

DAN GOVIER

and Miss B Haven

Nelson-based angler Dan Govier eats, sleeps, and drinks fishing and boating. The passion was fostered by his dad, a New Plymouth-based commercial fisherman, from a young age.

He used to take every opportunity to fish, be it with his dad Barry or his brother off the shore, wharf, or small dinghy. Family and fishing are intertwined – his first date with his wife Angela was a fishing trip, setting the scene for what was to come. His passion for angling is being passed down to another generation of the Govier clan with his daughter Brianna now a keen fisher.

NZ Fishing News' Grant Dixon caught up with Dan after launching his latest boat project – a Senator RC 540 – to find out a little more about a bloke who is seriously into his boats.

The bloke

What are your first memories of fishing?

All my early fishing memories are of fishing with Dad. He used to longline commercially for snapper and blue cod, and as soon as I was allowed on the boat, I used to go fishing with him. Once the lines were set, I could rod fish,

catching snapper and blue cod. I still proudly remember my first 10lb snapper, probably about 40 years ago now. I still have that rod it was caught on – a solid fibreglass outfit that was much heavier than the gear I use today.

Any opportunity I got, I was fishing, either with Dad or off the wharf or beach. I just could not get enough, and I still have that same passion today. Now that I am working and leading a busy life, fishing is my time to reset and recharge the batteries, and I love any time I can get out on the water.

Who have been the influencers in your fishing life?

Early on, it was my Dad. He is still a very keen fisherman, and his passion for fishing and boats has certainly rubbed off on me. We have fished together all around the country, targeting many different species and we still have a debrief on the phone after every trip we both do. One of the main things that he has taught me is to always keep thinking and learning about what you are doing and the fish you are chasing. You need to learn something every trip – what you did right or what you did wrong – and then either improve on that or adapt the next time you are out.

I moved from New Plymouth to Nelson in 2006 and did not know the area at all. However, I was taken under the wing by Pete Connolly. I met Pete in New Plymouth in the early 2000s when we took him fishing for marlin. He has taught me a lot about the Nelson/Tasman/Marlborough Sounds region – things like how the fish move around the region with the seasons and the different locations to catch certain species.

We see a number of family shots – they obviously share your passion for fishing?

Fishing is a great way to have fun, make friendships and share special times with family. My wife Angela also has a passion for the outdoors, and our first 'date' was a fishing trip. Luckily, we caught plenty of fish. Otherwise, it might have gone the other way! We love getting out in the outdoors together, and to be able to share the wonderful places we have in the top of the south is special. Ang did not come from a fishing family, but she is very practical and has picked up the art of fishing very well and now catches some amazing fish. It would also be hard for our daughter not to be involved in fishing, so we started taking her out on the boat from a very early age



Dad and daughter Brianna with another substantial Nelson snapper.



1



2



3

1) Dan's dad and fishing mentor Barry with a D'Urville kingfish. 2) Dan loves his Black Magic Snapper Snatcher flasher rigs. 3) Fishing is very much a family affair for the Goviers. Mum Angela and daughter Brianna with a Top of the South red.

"FAMILY AND FISHING ARE INTERTWINED – HIS FIRST DATE WITH HIS WIFE ANGELA WAS A FISHING TRIP."

and have enjoyed many trips, including overnights, with her.

What and where is your favourite form and fishing?

I love chasing snapper and kingfish. They are smart fish, so the challenge of catching them is probably what draws them to me.

Over winter, the fish here are in deeper water, and I target both snapper and kingfish using slow and long jigs, respectively. I guess it is the challenge of making the action of the jig work in such a way that tempts the fish to eat it, and you never know when that could be or even what you may catch.

Over summer, the snapper move into the shallower waters of Tasman Bay, and I love to target

them the old fashion way. I set a big berley trail and use strayline and flasher rigs to good effect. Catching big snapper in shallow water on light gear is great fun, and again, I love the challenge of seeing what I can improve on and learning something from each outing.

