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September 2023

Vol.73 No.874

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to get you started

PLUS

2023 FAST ELECTRIC NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS REPORT



588 AFRICAN QUEEN

Despite its modest size and appearance, the African Queen is one of the vessels which has become most vividly engraved on the minds of many people throughout the world. The African Queen achieved its fame as one of the main characters in a film of the same name. The movie also featured Katharine Hepburn and Humphrey Bogart, who in the filmed version of C.S. Forrester's work, play a British missionary and an alcoholic engineer living in Tanzania during World War 1. While sailing on one of the many jungle rivers, the couple become involved in a number of emotional incidents ending, of course, in romance. As the movie closes, the couple - totally exhausted and in a perilous storm - are driven into Lake Victoria, where the African Queen hits the German Warship 'Königin Luise', causing it to explode and sink. The ship used for the on location shooting in Uganda was built in about 1910. After a stormy life, the boat was brought to Florida, where its present owner, Mr. Jim Hendrich, uses the renovated ship as a pleasure craft.

Sc. 1:12
L. 74cm
W. 21cm
H. 43cm
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Just where did our sunshine go? The entire month of June and even early July in the UK was glorious. Since then, however, while southern Europe and many other parts of the world have been battling the effects of extreme heat, the weather system here seems to have adopted a Carole King (It might as well rain under September) attitude. Despite that, however, it's been great to see all the photos sent in from successful club/society events and open days, and I hope you've still been managing to enjoy some 'summer' sailing sessions in between downpours.

For now, though, I suggest you put the kettle on, make yourself a hot drink, maybe crack open the 'good' biscuits, and settle down in a comfy chair (obviously, modify those instructions to read "go to the fridge and grab yourself a cold one, before finding a shady spot" if it's simply sweltering where you are), as the pages ahead include plenty of inspirational ideas (that is, of course, if you're not already too busy building an Ark!) for those days when your workshop serves not just as a creative space but as a much appreciated refuge from the elements.

On the subject of getting stuck into projects, during my latest exchange of emails with regular reader Dave Watson, he happened to mention that, although the ads in MB are most helpful, he's still finding it increasingly difficult to source certain parts (most recently, nav lights) due to the fact that so many small businesses seem to be shutting up shop. Considering how frustrating this must be, especially if mid-build, it would therefore be really helpful to hear from any of you who can personally recommend sources for trickier to find components, spares and materials, or indeed offer any clever alternative solutions to the unobtainable/unaffordable. These could then be run in the Your Letters section of the mag alongside all the other useful modelling and general hobby-related tips and tricks submitted. That's a nudge, by the way! It's worth remembering that not everyone has the luxury of access to a friendly, local model boat club where there's a collective pool of knowledge and know-how – so please keep sharing the learns.

Meanwhile, it's time for me to wrap up and allow you to enjoy your read, so until we meet again in the October issue, may the wind back at your back – and the rain not constantly hammering down on you!

Enjoy your read!
Lindsey

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Compass 360

If you have a news story for these pages, please contact the Editor, Lindsey Amrani, via e-mail at editor@modelboats.co.uk

OUT AND ABOUT

Deans Marine Open Days

From 10am to 4pm on September 8, 9 and 10, Deans Marine will be hosting another of its popular annual fundraising events at its showroom in Farcet Fen, Peterborough (program your Satnav to PE7 3DH). Admission will be free of charge but, as all proceeds will be going local charities and the staff will be giving up their own free time to host the three-day affair, all contributions to the donation box at the venue's entry will be gratefully accepted.

Visitors will be treated to a first 'up close and personal' look at models built from the latest kits in Deans Marine's range and, in many cases, be able to watch 'on the water' demonstrations of their performance. Visitors will be able to view both static displays and 'on the water' demonstrations of models built from the latest kits in the Deans Marine range. Visitors will also be welcome to sail

their own model ships/boats on the test pond. The event promises to be a very social occasion, with various trade and model boat club stands (all under cover in marquees) to browse and natters to be had with fellow enthusiasts over refreshments at the on-site the café.

Although the daily activities will finish up at around 4pm, there is a barbeque planned for the Saturday evening – please note that, for catering purposes, pre-booking your meal will be essential. Likewise, due to space being limited, reservations must also be made for the on-site camping and caravanning pitches available to those of you wanting to make a weekend it (priority being given those manning trade and club stands at the event).

For further info call Deans Marine on 01733 244166.



Models being display/demonstrated at previous Deans Marine Open Days. Latest additions to the range will be revealed at the September event.



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The Midlands Model Engineering Exhibition

Dates for 2023 Midlands Model Engineering Exhibition at the Warwickshire Event Centre have now been confirmed by Meridienne Exhibitions, with this year's four-day extravaganza scheduled for Thursday, October 12 to Sunday, October 15.

As well as taking in all the great work on display, visitors will also be able to attend lectures presented by Model Boats' sister titles *Model Engineer* and *Model*

Engineers' Workshop, and there will also be daily live demonstrations of 3D printing by MEW Editor Neil Wyatt. Plus, of course, there will be numerous trade, club and society stalls to browse.

Tickets (priced at £12.50 for adults, £11.50 for Senior Citizens and £5 for children aged between 5-14) can be booked in advance at www.midlandsmodelengineering.co.uk or purchased on the day of your visit from the ticket office.

September Steam Open Day

The Knightcote Model Boat Club and the Leamington & Warwick Model Railway Society will be teaming up to co-host a steam-themed open day on Sunday, September 17 between the hours of 10am to 4pm.

As well as being able to watch steamboats sailed and live steam locos run on an outdoor track, the local RNLI will be in attendance and there will be a raffle, a prize for 'Best Boat on the Water' and refreshments served in the club house. Plus, there will be free parking and toilets on site.



All will be made welcome, including clubs and groups, although please note that anyone taking along a steamboat to sail must be in possession of a currently valid test certificate

For further details, email chrismoiruk@btinternet.com or visit the club's website at www.kmbcmmodelboatclub.com.

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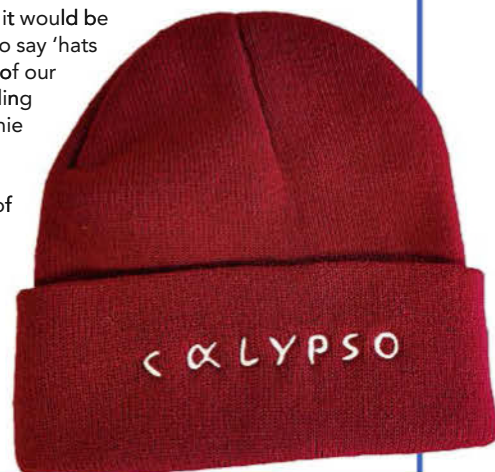
Warmest congratulations!

Hat off (or perhaps it would be more appropriate to say 'hats on') to the winners of our June 2023 issue Billing Boats Calypso Beanie Hat Prize Draw:

■ **Roger Morgan** of Newport, Wales

■ **Martin Oliver** of Chatham, Kent

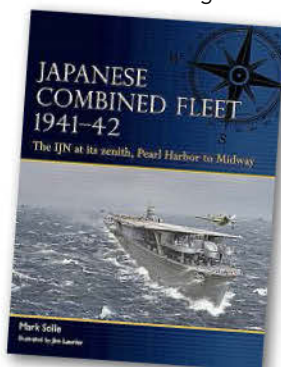
■ **Steve Ellis**, Radcliffe-on-Trent, Nottingham



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tactics and powerful warships. It also details the qualities and importance of IJN leadership, logistics, naval infrastructure, and Japan's shipbuilding capability, and gives an account and analysis of the IJN's combat performance during these crucial months – not just in the famous carrier battles, but also exploring lesser-known elements such as IJN amphibious forces and land-based aviation.

The title will carry an RRP of £15.99 in paperback or £12.79 in e-Book format, but a 10% saving can be made by pre-ordering now from the publisher's website at <https://osprey-publishing.com>



RNLI raffle result

Amongst the many prizes up for grabs in the raffle held by Kirklees Model Boat Club at its July 9 Open Day was a 12-month subscription to Model Boats, which, we are now delighted to announce, was won by Mr G. Wright of St. Helens, Merseyside. Raffle ticket sales contributed to a total of £263.50 raised for the local branch of the RNLI on the day, so bravo to all involved.



Compass 360

If you have a news story for these pages, please contact the Editor, Lindsey Amrani, via e-mail at editor@modelboats.co.uk

THE 2023 FAST ELECTRIC NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

Ian Williams reports back...

Over the weekend of July 8-9, this year's Nationals were, once again, held at Bridlington and, as is also customary, the MPBA Fast Electric section's AGM took place on the evening of Friday, July 7. Although the racing is held over the Saturday and Sunday, the lake is open on the Friday for practice, booking in and getting batteries weighed, etc, so most people do arrive in time for the evening AGM.

Now, I don't always report on the AGM but in this case there were one or two particularly noteworthy issues on the agenda. The first was the decline in attendance at the Nationals over the last few years; a bit of a worrying trend –although, as one member pointed out, club membership numbers do tend to be cyclical. There is no doubt, however, especially in the South West, that the loss of suitable water for model boaters, and particularly to IC enthusiasts, is starting to impact the ability to swell our ranks. With increased awareness of just how fast electric boats are becoming, many councils are now bowing to 'concerned citizens' and

beginning to ban all R/C boats from their waters. There were also several proposals by NAVIGA (the world organisation for model ship building/sport) that need deciding upon, in particular whether limiters should be made mandatory for the mini classes. Personally, I am pleased to report that we've decided to keep battery rules as they currently stand for now (for more information, visit <http://www.mpba-fes.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/MPBA-FES-Handbook-2023.pdf>).

With business all concluded, a duty sheet was then passed around, each of us signing up for a specific role/responsibility (e.g., starter/timer, race controller, buoy judge, etc) so that collectively we could ensure every aspect of the weekend ahead would run as smoothly as possible.

Racing against the wind

Numbers were, once again, a bit down this year, so racing wasn't the frenetic affair it has sometimes been in the past. Several years ago it was not at all unusual



Luke Burton and his collection of trophies.

to have around 100 entries and, once you reached that number of contestants, time naturally became very tight while trying to accommodate all the heats required over two days of racing. Since the beginning of this new decade, despite still attracting multiple entries in each class, the reduced number of participants overall has seen things become much more relaxed.

This year it was great to see not only some new faces but also to get reacquainted with a number of returning members who'd for various reasons had been absentees for several years. For instance, Paul Wilson and his son, Ashley were back, and they'd brought along some exciting new boats I hadn't seen before.



The new shelter with the extra step under construction



Above: Lee Heath's Mono 2 passing under the timing wires.



Right: Chris Pheasey's Hulk doing well in the rough.

"We were challenged by brisk winds for the entire weekend"

RACING RESULTS

Hydro 1

1st: Luke Burton
2nd: Martin Marriott
3rd: Peter Barrow

Hydro 2

1st: Luke Burton
2nd: Paul Heaton
3rd: George McDonald

Mini Hydro

1st: Rob Physick
2nd: David Harvey
3rd: Martin Marriott

Mini Mono

1st: Luke Burton
2nd: Ashley Wilson
3rd: Chris Pheasey

Mono 1

1st: Paul Heaton
2nd: Luke Burton
3rd: Peter Barrow

Mono 2

1st: Chris Phease
2nd: Paul Heaton
3rd: George McDonald

A photographic testament to just how rough the water was at times.

Despite a forecast that warned we'd see downpours of biblical proportions, the weather, for the most part, stayed dry, if a bit cool. For this we were grateful, as we were, this year, without our prized drivers stand. Being a few years old and built of wood, this structure had started to become a little unsafe in places, leaving no choice but to rip it down. In its place, there currently sits a modified container which, in time, a new and far more robust drivers' stand will be built on top of.

We were, however, challenged by brisk winds for the entire weekend. This, as you can imagine, caused a few problems, with boats bouncing around quite a lot on the choppy water, and some actually sank. The bottom of the lake is soft and boats which submerge under power often 'stick in the mud'. Most usually re-surface after a short while, but some don't. However, all boats that stayed under were recovered by our resident 'Boat Finder General', Andrew Fuller.

I think the three classes most affected by the wind itself, as opposed to the rough water, were the Mini Monos and Mini Hydros and the Cats, although for different reasons.

Right: A closer look at Paul and Ashley's boats.

The Mini classes are so small and light that, as well as bouncing around like corks, they were often blown off course, making them very 'lively' to drive. The Mini Hydros, funnily enough, didn't seem quite as susceptible to the wind, probably because they are so low profile. The bigger and faster classes were sometimes jumping right out of the water at speed, making life 'interesting' for their drivers. Perhaps surprisingly, the Hydros in general seemed to fare better in the choppy conditions than the Monos – especially the fast Mono 2s, some of which were definitely a bit of a problem to drive.

I have to say that although the racing got pretty close at times, it was mostly pretty civil, with none of the carnage some had feared might result from the prevailing conditions.

One boat that didn't seem at all bothered by how blustery it got was Luke Burton's Etti Arcas Hydro 1. This boat was fast and very stable in the rough water, appearing almost as if running on rails. Not surprisingly, it won the H1 class easily.

In fact, Luke had a very good weekend, not only winning the Hydro 1 but the Hydro O2 and Mini Mono races as well, before finishing off by taking second place in Mono1. Quite a nice haul of trophies!



Father and son team Paul and Ashley Wilson.

1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners in all categories are recorded in the Result box above, but I would just like to say a big 'well done' to all participants. Likewise, a massive thank you to all of the Bridlington club members who worked so hard work over the weekend to ensure a good time was had by all – not forgetting, of course, the ladies in the kitchen, who kept us so well fed and watered. ●

Oops, looks like this could be headed for the bottom!

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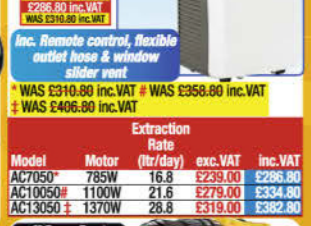
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Compass 360 SPEEDLINE RELAUNCHED

Original founder of the Speedline Models brand, **Adrian Gosling**, chats to our Ed, **Lindsey Amrani**, about why, with **MD Tony Blakewell** now at the helm, he's helping push the boat out on an exciting new venture



Original founder of Speedline Models, Adrian Gosling, and current MD, Tony Blakewell (left).

Q. Long term readers will no doubt already be familiar with Speedline Models, but for readers both old and new, can you tell us a little bit about the brand, its history and the reasons for the recent re-launch?

A. I established Speedbird Models over 20 years ago now, and fairly quickly built up a great reputation for producing some really world class model kits, not least when it came to the range of RNLI lifeboats on offer. I 'retired' in 2019 to pursue my interest in

Cyclekarting and in 2021 sold the business on to Tony Blakewell. Tony and I were already old friends. He'd been making all the fibreglass mouldings for nearly 15 years and worked out of a unit next to mine in Hinckley, Leicestershire. All was going well, until, on October 9 last year, we had a fire.

Tony lost everything: moulds, patterns, machinery, the lot. Most of my stuff was just smoke damaged but, believe me, that can write off so much. As if to add insult to injury, following the fire we weren't allowed

on the premises for safety reasons – but nobody told the chancers that. They stole everything that was metal and not screwed down, including all the power and hand tools that had taken me over 20 years to collect. In addition, they stole my two Cycle Karts, one of which had twice raced at Brooklands.

Wanting to salvage something from the ashes, Tony decided to start Speedline up again and I promised to help as much as possible.

"I promise we will make the best range of model RNLI lifeboat kits in the world!"



A new and improved 1:12 scale Shannon class lifeboat will be the first kit introduced by the newly relaunched Speedline Models brand.

Q. Bravo for taking a Phoenix-like stance! What's the plan, then, going forward?

A. Well, we now have a nice new unit on an industrial estate in Hinckley and are busy bringing Speedline back to life. Tony is the boss, but has me helping out as much as possible. As I will no longer be building cars, it makes sense to occupy my time with a project I can really get stuck into and enjoy, and who knows, I may even end up make a few bob!

We'll be making as much as possible in-house, using a laser-engraver/cutter and state-of-the-art SLA 3D printers to replace the resin castings. Each model we produce will be a true replica of the real thing, as the plan is to offer everything that's required to incorporate all of the subtle little differences each individual boat features. Customers can simply explain the spec and we will then include the necessary components in his/her kit.

I promise we will make the best range of model RNLI lifeboat kits in the world!

Some years ago, I visited a company that could scan a person with amazing accuracy and then produce a highly detailed 3D print of the scan, in any scale. It has since occurred to me that we could use this service to further complement our kits, i.e., we could invite the buyer over, dress him/her in RNLI clothing, get them scanned and then produce a figure of him/her in resin. This process creates a figure which is totally recognisable, not just facially but in terms of an individual's stance and shape. We are still researching this idea, since, ideally, we would like to install the type of scanner required on our premises and build up an appropriate wardrobe of clothing too.

In the meantime, we are getting set to scan actual RNLI crew members carrying out various activities on board their lifeboats, which we will then produce figures from on SLA printers. Super realistic figures at last!

Q. Which kits will you be putting into production first, and when these will be available to order?

A. We'll be starting with the Shannon in 1:12 scale because there's a significant demand for this kit and we can get it back into production fairly easily. Some parts, however, have been reworked to enhance the overall quality. For example, the engine removal hatch – previously made from etched stainless steel – is now simply moulded into the roof; this makes for a tidier job, looks neater, and has reduced the cost. We've replaced the old jet drives, too. The new 3D-printed ones I've designed are extremely realistic looking and amazingly efficient, preventing any air from being sucked in through the shaft bearings and keeping water out. The redesigned stator is now built into the compressor housing,



Following on from the Shannon and Trent class lifeboat kits scheduled for release this coming autumn, future plans include Tamar and Severn class kits. We can't give you an ETA for these as yet, but here's sneak peek at work in progress on what promises to be a magnificent Severn.



"For the first time, Speedline will also be offering just the fibreglass mouldings (hulls, decks and wheelhouses) ... This will give modellers the option of either scratch building the rest of the model or simply buying the bits and pieces required from Speedline as they go along, thereby spreading the cost"

make assembly both easy and accurate, and I've beefed up the reversing bucket arms and improved the method of turning the steering nozzle.

There's a new stator and bearing arrangement within the compressor housing and intake casing which improves the power output and eliminates water leaks. We are 3D printing the jet drives using carbon reinforced PLA so they are much stronger too.

We're hoping to have these ready as individual units by August/September. Plus there's a new stator and bearing arrangement within the compressor housing, bettering power, and the material is now stronger, therefore more resistant to 'accidents'. We're hoping to have this ready for release by August/September of this year.

We're also currently working on a new and significantly more detailed version of our

1:12 scale Trent class kit, which will not only result in a dimensionally accurate model but will beautifully capture the 'look and feel' of the real thing. All going to plan, we should be ready to start fulfilling orders for this by September/October time.

We intend to follow these two kits up with 1:12 scale Severn and Tamar class lifeboats and 1:16 scale Severn and Shannon kits, although I can't give you an ETA for these just yet.

Last, but not least, I must make mention of the fact that, for the first time, Speedline will also be offering just the fibreglass mouldings (hulls, decks and wheelhouses) as they become available. This will give modellers the option of either scratch building the rest of the model or simply buying the bits and pieces required from Speedline as they go along, thereby spreading the cost over a period that suits their pockets. ●

Billing Boats' *African Queen*

Part
one



1

Richard Simpson embarks on a two-part build review of this 1:12 scale kit, aimed at the 'Advanced Beginner'...



2

A strong box to protect the kit with a very useful good quality photo of the complete model on the top.

One of the things we actively pursue and promote is trying to attract more newcomers, particularly youngsters, into the hobby. To encourage this, I'm a great advocate of recommending a kit, both as a starting point and as a means of learning new skills, which can eventually be carried forward into more demanding projects. The beauty of kits is that, as they come with all the design in place, you can simply concentrate on the build, safe in the knowledge that, provided you follow all the instructions, there is every chance of a good outcome. So, when Billing Boats asked if someone would like to build and review its kit for the *African Queen* (see **Photo 1**), it seemed like an ideal opportunity to put my preaching into practice.

At the same time as I agreed to build the *African Queen* the editor also asked if I would like to evaluate some new Humbrol products. Consequently, all paints, varnishes, pigments and washes used in the build of my *African Queen* were from the current Humbrol range.



What the complete model looks like. A great project to use as a teaching tool for a youngster and a model with bags of character when finished. Detailing opportunities are limitless.

Opening the box

On receiving my review sample, and after the substantial packaging was removed, I got my first view of what I was letting myself in for. The box top depicted a large photograph of the prototype build, beautifully put together and looking very smart indeed (see **Photo 2**). Opening the box revealed a set of instructions, including a parts list, a full-sized drawing, wood strip, engine components attached to polystyrene sprues, various brass fittings and fixtures, a sheet of copper plate, a vac-formed hull, several laser-cut wooden frets and brass tube and rod (see **Photo 3**).

When presented with a bag of brass bits and pieces and bundles of varying stock material, I find it invaluable to separate all the parts and place them on a piece of paper. They can then all be measured up, identified and their respective part numbers recorded on that paper; you can also scribble down any notes you might find useful (see **Photo 4**). Being a fictitious vessel, research included finding and downloading stills from the movie and studying them. What immediately became apparent was that there were a few small variations between the



Everything you need except for the motor, coupling and electronics. Take care not to waste materials as there frequently wasn't a lot of spare.

model and the movie version, so I had some decisions to make. Should I follow the kit's instructions to the letter, or should I aim to faithfully replicate the boat as she appeared in the movie? I opted to go for a bit of both. For authenticity's sake, I decided to paint the engine green and the hull's lower part red. However, while the vessel in the movie is absolutely filthy, from one end to the other, I didn't want this to be a weathering demonstration. I decided, therefore, to follow the kit manufacturer's guidance, reassuring myself that I can always – and, indeed, probably will – give this model the full weathering treatment at a later date. I chose to include the flag and awning that come with the kit, despite not spotting these in any of the movie stills I'd viewed. To get a better feel for the project, I also bought a copy of the movie and watched it. Matinee over, and with everything laid out and tools, glues, etc, readily to hand, it was time to make a start (see **Photo 5**).

A brief word on glue

One of the biggest challenges when working with vac-formed plastic is finding the right glue. In most cases the plastic is of a polystyrene type, so the best product for the job is a glue that will dissolve the surface of the plastic, thereby facilitating the bond process. This is fine for adhering plastic to plastic, but not quite so straightforward for plastic to wood joints. My first 'go-to' glue for any tricky joint is usually a two-part epoxy such as Araldite, and I used this to start with, until I discovered to my horror that the glue simply peeled off the plastic hull once it had cured. So, after asking around, I went for a tube of Stablit Express. This is a very good, albeit extremely expensive, two-part glue, which creates an incredibly strong bond and sticks most things. A test run on a scrap of the hull's plastic looked promising. However, I quickly realised that when it came to gluing the deck on, it was going to take a lot longer to get the glue around the top of the hull

“One of the biggest challenges when working with vac-formed plastic is finding the right glue”



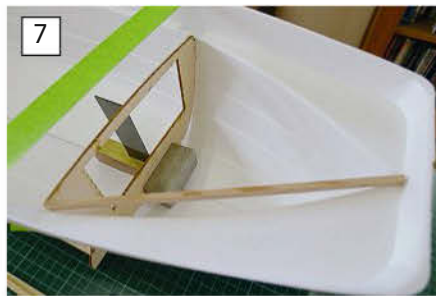
If you have room, laying all the parts out and labelling them saves a huge amount of time going backwards and forwards through the instructions.



