on the south coast visit www.fishbermi.com