If you could only have one rod, reel and lure/bait to use for the rest of your life, what would they be?

It would have to be one of my own rods that I build under the AquaZition brand to fish for snapper. The NZ-manufactured blanks are made from top-end carbon fibre. They are acid wrapped to get the best action out of the blank. It would be

matched with a Shimano Ocea Jigger 1000 or Maxel Hybrid reel.

For the terminal tackle, it would have to be the Black Magic Snapper Snatcher flasher rig in the original colours. I have been using these rigs for many years now, and they have caught me (and my family) some amazing fish.

What are your most memorable/ significant catches?

There have been many. Every snapper over 20lb is special. I have managed to crack the 30lb once, which is right up there.

When I was commercial trolling for albacore tuna with Dad, I managed to land a 55kg yellowfin on a handline with no gloves. I can still remember the entire fight. We hit a stalemate once, but Dad kept

pushing me – "If you don't move him, you will lose him." It was very lucky we got him as the hooks had almost bent out straight I had that much weight on the line.

What is on your fishing bucket list – in NZ and/or overseas?

At home, I want to catch a southern bluefin tuna from my boat. This is one of the few sportfish I have not caught, and that will be the target once the big boat is built, so watch this space.

Overseas, I want to join Tony Orton on one of his guided trips to Oman to chase yellowfin tuna on topwater gear. Seeing these large tunas hit a stickbait or popper would certainly be something special, and these fish test every

inch of the gear you are using as well as the angler.

What do you do for a job? Is that connected in any way to your passion for the sea/ fishing?

My passion for the sea and fishing led me to Otago University, where I gained a Bachelor of Science as my undergraduate qualification, going on to complete a post-graduate Diploma and then Masters in marine science. My entire professional career has revolved around the sea. After university, I sat my commercial skippers' ticket, which has been invaluable.

I work for a global environmental consultancy company, and I manage a team

of 20 staff across Australia and New Zealand, where we work primarily in the marine space. We assist companies with gaining regulatory approvals for offshore marine activities and undertake environmental monitoring programmes offshore. The sectors we mainly work in are aquaculture, offshore oil and gas, government-related work, and, more recently, offshore wind.

Do you do any freshwater fishing?

I have done a little bit in the past, and I really enjoy it, but I have not focused on it like I have sea fishing. For me, not knowing what you may catch is what intrigues me and is one of the major drawcards over freshwater fishing. In saying that, I do want



One of Dan's most memorable catches – a 55kg yellowfin on a handline – sans gloves!

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“BEING ABLE TO CUSTOMISE THE BOAT TO HOW I WANT TO USE IT AND MY STYLE OF FISHING IS ANOTHER MAJOR DRAWCARD.”

to catch a big trout or salmon down in the canals at some stage.

The Boat

You are currently putting together a Senator 540 ‘project’ boat, but I hear it is not your first Senator?

I have owned a few Senator boats now and am very loyal to the brand as they have served me well. I recently owned a large 8m custom Senator that was very highly spec’d – an amazing boat. It was a large boat and, due to the weight, had to be in Certificate of Fitness (COF) and required a large American truck to tow it.

In 2022, my wife and I made the hard decision to sell it and get something that does not require a COF. The selling of the boat was OK as I knew I would buy another Senator to replace it with.

I do a lot of solo fishing, especially over spring/summer when the snapper are close in, where I can get out early before

work and then back into the office by 9-10 am. Having a smaller boat that is easy to use, well set up, and quick to wash down is ideal for this scenario and led to me building the RC540. I also wanted it to be capable of bigger missions further afield when I am fishing by myself or required a long tow over gravel roads.

Why Senator, and what else is in the pipeline?

With a Senator you get a lot of boat for your money. They measure the true hull length of the boat for each of their models compared to many other brands. There is just so much useable fishing room in a Senator. The pontoons provide a safe and stable fishing platform which is a great piece of mind when taking the family out to sea, as you know they will always perform well. If the weather cuts up, it will get you home safely. The high sides and full toe space make it a pleasure to fish on as well.