Basic tools and glues to start with. The Araldite was replaced with Stablit Express but most of the other items were as used. All paints were from the Humbrol UK range.



The forward bulkhead determines the position of the frames on the deck supports so it needs to go in first. Laminating the two parts is simply a white glue and pegs job.



Careful positioning is critical. I used blobs of Blu Tac to get the position perfect then applied a generous fillet of glue. The pre-cut beam ensures transverse alignment.



I replaced the keel extension with a piece of pine strip for strength and drilled for the rudder stock at the correct angle. You can see how little clearance there is for the propeller.



Simply gluing the rudder to the stock was never going to be strong enough so I pre-drilled the stock ready to take pins when it came time to fit the rudder.



To get the battery fitted where I wanted it a frame required cutting so, to replace the strength, sides were added to the battery box.

and the bulwark stays than the five minutes I had before the Stablit Express would start hardening. I came to the conclusion, therefore, that polystyrene cement was going to be my best bet – although this couldn't be a thin variety. If the cement is thin, as with Liquid Poly or even Revel Contacta in a bottle, it soaks into the wood and evaporates before it has the chance to dissolve the surface of the plastic, so you end up with a very weak bond. The only glue that will work is the old fashioned thick polystyrene cement that you get in a tube. Even so, you must be careful not to use too much glue as there is always the danger of this dissolving its way right through a very thin plastic hull. For all wood-to-wood joints I used simple PVA white glue, whereas all brass components were glued with either cyanoacrylate or two-part epoxy.

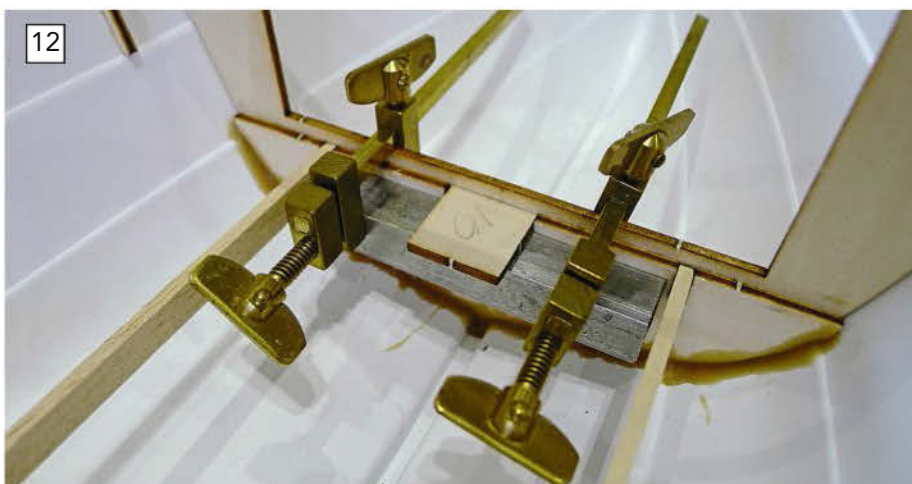
Lower hull internals

I decided that the best approach with the hull internals was to make the below deck frame and the two assemblies of upper frames and deck support as separate assemblies on the bench. This made keeping everything square much easier while the glue set. These parts were then fitted into the plastic hull as assemblies and glued with Stablit Express. The forward main bulkhead was glued in first after laminating it with the below deck bulkhead (see **Photo 6**). As everything else is located from it, the positioning is critical. It also determines the positioning of the frames on the longitudinal strake, so has to be secured in the boat before the side frame assemblies can be made (see **Photo 7**.) Being a combination of wooden strip and laser cut ply didn't present any problems. As I had tested a couple of joints without sanding off

the dark burnt brown laser-cut edges of the ply and found that it glued securely, I didn't bother sanding the edges off, as there is always a danger of making the joint sloppy by doing this. The below deck framing went in neatly and a substantial fillet of Stablit Express was added to the edges of the bulkheads. This was closely followed by the frame assemblies.

During this process, the motor, shafting and rudder assembly was also looked at for the best approach. Using the provided motor base, shaft and stern tube should fit in according to the plan; you still, however, want to try and achieve perfect alignment (see **Photo 8**). One aspect that did require some careful consideration was the rudder tube. This should be attached to the transom but that puts it at an angle with the keel line, and therefore the rudder bush inserted into the keel extension is also at an angle to the rudder stock. I wasn't convinced that the keel extension was strong enough anyway, being a ply part, so I made my own from a scrap of pine. This was then drilled at a slight angle to take the rudder stock bush. With the rudder tube and propeller shaft all temporarily fitted, it did become apparent that there was very little clearance around the propeller (see **Photo 9**). Everything was held in place with tape to ensure a perfect fit before finally being glued in securely. Because of the tube arrangement, the rudder needs to be fitted after the stock is inserted in the tube, which is a little tricky, as gluing it straight to the brass shaft wouldn't achieve a secure enough bond. Having pre-drilled the shaft (see **Photo 10**), my rudder was drilled and pinned once fitted.

I was very careful with the cutting of the hull as I wanted to ensure my stern tube and keel extension penetrations were as neat and



Not getting the mast support square would see the mast at an angle so the base was glued and held square. This was further strengthened by a wooden block glued below the base.



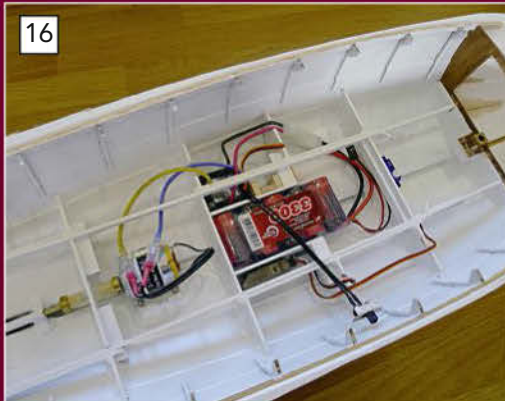
The first couple of coats of acrylic matt primer sealed the wood and showed up any imperfections. Note the threads of the motor mount screws masked by silicone tube.



The space in the forward area of the frame had just enough room for the rudder servo but the connection needed to be fishing line led through copper tube.



Another coat of primer on the copper tubes then everything received two coats of Humbrol gloss white acrylic.



Left: The electronics could all now be fitted. The receiver and speed controller both tucked in very neatly either side of the battery. The switch is set to be fitted to the wooden supports on the port side.

Right: Probably the biggest challenge of the build was gluing the main deck down. Planning and preparation was key to a successful joint. Stainless steel clothes pegs were invaluable.



as accurate as possible. These parts were then filleted with plenty of Stabilt Express to seal and strengthen the areas. Finally, the main ballast component, the battery, needed locating. The instructions showed the battery mounted longitudinally; there were, however, bulkheads in the way, so my initial thought was to mount it transversely. I wasn't happy, however, with the fact that, with no ballast at the ends, this could, potentially, make the model a little 'bouncy', so I went back to a longitudinal fit and decided the bulkhead would have to be cut. After the battery area was boxed off with a couple of longitudinal ply bulkheads to replace the lost strength, the battery sat neatly and securely along the centre line (see **Photo 11**). Once all the internal hull parts were in place, including the mast socket base (see **Photo 12**), the gluing surfaces for the deck were then masked off

and the internal surfaces were given a couple of coats of Humbrol acrylic primer (see **Photo 13**).

With the lower framework and motor in place, it was then possible to see the space available for the fitting of the electronics. I had chosen to go with a 3V to 7.2V 380 brushed motor, as recommended, and run it at 6V, deciding, as the model is particularly light, this would be plenty of power. I wanted a morning's duration though, so I bought a 3300mha, five cell Nimh pack, a Spektrum receiver to use with my Spektrum transmitter, and an Mtroniks Viper speed controller. The instructions showed the steering servo in the forward locker, which I really didn't like. This would make access extremely difficult and require the removal of the mast and forward bulkhead hatch just to see the servo, and actually getting to it would still be impossible. I

decided, therefore, the best location would be below the deck, where there was just enough space for a micro servo to be mounted.

Linkages would be lengthy and complicated from this location though, so I decided to use a couple of fishing lines run through copper tube to operate the rudder via the tiller arm. This proved to be neat, easily accessible and moved the rudder positively. The copper tube was simply glued in place (see **Photo 14**) to enable the fishing lines to be tied to an eyelet below the tiller arm before being secured with a copper thimble.

With this finished, another coat of primer was sprayed onto the copper tubes before all internals were given a couple of coats of acrylic gloss white (see **Photo 15**). The electronics were then fitted and tested, and cables neatly tied up out of the way (see **Photo 16**)



The excess could then be removed with a backwards cutting saw, leaving just a small edge.



This was then trimmed back to the edge of the wooden deck with a coarse and a fine finishing abrasive.



20 Marking out for the position of the rubbing strake with a spacer and pencil.



21 The rubbing strake could then be glued to the line, held in place with tape until the glue fully cured.

The decks

I found work on the internal decks all pretty straightforward, these simply needing to be cut from the plywood frets and have planking drawn on with a black ball point pen before a thin brown enamel wash applied. The trickiest part was around the edge of the foredeck and the internal bench seats, where I had to draw a curved line parallel to the edge of the wood. I taped the pen to a pair of dividers for this. Alternate planks were given different numbers of strokes with the brush to make them look a little more individual. The deck surfaces were then finished off with a coat of matt varnish. The internal decks sat very neatly on top of the framework, with just the aft piece glued permanently in place. The

hatch over the coupling was improved with a couple of beams to the underside to ensure it located neatly between the bulkheads when fitted, and the bench seats were given the same treatment before being glued to their brackets on the hull.

The fitting of the main deck was probably the biggest challenge and the process I put the most thought into. I knew, as it was cambered, that it would require holding down all around the edge. Locating it longitudinally would, I decided, make things significantly less troublesome. To achieve this, I fitted the top of the stem post into the vac-formed hull (this sits a lot easier if the front edges are chamfered). Once the glue had set, I applied modelling putty around

the point of connection, which was then filed and smoothed until it seamlessly blended in with its surroundings. The main deck has a notch at the front end that sits around this post and the post has a step in it to locate the deck, so, if you get the stem post height right, you can slide the front of the deck into it, and it will be perfectly located. At the stern, the decking overhangs just enough to partly cover the rudder tube. I specifically left this a couple of millimeters proud of the transom for this very reason. Now I was able to cut a semi-circular notch into the aft end of the deck, which sat neatly over the tube, and this located the aft end of the main deck as well. So, with both ends of the deck located, all I had to concentrate on was clamping



22 The hull was then given an all over coat of Humbrol acrylic grey primer.

23

And the topsides finished with two coats of Humbrol acrylic gloss white.

the edge of the deck around the top of the hull. The process involved laying a generous bead of polystyrene cement around the flat part at the top of the hull and then a bead of PVA white glue around the deck support and the top faces of all the frames. The deck was dropped on, and the edge clamped all the way around, ensuring there was a visible fillet of cement around the joint (see **Photo 17**). I then left it to fully cure for a few days. Following this, the clamps were removed, and the edge was trimmed close to the rim of the deck with a backwards cutting saw to ensure that no pressure was applied to open the joint (see **Photo 18**). Finally, the edge was finished off with abrasives to give a nice, neat edge to the deck (see **Photo 19**).

Hull exterior

Externally there is very little on the hull, apart from a wooden rubbing strake that has a rope fender mounted on it. Having first marked the hull with a scrap of wood to determine the position of this strake (see **Photo 20**), I then glued it on with Stabilit (see **Photo 21**). The rudder was simply glued onto the rudder stock, after filing a groove in it (to better locate it), before being drilled and pinned through the rudder stock via the pre-drilled holes. The hull was then given a couple of coats of primer (see **Photo 22**) before I applied a white gloss coat to its upper surfaces (see **Photo 23**). Rather than being painted up to a waterline, the lower hull was to be painted up to a line parallel to the top of the hull, so this was marked out

with a pen, again, attached to a pair of dividers (see **Photo 24**), then masked and sprayed with Humbrol gloss red below this line (see **Photo 25**). Finally, the rope fender was whipped at either end before being attached to the strake with thin cyanoacrylate glue.

Part 2

With the basics of the hull complete, next month I'll be covering the fitting out and completion of this model. ●

24



Above: What looks like a water line initially is, in fact a line parallel to the deck. This was marked out by attaching a pen to a pair of dividers then masked with Frog Tape.

Below: Finally the lower hull was sprayed with two coats of Humbrol acrylic gloss red.

25





Adamcraft

John Parker reflects on the legacy of Harvey Adam's pioneering but curiously short-lived post-war venture

Harvey A. Adam was a naval architect involved with the testing of high-speed patrol craft during World War II. When peace returned, he started a company devoted to model boat products, an obvious passion of his. The first product, an 18-inch clinker-built sailing dinghy in kit form, appeared in early 1947 and sold to the tune of 20,000 copies to an appreciative public that had been starved of such products during the war years. He extended his range of products to include power boat kits, an electric motor and other accessories and in 1952 wrote and illustrated a highly regarded book containing detailed plans and information. His course seemed set for continuing growth and success, yet by 1953 his company had closed and the name of Adamcraft faded from the pages of the modelling press.

Adamcraft products

Adam established his company, Adamcraft, at Brockenhurst in the New Forest, Hampshire, a location that might have suggested itself to him when he was stationed there on war-related work. It is said that the factory was located in what were possibly Nissan huts on the outskirts of the village. The first announcement of the company's activity

came with an advertisement in the December 1946 edition of *Marine Models* magazine. This was for the International 12-ft dinghy kit mentioned above, which sold for 70 shillings (equivalent to about £175 today) and came packaged in an ex-WD cardboard mortar shell case!

Within the tubular packaging would be found three envelopes containing the pre-cut resin bonded plywood frame parts, printed plywood sheets for the planking, a sail made by Ratsey and Lapthorn, a shaped mast, an instruction book, paints, hardware and a simple tool kit. By any standards, this was a very complete and modern kit, which was claimed to be within the ability of even a twelve-year old boy to complete. (One wonders, though, how well he might have coped with the clinker planking.)

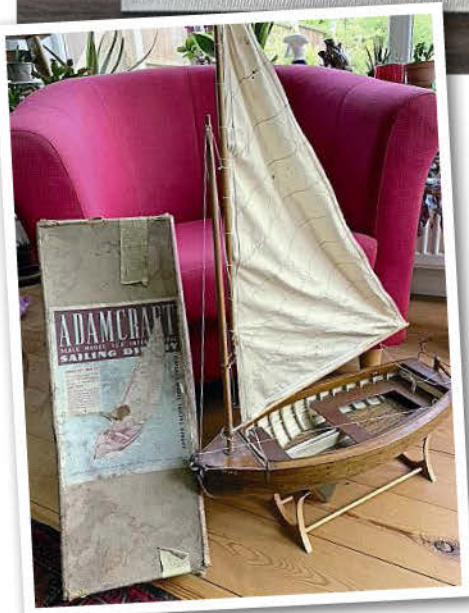
The full-size 'International' 12 ft dinghy on which the kit was based was designed by George Cockshott in 1912 for the Olympic Games. First used at the 1920 Olympics, it is still raced worldwide today. At 18 inches (457mm) long, the model is 1:8 scale and built inverted on a pair of building stocks, or jigs, included with the kit, enclosing a centreboard box from which a metal keel plate may be extended. A forward mounted mast with what Adam describes in the



Packaging for the dinghy kit was an ex-WD mortar case!



Dinghy kit components.



Above: A factory assembled dinghy.

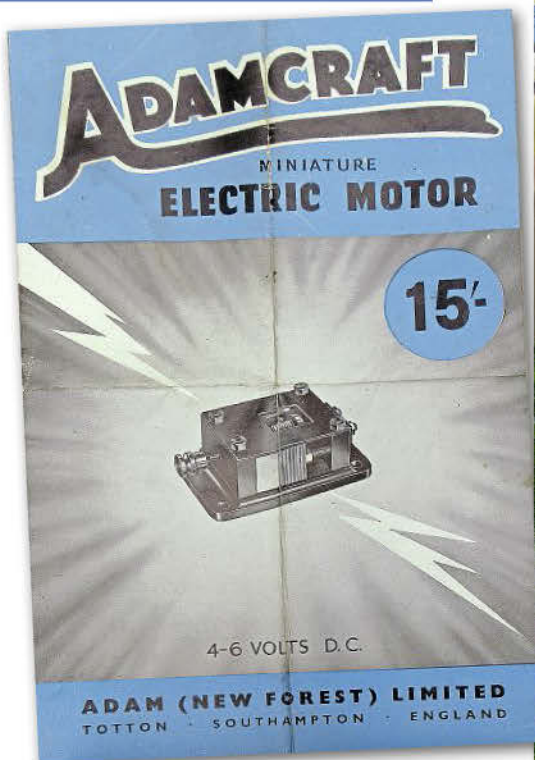
Right: A Dinghy tool kit, glue and finishes.

instructions as a gaff rig was supplied - though some dispute this description and consider it a Gunter rig. At some stage, the dinghy was also made available as a factory-built complete model, which was offered in a more conventional box. The completed

dinghy is a highly decorative object with its clinker-built hull and varnished timber finish; too nice to risk sailing in open waters perhaps, as word has it the two watertight compartments are insufficient to prevent it sinking if broached.



"By any standards, this was a very complete and modern kit"



Above: An instruction leaflet for the Adamcraft electric motor.

Right: An Adamcraft Seaplane Tender with Perkins engine cover and other items in an Adamcraft themed display.



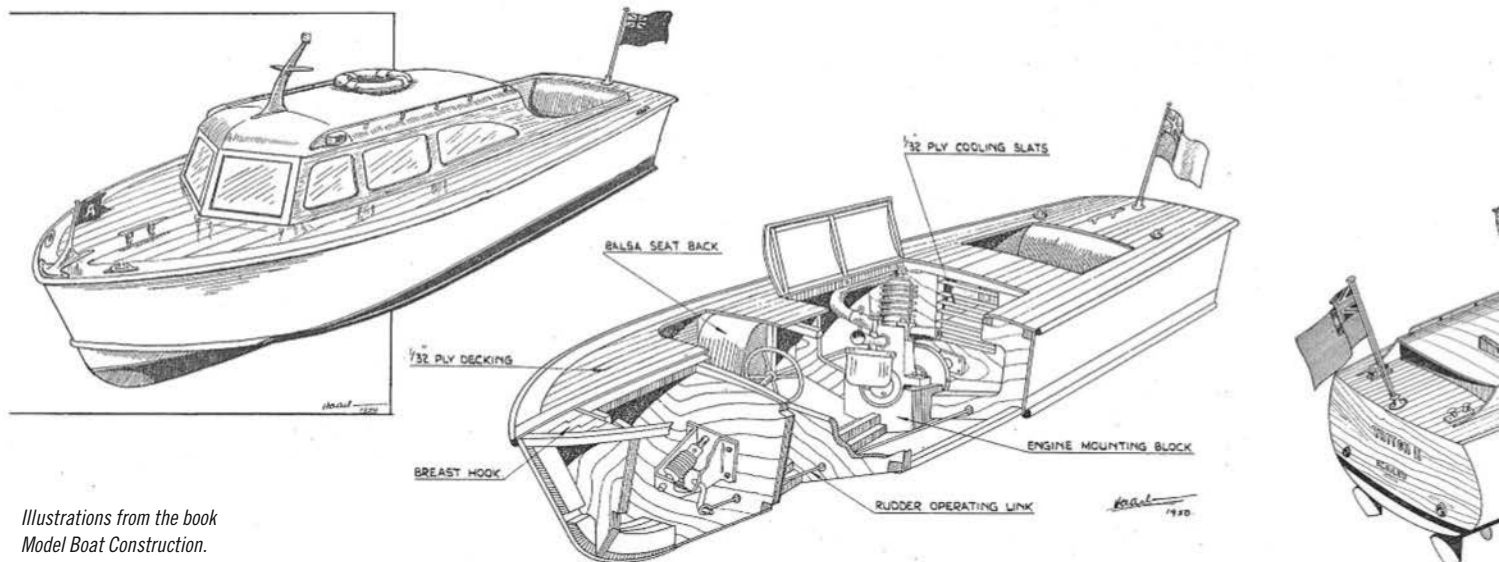
A sixpenny brochure released by Adamcraft in 1949 carried details of existing and new products. The Adamcraft 4-6-volt electric motor, for example, was a compact unit with a screw-down base, 2.25" x 1.75" x 1" (57 x 44 x 25mm), that sold for 15 shillings. It utilised Ticonal (Alnico) magnets, copper-manganese brush gear and self-lubricating bearings, making it very much state-of-the-art for the time, useful for powering a small craft or carrying out auxiliary functions in an early R/C set-up. An alternative version of the motor, without its base, came as a kit containing a two-part plastic housing for it that was a replica of the 100hp Perkins P6M engine. Such a scale engine representation

could sell well today I think, and a 3D-printed version immediately suggests itself.

Also new was a kit of the British Power Boat Company Mark II Seaplane Tender, originally built at Hythe. This was another nice choice of prototype, which resulted in a simple but attractive 30-inch (762 mm) long model to about 1:16 scale for powering by an electric motor or small diesel (the 1.3 cc Mills was recommended). The same hull was used for a kit of a fast cabin cruiser with

a full width superstructure. Featured was the usual Adamcraft built-up construction based on a 1/8-inch (3.2mm) ply framework covered with 1/16-inch (1.6mm) ply skins, assembled inverted over a building jig. Both had a single prop shaft, though the full-size Seaplane Tender had twin engines and shafts; an understandable concession in the interests of cost and simplicity. The kits retailed at 67 shillings and sixpence.

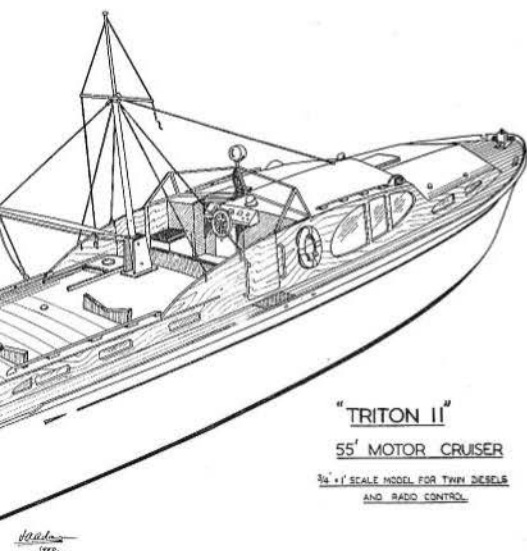
Harvey was a member of the Beaulieu



Illustrations from the book *Model Boat Construction*.



Model Power Boat Club and a keen exponent of fast model boats, especially hydroplanes. It is not surprising then that he offered a hydroplane kit, the Jet-Ho, following the release of the Jetex 200 rocket motor in June 1948. The simple 10-inch (254mm) craft depended very much on its lightness to achieve short duration high speeds. A smaller kit followed it, the all-balsa Jetcraft, when the much cheaper Jetex 50 unit became available.



An Adamcraft Perkins engine and motor kit.

