

Boat ramp blues could be a thing of the past

Scott Coghlan

DEALING with your boat at a crowded ramp can be one of the most stressful aspects of a day on the water, but the innovative Launch and Retrieve Boat Latch is an Australian invention that will take much of the angst out of the experience.

Sure, the Boat Latch won't do anything about long queues to use the ramp and inconsiderate behaviour from other boaties, but it will mean getting your boat in and out of the water will be a much less stressful, much dryer and far less dangerous experience.

And anyone who has dealt with a boat ramp as slippery as an ice-skating rink knows that staying dry and avoiding a nasty tumble is a huge benefit.

Not only that, it makes battles with ropes, winches and chains a thing of the past.

The Boat Latch has been called a "marriage saver" and it is not hard to see why.

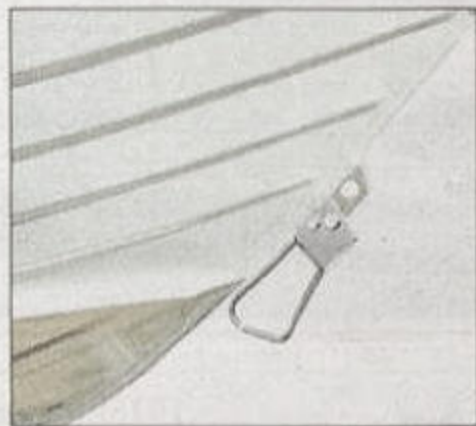
With a Boat Latch fitted to your trailer, launching and retrieving becomes a one-person job.

The snare and latch system designed by South Australia's Geoff Davis and featured on ABC-TV's *New Inventors* program enables the driver of the boat to simply drive it up on to the trailer and lock the snare on the front of the boat to the latch on the trailer.

Taking it off is a simple matter of edging the boat forward while on the trailer to disengage the latch.

Respected fishing writer and *SA Angler* editor Shane Mensforth is an unabashed fan of Mr Davis's invention, describing it as "one of the best investments I ever made".

"The new device isn't intended to replace the trailer winch mechanism or safety chain, but when operated according to the instructions, it makes the whole boat ramp exercise safer and quicker," Mensforth said.



"The patented Release and Retrieve Boat Latch is by far the cleverest device of its kind.

"Constructed from high-quality marine-grade stainless steel, it is designed to eliminate most of the problems associated with drive-on-drive-off trailers."

Mr Davis said he set out to design a superior way of launching and retrieving boats after watching his mate slip over on the boat ramp a couple of times. He used his experience of farm machinery to come up with a simple and effective design that is easily fitted, with no drilling of holes or welding required.

Boat

Winch hook
attaches
here



Boat Latch

Trailer

'Snare'
("fibreglass"
boat version)

'Latch'

Chain
attaches
here

Lever to set
Launch or Retrieve

"I used to sit in the cockpit and watch things like my mate slipping over happen over and over again," Mr Davis said.

"I thought 'There has to be a better way than this', so I worked on a solution.

"It is a simple mechanical operation and takes so much of the hassle out of handling a boat."

Built from marine-grade stainless steel to ensure longevity, Boat Latch is suitable for all vessels – aluminium, fibreglass, wood and ply – up to 8m.

Many boat manufacturers are now using the Boat Latch as a standard feature.

The Launch and Retrieve Boat Latch is available from

several dealers in WA, including Commodore Marine, Portside Marine, Offshore Marine and LeisureCat in Perth, Moby Marine in Esperance, Offshore Marine in Busselton and Purslowe Marine in Mandurah.

Info: Launch and Retrieve Boat Latch,
www.boatlatch.com,
8554 7214.