Being able to customise the boat to how I want to use it and my style of fishing is another major drawcard for me. Having the ability to work with my local Senator dealer (Haven Pleasureboats) here in Nelson and the factory direct to customise a boat is a great draw card.

I am currently building an RH770 with Senator, which should be on the water around September/October this year. This will also be fully customised to my style of fishing and overnighing and will have a high-spec fit out of quality gear and electronics.

What are some of the key features of the RC540?

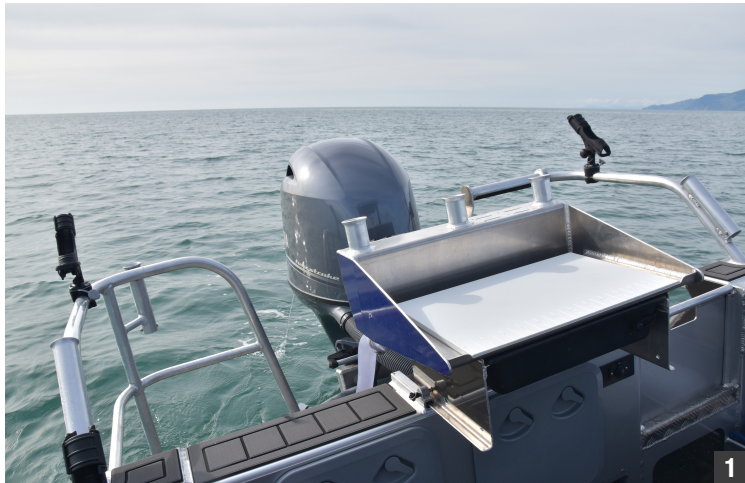
I have managed to fit a lot of features onto this boat, and having the ability to customise has made this possible. All the features commonly found in a larger vessel I have managed to fit into the RC540. As a result of this customising and quality fit-out, the boat is a pleasure to use, and at the moment there is



“WHEN I FISH I DEMAND THE BEST – THAT’S WHY I CHOOSE FURUNO”

ENL WELCOMES DAN GOVIER TO THE FURUNO FAMILY- WELCOME ABOARD TO OUR NEWEST 2023 AMBASSADOR





1) The business end – Yamaha F115, work area and extended fishing space. 2) The Senator's helm station is dominated by the Furuno TZT3 12" MFD. 3) The livebait tank and its intended occupants are very much a part of Dan's fishing arsenal. 4) The centrally mounted Minn Kota adds quite a few angling options.

nothing further that I wish I had included.

The key features of the RC540 include:

- Furuno TZT3 12" MFD with TM260 1 kw transducer
- Yamaha F115, very efficient and reliable and paired with the digital gauge
- 72" Minn Kota Ultra with automatic deploy and retrieve
- 24 v lithium battery for the Minn Kota that is positioned low down and central – the lithium battery significantly reduces weight over traditional AGM batteries
- Zipwake auto-trim system
- Maxwell anchor winch with wireless remote, Sarca anchor, chain and multiplait rope
- Soft top with a rocket launcher and clears to keep the cold out on those cooler mornings
- Extensive lighting inside and out, including a range of Hella floodlights, spotlights and strip lights in both red and white
- Piranha underwater lights

- Extended platform and cage with boarding ladder
- Live bait tank with pump for keeping baitfish or as a kill tank
- Washdown pump and hose
- Additional rod holders and cup holders as well as extensive RailBlaza rod holders and fittings
- Hard-wired electric reel sockets
- Underfloor fish bin with gas assist hinges
- Enclosed transom with twin battery set up with wired in Pro-Mariner battery charger
- Fully sealed king and queens with upgraded seating for dry storage and comfort whilst travelling
- Marine carpet to all floor areas and pockets for comfort and noise reduction
- Underfloor fuel tank – 95L
- Fusion marine sound system
- Full road cover
- Boat latch on trailer for self-launch/retrieve
- Customised U-Deck on top of gunwales and transom for safety

and comfort

- Self-draining bait station with tackle draw and rod holders

What are your fishing plans for the 540?