Model Boat Construction

Harvey's book *Model Boat Construction* was published by Percival Marshall in 1952. It was quite a lavish production for the time, filled with constructional information and with fold-out plans for an Elco PT Boat and British Power Boat Company MTB, as well as many other drawings which are mostly dated 1950. The MTB and a larger cabin cruiser were being considered for production as kits and advertised in a brochure as "New Models coming into Production ... as soon as controls are relaxed and good materials and engineering facilities become available", but as far as I know they never saw the light of day. This may also apply to the 16-inch Sharpie sailing boat, though it was mentioned in Adamcraft's 6d brochure. A fine copy of the book in its dust cover, which I reviewed in more detail in the January 2014 issue of *Model Boats*, could cost up to £100 now, though £30 to £40 is more usual.

Adamcraft closes

Shortly after his book was published, in a surprising move, Harvey closed his Adamcraft business and relocated to Kenya. I don't know the reason for his swift departure and can only speculate. Were the difficult working conditions of post-war Britain to blame? Was it a family break-up, or was he advised to make the move to a warmer climate for health reasons? Whatever the case, he died on March 4, 1954, in Mombasa, Kenya at the age of only 45.

"Today the name of Adamcraft is unknown to most people, but surviving examples of his kits and products are keenly sought after by collectors"





The box label for the Seaplane Tender kit.

Adamcraft today

Today the name of Adamcraft is unknown to most people, but surviving examples of his kits and products are keenly sought after by collectors. Their rarity means they sometimes fetch quite high prices at auction. Harvey Adam will always be best remembered for his International 12 ft dinghy kit, examples of which, like its full-size counterpart, are still

“Harvey Adam’s short-lived company was probably the first to introduce modern built-up methods of model boat construction to post-war Britain”

displayed and raced today; in fact, the level of interest appears to be growing.

With some tuning and modification, this

little craft lends itself well to being radio-controlled as enthusiasts in several countries have demonstrated. For anyone unable to locate an original example, it is worth remembering that a reproduction can be made from the drawings in *Model Boat Construction*, though these show an alternative Bermudan rig with the mast located further aft; perhaps this was to be the next iteration. Drawings for the Seaplane Tender hull, 30-inch Cabin Cruiser, Triton II Motor Cruiser and several other models that Harvey was associated with can also be found in the book. Built-up models and occasionally unmade kits of the Seaplane Tender sometimes appear for sale or at shows.

Harvey Adam’s short-lived company was probably the first to introduce modern built-up methods of model boat construction to post-war Britain, with complete kits featuring lightweight die-cut resin-bonded plywood frame components under a thin plywood skin at a time when clumsy carved-from-solid or bread-and-butter construction still predominated. This paved the way for later companies such as Aerokits and Veron to further popularise the method and Harvey Adam deserves recognition for that.

In closing, I give my thanks to Roger Clements, an Adamcraft enthusiast, who was able to help clarify some historical points and who provided most of the photos accompanying this text. ●



Adamcraft (New Forest) Ltd., of Southampton, have put on the market a kit for a 30-in. R.A.F. Seaplane Tender. This type of model is probably the most popular of any at the present time. The hull is stable, easily driven, has ample freeboard and has a smart, modern appearance. The photograph reproduced on this page is taken from a model of this type made from the Adamcraft Kit, which, as will be seen, makes a very wholesome model of good appearance. The method of construction follows full size building practice. The instruction book, which

accompanies the kit, describes the construction in great detail, and with the clear illustrations and scale drawings, will enable the veriest tyro to produce a good model. It is, in fact, a valuable treatise on the construction of this type of model. The materials supplied are very complete and well up to the high standard one expects from this firm. From a similar kit a fast Cabin Cruiser may be built. Both models have been designed for use either with the Adamcraft electric motor, the Mills diesel, or with any of the small i.c. engines available.

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A review of the Seaplane Tender/Cabin Cruiser from *Model Ships and Power Boats* magazine July 1949.

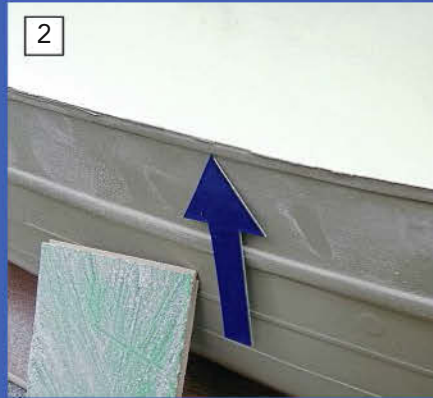
A bumbling Brunings build

THE

S.S. CHRISTIAAN BRUNINGS

John Mileson shares his observations on building and installing a steam plant into this Deans Marine kit





"For the model boat enthusiast, this is heaven on earth!"

My wife and I don't venture far these days, so it took a lot of planning and courage to head out into unknown territory: the vast featureless fens of Cambridgeshire. PE7 3DH: this should, I reassured myself, as I programmed the postcode into my trusty(?) Sat Nav, get me to Dean's Marine, some 25 miles from home.

The purpose of my visit to Ron Dean's emporium of delights was to collect a pre-ordered steamer boat kit. I could of course have had it sent to me and let the delivery man cope with all the trials and tribulations. But being of an adventurous spirit(?), I opted for the road trip.

In the middle of nowhere, amidst acres of black fenland soil sits Dean's Marine, and, to my own secret amazement, I did actually manage to get us there (and back!). For the model boat enthusiast, this is heaven on earth! While having a large range of nautical accessories, it's the boat showroom that is particularly breathtaking. There are dozens of Dean's made-up boat kits to inspect. But it was the Christiaan Brunings kit that I had come to collect.

I chose this kit for two reasons. Firstly, because it appeared to be reasonably simple to build, and secondly, and more importantly, it was designed to accept a live steam plant.

First things first

At this stage of reviewing a kit, most contributors extoll the virtues of the cardboard box the kit in question comes in. Personally, I can't subscribe to their enthusiasm, except to say this one was entirely adequate.

Everything was well packed. The fibreglass hull was accompanied by two trays of small items, some strips of wood, laser-cut plastic for the superstructure and a set of instructions, both in paper form and on a disc. The latter may be very useful. I don't know, as I have no means of viewing it.

The hard copy, Ron says, should be read a number of times to ensure a full understanding of the construction. That may be so for the average builder but, not the sharpest tool in the box, I was still confused after scrutinising them half a dozen times. Mind you, considering I was trying to follow these instructions after just having returned from the kitchen where I'd wrestled with the opening of a cardboard carton of soup,



maybe I'm not the best judge of what's simple and what's not!

I usually start any project by ensuring I have all the materials required to complete the build. So, over the next few days I gathered together the paints, adhesives, filler, etc, I was going to need.

Prepping the hull

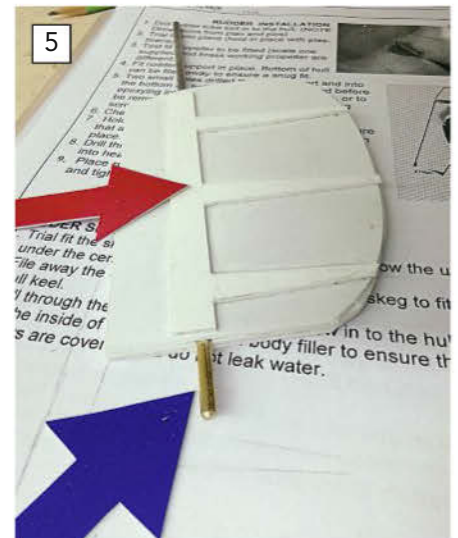
My first task was to thoroughly wash the fibreglass hull and leave it to dry (see Photo 1). This was then lightly abraded using something resembling a pot scourer from Halfords to remove its shiny surface, hence creating, I hoped, a key for the paint to adhere to.

As the weather was still reasonably warm, I decided to spray the hull with grey primer and gloss topcoat (Ford Dove Grey, from Halfords). This as it would no doubt get scratched during the build, but at least a base coat had been applied and the colour of the hull deemed acceptable.

Sanding down the top edge of the hull wasn't a pleasant job (see Photo 2).

The instructions recommend using aluminium oxide 'sandpaper'. I tried this, but it seemed to be taking forever to remove the excess fibreglass, so I instead donned my face mask and with my Dremel and Permagrit cylinder cutter hacked away the excess fibreglass in a matter of minutes.

The next directive in the instructions is the cleaning and flattening the inside 40mm of the hull – easier said than done. Due to



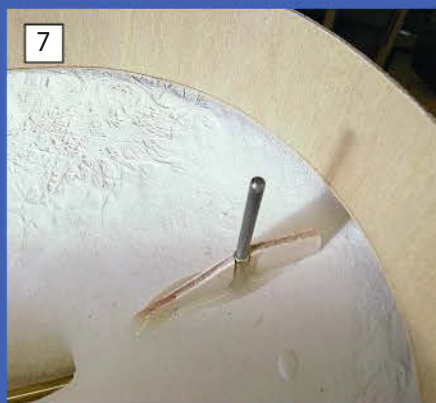
the various thickness of the moulding, some areas were up to 3mm thick, while others were almost through to the gel coat. I ground away the thickest parts with my Dremel, but it soon became obvious that I wouldn't be able to get a consistently good finish all the way round, so I 'lined' the inner top 40mm with 0.8mm plywood, thus covering over the rough surface. I stuck this on with Evostick 'Sticks like ****'. This silicone adhesive stuck the differing surfaces together with ease. Most impressed! (see Photo 3).

Portholes

It was time to move on to drilling the portholes. This proved a bit tricky. I put masking tape over the area to be drilled, hoping this would prevent the fibreglass from chipping. I also used an appropriately sized centre drill bit in my electric drill to create the holes. Despite taking great care, though, all the resulting holes were decidedly ragged (see Photo 4). I decided, therefore, to replace the portholes supplied with a set of glazed brass ones, trusting the brass lip would cover the damage.

It may appear I am jumping from one job to another – and in that assertion you would be correct!

"This silicone adhesive stuck the differing surfaces together with ease. Most impressed!"



The rudder

The rudder was my next task. Cut from the plasticised laser-cut card, assembly seemed easy enough. There were two issues here, though. Firstly, I couldn't get the spindle to go through the rudder and protrude out to act as a lower bearing point with the skeg. Secondly, the embossing on the card wasn't sufficiently deep to give a convincing outline of what I assumed to be steel strapping. Obviously, these concerns needed rectifying. So, a brass rod was glued in as an extension to the spindle, and the 'steel' straps were made from 'Plastikard' and glued on (see **Photo 5**). Before gluing the rudder tube into the hull, the rudder assembly was fitted to check everything was square (see **Photo 6**). Once satisfied everything was alright, the tube, it was glued in with epoxy resin (see **Photo 7**). I think this would probably have been strong enough, but I did add some P38 filler to make sure.

The skeg supplied in the kit (white metal) would have been adequate in providing protection to the rudder, but I chose to make a replacement skeg from brass (see **Photo 8**). This would serve two purposes: it would protect the rudder and, also, act as a lower bearing for the large rudder blade.

The servo

While working at the stern, the servo was fitted. I couldn't figure out from the instructions how this should be implemented due to the large difference in levels. Deviating from the instructions, then, the servo was fitted as shown (see **Photo 9**). I'd need to disguise my handywork somehow but would deal with that later on.

As I was awaiting delivery of the steam plant, I next decided to turn my attention

to the superstructure. I really wanted to get this finished and to fit the deck, but with the propeller shaft and steam plant still to fit, I thought it prudent to show some patience (not usually one of my virtues!).

The superstructure

Most of the superstructure comes in the form of fibreglass mouldings and etched sheets of plastic card. In terms of the former, the majority required considerable fettling, while the latter required very careful removal from the card. I opted to replace the original fibreglass mouldings with scratch-built ones made from plywood. There were two reasons for this decision; firstly, the detailing on the fibreglass moulding was ill defined; secondly, both Ron at Dean's Marine and Jerry at Clevedon Steam had pointed out the importance of plenty of ventilation for the gas fired boiler. So, the original designs were modified to allow air to access the hold wherever possible. The aft companion way illustrates this (see **Photo 10**); the one supplied in the kit is shown to the fore. This and the other deck installations were cut from 2mm and 1.5-mm plywood, using the original mouldings as patterns.

The laser cut plastic card for the wheelhouse, etc, went together well. I used what I think is called a 'scawper' to redefine the planking (see **Photo 11**). Some fillets of wood were glued in to strengthen the corners. Bearing in mind my model was to be steam powered, I knew I'd regularly need to remove the superstructure to gain access to the steam plant, so construction here had to be robust.

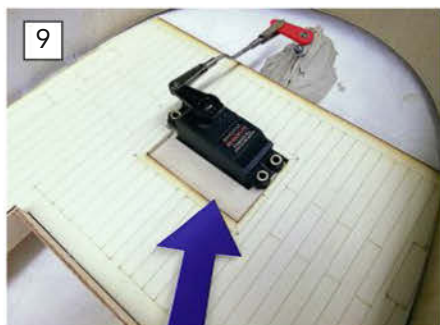
More detailing followed, using both items supplied with the kit and other bits and bobs I scratch built myself.

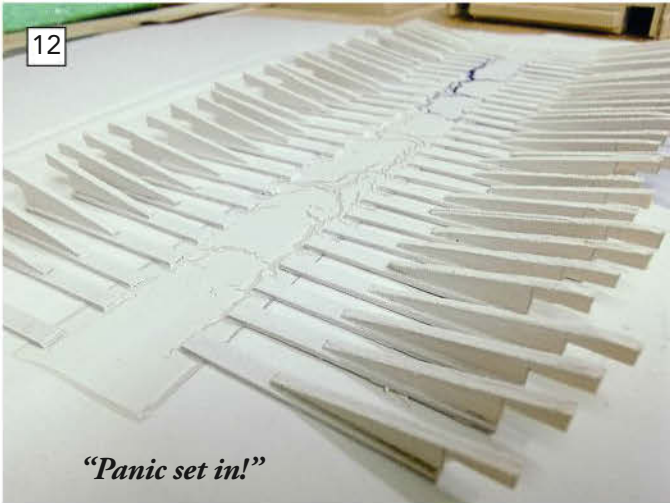
I was beginning to realise with all the modifications I was making, this was not going to end up as a true representation of the original ship. For example, I could not get the bulwark support brackets from the kit to fit well over the modified beading between the deck and bulwark, so new ones were made from plywood (see **Photo 12**) – these were not as accurate, but (for my skill level) more fit for purpose. The stern area required dramatic changes to cover the rudder servo and its linkage. For this reason, the original plywood rear deck, while attractive, didn't work well. **Photo 13** shows the deck as supplied and my replacement.

Funnel fiasco

Next came the funnel. This is supplied as a pre-cut length of plastic waste pipe. I had already cut and filed a hole to the right diameter in the engine room/boiler housing. It appeared to be a simple enough job to bond the pipe in place using epoxy resin. I suppose it depends on what you call simple! The obvious difficulty is getting it vertical in all planes. I applied the epoxy resin to the base of the funnel and located it in the hole in the top of the boiler housing. So far, so good.

The set square I intended to use to check the funnel alignment, however, wasn't where it was supposed to be (yes, I know!). After





having finally found it under all the other debris in the shed and returned to the boat some five minutes later, the funnel had, in the meantime, gradually slid down into the bowels of the boat, the adhesive acting as a lubricant!

Bearing in mind I was using 5-minute epoxy, time was against me. The funnel had come to rest with just the top poking above the superstructure, and the adhesive well and truly starting to set in this position. Panic set in! I grabbed hold of the exposed bit of plastic tube, and it became a battle between me and the fast-setting adhesive. Eventually, I managed to twist and pull the offending article clear of the housing, ruining the funnel at the same time.

The anchor wyndlass

Yet to take delivery of the steam plant, I couldn't glue the deck down yet for fear of limiting the access when fitting the steam plant, so I then focused all of my attention on getting the detailing work above deck completed (see Photo 14).

With the weather being reasonably mild, the wheelhouse and associated structures were finish painted, too.

Fitting the homemade bulwark rails cut from 3mm ply went surprisingly well. These were stuck onto the narrow edge of the bulwarks with epoxy resin (see Photo 15).

So, while on a bit of a high, I made an

"Sometimes it pays to be an optimist. Not on this occasion"

attempt at what I thought would be an easy assembly job: the anchor wyndlass. The white metal components were tipped from their bag, and even at a quick glance I could see problems galloping towards me. (see Photo 16). Firstly, the castings were of mediocre quality, with mould mismatch, excess flash on the very delicate castings, and areas of distortion and lack of metal. However, I thought if I could at least get it assembled, a good thick coat of paint might hide the problems. Sometimes it pays to be an optimist. Not on this occasion. The instructions were indecipherable, and the grainy photos of little help. The instructions also referred to a 'gypsey'. Chambers dictionary makes reference to the word 'gypsy', but makes no mention is made in any nautical context, however it's spelt! I spent an hour or so trying to get something, anything, to fit. In the end I gave up and have added these bits to an ever-growing collection of various manufacturers bits that really need to go straight in the bin but might come in useful in the future. Who am I kidding!

The anchor windlass is a major feature at the bow of this boat. I contacted Mobile Marine in Lincoln and the following day a windlass kit arrived. The quality of the white metal components was reasonable,



requiring minimal cleaning up. Now then to the instructions for this windlass.... These come on a single sheet, with sketches on one side and grainy coloured photos and parts identification on the other. The sketches were alright, but when reference was made to the photos it was impossible to distinguish any of the salient features. I did use up all the bits but ended up gluing them on anywhere simply make the end result 'look pretty' (see Photo 17).

Full steam ahead?

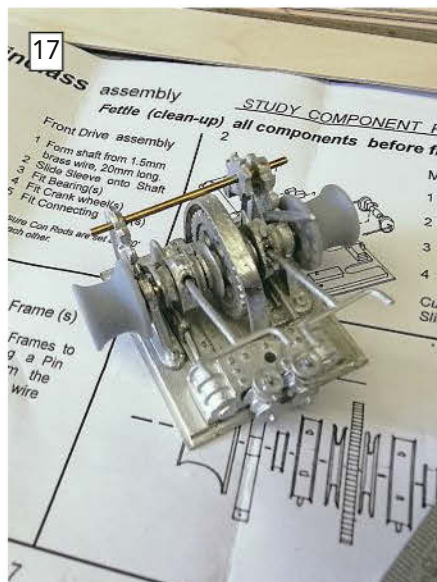
With the arrival of the steam plant, progress was made below decks. A pad, made from 9mm plywood was bonded into the bottom of the hull. This would serve as the base onto which the steam plant could be fixed. Adding a steam plant to an existing kit does throw up one major problem. The boiler and chimney must line up with the original plastic funnel, with the hope that, once complete, the trim of the boat can be adjusted with lead ballast. Getting the funnel vertical in both planes was down to the use of set squares – and luck!

(see Photo 18).

What I hadn't bargained for was the limited clearance between the copper boiler chimney (outside diameter 28mm) and the internal diameter of the plastic pipe (32mm). While it was a 'comfortable fit', there was little space around the chimney to help with the draught required for exhausting the steam. Plus, and this is a big plus, the boiler chimney gets very hot. The possibility of the plastic funnel melting became apparent.

I contacted Jerry at Clevedon Steam, and he concurred; this was likely to be a major problem. After protracted discussion over the phone, we agreed there were really only a couple of options. The first was to endeavour to insulate the chimney using stick-on silver insulation foil. This would probably make the removal of the chimney and superstructure, for boiler servicing, difficult, particularly at pondside. The more realistic option was to fit a larger diameter chimney to replace the original (well, second original!) with a larger diameter piece of pipe, thus overcoming the ventilation problem.

Where, then, to find a bit of pipe about 2 inches diameter? While climbing over all



"Both options were risky, and fraught with personal danger"

the accumulated rubbish and things that 'may come in useful' in the dark interior of the garden shed, it suddenly struck me! The rotary washing line aluminium pole must be about the right diameter. It would need about a foot cutting off the bottom of the pole. What I wondered would my wife have to say about this? I opted not to tell her. Should she notice sometime in the future, I could deny all knowledge, or maybe suggest that over the winter she had grown a foot or more! Both options were risky, and fraught with personal danger.

Adopting a 'devil may care' attitude, I cut off about a foot off the aluminium pole, which was 2-inch (50mm) in diameter, considerably larger than required. The next problem was removing the original plastic funnel (which you may recall had caused me such grief) and fitting the replacement to the existing superstructure. With a bit of aggression

and a coping saw, I managed to cut off the plastic pipe, causing only minor damage. The hole in the superstructure required considerable enlargement. A series of holes were chain drilled in the plywood and the excess material chiselled out. When fitted, the new funnel did look a little large, certainly compared to the original. Never mind; at least it resolved the problem. **Photo 19** illustrates the difference in diameter between the original and the clothesline post.

One of the great difficulties of fitting a steam plant is to get the balance right. It's difficult to gauge during the build how the finished trim of the boat will end up. The unknowns at this stage are the effect of a boiler filled with water, a gas tank with liquid gas, and a condenser with wastewater /oil. Add to this list, the battery and electronic equipment. The other restriction is the openings in the pre-formed plywood deck. At the end of the day, therefore, it's down to guesswork. If it looks right, it probably is right (see **Photo 20**).

Before going any further, I had to decide whether or not to run the steam plant in situ. It had already been successfully run on the bench. Running it in the boat can create further problems, since oil tends to be splashed about, hands get greasy, and any further painting of the model can therefore be difficult. So, mistake or not, I chose to wait until the boat was finished before trying this.

All that remained to be done was the final fitting operations. The deck was glued on, a final coat of paint sprayed onto the outer hull, and all the pre-made deck fittings added (see **Photo 21**). Fitting the boiler and associated fittings was a tight squeeze in places. This is evident when looking through the ventilation hatches into the 'boiler room' (see **Photo 22**).

It was now time to fire up the boiler and check everything ran smoothly. Fortunately, all went well. A 'bath' test was carried out, and the trim of the vessel adjusted. Finally, the model ready for a trip to Wicksteed and its maiden voyage.





All things considered...

The building of any model, whether scratch built or constructed from a kit, is a very subjective exercise. After all, each of us have different expectations, based on previous experience and expertise.

My experience of building model boats is admittedly very limited. What follows, then, is a serious attempt to combine both criticism and praise in equal measure.

I have in the recent past purchased a number of fibreglass hulls from Dean's Marine. Each model based on these hulls has turned out well. The difference in this instance was that I chose the full kit for the Christiaan Brunings steam vessel, as opposed to a hull only.

This kit was chosen for its ability to accommodate a live steam engine and, I must admit, having seen a completed example of it in Ron's showroom, it does produce a very attractive model.

I should say at this juncture I am absolutely delighted with my finished vessel, but, and there is always a 'but', I did encounter some problems. As a relatively newcomer to model boat building, I profess to prefer building from scratch rather than from kits. In the past, the kits I have purchased have, in my mind, always had some failings, the Christiaan Brunings kit being no exception.

In fairness, had I opted to fit an electric motor, this kit would have been much easier to build. The addition of the steam plant did complicate the matter. This was mainly due to the lack of space in the 'hold' to accommodate the boiler, engine, condenser, gas tank and the servo for the engine regulator. I was also very aware that I would need access for servicing the steam plant and, if necessary, its removal.

