



Out of this world

Joshua Conn

IT looks like an alien spaceship but could be the biggest thing in surfboard design since the invention of the thruster.

The Meyerhoffer has futuristic narrow hips, a pointed tail, is made from lightweight epoxy and by rights should also have lasers and lightspeed capability.

It has almost nothing to do with most modern surfboards and the team behind it could not be happier.

Mark Kelly, the man bringing the Meyerhoffer to Australia, said it would be an inspiration.

“Surfing’s actually quite conservative so bringing something like this in really does turn a lot of heads,” he said.

“The construction of boards has changed quite a lot over the last few years but designs have stayed the same so you’re putting space shuttle technology into the Kittyhawk.

“One thing we want to do is try and inspire others to come up

with different designs.”

Kelly’s company Global Surf Industries will launch the surf craft at the Noosa Festival of Surfing next month.

So what’s with the name?

No one would blame you for thinking *Baywatch* star and hamburger devotee David Hasselhoff was involved at some level.

The branding is actually taken from its Swedish designer Thomas Meyerhoffer.

Yep, you heard right, Sweden.

The home of furniture assembled with Allen keys, safe but boxy automobiles and — surprisingly — the Stockholm boardriders club.

Meyerhoffer spent the early part of his career designing computers for Apple. Not the stuff that earns you “cred” out in the line-up but the now California-based designer has an international reputation for innovation and reinvention.

He turned to surfboards at the

time of the Sydney Olympics and has not looked back.

As far as performance in the water goes, the Meyerhoffer has already won plenty of fans. Maroubra surfer Daniel Flynn says it’s like two boards in one.

“For the guy who’s riding a short board who wants something for all conditions ... it’s perfect.”

Now for the road test. The waves were short on size at Maroubra and our test pilot — yours truly — short on talent.

But with a board straight out of Captain James T Kirk’s quiver, even the Silver Surfer would have turned green with envy as I glided across the water.

Throw in a one-size-fits-all spacesuit and the experience would have been complete.

As for the board revolutionising surfing, who cares?

If you ever get to ride one, I guarantee you’ll have fun.



New wave: *The Daily Telegraph* reporter Joshua Conn tests the Meyerhoffer

Picture: Phil Hillyard