This boat punches well above its weight, and in the right weather conditions, I would be comfortable fishing anywhere I can in the top of the south aboard her. It is easy to tow, launch and handle solo so it opens up a number of different options depending on the weather. I plan to launch this boat out of Westhaven, Golden Bay, French Pass, Okiwi Bay, Duncan Bay, Havelock and Nelson to give me full coverage of the top of the south.

It is perfectly suited to the fishing I do before work over spring/summer, but I will also be taking it on the bigger missions to D'Urville and Stephens Islands to chase some of the winter snapper and kingfish, especially while the

bigger boat is still in build.

The Senator 540 is well set up for game fishing. Any plans in this direction?

This boat would be ideal for chasing gamefish. It has all the rod holders for running a game set up, is stable when fighting fish, and the Yamaha F115 is quiet and economical at trolling speed. We are seeing more albacore tuna come into Tasman Bay now as the water warms and we get different currents, and I don't think it will be long before someone hooks a marlin there.

Out of Westhaven or even Greymouth now opens the ability to chase southern bluefin tuna or striped marlin over the summer months.

I see you have a Minn Kota electric motor – how will you utilize this?

The Minn Kota is a game changer for fishing. The feature I use most

on the Minn Kota is the 'spot lock'. This essentially anchors you on location, and you do not move. The Minn Kota prevents the boat from swinging as you can do on an anchor, so this reduces tangles and also presents baits much better to the fish, as they are not constantly moving across the seabed. In the shallow water, it is also quiet.

There is a heading sensor that receives a GPS fix to keep you on the heading you select; however, it will be weathervane to the strongest force, either wind or tide. What this means is that you will generally sit bow first into the weather, making for a more comfortable fishing experience.

The 'jog' function is also very good. Combined with the Furuno electronics package, I can position over a rock or school of fish and then move the boat five feet at a time, either forwards, backwards or sideways, to position exactly where I want to be.

The Ultra is a 24v Minn Kota to enable the auto deploy and

retrieve, so normally, it requires two large 12 v deep cycle AGM batteries to provide the 24volts. With the recent advancements in lithium batteries, there is now a single 24v lithium battery at 25kg of weight that provides significant weight savings, and I was able to get a customised mounting within an underfloor compartment, positioned centrally and low to keep centre of gravity down. Through an app on my phone, I can monitor the power consumption, life of the battery and also the charging features, so I can fully monitor everything while it is in use.

The boat is well-lit with Hella products – what have you included?

When I go fishing, I generally either go or come home in the dark. I love fishing the change of light and like having good lighting on the boat for both working lights but also fishing lights, hence the combination of using both red and white lights.