As for the kit itself, I did have to make

some major modifications in order to fit the steam plant; a very obvious one was the replacement of the original plastic funnel for the larger diameter aluminium example. I was given to understand the kit was designed to suit the original Cheddar steam plant, so would be equally compatible with the Clevedon Steam plant which is its direct successor. Clearly, I was mistaken.

I replaced some of the kit's original moulded superstructure with scratch-built plywood copies. Was this necessary? Probably not, but I thought this beneficial for two reasons: 1) because some of the mouldings supplied were a little 'tired'; i.e., the detail was not very pronounced, and 2) as the advice from Ron (Deans Marine) and Jerry (Clevedon Steam) had been that I needed to ensure adequate ventilation for the boiler burner. The latter meant modifying the designs to allow a greater through put of air. Possibly, the original components would have been adequate, but I could take no risks.

Overall, the kit was good.

The appearance of my example is due to the modifications I made, so it's somewhat different to the prototype, most obviously when comparing funnels!

I did leave off some of the detailed components in the kit. Operating a steam plant requires regular access to the plant, which in turn necessitates removing much of the superstructure, therefore greatly increasing the chance of damaging detail components. Model boats seem to be prone to damage at the best of times!

To sum up, I found this build quite challenging, but enormously pleasurable, and can thoroughly recommend the kit. It's not for the beginner, but I suspect the more experienced amongst you would overcome the 'difficulties' I encountered with ease. ●



"The appearance of my example is due to the modifications I made, so it's somewhat different to the prototype, most obviously when comparing funnels"



"Had I opted to fit an electric motor, this kit would have been much easier to build. The addition of the steam plant did complicate the matter"

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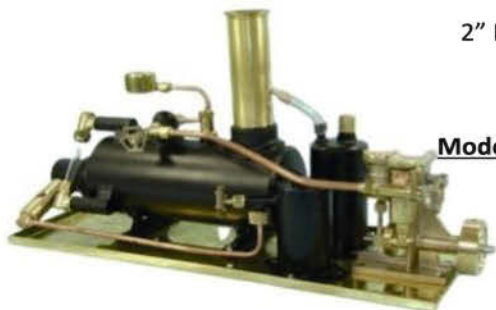
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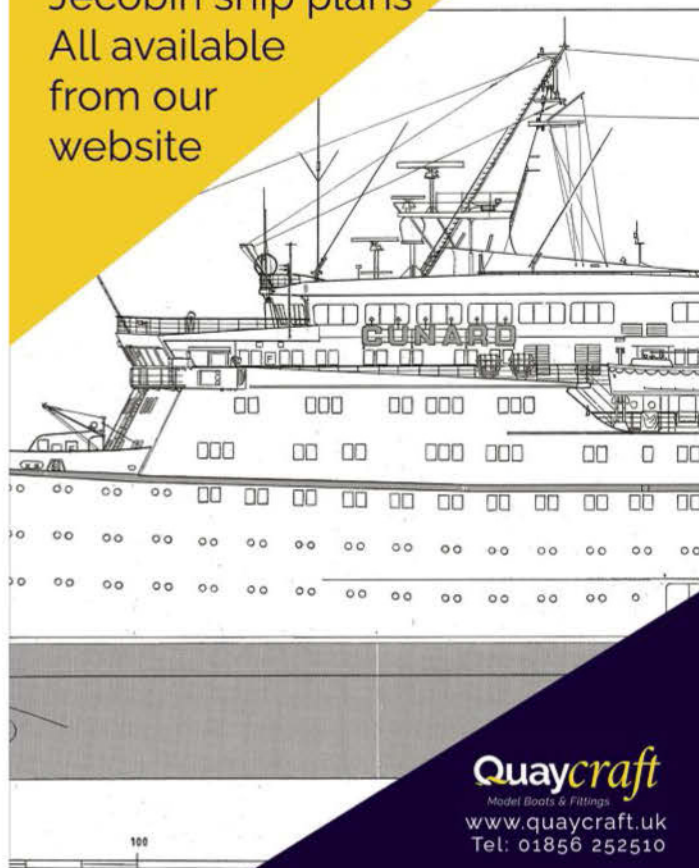
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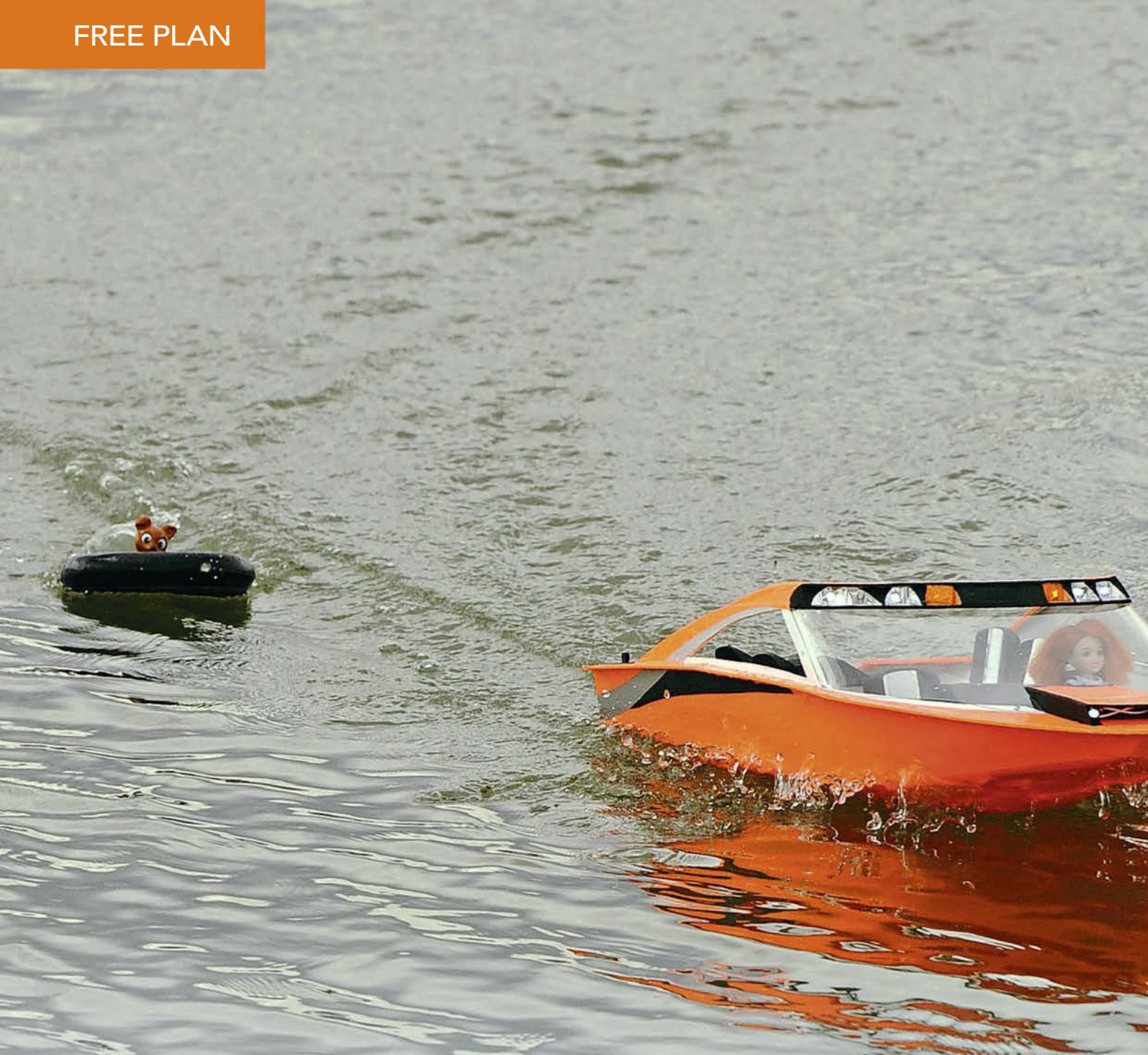
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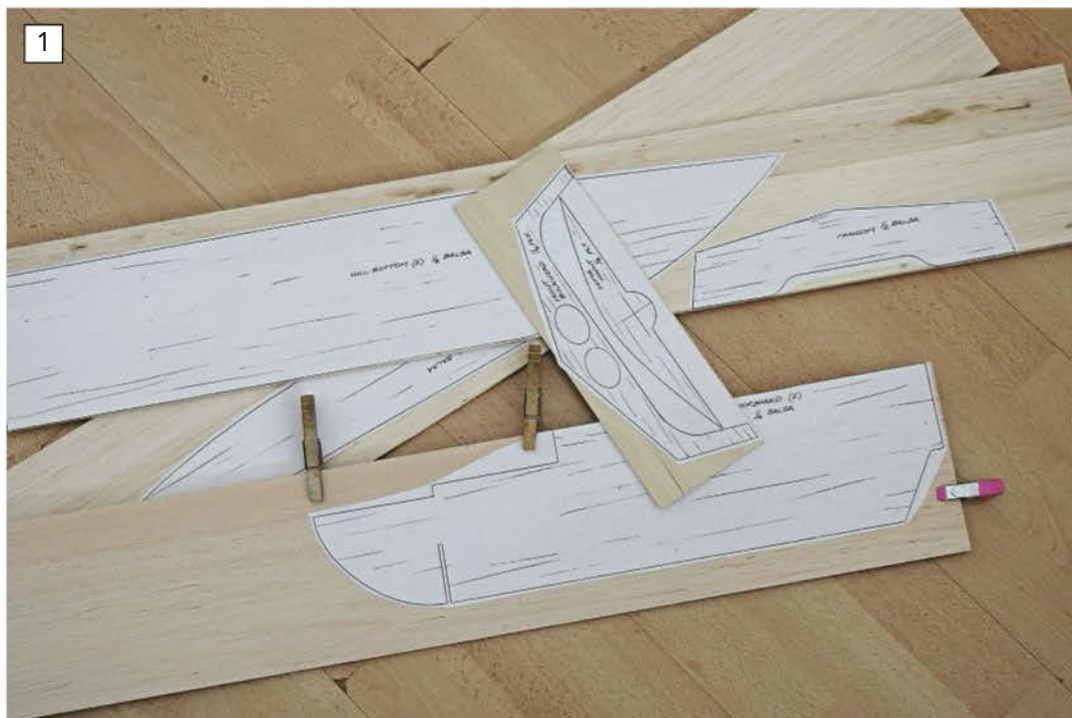
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One goal, One passion - Model Ships



Lake Skimmer

Ready to trip the light fantastic? OK, then simply follow **Clark Salisbury's** lead...



Before we begin the building process, let me explain the reasoning behind Lake Skimmer's design. The goal here was to create a model boat of as light a construction as possible, powered by a drive system also chosen specifically to keep weight to an absolute minimum.

I'd managed to bring in a previous model boat I'd designed at just 2 lb 13 ounces, but the aim with *Lake Skimmer* was to reduce that weight down yet further, to 2 lb 5 ounces or less, while keeping her basically the same size as her forerunner. This would mean more speed from the same amount of power, less strain on the motor, and, hopefully, with that combination, longer running time. I was also keen to try out a new (to me) method of covering the hull, using monocoque, which if you've ever built an R/C plane you will recognise as the plastic covering that shrinks with heat and can be used to cover the entire

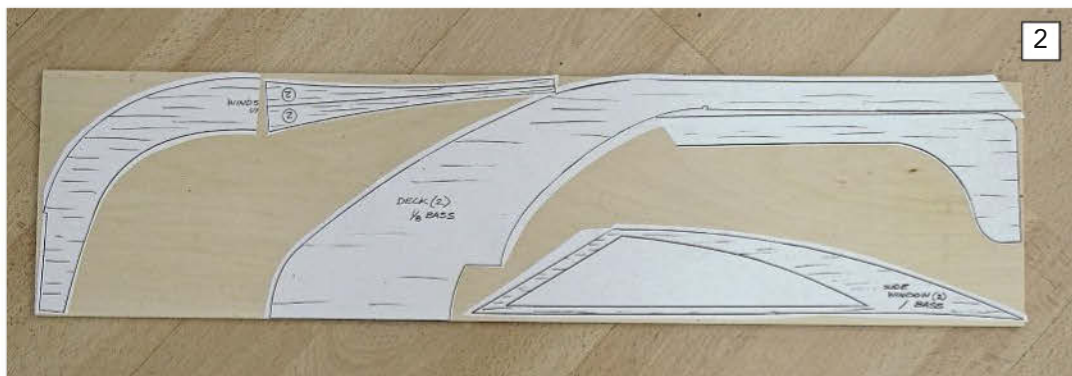
airplane. In the past I've always painted my hulls with fibreglass, which, if it's your preferred choice, should work perfectly well on *Lake Skimmer*, but as I knew monocoque would save just that little bit more weight, I was eager to put it to the test.

Last, but certainly not least, the intention was to successfully build what I think is the most beautiful model boat I've ever designed (with a little help from a dressmaker's styling design ruler). I'll let you be the judge of whether, or not, I've managed to achieve that. Let's build!

Cutting out the parts

As shown in **Photo 1**, the paper templates for the parts you're going to be cutting out first need to be glued with a glue stick to the appropriate types of wood. There are many duplicate parts required for this build, so you can simply stack your pieces of wood, glued

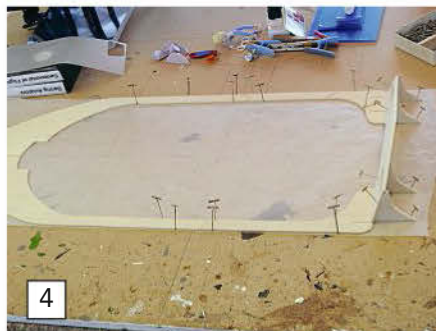
"The goal here was to create a model boat of as light a construction as possible, powered by a drive system also chosen specifically to keep weight to an absolute minimum"





just around the edges to hold them together, before cutting out the requisite number of copies with a scroll saw. In **Photo 2**, you will see how to nest the parts on the 3/32 bass wood so as to make best use of these sheets.

Photo 3 shows the seats cut out from the foam board and glued together with the seat connectors. At this point, all six seats have a combined weight of just 0.3 oz. For a bit of added fun, you might also like to fashion a tube from the 1-inch-thick construction foam in which a 'tuber' – a person (doll), or



perhaps a dog – can eventually ride along behind in the boat's wake. I managed to find a small model dog at my local dollar store; this was chosen not just because I like dogs but because it's small and has a low center of gravity, meaning the tube will be less likely to turn over when the boat is being run fast! In case of any spills while getting your thrills, though, you will still want to attach your dog/'tuber' figure with a screw to the bottom of the tube.



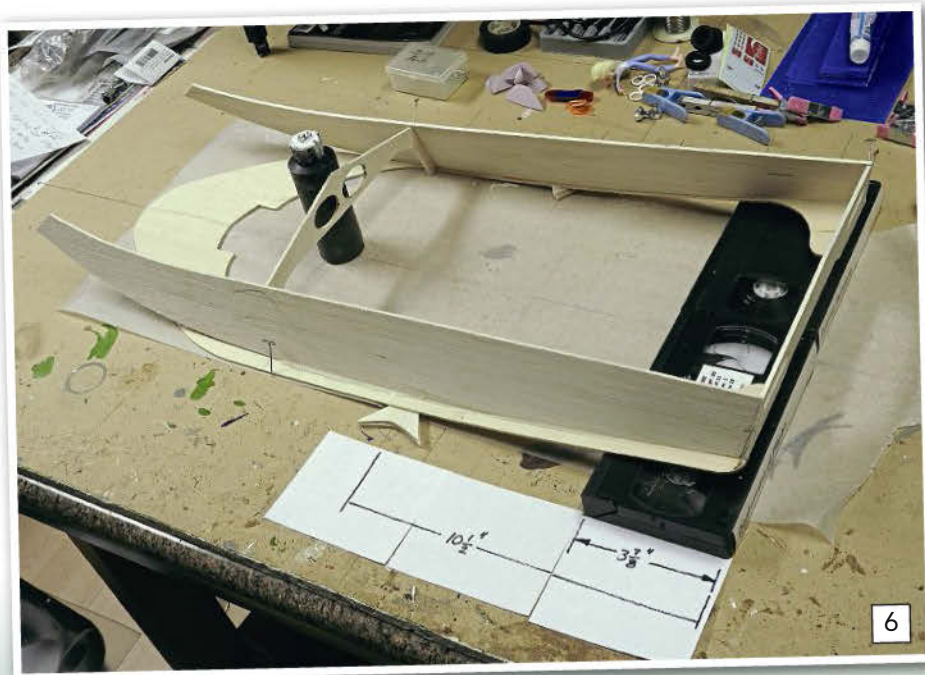
Building the hull

Photo 4 shows the four deck pieces glued together and pinned to my building board. Note the straight line I drew on my board; following suit will make sure that your deck is built perfectly straight as you glue these pieces together. Also, at the rear deck, note that the transom has been glued in place on top of the deck. The correct angle is being held by using the balsa transom locators. Make sure your transom is centered perfectly on the line.

Photo 5 shows the front bulkhead glued in position within notches on the deck. To hold this perpendicular, use a couple of bottles of paint or glue, as shown.

Photo 6 shows the hull sides being glued to the deck. Note that you are not gluing forward of the front bulkhead yet. You will need to employ a couple of 1-inch-thick spacers at 3 7/8-inches forward of the transom, and then also use the transom locators (two stacked together) as spacers at 10 1/2-inches forward of the transom. If you have some old VHS tapes, you will find these make excellent 1-inch-thick spacers.

"This is necessary to achieve the degree of bending required to get the balsa hull sides to meet the front surface of the deck before gluing them down"



"For a bit of added fun, you might also like to fashion a tube from the 1-inch-thick construction foam in which a 'tuber' – a person (doll), or perhaps a dog – can eventually ride along behind in the boat's wake"

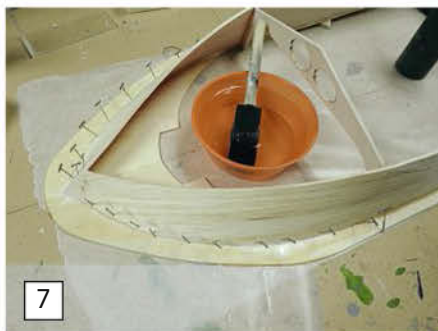
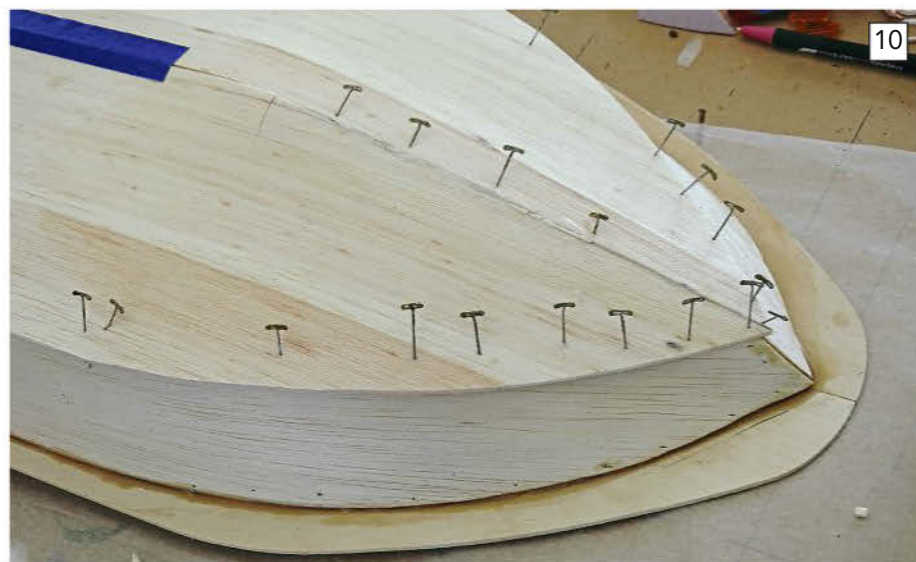


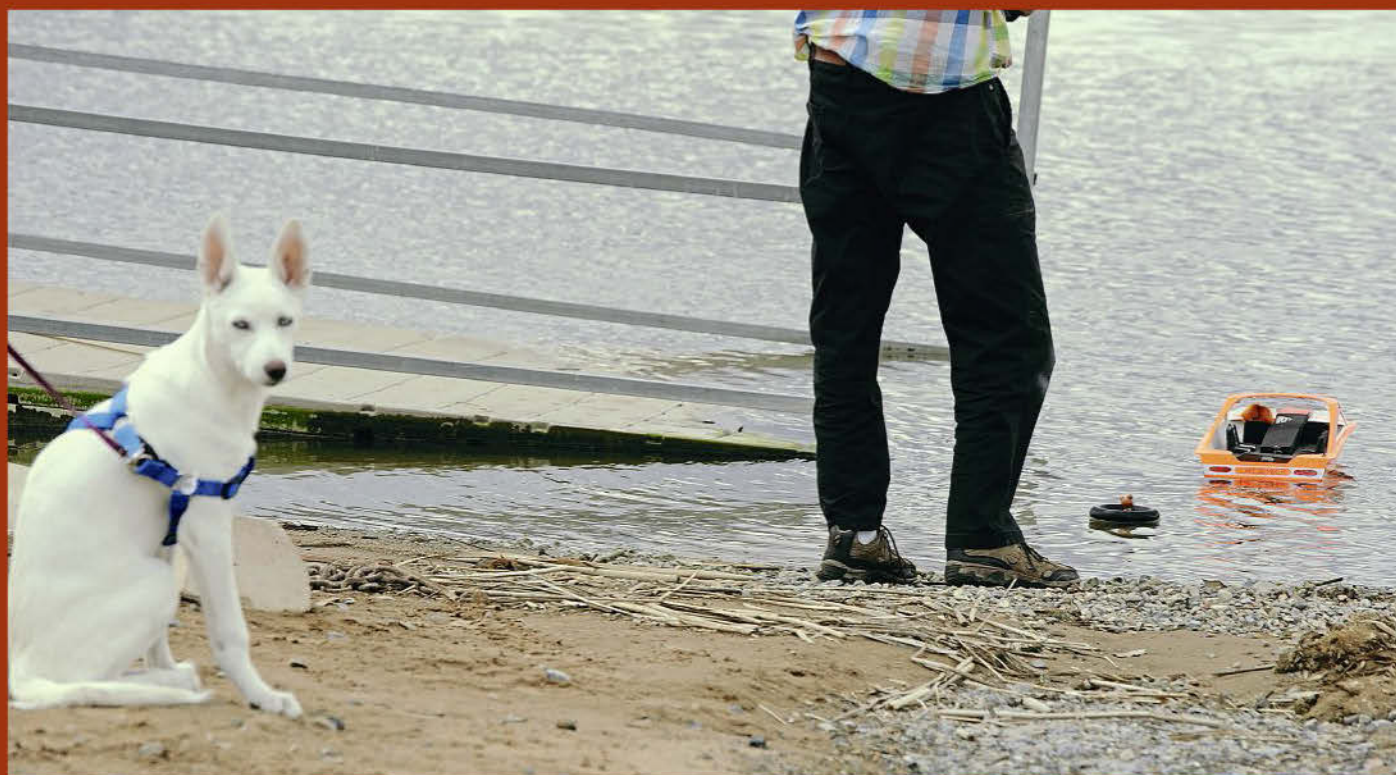
Photo 7 shows the bowl of water and foam brush I used to wet the front of the hull. This is necessary to achieve the degree of bending required to get the balsa hull sides to meet the front surface of the deck before gluing them down. Use plenty of small T-pins to hold the sides firmly in place until all glue has dried, after which, you may still need to add another bead of glue to fill in any gaps.

