

From the Fisher's Mouth

9th May 2010

A few columns ago, I spoke about a new product released by Minn Kota that significantly improves 'hands-free' fishing. The i-Pilot is a GPS bolt-on addition to Minn Kota's range of bow mounted electric motors, which adds a suite of functions and capabilities.

Dave Carter, Craig Harris and I have tested the i-Pilot on a range of boats and under differing circumstances and came up with a range of comments and critiques.



For fishing open water and known trolling runs the GPS tracking is flawless, the advanced auto pilot maintains the boats course without 'crabbing' due to wind, current or waves, whilst 'spot lock' enables the boat to hang on top of the fish whilst you are fishing (ideal for holding over a school of redfin in Blowering).

But in contrast to these advantages, for river fisherman 'spot lock' doesn't cope brilliantly with fluctuating flows and doesn't hold position as accurately (within a metre) as I would like. Also, the huge amount of functions available on the remote control makes the hand unit a bit large, but to be fair, there are a lot of controls available on the handpiece.

As mentioned earlier, the i-Pilot is available as a bolt on for existing motors, but Wagga Marine has managed to secure Minn Kota Terrova's that come pre-fitted with the i-Pilot with the price comparable to the non i-Pilot Terrova.

With i-Pilots, remote controls, side imaging, downriggers, GPS, depth sounders, and all the other gadgets we have available, it's a wonder we have any time left for fishing! At least we have something to do whilst waiting for a bite. But enough of gadgets and on to the fishing.

The time has come to dig out the big lures and look to the weirs and locks of the Murray and Murrumbidgee Rivers targeting monster cod. Cold water sees all the small creatures tucked away for the winter, and the big fish are out looking for an easy meal, which we hope to provide by way of a wobbling piece of timber or plastic.

I have done an early reconnaissance of the lower Murray mapping out some new water for future trips and its looking good. With a flush of water down the Darling the water is a bit milky but easily fishable. The influx of water will have sparked the food chain and hopefully have the peak predators on the chew.

My favourite lures for chasing big cod are the 90mm, 120mm and 150mm AC Invader's and the medium and large Hammerhead. Make sure you fit these lures with 'Owner' trebles as you don't get many bites and you want them to stick when they come.

Through winter, Riverina Sportfishing offers extended tours to big cod country, and I can show you tips and tricks to fool (hopefully) these giant fish.