The king and queen helm seating arrangement features dry storage beneath

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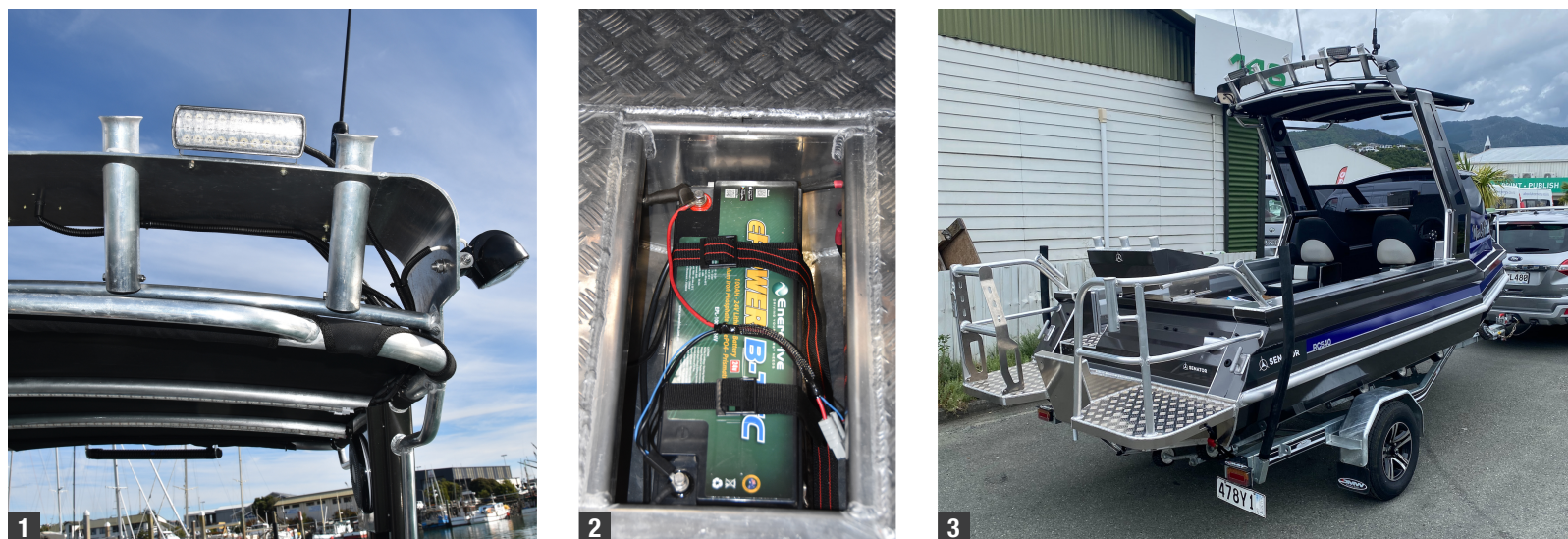
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1) The boat is well-lit with Hella product. 2) The 24v lithium battery for the Minn Kota that is positioned low down and central. 3) The DMW trailer has been up-spec'd to handle the local terrain as well as single-handed launching and retrieve.

I had to get an additional switch panel put into the boat to cover all the lights and features on the boat, with a number of the switches being two-way – one way for white light and the other for red.

I have used Hella for many years now, and their lights have never let me down. The framing of the soft top has both red and white strip lights, and also down the gunwale pockets and forward cabin, so a more subtle light can be used at night, be it while fishing or underway.

Any special trips planned?

I am looking forward to taking the boat to D'Urville Island and fishing around Stephens Passage and the

top of D'Urville. Winter months bring some amazing fishing to these areas, and the fish are just starting to turn up there now. Combine this fishing with a calm winter day and no sea breeze, and there is no better place to be.

Are you set up for overnighting?

There is no plumbed-in toilet as such, but I have a boom bucket when I have the family onboard, essentially a toilet seat and lid on a bucket that works well and can be removed from the boat when not required.

All cooking is done with gas cookers which don't take up much space and are quick and easy to use. I have a Jet Boil, which is great for making coffee early in

the morning, and I want to get a Cobb Grill for when we are out longer and have dinner onboard or overnight.

I am planning some overnight trips this winter, but the RC540 is only suitable for one person to overnight in, as it wasn't designed for this. I will utilise the full-length road cover to create a tent over the boat to keep the cold out. The cabin is fully lined with carpet, and I have the carpet on the deck, so that also helps keep the cold from the aluminium out.

What are you towing the rig with?

I have a Ford Ranger Sport 3L V6. This tow vehicle was purchased with the RH770 in mind, but it

makes towing the RC540 a breeze. I plan to tow a lot to French Pass and Westhaven with it, both of which have large winding hills to traverse before you get there, so having the power and comfort of the Ranger is great. The roads into these launching destinations are also gravel for a reasonable part of them and when it is dry, everything gets covered in dust, so that is why I was very keen on getting Senator's in-house team to make the customised road cover.

Thanks, Dan, that is quite a fishing battleship you have put together. We look forward to reading more about you and your family's adventures in due course.
– Grant Dixon



The rig – the Senator RC540 Miss B Haven and tow wagon, the Ford Ranger Sport V6 – ready for its first adventure

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