Photo 8 shows the bottom of my hull sides being sanded. Use a long flat sanding block to do this and be sure to sand your hull sides so that the front bulkhead is even with the hull sides.

In **Photo 9** you will see one side of the hull bottom being glued to the front bulkhead, and to the hull sides. Again, use a lot of small T-pins to secure here. Once one side has dried, you can then start gluing the other side of the hull bottom. Note that nothing in front of the bulkhead should be glued yet.

Photo 10 shows the front of the hull bottom glued to the front sides of the hull. As previously, you will need to wet both the upper and lower areas of the hull bottom pieces so that they can be bent enough to meet the sides of your hull. Again, use plenty of small T-pins to hold everything place while your glue dries. There will then be some trimming and sanding off required so that smooth lines can be established along the entire length of the hull bottom.





Attaching rudder and drive components

Photo 11 shows the rudder shaft tube being glued inside of the rudder tube mount pieces. First of all, the rudder shaft outside tube will need to be cut to exactly 1.5-inches long. It can then be sandwiched between five pieces of 1/8-inch balsa. Make sure that two pieces are glued together first, then the small pieces, with the tube, before finally gluing the other two larger pieces together. The

bottom of the brass tube should protrude 3/16th of an inch below the bottom of the assembly. Once dry, glue the whole assembly to the front of the transom and to the bottom of the hull. Then (once again, after your adhesive has dried) glue the rudder servo mount to this assembly and the back of the transom, as shown in **Photo 12**. Note that there are two servo mount holes, and you can mount a servo to whichever side works best for you and your radio, especially if

there's no servo reversing option. The rudder shaft should be cut to exactly 2 7/16-inch length, and make sure you do NOT cut off the slotted end of the rudder shaft, as this is where the rudder will be soldered to the shaft. Indeed, you can go ahead and do this soldering now, as shown in **Photo 13**.

Photo 14 shows the boat stand being mount assembled and glued together. Cut two pieces of 3/8-inch wooden dowel to a length of 8-inches and glue as shown in this

“Note that there are two servo mount holes, and you can mount a servo to whichever side works best for you and your radio”





11



12

photo. Going forward, this mount will be used whenever the hull is upright.

Photo 15 shows the drive shaft supports glued together. You will be using one on top of the hull bottom, and the other underneath the hull bottom.

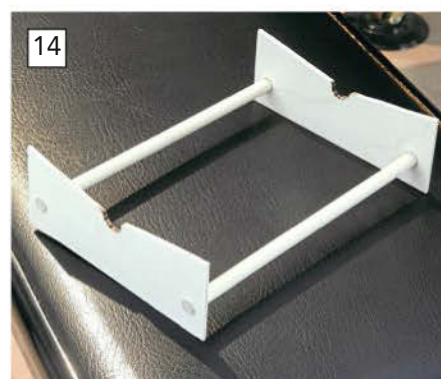
In **Photo 16**, first of all, note how the plywood drive shaft supports are glued in place, and how the drive shaft tube should be used to hold them centered. Next, the drive shaft tube needs to be epoxied into these supports, both



13

above and below, as shown in **Photo 17**.

Now, although not shown, one of the brass couplings in the drive shaft kit will need to be drilled to 5/32-inch diameter so that it can be fitted onto the motor. Note how (again, see **Photo 16**) the back face of the motor mount must be glued in position exactly 3-5/8-inches in front of the brass drive shaft tube. Before gluing this in place on the hull bottom, you will want to assemble the complete drive assembly: the motor with the brass coupling, the nylon U-joint, brass coupling, 1/8-inch wheel collar, and then the nylon thrust washer. This can now be



14



15



16



17



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“Hook up the LEDs to the two AAA batteries in the holder, turn off all the lights, and you can admire how cool the gauges in your instrument panel look all lit up!”



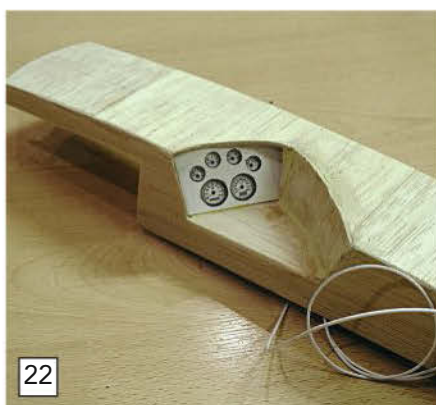
18

inserted into the brass drive shaft tube. On the rear side, another nylon thrust washer must be added, followed by the small steel rod through the drive shaft, the propellor, and finally the lock nut to retain the propellor. Also note that the three motor mount gussets need to be glued to the hull bottom and the motor mount, as shown; these gussets hold the motor mount on a 14-degree angle compared to the hull bottom.

Photo 18 illustrates the taillights mount glued in position. Before gluing these to the hull bottom, however, install your red taillight lenses flush with the outside of the transom. I used epoxy around the edges of my red lenses to ensure no water could get in.



19



NB The LED taillights are glued into the light mounts, and the white wires are soldered to the leads. LED lights only work one way, so the short leads on each LED light need to be wired to positive on the AAA batteries, while the long lead on each LED needs to be wired to negative. I am using all white wire, so I just painted the ends of the leads that are positive black.

Photo 19 shows the main drive battery holder glued to the hull. I glued this a quarter inch forward of the rudder servo mount. Also at this point, the floor mount should be glued to the servo mount and the battery holder.

Photo 20 shows the air tunnel top glued to the air tunnel sides. Note that the instrument

panel cut out is on the left side in my photo. You may want to build a right-side driver boat, to match the way cars are configured in the UK. Please note, your air tunnel should not be glued to the hull of the boat yet.

Photo 21 shows the air tunnel upside down, with the instrument panel base glued to the air tunnel. The bottom of this base is exactly $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch above the bottom of the air tunnel. Also, the front LED light mounts are glued in position at the front of the air tunnel, and they should be $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch rearward of the tunnel front. In this photo, the LEDs are also in place, two being attached to the two holes in the instrument panel base – these will light up the gauges. The other two LEDs

are epoxied to the front tunnel light mounts. Again, solder all the positive leads together first, then the negative leads. There should be about 16-inches of wire lead going to the rear of the boat also, where the AAA battery holder will be located.

Photo 22 shows the instrument panel with its gauges glued to the back, and also the instrument filler, glued in place. Once the glue has dried, hook up the LEDs to the two AAA batteries in the holder, turn off the lights, and you can admire how cool the gauges in your instrument panel look all lit up! This is also a good way of testing all your LEDs are working.

Photo 23 shows the air tunnel glued to the hull. Note that there are four air tunnel locaters, which should be exactly $2\frac{5}{8}$ -inches apart and centered on the front bulkhead and on the motor mount. These should be glued in place and allowed to dry before then gluing the air tunnel to the hull. At its centre, the front of the air tunnel should be exactly $1\frac{1}{4}$ -inch from the very front tip of the hull.

Photo 24 shows the rear step parts all glued together at the rear of the floorboard. The floorboard halves will also need to be glued together along the centerline. Make sure the hole in the rear step lines up with the floor mount you've installed (see Photo 19).

Photo 25 shows the foam light mount glued to the upper rim windshield parts. Everything is glued together at this point. The cutouts in the windshield rim parts should be $9\frac{3}{4}$ -inches apart, as shown.





Photo 26 shows the glued in headlight well reflectors, along with the epoxied in LEDs and amber lenses in the two inside headlight wells. When installing LEDs, I usually ensure the short LED lead is always on top, as that makes it a lot easier to not cross wires later when you're soldering all the leads together. You should also do your soldering at this point, and again, leave about 18-inches of wire on the right side; this will go rearward to the AAA battery holder later on.

Photo 27 illustrates the headlight/side window assembly glued together. I would suggest you tape two pieces of paper to each other and draw lines 10 3/4-inches apart on these, you can then pin everything together as shown; use the center headlight jig and

the side window jigs to maintain the correct angle while gluing.

Photo 28 shows the assembly built in **Photo 27** now glued to the top deck. It should be centered so that the same amount of top deck shows on each side. The rear of this assembly should be 2 3/4-inches forward from the rear of the top deck. After your adhesive has dried, glue in the windshield pillars; these should protrude about 1/8th of an inch forward of the front of your side window pillar. These need to be glued to the inside of the side window, but only at the top and bottom, so, cut a small piece of the windshield material and use that as a spacer, as later the front window is going to slide into the space you are creating between the





window pillar and the side window. You will also notice that on the right-hand rear deck of the boat I have installed a switch. You could use a toggle switch instead of a slider switch if you prefer, but this is for turning the lights off and on. You've now reached the point where you can glue your AAA battery holder to the bottom corner of the hull, solder all your wires and test your lights.

Photo 29 shows the removable floorboard, complete with seating, and my boat pilot in the driver seat. Meet Chelsea! She's Barbie's cousin and, being smaller and lighter than Barbie, is perfect for this boat. I'm not sure you can get her in the UK, but obviously whatever figure you decide upon, he/she needs to be short enough to fit under the top light bar above the windshield.

Photo 30 shows a thin (1/16-inch x 1/8-inch) strip of bass wood. This curves all the way up the rear window section and then across the backside of the light bar above the windshield, so you'll most likely have to fit this using several sections.

Photo 31 shows the rear of the hull, with the battery holders, the ESC, the receiver and the rudder servo hooked up. Quite a bit of construction foam is required to ensure your critical components don't sit in the bottom of the hull – just in case any water is taken aboard while running your boat.

Final checks

Before her first outing, I tested *Lake Skimmer* in the bathtub for leaks, and I'm very glad I did! There were, indeed, a couple of small leaks where the rudder and drive shaft exit the hull bottom. To remedy this, I cut about an inch of the monocote away from each of these parts and then painted over the areas with fibreglass. This worked perfectly and completely eliminated the problem. If using



this method, I recommend you do exactly as I did and make sure that when painting the fibreglass over the bottom center section you overlap the monocote by a 1/4 inch or so. Rest assured; the fibreglass will not eat away the monocote. What it will do is form a very watertight seal. Also, while your boat is in the bathtub, check your propeller drives the boat forward, not backwards. If it is going the wrong way, don't worry; all you'll need to do is change any two of the three wires going to the outrunner brushless motor. ●



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PS *Bilsdale*

PART
TWO

Colin Bishop completes this 1:48 scale period paddle steamer and reflects on lessons learnt





Having last month covered the hull construction, mechanism and electronics, let's now move on, starting with the fittings and above decks detailing. The overriding requirement here was to keep everything as light as possible so as to maintain stability once the boat was afloat; so, just as an example, aluminium tube was used instead of much weightier brass.

"The overriding requirement here was to keep everything as light as possible so as to maintain stability once the boat was afloat"

Biltsdale was a fairly simple vessel, so I knew the amount of scale fittings and detailing the model required was relatively modest. However, what I hadn't bargained for was that the plan wasn't always very specific and some fittings, such as the anchor, simply weren't shown at all. To some extent, old photos of the ship filled in the gaps, but these were mainly distant views and suggestive rather than explicit when it came down to detail. Some general research and extrapolation were therefore needed to produce a convincing semi-scale representation of the ship. The latter did have the advantage of giving me free rein to modify or even bodge some things for the sake of modelling convenience. These vessels were often subjected to minor alterations during their lives, so my conscience is reasonably clear – and I was only pleasing myself anyway!

Portholes were depicted with jewellery rings of the correct diameter and the use of a hole punch to make disks of transparent styrene painted blue on the reverse, which I fixed into place using Canopy glue. A touch of odourless cyano was subsequently applied round their circumference to improve water resistance. If they should fall off, however, I can easily replace them using a different glue combination.

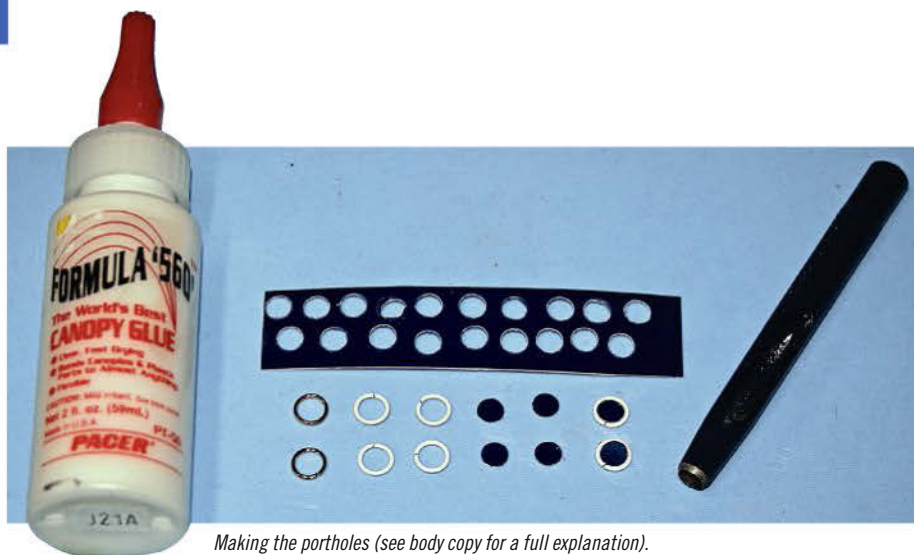
Railings are a prominent feature on excursion vessels and *Biltsdale* is no exception. Old photos show that they were generally covered with canvas to act as a windbreak for the passengers. On a model this can be problematic, as 'solid' barriers high up can introduce serious windage, and thus stability issues. The same applies to full size vessels. The mv *Shanklin Isle* of Wight Ferry of 1951 was fitted with plastic windbreaks over her railings in her last years as an excursion ship, and her captain told me that the windage made her much harder to handle. I therefore decided that, at least initially, my scale *Biltsdale* passengers would simply have to put up with the draught. I'm told they are used to that sort of thing 'oop North'!

"I'm told they are used to that sort of thing 'oop North!'"

Railings are quite tricky to make from scratch, requiring accurate jigs for soldering. Commercial railings are available but rather expensive, and you can't change the stanchion spacing, which can make them difficult to fit. I decide on a halfway house solution: purchasing pre-drilled stanchions from Caldercraft and using brass wire/rod for the rails. It wasn't cheap, but it did make things an awful lot easier at 1:48 scale.

The assembly procedure was as follows... I used 30 thou brass wire for the top rail, which entailed opening up the stanchion holes slightly with a micro drill bit. The two lower rails were 20 thou wire. Holes were drilled in the deck at all the stanchion positions and the stanchions temporarily inserted. The brass wires were then threaded through. This becomes a bit fiddly when corners are involved, but everything can fairly easily be coaxed into place. Joints in the railing sections should be between stanchions, and I used thin tube or tubular jewellery beads as sleeves. If necessary, the joints can always be masked with lifebelts mounted on the rails. Once set up, the wire/stanchion joints were 'painted' with Carr's solder paint, which combines solder with flux and just requires a touch with a soldering iron to make a strong and clean joint. The finished rail sections can then be unplugged, cleaned up, painted (preferably sprayed) and glued into place.

Skylights were made of plasticard and glazed with clear styrene. The upper deck skylight was enlarged to accommodate the rudder servo. I invented a skylight on the promenade deck to provide access to the radio and battery switches and, being above the main deck saloon, it doesn't really look out of place.



Making the portholes (see body copy for a full explanation).

The anchor hand windlass is just a plasticard frame enclosing various gear wheels from my bits box to represent typical windlasses of the time.

The two big cowl vents are commercial tops mounted on plastic tube to bring them to the correct height. Making cowl vents from scratch is another time-consuming task. The boiler casing is a plasticard box and the funnel is a length of lightweight tubular wiring conduit with a couple of 'O' rings added. The bridge was constructed from plasticard.

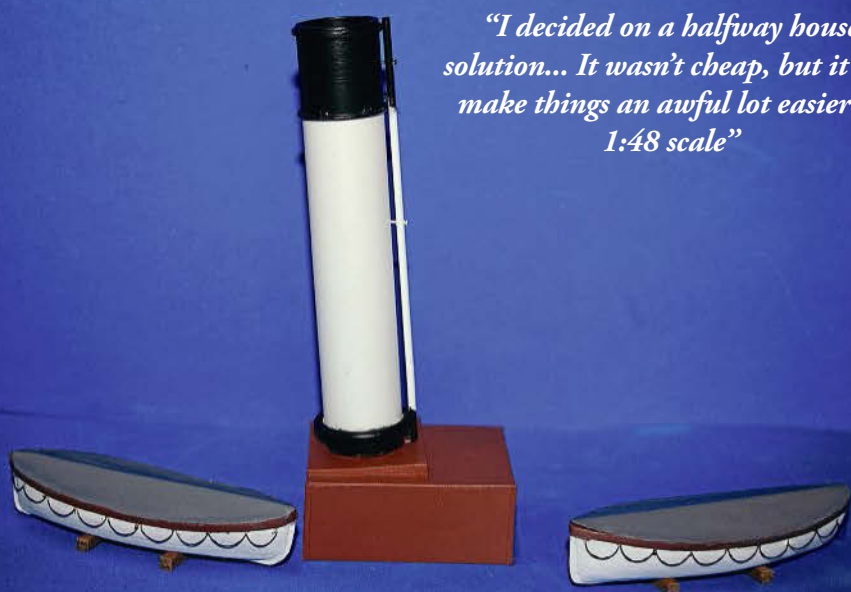
The promenade deck and bridge steps utilised some lengths of Plastruct stairs bought many years ago for another project and not used. They are nominally 1:100 scale but in fact look OK used as ship companionways. I glued two lengths together for extra width, so there is a rib running up the middle, but this isn't particularly noticeable. The stair rails were formed of brass wire, using solder paint – a tricky job, but one that got easier once I'd completed the first rail, as this could then be used as pattern for all the others.

Another feature of excursion vessels is that they include a lot of on deck seating, and I

was rather dreading the prospect of trying to replicate the kind of shaped and ribbed seats you'd find on, say, PS Waverley. However, close scrutiny of the plan, backed up by some photos of an old auction model of the vessel and a bit of extra research, suggested that back in the early 1900s nothing more than simple benching was provided to take the weight off excursionists' feet. I therefore fabricated my own using sections of 10mm plasticard square tube for the supports and plasticard strip for the ribbed bench surfaces. Satisfyingly, this looks about right in the general context of detail on the model.

The mast came courtesy of an old artist's paintbrush which was already conveniently tapered, saving a lot of work in sanding down a length of dowel. I fitted some rigging on the mast and funnel with shirring elastic, which stays taut but copes very well with accidental knocks and is easily replaceable. I did simplify things by reducing the many shrouds on the original vessel, but I think it looks OK. The mast itself is semi-demountable, thereby allowing access to the underside of the model as and when required.

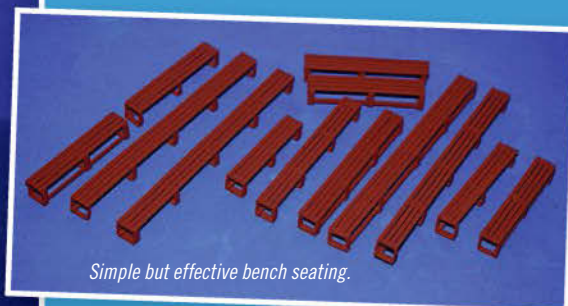
"I decided on a halfway house solution... It wasn't cheap, but it did make things an awful lot easier at 1:48 scale"



Funnel assembly and lifeboats, both need to be lightweight.



Railings under construction, as described in the text. A joint using sleeves and covered by a lifebelt will be used between stanchions.



Simple but effective bench seating.



The addition of passengers has made a huge difference in bringing Bilsdale to life.

“Rigging the lifeboat davits required some thought...”

The lifeboats were carved from balsa using a line drawing found on the internet, ‘planked’ with paper and fitted with fabric covers.

Rigging the lifeboat davits required some thought. The boats are carried on the promenade deck and lowered by two davits, one situated on the upper deck, the other on the paddle sponson. Since both the deckhouse and sponson are detachable, it would be necessary to disconnect the davits from the boats when removing either. Also, traditional davits were usually both curved and tapered, not an easy thing to model. After a few false starts, I eventually made the davits in three thicknesses of aluminium tube. The lower section is attached to the deck and serves as a socket in which the upper part of the davit can swivel. The tube for the top section is curved with an inner core of brass wire to stop it crumpling when bent to shape. Small eyebolts were fitted to rig the block and tackle for the falls. I had some Amati plastic blocks in the bits box which were about the right size. The lower block has an eye which slides onto a hook on the lifeboat – this is the detachable bit. Rigging was a very fiddly business and involved some colourful language. Once each set of falls was finally in position, the line was stiffened with glue to keep it in shape when unhooked from the lifeboat. It is now easy to unhook the falls and swivel the davit away to remove the superstructure, and the davit upper sections can be removed entirely if necessary.

Bilsdale’s name was carried prominently around various parts of the ship, including on large boards at the bow and stern instead of the usual painted lettering. Presumably this made her easy to identify among the other excursion vessels tied up along the quay at Scarborough and elsewhere. The nameplates for the model were printed out on my computer, then sealed and fixed to the hull and upperworks.

The final touch

There was now just one thing missing – people! *Bilsdale* needed her complement of happy excursionists. It proved difficult to source miniature figurines in attire representative of the inter-war period, but I eventually found some suitable ones that pass for 1930-ish, although they needed repainting to improve their authenticity. I added a rather special time-travelling passenger as well – a bit anachronistic, but I couldn’t resist.

Bath tests

The model initially floated stern down due to the receiver battery and ESC weight, so some additional ballast was placed under the foredeck to level her off and bring her down close to the waterline. Despite every effort to minimise superstructure weight and although the model was stable when at rest,

there was a tendency for her to initially list to one side or the other when full ahead power was applied – a problem that John Elsey, one of our Model Boats forum members, had also identified. The solution was to add a bit more ballast to increase stability and immerse the paddle floats a little more. Although there were various nooks and crannies within the hull in which to add scraps of lead, a neater solution was to apply small self-adhesive weights, normally intended for balancing motorcycle wheels, to the underside of the hull where they would be unnoticeable. These were overcoated in resin to fully secure them to the bottom. Subsequent tests indicated that the model now had good stability, despite further fittings having been added. She was also pretty much on her designed waterline, with just a slight squat aft which should be unnoticeable when she’s underway.





For a bit of fun, Colin added an anachronistic time-travelling famous lady!



The addition of passengers and seating effectively conceals the steering linkage.



Foredeck detail. The pole behind the mast is the galley chimney.



The bridge perched on its thin struts. There is no obvious connection between the helm on the bridge and the rudder either on the plan or any of the old photographs.



The lifeboats and pairs of davits are each on separately detachable parts of the model!

Pond trials

With a new model, my usual practice would be to undertake pond trials once the vessel has been fitted out but before details and deck fittings have been added. In this case, the unrelenting cold and wet weather over many weeks, coupled with a long drive to suitable water, meant that *Bilsdale* was essentially complete before being committed to the pond for the first time.

On that day, the sun was finally shining, but there was still a bit of an unwelcome breeze on the Bushy Park Lake as Ashley Needham, myself and a friend of Ashley's anxiously readied ourselves for *Bilsdale's* official launching. Much to our relief, with just a few glitches, the boat performed impressively straight out of the box (which I had only just made!).

Plus, points

Bilsdale floated on her waterline, proved very stable, and her paddles delivered plenty of thrust, with power in hand. I was delighted by how easy she was to handle and with the general impression she gave on the water. She was, in fact, just as I'd envisaged. Adding some suitably clad passengers has greatly enhanced her realism.

Despite all the whirly bits inside and the complicated electronics, nothing failed or came loose during the intensive testing session, which was most encouraging.

Points needing attention

As anticipated, windage did affect her; not to the extent of compromising stability but enough to lift the upwind paddle slightly so that the downwind one tended to dig in and

increase the list, although she soon recovered. Although determined to a greater or lesser degree by the direction of the wind, this was most noticeable at full speed. It's probably a characteristic I will have to live with, as full-size paddlers experience the same problem.

The controls did seem over-sensitive, and, on reflection, I think the mixer may be better on 50% rather than 100%. As it wasn't practical to change this at pondside, another session will be needed.

We also noticed that there appeared to be a slight difference in power output between the two paddles, which made turning one way easier than the other. There could be a number of reasons for this, including unbalanced ESC responses and a degree of friction in the paddle drive. These issues are currently being investigated and, hopefully, resolved.

Overall, I was pretty pleased with the inaugural session, as all the important design issues seem to have come up trumps. I'm confident that with a bit more tweaking of the various settings the boat will settle down nicely into a good performer.



Bath trials.



Additional ballast using motorcycle wheel weights (see text).



Bilsdale makes a pretty picture on the water with her load of happy excursionists.' Images courtesy of Ashley Needham and Alan Williams.

What happened to Plan A?

Shortly before commencing this model, I suffered what is termed a retinal vein occlusion, sometimes known as an eye stroke, which results in severe damage to the affected eye. Intervention was delayed due to Covid, so it was impossible to restore full vision and, despite eventual treatment, a further relapse in 2022 resulted in complete blindness in that eye. Model making with just one eye is a real problem as there's no depth perception at short distances, which makes close working and painting very difficult indeed, although not totally impossible. I was glad in the circumstances I had only intended to make *Bilsdale* semi-scale, and that I was still able to proceed with the model much as intended. This did, however, pose a real problem in constructing the 3D-printed feathering paddle wheels, which rely upon the tiny nuts and bolts used in spectacles. I therefore decided to complete the model using the Glynn Guest wheels to get her on the water and worry about the construction of the feathering wheels later. If I manage to overcome the problems, there will be a follow up article sometime in the future.

Reflections

Having completed this project, I think it's time to reflect back on some of the lessons learnt...

Complexity

Some readers may consider this model to be over complex – and I can understand why. By fitting independent paddles, I very much increased the complications and reduced the space inside the hull for other items. Coupled paddles would have required only a single motor and much simpler electronics. But, I reasoned, as I was only likely to do this once, why not go the whole hog! For me, it was the right decision, as I found exploring a new area of modelling and translating theory into practice not only educational but extremely satisfying. It's nice to know the old brain cells are still firing after three quarters of a century! Plus, of course, I now have a very attractive working model of a period paddle steamer as a result.

Clearances

When building a conventional propeller-driven model the only critical clearances are associated with lining up the motor with the propshaft, ensuring that there's minimal play in the shaft itself at each end, using washers and locknuts, and that whatever type of coupling you are using to connect motor to shaft is properly fitted to maintain a true driveline. It is literally straight forward!

In a paddler, and especially one with independently driven wheels, it is all a moving feast! The hull is filled and slung with

rotating pulleys, wheels, shafts and collets, plus long driving bands, all of which are whizzing round in close proximity to fixed pieces of the hull structure and items of electrics/electronics, etc.

It only takes contact between a moving bit and a fixed bit to bring the whole show to a halt – and you will be grateful if you've fitted fuses in the circuit! Fitting and maintaining all this requires quite a bit of care, attention and adjustment. Fortunately, I managed it all in the end, although it does look like a miniature funfair inside when fired up!

Final thoughts

Bilsdale has been a project encompassing many different aspects of scale boat modelling, including scaling off drawings, stability assessment, hull construction techniques, propulsion mechanics and electronic controls. A lot of problem-solving and research was required along the way. I rather doubt if I will build another paddler, but I have really enjoyed this one!

Building Bilsdale yourself

The original plans were dropped from the Model Boats Plans Service many years ago and are not offered by Sarik Hobbies. Full-size copies can be found online from a source in Canada by searching for 'PS *Bilsdale* plan' and are very useful but beware of minor distortions. Digital subscribers can download the pdf scan of the 1972 illustration in the magazine, which is the same as the 1:7 reproduction in last month's print issue. I should, however, point out that while these plans can be scaled up, reducing your build down to anything smaller than a length of 35 inches (89cm), at 1:48 scale, is likely to present some stability issues, unless you run both paddles from a single motor. Scaling up by x8 will give a model length of 40 inches (101.5cm), at 1:40 scale, and a greater margin of stability, but passenger figures at this scale are more difficult to find. So 1:48 scale is a 'Goldilocks' compromise, but always beware excessive top weight. ●



The next challenge! The 3D-printed components for feathering paddle wheels provided by Ron Rees.



Part
one

I.C. POWERBOATING BASIC BUILD

Derek Owen explains how to craft a very simple boat to get you started

Welcome to Part 1 of a two-part guide to building a simple wooden boat into which a small 3.5cc powered IC glow engine can be installed.

This will be based on the Keps 21 – an established outrigger boat built and designed by Niklas Edlund from Sweden, which is one of a number of plans that are free to download when visiting the NE-Stuff website (the following link will take you directly to the page in question: <http://www.ne-stuff.net/2012/10/keps-t2-21-presentation.html>).

Don't worry if you don't want, or aren't ready for, a full-on racing machine as, once fitted with a sport 3.5cc engine, this will serve as a great introduction to running a circuit style boat. With a full-on racing engine, on the other hand, well, that's a whole different league! In Part 2, I will give you an idea of how such boats can be run and will provide a link to a video clip or two.



Parts cut and ready to glue.



Starting to glue bulkheads to the side of the tub.



The bulkheads and sides glued in place.



Holes pre-drilled in the bulkhead as the plan suggests.

To start off with, though, we'll this month be focusing on the build of the tub section of our racing hydroplane outrigger style boat, before moving on to the construction of the front sponson in the October issue.

Plans and prep

At the risk of stating the obvious, before getting started it's always best to really study the plan you're going to be working from, so that you fully appreciate and understand everything shown.

A good set of plans will normally note the best materials to use and list any associated items required. For the Keps we'll be using Birch ply, although you will have to refer to the freebie plan for the varying thicknesses required for all the different parts, as my intention here is purely to provide an overview of how one of these boats can be put together even by someone with the most basic of woodworking skills.

As well as your Birch ply, you will need a good band saw, belt sander and pedestal drill, along with a steel ruler, a set square, a range of files, craft knives, clamps, and, ideally, a couple of lengths of aluminium angle to use along with these clamps to keep your build straight.

In terms of adhesives, I'd recommend the use 5-min and 15-minute epoxy glues (along with a supply of rubber bands and some weights to hold everything together



The top and bottom skins in place; note these have been left over-size and will be trimmed to fit later.

until sure my glue has completely dried). I also favour a good cyno (superglue) – a bit controversial, I know, as there are modellers who would strongly advise against using superglue in the construction of a wooden boat model. Personally, however, I've never had a problem with this, as I tend to apply it to wood that has already had several coats of the epoxy resin soaked into its grain in order to seal it, and to further increase the overall strength of build.

Naturally, you'll also need various grades of sandpaper.

Immersing yourself in the tub...

So as not to get into hot water, my best advice is to forward plan as much as you can, and check, after each stage of the build, that you're 100% happy with everything before moving on. While errors are very frustrating, they can be rectified, and it's probably best to address them straight away, if for no other reason than to stop yourself from becoming demotivated. That said, let's build...

Once you've marked and cut the wood to shape, it's a good idea to lay all the pieces



"I thoroughly recommend inserting some high-density foam into the nose of your hull, as this is a great way of adding lots of strength without drastically increasing the weight of your boat"

An overall view of the cut-outs and holes.

out so you can check how they fit together and where to start gluing them. At this stage, pre-drill any holes noted on the plans, as you will find this much easier to do while your pieces of wood are still flat.

You'll then need to stick the bulkheads along one side of the tub, keeping everything flat and square. Follow this by marking the other side of your tub so that the bulkheads are evenly matched to ensure the correct 'squareness' once glued. The use of angle aluminium and several clamps will keep everything nice and straight at this stage.

I thoroughly recommend inserting some

high-density foam into the nose of your hull, as this is a great way of adding lots of strength without drastically increasing the weight of your boat. This can be glued in with epoxy resin.

Once happy with your basic tub frame, and with its cut-outs done, you can then attach the top deck skin. This is where some weights and rubber bands will come in handy. If you are using superglue, then a clamp and your own two hands will do the job pretty quickly. Bear in mind, though, that positioning will need to be pretty accurate, as cyno glue bonds almost instantly. If that sounds scary,

perhaps stick to 5-min epoxy here.

With your top deck skin firmly fixed, coat all your interior timber with a thinned down epoxy to create a good seal and prevent any water ingress.

It's now time to attach the bottom skin – although, again, only after having made any necessary cut-outs (e.g., the slot for your prop shaft tube). You will find the bottom skin easier to glue on, as this is, after all, a more solid and rigid section of the model.

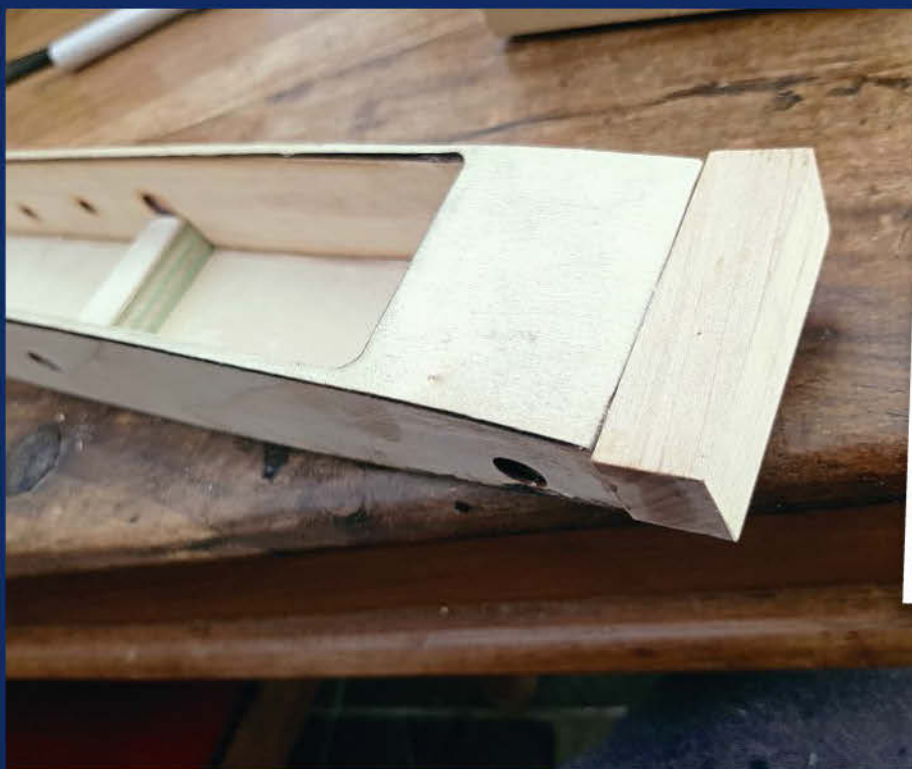
You can, of course, make your top and bottom skins a tad oversize and simply trim them to fit once glued.



The dense foam for the nose, ready to be trimmed to fit.



The front nose block in place, ready to be sanded to shape.



Left: The hardwood nose block epoxied in place ahead of some shaping.



Above: An overall view of the tub, now well on the way to completion.

“Make sure these holes are vigilantly sealed with thin epoxy, ensuring no bare wood is left exposed”

With your top and bottom skins all neatly trimmed and sanded, you can now add any blocks or strengthening skins as and where you feel they may be required (taking care, of course, not to substantially add to the weight of the model). Although it won't happen overnight, you will come to develop a knowledge of, and instinct for, any possible weak areas when model boat building.

At this stage I like to coat the whole build with a thin coat of epoxy and leave it to fully

cure. This helps to keep any contaminants from getting into the wood. Even the transference of natural oils from your hands, for example, has the potential to affect adhesion when applying finishes to your wood.

For my outrigger boats I glue either carbon tube or aluminium tube in place through the tub; I always use 10- or 15-min epoxy here, just for the added strength of the bond.

The plan shows where to drill holes for

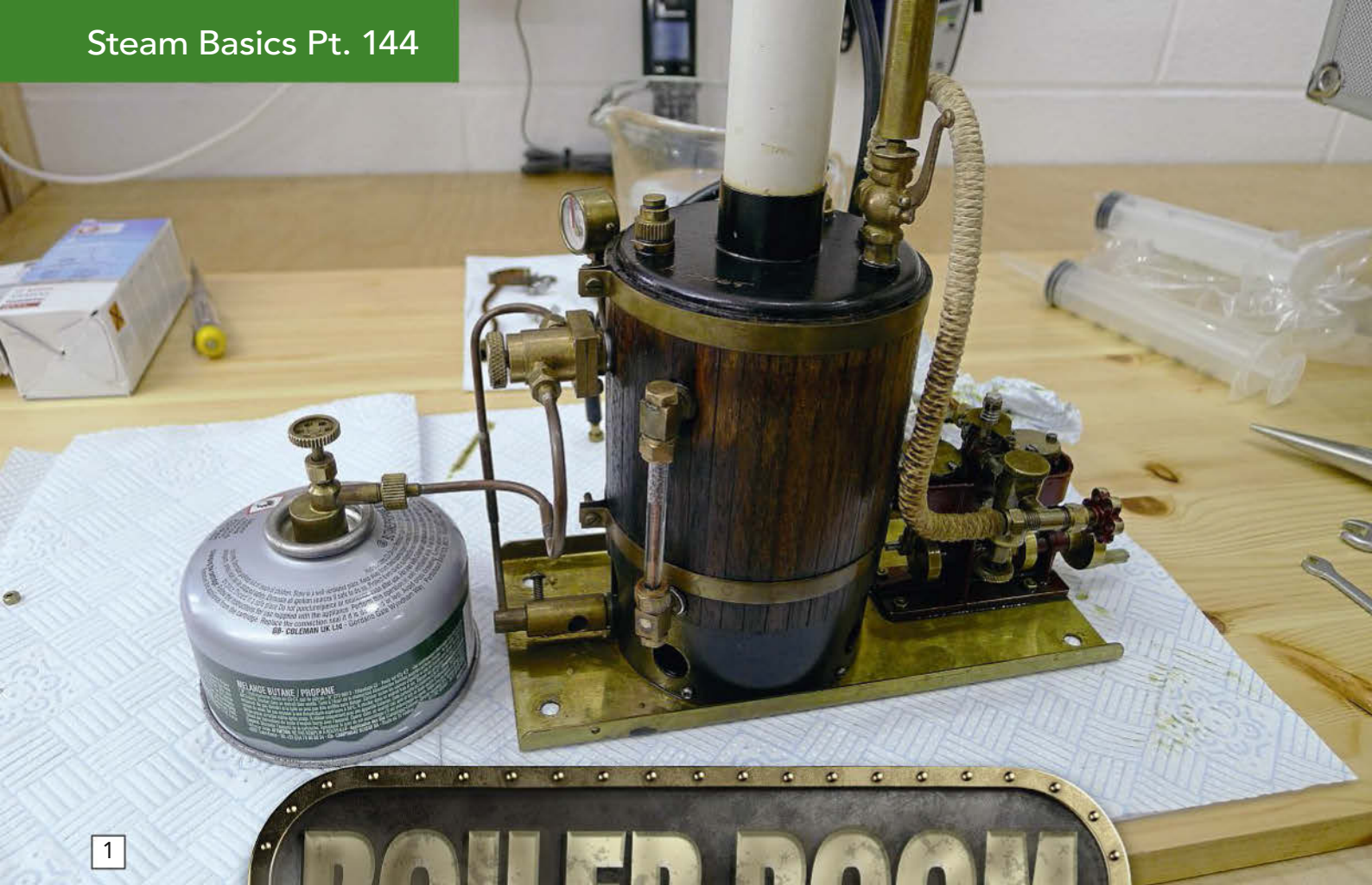
the motor mounts and the control arms in the bulkheads – a task which, as previously mentioned, is best tackled at the start of the project. This guidance, however, is based on the plan's recommended hardware for the build (including the strut and rudder). A plan will often specify more than one manufacturer's products, hence giving you options; however, should you opt for your own individual choice of motor and hardware, this may necessitate build deviations. For example... In this instance, the strut is at the rear, next to the rudder in which the drive shaft locates. The plan shows a slot in the underside of the tub which the shaft can be passed through and then epoxied into place. But, if you've gone for parts other than those recommended, you have to consider an alternative set up and where holes will instead need to be drilled. In any case, make sure these holes are vigilantly sealed with thin epoxy, ensuring no bare wood is left exposed.

Next month

As mentioned at the start of this article, Part 2 will explain how to create the front sponson and complete this project, so if you're excited by the idea of some serious thrills and spills, don't miss the October issue! ●



The bottom skin, showing the slot that's been cut for the prop shaft.



1

Richard Simpson addresses the whys and wherefores of changing the safety valve in a steam plant

I'm a great advocate of checking out secondhand plant as a means of getting into the hobby of steam-powered radio-controlled boats. There are undoubtedly some very good buys out there, which, as long as you keep your wits about you, will serve you well for many years to come – the old Cheddar Puffin plant illustrated

here (see **Photo 1**) being a great example. There are some caveats though. A plant may be showing its age a little, and there may well be one or two parts that need upgrading to meet requirements and keep it working reliably and efficiently. An item that frequently comes under such scrutiny is the safety valve.

Whatever the arrangement, a safety valve will always incorporate a spring holding a valve against a seat. This spring will be overcome at a predetermined point, when the steam pressure will push the valve off the seat and allow steam to escape to atmosphere, thereby preventing any further rise in steam pressure in your boiler.

While recently offering some plant advice, my suggestion that a safety valve should be changed was met with a degree of concern by the owner. Clearly, he was more than a little daunted by the process of selecting a replacement safety valve. Consequently, this



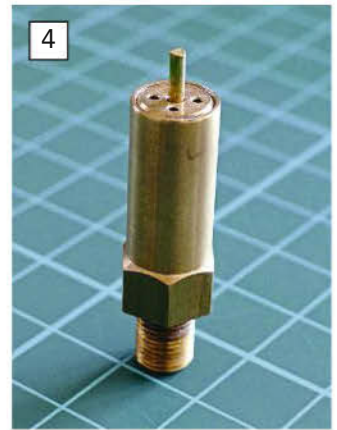
2

Above: As long as you take suitable precautions there are some good buys to be found on the second-hand steam plant market, as Richard discovered with this Cheddar Puffin. There may well be one or two things that require doing to your second-hand plant however, with a new safety valve being a common upgrade.

Left: The type of valve you might find in a Wilesco, Mamod and one or two of the other low-pressure boilers: although not intended to be adjustable, it still remains a requirement that such a valve is tested and works according to the rules.



A very common valve found fitted to many older Cheddar boilers. These are simple yet effective, although with a rubber seat can start to leak after a while, meaning the rubber 'O' ring has to be replaced. Setting the valve could be quite a lengthy task though.



A typical modern replacement safety valve that can be set in place. The adjustment disc is the part with the holes in it, used to vent the steam and as a means of locating an adjusting tool. The pin is an extension of the spindle.

month I think it is worth going through the factors that need to be taken into account when making your choice.

Reasons for changing a safety valve

When we consider safety valves it is probably worth dividing them into categories, and the individual characteristics/workings of each (see below) may well be the deciding reason for changing/selecting one.

* Non-adjustable safety valves (see Photo 2)

You might find one of these fitted to a Wilescro or Mamod boiler, and you will see by looking at it that the spring is simply held on the spindle by crimping the spindle to flatten it out. The springs push the spindle downwards, thereby holding the valve on the top of the spindle against the seat in the body. These safety valves are set, approximately, by the manufacturing process and are designed for the specific boiler they are fitted to.

* Safety valves that need to be removed for adjustment (see Photo 3)

Instead of a crimped end, these valves have two locked nuts on the internal end of the spindle that the spring sits against. Loosening the lock nuts allows them to be turned to increase or decrease the spring rate, thereby adjusting the lifting pressure

of the valve. To adjust the valve, however, you must test it first, then, to adjust, vent the boiler, remove the valve, make the adjustment on the lock nuts, refit the valve, raise the pressure again and then re-test the valve. If it is still not lifting at the correct point you might have to repeat the above, which can be a bit of an onerous task. There is also a school of thought that advocates that this type of safety valve is safer than the ones that can be externally adjustable, as you are not trying to set the valve with steam emitting from the vents.

* Safety valves that can be adjusted in situ (see Photo 4)

These valves usually have some sort of adjusting plate that the spring sits on, which is accessible from the outside of the valve. The valve plate can sometimes then be locked in this position and the pressure lowered then raised again to check the correct operation. Sometimes the plate is not locked and relies on the spring pressure to hold it in place, sometimes the plate can be rotated by a pair of fine nosed pliers or tweezers, and sometimes a screwdriver blade can be adapted to sit in a machined slot (see Photo 5). To demonstrate the process, the valve on the left in Photo 6 has its plate screwed down so the valve will lift at a higher pressure, whereas the valve on the right has

its plate screwed much further out so the valve will lift at a much lower pressure.

The first thing to mull over is whether you want to change either a non-adjustable valve or a valve that can only be adjusted when removed with a valve that can be adjusted from the outside, thereby upgrading your valve to one that is much easier to set correctly.

It may be that you want to replace a valve as a result of a spring weakening with age and frequent exposure to heat. With a non-adjustable valve you might notice that the valve is starting to leak more easily at lower pressures, thereby losing steam, or, with an adjustable valve, you might find that you have to screw the spring down a little tighter than you used to. Either way the spring is getting weaker, and a replacement valve should be considered. A replacement spring is possible but getting hold of one that fits perfectly and is exactly the correct spring rate to operate correctly is highly unlikely.

Yet another reason for wanting to change the valve could be leaking at the valve seat. If it is a metal-to-metal seat then the effects of corrosion or scale build up with age can lead to this, or, if it is a rubber 'O' ring valve then the rubber can get hard with age and stop sealing properly. Either way, replacement should be considered.



Two other types of externally adjusted safety valves. Both have vent holes in the disc for either pliers or tweezers, and the one on the right has a machined slot that can be used to adjust it.



The valve on the left is set to lift at a high pressure and the valve on the right is set to lift at a low pressure. Never adjust the valve so it is hardened right down, as this effectively gags the valve and renders it inoperable.



The first job is to lift at the correct pressure and vent steam. The second job is to vent enough steam to prevent the pressure building up by no more than 110% of working pressure.

Deciding on a replacement

Assuming you have decided that you want to replace the safety valve that you have fitted to your boiler, it's worth first remembering what the valve is supposed to be doing. A safety valve is there to perform two functions, both equally important. The first is to lift at the required pressure, thereby venting the boiler to atmosphere (see **Photo 7**). This must occur at the exact pressure required and, preferably, be easily adjustable to ensure the valve performs satisfactorily. Once the valve has lifted and vented the pressure sufficiently, the valve then needs to reseal without losing too much steam. Unfortunately, many safety valves out there, even when new, tend to leak more and more as the pressure rises towards the lifting pressure, and less and less as the pressure falls. This actually wastes a lot of steam, and therefore fuel, and is something to be avoided. The best valves lift almost instantaneously, discharge sufficient steam to drop the pressure, then sit back down equally instantaneously.



Most modern boilers are now fitted with externally adjustable safety valves, as illustrated by this Pendle vertical boiler.



Over the years Richard has found the best tool to be angled nose tweezers. These locate easily but your hands are kept out of the way of any inadvertent release if you back off the disc when there's still residual pressure in the boiler.

"A safety valve is there to perform two functions, both equally important"

The second function, and the one less frequently considered, is that the safety valve has to prevent the pressure from rising any further in the boiler after it has lifted; the rule book states by 10%. Consequently, if the burner is on full and the safety valve is lifted, the valve must prevent the pressure from rising by any more than 10% of the working pressure. This means that for a 60-psi working pressure boiler the pressure can never rise above 66 psi. This is dependent on two things, one being the size of the safety valve and the other being the size of the burner. If the pressure in the boiler continues to rise above 110% with the safety valve open, there are two courses of action. Either the safety valve capacity must be increased, by either fitting a larger valve or even fitting two valves on a common branch, or by lowering the capacity of the burner. A perfect example of this occurred a few years ago when I tested the safety valve on a boiler that was fitted with two poker burners. The pressure continued to rise even with the safety valve open, so something had to be done to rectify it. I suggested either smaller jets in the burner nozzles or a larger capacity safety valve but, in the end, the owner simply blanked off one of the poker burners.

Once you understand what a safety valve needs to do, you are better equipped to know what you are looking for. You will also need to know the specific thread of the safety valve boss you have fitted to your boiler. The trouble is that certain manufacturers tend to have their own preferences for thread systems, with some using 40 tpi threads, some using 32 tpi and some even using 26 tpi. Added to that, there could also be differences in diameter of the thread, and it can be quite tricky to match the thread of a new valve with the existing one. To be absolutely certain of getting the correct thread the best method is to send your existing valve to the vendor and ask them to

match the thread. This will save you wasting time and money on a valve that doesn't fit. Alternatively, it is worth going along to a model engineering show with your safety valve in your pocket and then having a chat with the vendors selling steam fittings. There will always be a number of them at such shows and all will be more than willing to match up your thread on the new safety valve.

Setting up your new valve

As most boilers nowadays tend to be fitted with externally adjustable valves, we will consider setting up that type of valve. The valve only needs to be screwed onto the boiler and then very gently nipped up with a spanner. You can seal it with either PTFE tape on the thread, a fibre washer or some might even use a rubber washer, but either way fit the valve to the boiler. Next you should screw the adjusting plate in a few turns to be sure that there's pressure on the spring and the valve is being held on the seat. Take care not to screw the adjustment plate right the way in, as by doing this you'd be rendering the valve inoperative – which is known as 'gagging' the safety valve and should never be done.

Now raise steam until the valve lifts and note whether the valve lifts above or below the required pressure. Wait for the steam pressure to drop and make an adjustment to the valve adjusting plate; screwing further down will raise the lift pressure and screwing out will lower the lift pressure (see **Photo 8**). Be very careful if there is still residual pressure in the boiler while you are backing off the adjusting plate. You could lower the spring rate to the pressure of the boiler and the valve will suddenly operate. Next, raise the steam pressure again and hopefully the valve will lift a little closer to the required pressure. Continue this process until the valve lifts at exactly the point you want it to.

There is another method, although I wouldn't recommend this to inexperienced

"There is another method, although I wouldn't recommend this to inexperienced modellers or those new to steam plant operation as it has the potential to be hazardous"



10

When Richard received this Cheddar plant and gave everything a good check over and a clean for the first time, the raised steam showed the safety valve simply leaked by varying amounts!

modellers or those new to steam plant operation as it has the potential to be hazardous. It involves raising steam slowly until you reach either the working pressure of the boiler, or a lower point if you prefer to run your plant at a lower than working pressure. Once at the desired pressure back off the adjustment ring slowly until the valve pops open. The pressure should drop and the valve close again. Interestingly, this is how real-life boiler safety valves are set, but in the 1:1 scale world the vented steam is piped safely away from the operator.

Whichever method is used, next raise the pressure with the burner on the maximum setting. The pressure will come up again and the valve should lift at the pressure you set it at. Leave the burner on full and wait for a couple of minutes. The pressure should remain below the 10% allowance during this time so that you know the capacity of the safety valve

is sufficient to cope with your burner. Then, shut off the burner and see if the valve closes and seals correctly. If you are happy with the valve then you can lock the adjusting ring, if fitted, and put the boiler back into service. Remember when you are doing this that steam will be emitted from the vent holes (see **Photo 7**) so keep your fingers out of the way, don't be looking down on the valve from above, and wear a pair of safety spectacles or goggles.

Just a final note: if you have replaced a safety valve you should inform your boiler tester, who might want to see the valve operate as well. If nothing has changed, he might be happy to leave it at that, but if anything has changed, such as the opening pressure, or if a modification to the burner has been made, then he will probably want to do another steam test.

Don't be daunted

Although most new boilers nowadays come pre-fitted with an externally adjustable safety valve, as with this Pendle boiler (see **Photo 9**), many of us will decide at some point that we might want to change a safety valve. Changing a safety valve is not something to be concerned about; in fact, staying with a valve that you're not confident with is more of a concern. As long as you are aware of the things to take into consideration when selecting a new valve, there's no reason why you shouldn't be able to do it quickly and easily and have a much more reliable and effective valve on your boiler.

When I bought the Cheddar plant (see **Photo 1**), it was fitted with the original Cheddar type of safety valve that can only be adjusted when removed (see **Photo 10**). I personally prefer the valve type that can be adjusted externally, so I found a replacement of exactly the same thread but with a larger capacity (see **Photo 11**) at a steam show and duly replaced the valve (see **Photo 12**). ●

"As long as you are aware of the things to take into consideration when selecting a new valve, there's no reason why you shouldn't be able to do it quickly and easily, and have a much more reliable and effective valve on your boiler"



11

The 'O' ring was hard, the spring was weak, and Richard soon got fed up with trying to adjust the valve by raising and venting the steam pressure. Consequently, an externally adjustable valve was sourced.

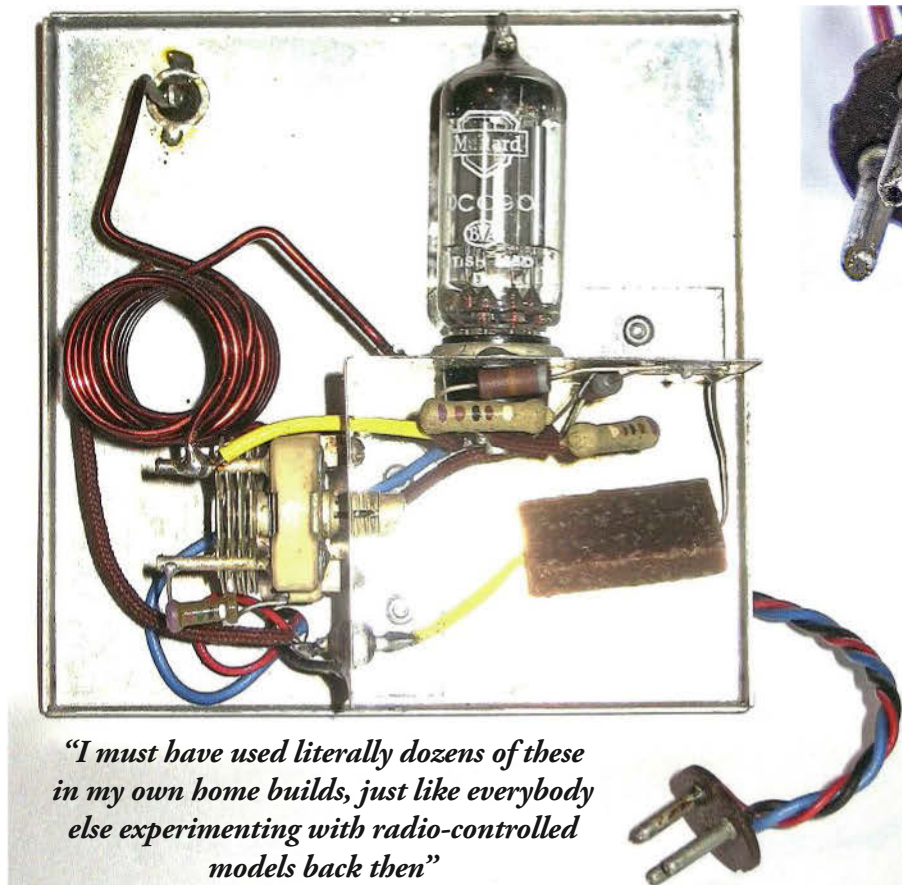


12

The new valve opens and closes far more quickly, venting steam quickly but not losing unnecessary amounts, and is much easier to set.

CONNECTED!

Dave Wiggins joins up the dots in the history of electrical connectors for radio-control use



The first generation (1950s) of R/C connectors, including an example on an ECC receiver.

Right from the early post-war days of radio-control, transmitters and receivers plus their actuators (and, later on, their servos), whether home-built or commercially manufactured, required a multitude of electrical connectors.

The very first sets made great use of items that were already on the market, thanks to domestic, battery-powered valve wireless receivers. As you can see from my pictures, the connectors used were simple yet surprisingly reliable items, made with crude tubular tinplated brass 'pins' riveted to 'paxolin' (SRBP – Synthetic Resin Bonded Paper) bases, sometimes enclosed in a pressed aluminium outer casing. Their intended use (in the early wireless business) was simply to allow set owners to plug in replacement dry batteries as and when required, and they fitted the high and low voltage batteries required for HT (High Tension) and LT (Low Tension) supply in all such radios.

As similar HT/LT batteries were also required in order to power the earliest R/C

transmitters and receivers, these became the first 'go-to' universal connectors to be used in the receiving side of things as well. In my younger life I must have used literally dozens of these in my own home builds, just like everybody else experimenting with radio-controlled models back then. These were more reliable than they may perhaps look today, provided that one kept salt water away from them.

The connectors used for batteries needed just two poles (plus and minus, obviously), and were polarised in order to prevent incorrect insertion. Thankfully for the first R/Cers, multi-pole connectors were also made with 3, 4 or 5 pins. These could be obtained from popular radio trade suppliers, such as 'RadioSpares' Ltd (now RS components), and from specialists who advertised in the world's first magazine for R/C enthusiasts, *Radio Control Models and Electronics*, launched in 1960, or in the good old *Model Maker*. There were other variants on the connector theme too, and the 6-pole one I picture is attached



to one of the very earliest single-valve 27MHz receivers manufactured here in Britain by the firm of ECC (Electronic Control Components) Ltd of London.

Also in popular boat use (they were mostly a bit too big for aero modellers) were a range of freely available multi-pin connectors that the radio trade had adapted from wireless valve bases, these being of 7, 8 or 9 pins (from B7G, International Octal and B9A standard bases). My pictured example is a B7G connector set from the famous British maker ED Ltd, which is fitted to one of this manufacturer's 'Transitrol' hybrid valve/transistor/carrier wave/receivers from my collection. Using all these types covered virtually every application in a 1950s' era radio-controlled model boat.

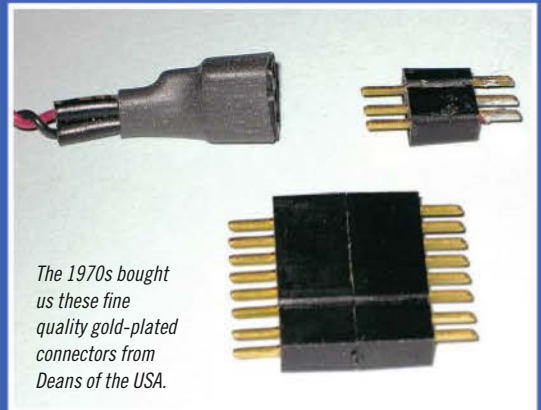
It's interesting to note that, although now best-known for its hugely popular line of model diesel engines, ED Ltd incorporated its original *raison d'être*, the design of radio equipment, in its 'Electronic Developments' name.



A nice example of a late 1950s' B7G connector pair on a receiver by ED Ltd.



Often known as 'AEI' connectors, these c.1960s' silver and polythene devices were a big step up.



The 1970s bought us these fine quality gold-plated connectors from Deans of the USA.



Progress in modern gold connectors from Kraft Systems, c. 1970.



A nice selection of British R/C connectors by SLM of Cheltenham.



"Mercifully, these often somewhat dangerous devices (when used in metal cased transmitters) have faded away"

Moving on a bit...

As radio valves began to be replaced by the first transistors, new and much smaller connectors were obviously going to be required, especially once new commercial manufacturers began to be attracted into the model market.

One of the first connector ranges to prove universally popular during this era was manufactured by one of the Britain's biggest radio concerns, and I picture an example of what was really a very clever idea: a connector strip that could be cut to the size required by the radio builder. The pins are silver-plated, and the quality is thus much better than the very early tin connectors. These connectors were much employed by firms such as RCS (Radio Control Specialists Ltd) during the single- and multi-channel reed era of British-built radio control.

And, again...

As reeds (a topic I will return to later in the series) gave way to the proportional control idea, manufacturers, once again, had to engineer smaller multi-pin plugs and sockets. Out in America, one of the most successful in this renewed endeavour was the firm of Deans, which made a wide range of solder type, gold-plated connectors for virtually all the major US manufacturers. These were nicely engineered and remained universally

popular until the next big advance came along, in the form of the solderless 'crimp' connector and the adoption of 3-wire servo systems.

Taking the biggest of the US manufacturers as just one example of many, Kraft Systems had initially, from 1968 and its Gold Medal range, utilised the 'Brunner' range of 4-pole soldered connector blocks. These had themselves replaced Kraft's first connector (of origin unknown to me).

With the coming of 'Crimp'

Owner Phil Kraft's idea was to go solderless, thus cutting assembly time, and so Kraft adopted the 'crimp' idea then coming into use within the full-size aviation and avionics industry with enthusiasm. One of the company's in-house mechanical and moulding toolmakers, Mr Joe Martin, did the design work on what later became known as the 'Kraft-Multicon' connector range. These connectors were of such quality that they remained the company standard right up to the end of its existence. Other makers Stateside soon took the same route. This obviated all the laborious (and skilled) hand soldering of the many connectors used in a 6- or 7-channel radio set (with substantial production cost savings) and hugely increasing system reliability.

In Britain, our much smaller manufacturers mostly stuck to hand soldering, which was

certainly useful to us home builders as it meant that there was a significant demand for solder type connectors. The biggest of these providers was SLM of Cheltenham, and pictured are some of its connectors, both as single pairs and as 'blocks'.

Finally, one must not forget that right through the history of R/C manufacture there has been a demand for multi-pole connectors for transmitters, as well as for receivers and servos. Simpler requirements, yes, but essential all the same for such purposes as charging and master-student trainer links – plus, when reversing became common, for that as well.

A popular 'off-the-shelf' solution for charging was the European DIN (German Industry Norm) connector that originated in Hi-Fi amplifiers, stereo tuners, etc, and shown here is just one example as my last offering. Others were, of course, used, especially for those transmitters that had built in battery chargers powered from 110- or 240- volt mains. Mercifully, these often somewhat dangerous devices (when used in metal cased transmitters) have faded away.

Looking back, what was causing all these changes and advances from the 1950s right on into the 1980s was the steady miniaturisation of radio gear as it got smaller, lighter, and more capable decade after decade, and I will be returning to this topic next time around. ●

Your Letters

**Got views to air or information to share?
Then we want to hear from you!**

Letters can either be forwarded via email to editor@modelboats.co.uk or via post to **Readers' Letters, Mortons Media Group, Media Centre, Morton Way, Horncastle, Lincs LN9 6JR**

Atlantis Nautilus

I thoroughly enjoyed John Parker's excellent Flotsam & Jetsam article on the USS Nautilus in the August edition. Further to John discussing the kits by Aurora, Revell and Lindberg, I would point out that one of these is still in manufacture. The Lindberg 1:300 scale USS Nautilus is currently manufactured and sold by Atlantis Toy and Hobby, 435 Brook Avenue Unit 16 Deer Park, NY 11729

USA, but can also be ordered from retailers in the UK. An impressive model measuring just over 12-inches (305 mm) in length can be built from this very reasonably priced kit, which now includes updated decals.

**TONY HADLEY
EMAIL**

*Thanks for sharing this info, Tony.
Much appreciated. Ed.*



Blast from the past

In the August issue, the Next Month in Model Boats page posed the question "Anyone remember Adamcraft?". Well, actually, I do. In about 1950-ish, Derek, my best friend, and I both had examples of the boat you've illustrated to flag up the forthcoming feature. I'm not sure exactly how much the kits they were made from would have cost back then, but I do recall marvelling at how very advanced for their day these kits were, with components appearing almost laser-cut. The planks had to be nailed on, and I still have the hammer included. I think I used a gramophone needle to make a start on the holes for the nails.

Derek and I both lived very close to the lake in Roath Park, Cardiff, where we'd sail our boats. To be honest, I have no recollection of performance. I rather suspect it was a bit dodgy, considering how variable winds can be on lakes. I do remember there was a very large bronze centre board. However, from later experience, my guess

would be that these boats heeled badly.

I have no idea what eventually became of them. We both left school at about this time and interests quickly turned to booze, girls, work and National Service.

On my retirement in the early 1990s my interest in sailing both model boats and their real-life counterparts was rekindled. *Eye of the Wind* became one of my favourite boats – not much good to windward, but absolutely beautiful, and despite there being no plans for her, I did manage to build a model working purely from photos.

**NIC GRIFFIN
EMAIL**

I was so hoping someone would be able to share some memories of actually owning and sailing one of these beauties, so thank you, Nic! I am sure you will find John Parker's feature (see pages 24 to 29 in this issue) most interesting. Who knows; perhaps it will even trigger a few unexpected flashbacks. Ed.



This Adamcraft model featured on the Coming Next page in last month's issue immediately triggered memories for Nic Griffin.

Loch Maree at Bahia Blanca, Argentina, 1977.



Sound advice

I thought that you might like to see pictures of a 18,000 hp 9 cylinder engine and the ship into which it went.

The engine is a Burmeister & Wain engine, built in 1974 by John G. Kincaid of Greenock, Scotland for the refrigerated cargo ship MV Loch Maree.

The range of top speed for that type of engine was between 122 and 139 rpm. These engines could be built with any number of cylinders between 3 and 12. Multiples of 3 were the most common and 9 cylinders was the largest number for that type that I worked on.

If more than 18,000 hp was required, it

was better to go to the next series; these developed 3,000 hp per cylinder and consequently you could get the same power in a shorter engine. We built an 11 cylinder in 1976, which at 33,000 hp was the largest diesel engine built in Europe up to that time.

After university I joined the Merchant Navy as an engineering officer cadet and was sent to Kincaid for shoreside training.

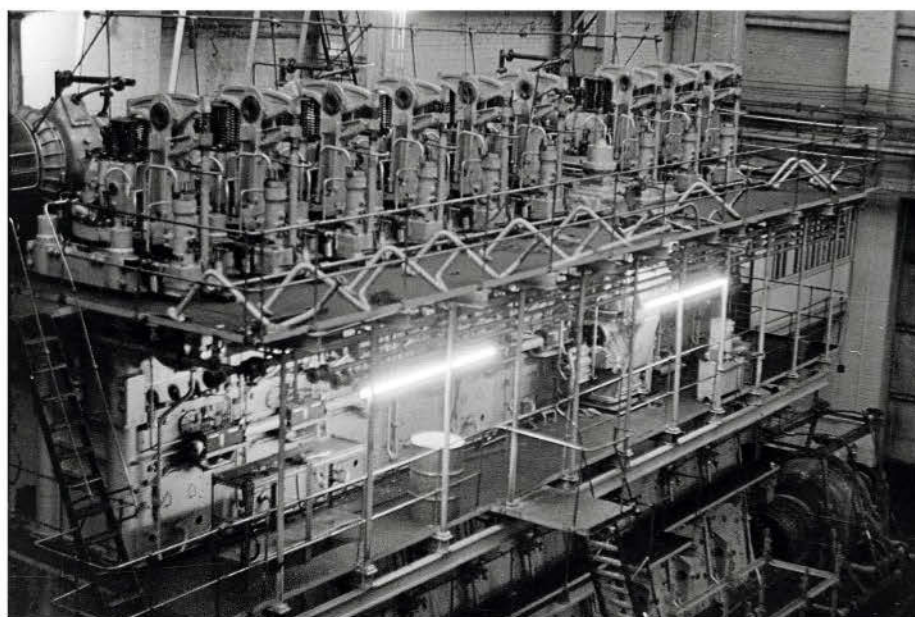
When in the accommodation one feels the engine running rather than hearing it. When on the forecastle the engine was inaudible, even in calm weather, just the noise of the waves against the hull.

My second ship (as junior engineer) was

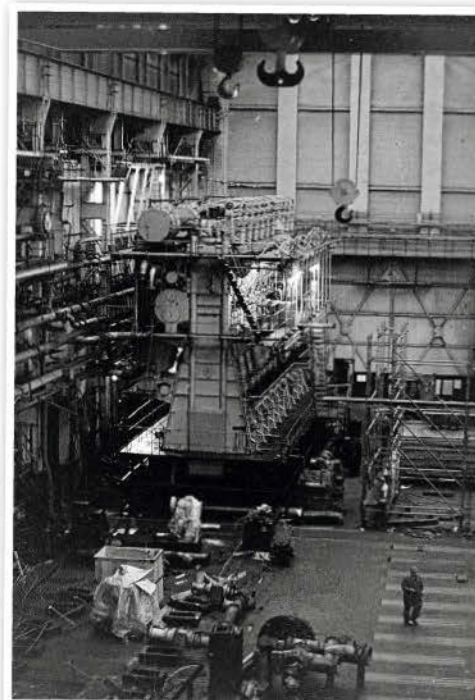
the MV Loch Maree. There can't be many people who worked on the engine in the shop, worked on fitting out the ship in the yard and then sailed on the ship as an engineering officer.

VICTOR CROASDALE
SPRING VALLEY, ILLINOIS

It's always fantastic to be able to publish first-hand accounts like this, Victor, and what a privilege to be able to share your marvellous photographs, too. Thank you so much! Ed.



The ship's 18,000 hp, 9-cylinder Burmeister & Wain engine.



TIPS AND TRICKS

Buoyancy boosters

Following Mr Grablyn's useful suggestion to use table tennis balls for eye protection (Bright Idea, August 23), I am reminded of another use.

I know most model yachties sail single hulled craft, which are normally self-righting, but those who sail multi-hulls (Cat or Trimarans, etc.) will be aware that these vessels are equally stable upright or inverted, as are their one-to-one scale counterparts, and that can make recovery very difficult.

The full-size solution is to add additional buoyancy to the masthead, usually in the form of small fenders, which in the event of a capsized prevents a 90-degree recoverable embarrassment becoming a totally inverted rescue situation. Perhaps in the model world here is another use for these versatile balls.

Mike Payne
Warminster Model Boat Club

Great idea – thanks for serving it up, Mike! Ed.

Back to basics

Could you please pass on my thanks and appreciation to Richard Simpson for his Boiler Room instalment in Vol 73 on the basics of filing. I have been using the majority of the methods he described for decades, but the article took me back to my 5-year indentured apprenticeship in the late 1960s where we were taught the basics. We had to make a 2-inch cube across all faces and corners, starting with a shaping machine then using files and scrapers, plenty of engineering blue and the use of the engineering table. This was checked by an instructor with a micrometer; if was out by a few thou he threw it in the bin, and we had to start again. With hindsight, all the basic skills I learned in that period have stayed with me ever since.

I wonder how many others shared this experience

It was priceless.

ROGER ATKINS
DROITWICH SPA MBC

Thanks for these lovely comments and memories, Roger, which I have indeed passed on to Richard. Ed.

Corvette comments

While I enjoyed Richard Simpson's article on his RTR corvette back in the March 2023 issue of Model Boats, I feel I must, albeit belatedly, couple of points.

Richard suggests that few corvettes would have been as heavily weathered as some models indicate.

I was a member of the (now closed) Flower Class Corvette Association and feel informed enough to agree that a poorly painted model may look 'overdone' weather-wise.

However, from meeting ex-corvette sailors, let me record their comments. On the horrendous convoys to Russia, the crews were at 24/7 action stations, fearing attack from the Luftwaffe and/or the *Tirpitz*, while also often having to navigate through fog and chip ice away from the upper works. They were, therefore, too busy, or exhausted, to paint ship. Some Royal Canadian Navy Corvettes had such poor-quality paint that whole sheets of camouflage flaked off, exposing bare metal hulls to rust. To provide just two more specific examples of heavy weathering:



* K80 carried a kedge anchor stowed under the port side whaler. The retaining shackles were so heavily rusted that the anchor could not be released.

* Some readers may recall TV News film of the beautiful liner *Queen Elizabeth* returning from the Falklands war. She was very rust-streaked and shocking to see.

Also, while the Canadians did paint logos on their corvettes' 4-inch gun-shields, the World War II Royal Navy did not. The Graupner model gun-shield shows a ding-dong bell. Yuk! A Royal Navy ship in World War 1 did feature a metal blue coloured bell on its plaque, but World War II corvettes were Flower class, hence a bluebell flower insignia. The photo I

have sent you shows K80 HMS *Bluebell's* correct plaque, made by

Max Shean, Lt. on K80 before her loss in 1945.

I hope this is helpful to corvette modellers

KEITH JARDINE
E MAIL

Thanks for raising these interesting points and for sharing the image of the plaque for K80, which I am assure will assist many modellers. Ed.

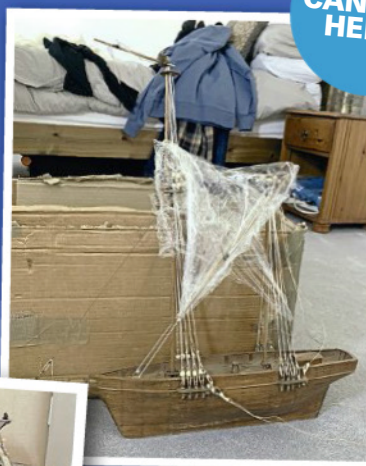
CAN YOU HELP?

Completion builder required

My father-in-law, who has sadly now passed away, has left us two partially built wooden boats. They have been sitting in the loft for years and we would really like to get them finished so that they can be displayed, so I am hoping you can put me in contact with someone who offers such a service. We are located in Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire, but would be happy to pay for the outgoing and return postage.

MEGAN LEMON
EMAIL

As we've had results with similar appeals, Megan, I am opening this up to our readership and really hope to be able to pass on the contact details of anyone who feels able to help. Ed



Above: & left: Is there anyone reading who would be able to help the Lemon family get these two partially built wooden models completed?

Anyone recognise this steam yacht?

Can anyone please help me identify the vessel on which this scratch-built steam yacht model was based? I remember it was displayed in a glass dome in my grandparents' house when I was a child. It was old even back then – and I am 70 now!

My great, great grandfather's people were all sea faring, and along with this model, I am lucky enough to have also inherited the old logbooks from his ships (circa 1850s).

JOHNT KIRWAN
EMAIL

What a fabulous legacy, John! As you mention this model was built from scratch, it, of course, be a generic representation rather than based on a specific vessel, but if not, I am sure someone out there will be able to ID her. Ed.

CAN YOU HELP?



Can anyone identify the vessel this vintage model steam yacht would have been based on?



OUT AND ABOUT



Kirklees Summer Open Day

This year's Summer Open Day on July 9 followed hot (literally) on the heels of our very successful Steam Open Day in May.

Club members had to be on site very early to get everything (particularly the 'cup of tea' tent) set up and ready for the arrival of our first guests at 9.30am.

I was kept busy marking out the various participants' tent pitches, including the one for the RNLI. It is with great pleasure therefore that I am now able to reveal a total of £263.50 was raised for this non-government funded, life-saving organisation during the day, as the local Mirfield branch has long been a staunch supporter of our open days.



Once again, we were able to exhibit many different types of models, both as static displays and on the green water (yes, like most clubs, we've been suffering from the effects of the exceptionally warm weather); naturally, however, we had plenty of hand sanitizer stations on site.

Attending for the first time this year, and putting on an excellent display of plastic models, was the Wakefield branch of the IPMS, whose post-event feedback was that its members had thoroughly enjoyed discussing model boat construction and picking up new ideas, hints and tips from both our members and visitors.

Representatives from 16 different model boat clubs located in the Northeast, the Midlands and various parts of Yorkshire and Lancashire attended, while trade support was provided by Mountfleet Models and Model Flags.

The recently introduced military vehicle section is proving



very popular at our open days, and once again a vast selection of model tanks and vehicles were also on show.

Plus, of course, as is customary, we had a big raffle, with lots of terrific prizes won.

We finished up at round 3 pm, due to the forecasted thunderstorms, but not before a great time had been had by all.

Our thanks, then, to everyone who supported this event and made all the planning and hard work that went into it so worthwhile.

We'd now like to extend an open invitation to the Autumn Open Day we have planned for September 10. Likewise, please feel free to visit the Club's stand at this year's Blackpool Model Show (scheduled for the weekend of October 14/15) or to come and meet us at any of our Sunday morning or Thursday afternoon sessions at Wilton Park, Batley West Yorkshire.

STAN REFFIN
KIRKLEES MBC

Bravo to you all! Ed.





OUT AND ABOUT

Kenwith Castle MBC Open Day

We were delighted to host the Sedgemoor Model Boat Club, City of Plymouth Model Boat Club, Millbrook Model Mariners and Camborne Pond Hoppers at our Kenwith Castle Model Boat Club Open Day on July 9. An enjoyable day was had by all, despite a thunderstorm halfway through the event!

We had a large and diverse range of models on display, ranging from a duck to a German U-boat; the latter, so accurate it was actually used in a World War II film, being capable of power diving to a depth of two feet and travelling underwater. But there were, of course, many other beautifully detailed models, representing a variety of construction methods, including everything from scratch building in wood to 3D printing in plastic, to be admired.

A large number of craft took to the water,

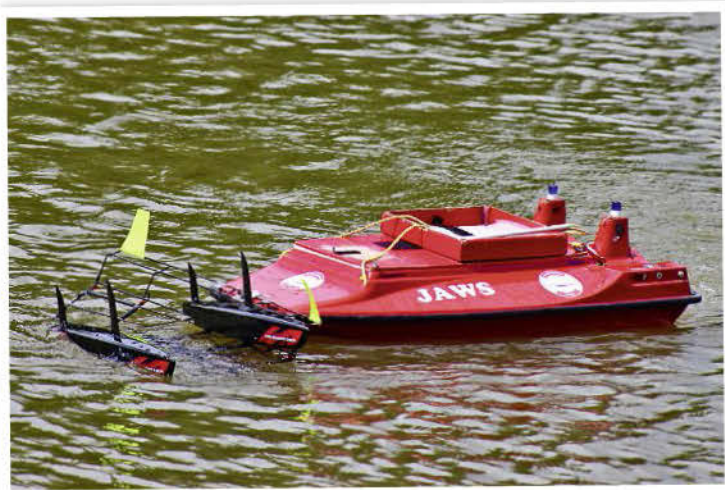
with no real mishaps – although an interesting rescue took place when a catamaran capsized and had to be brought back to shore by an unusual rescue boat named Jaws!

My fellow members and I would, therefore, like to thank to all the clubs who came along and made the event so successful. A big thank you, too, to the Kenwith Castle Care Home for all of its help and support.

Additional photos to the ones shared here can be viewed by visiting the Open Day 2023 page on our website at www.kcmbsc.weebly.com.

STEVE MURCH
KCMBC

Lovely shots, Steve. You really are very lucky to have such a beautiful setting in which to sail. Ed.



Named for his daughter, Mike Sayce's hometown trawler boat build.



Your Models

Whether you're highly skilled and experienced or completely new to the hobby, you're definitely invited to this launch party! So please keep the contributions coming by emailing your stories and photos to editor@modelboats.co.uk

Girl Katherine

I am a long-time reader and subscriber to the magazine. In the recent May 2023 issue, there was an article under the heading of 'Paul Freshney's Model Boats', which was written by Colin Bishop, and is a fitting tribute to the late former editor.

Paul's family had decided to sell 10 of his models, for new owners to enjoy and appreciate them, and Colin's article provided the backstory to the models and Paul's incredible modelling skills.

His Royal Naval subjects were certainly above my skill level, but I had seen his model of the Cygnus 33 inshore trawler, many years ago, and this inspired me to build my own version, as I originally hail from a fishing port.

My model is a modified version, with extra detailing, of a long discontinued Caldercraft kit, *Celia*, which was a 1:16 scale inshore trawler. The subject was based on a Freeward 35, which was, and is, a strong, seaworthy, offshore workboat, with a GRP hull, which

could also be used for sea angling and tourist charter boats, and in this case as a trawler. For motive power I used a 545-12 low drain motor, running off a standard 'buggyback', a six cell NiMH 7.2-volt 3700MAH battery. The ESC is an Mtronics MicroViper Marine 10, which is waterproof and easy to set up.

On my example the registration letters 'SN' stand for the fishing port of North Shields, on the North-East coast of England, which happens to be my birthplace. In best fishing community tradition, I named the boat after my daughter.

These days my main model boat interest is working scale models, although I enjoy the mix of articles in the magazine, and there are always new hints and tips to pick up. A particular favourite of mine is Richard Simpson's 'Boiler Room' column, which is generally way above my pay grade, for instance over the past couple of months I've learnt a lot of useful information about



drill bits and files. That's the thing about this hobby, there are always new things to learn.

Mike Sayce
email

Way too much modesty going on here, Mike! Fabulous work, and I love the fact that you've personalised your build to represent a typical working boat from your hometown and named her for your daughter.

I have, by the way, already passed your feedback on to Richard Simpson, who is delighted you are enjoying the Boiler Room series. Ed.



Vigia

A good decade ago I bought a rather battered tinplate hull, which, if memory serves me well, was 50 inches LOA. This sat on my windowsill for quite some time while I contemplated what to do with what had very much been a spur of the moment purchase. Eventually, at the suggestion of a friend, I selected Vigia as being a suitable subject to model.

This was a project that took me a long time to complete, as I had never modelled anything in tinplate before. I confess to having cheated somewhat by making the bulwarks from tinplated copper sheet – although, actually, this worked out quite well. Also, despite knowing the original ship was diesel electric, I elected to go with steam. I got somewhat over enthusiastic, too, and fitted a Saito 3 cylinder, which gave the ‘drifter’ the speed of a destroyer – great fun, though!

As my preference is sailing model yachts, I later sold the boat to a gentleman in the USA. I have fond memories of it, though, and do still miss it every time I glance up at the now empty gap on my windowsill.

**M. DEARDEN
EMAIL**

There's something intrinsically charming about tinplate toys/ models, so you had me at hello! Fabulous work and kudos to you for stepping out of your comfort zone, it really paid off. Ed.



John's superb 60-years-in-making scratch-built model of Cervia.



The steam tug Cervia

I have always been an avid modeller and made and repaired all sorts of model boats, I thought I would share some info and images from what has been the project that has taken me the longest time to complete – over 60 years, in fact!

I began my modelling the steam tug Cervia back in 1960 when I first started teaching handicrafts, and, finally, she is finished – well, almost. Frustratingly, a recently broken wrist has slowed me down a little, but all I have left to do now is equip her with radio control and get her into the water!

Over the years I have visited Cervia in Ramsgate Harbour many times, each time taking numerous photographs and measurements and checking on the accuracy of my build. Included in the photos I am sending you is one of me on



John aboard Cervia during one of his many visits to Ramsgate Harbour.



the deck of Cervia taken in 1986.

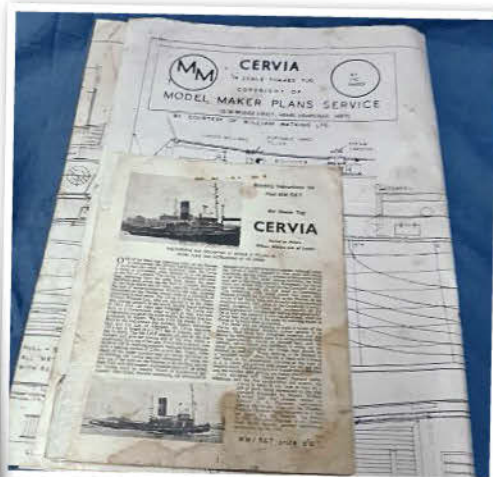
My tug was scratch built from copper and brass to the original Vic Smeed design (Plan No-MM567) from Model Maker plans service. The framework and superstructure for the hull were created from brass strips, silver soldered to make up a skeleton frame. I then used 20swg copper sheet cut into small panels, which I annealed and shaped to fit the framework. These panels were soft soldered to the frame to gradually build up the hull.

The deck and cabins were also made from brass, as were the other deck accessories.

All the lights are correct and fully functioning.

**JOHN EASTERBROOK
EMAIL**

Firstly, I hope you are on the mend, John. Secondly, congratulations on completing this epic project, which has resulted in a truly splendid model. Cervia is such a fascinating subject choice, too, and, for those unable to visit her in Ramsgate, well worth reading up online at <https://thesteammuseum.org/steam-tug-cervia/>



The original Model Maker plan on which John based his build.





Lawson Pratt's excellent R/C Motor Torpedo Boat built from a Glynn Guest plan published in *Model Boats* June 2011 issue.

Three great builds

I like working in ply and balsa. In fact, I enjoy the building process as much as operating models. My Motor Torpedo Boat was built from a Glynn Guest plan published in *Model Boats* in June 2011. It's a straightforward and satisfying model to build that performs well on the water. This one is powered with a 2822/14 1450kv motor, 4000 NiMH battery, 30amp ESC and 32.5 2-bladed propeller.

D80 is HMS *Barfleur*, a Battle class destroyer as built in 1944. The classic silhouette appealed to me. She is 1m long and the lines were obtained by enlarging a plan from John Robert's book *British Warships of the Second World War*. This is a plank on frame model powered by two 360 type brushed motors driving 30mm propellers. The upper works etc are 1mm plastic.

I had only built and used powered models prior to joining a superb, ultra-friendly club in Warminster. A member asked me to take control of his Dragon65 yacht while he took pictures. I'm still not sure whether this was by design or accident, but I was immediately bitten by the more demanding nature of sailing. Thank you, John! I built *Omega* from a John Goodyear plan that came free in the July 2019 issue of *Model Boats*. The model is balsa covered with the lightweight cloth and well-known laminating and finishing resin that I also used on *Barfleur*. The sails are a DragonForce A rig. These are not exhibition standard looking models as I only work to the nearest mile, so they're best seen at a distance on the water. However, building and



Omega, the delightful yacht Lawson's built from a John Goodyear plan that came free with the July 2029 issue of *MB*.

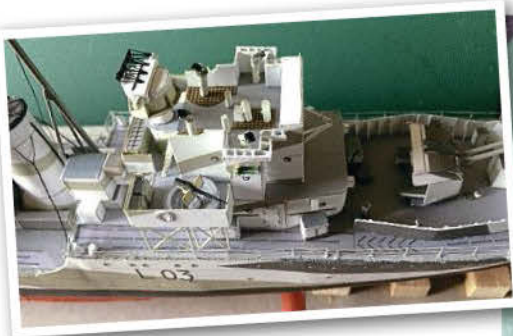
operating them from has provided so much enjoyment.

LAWSON PRATT
EMAIL

What a versatile and talented modeller you are, Lawson – fabulous work. Ed



The Battle class destroyer *MS Barfleur*, which Lawson built by enlarging a plan in John Robert's book *British Warships of the Second World War II*.



Above: Packed with detail: Trevor Briggs' 1:200 scale card model of HMS *Badsworth*.

HMS *Badsworth* and *Sheffield*

I am submitting a few pictures of my 1:200 models for the Your Models section.

Badsworth is my first full hull paper model. I filled the hull with balsa to support the paper parts. I finished her in April this year.

Sheffield was started on holiday last May; my picture shows the Carley rafts and the ship's boats.

I look forward to *Model Boats* each month. Keep up the good work!

TREVOR BRIGGS
EMAIL



Above: The diminutive 1:200 scale Carley rafts and ship's boats for the card model of HMS *Sheffield* Trevor is now working on.

It's really interesting to see how much detail can be incorporated in to these card builds, Trevor. I look forward to seeing more of your work in a future issue. Ed.



Next month in **model Boats**

In our October 2023 issue, on sale from September 15, 2023, be sure not to miss...



● HOW TO CONSTRUCT A SIMPLE LANDING CRAFT MODEL

Glynn Guest provides a mini plan and accompanying instruction guide for this quick, easy and economical build



● MODELLING MASTERPIECES

Ahead of his next (2025) exhibition, we treat you to a sneak peek at some of Gerry Westenberg's magnificent work

RIVA AQUARAMA

The challenges of scratch building a classic 1960s' Italian Runabout design that leaves no hiding place for mistakes!



PLUS

A thematically varied selection of feature-length articles, all your favourite regular pages – including Your Models, Your Letters, news, reviews – and lots more (Please note: content may be subject to change)

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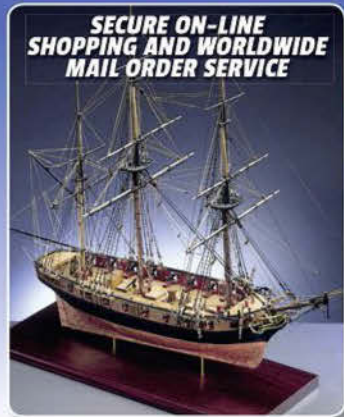
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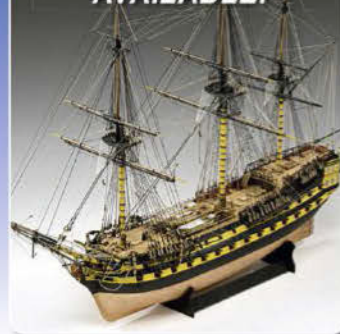
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HMS Diane 1794 C9000	599.00
HMS Jalouse 1794 C9007	295.00
HMS Mars 1794 C9007	264.00
HMS Snake 1797 C9002	260.00

Corel Static Display Kits

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Cocca Veneta, 16th Century Merchant Vessel	191.00
Corsaro II 1:24 Scale Ragatta Yacht	400.00
Dolphyn, Dutch Privateer SM16	213.00
Dragon Yacht SM51	91.00
Flying Fish 1:50 SM19	174.00
Half Moon 17th Century Galleon 1:50 Scale	190.00
HMS Victory Starter Kit SM101	48.00
La Sirene 18th Century French Frigate 1:75	275.00
Liaut Spanish Fishing Boat	77.00
Paranza Adriatic Fishing Boat 1:25 SM45	77.00
Wasa Swedish Frigate 1628 1:75 SM13	497.00
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Trainera De Regatas Wooden Rowing Boat	79.00
World Salvador Falua	85.00

Dumas Static Kits

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CC 19ft Racer #1702	60.00
CC 24ft Runabout 1930 #1701	88.00
CC 24ft Sedan 1956 #1707	85.00

Chinese Junk #1010	26.30
Chris Craft 18ft Continental 1960 #1709	79.99
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Skipjack Yacht #1704	70.00
Snipe Sailboat #1122	55.48
Viking Ship #1101	26.30

Krick Kits

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Alert US Cutter	216.00
Antares With Rigging Set	643.00
Felix Hamburg Harbour Launch	108.00
Grimmershorn Motor Vessel	289.00
Gulnara	320.00
HE4 Police Boat inc Fittins	485.35
Karl & Marie German Freight Boat	171.00
Krick U Boat	399.00
Lisa M Motor Yacht	124.00
Muritz 650mm Length	169.99
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Sirius Shrimp Cutter	495.00
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American Schooner 1:66 Scale	147.00
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Britannia British Regatta Yacht 1:64	140.00
Catalina Dutch Pleasure Yacht 1:35	140.00
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Flying Cloud American Clipper Ship 1:96	272.00
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HMS Beagle 1:64 Scale	169.00
HMS Bounty 1:100 Scale	135.00
HMS Bounty 1:64 Scale	230.00
HMS Endeavour 1:100 Scale	113.00
HMS Portsmouth English Merchant Ship 1:64	153.00
HMS Prince 1:144 Scale	245.00
HMS Surprise British Frigate 1:75 Scale	293.00
HMS Swift English Brig 1776 1:70	136.00
HMS Valiant British Brig 1@66	159.00
Hunter British Armed Cutter 1767 1:72	123.00
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Le Coureur French Lugger 1776 1:54	151.00
Lexington 1775 1:100 Scale	128.00
Lleudo Merchant Vessel 1:32 Scale	139.00
L'Orenoque Steam and Sail Ship	290.00
May Royal Dutch Yacht 1646 1:54 Scale	179.00
Mayflower 1:70 Scale	150.00
Merselle French Schooner 1:64 Scale	152.00
Newport Baltimore Clipper 1:57	97.00
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Rattlesnake 20Gun Privateer Ship 1:64 Scale	208.00
Roter Lowe Dutch Galleon 1597 1:55 Scale	270.00
Santa maria Flagship of Columbus 1:50 Scale	240.00
Sao Miguel 16th C Carrack 1:54 Scale	274.00

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Armed Swedish Gunboat 1775 1:35 Scale	146.95
Bruma Open Cruiser Yacht 1:43	227.00
Dreki Viking Ship 1:40 Scale	198.00
Mantua Titanic Part Builds 1 to 5 Boxed kits	POA
Mincio Freelance Mahogany Runabout	118.00
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Buccaneer Pirate ship 565mm Length	116.00
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Diana Frigate 1792 1:85 Scale	265.00
DOS Amigos Brigantine Schooner 905mm	138.00
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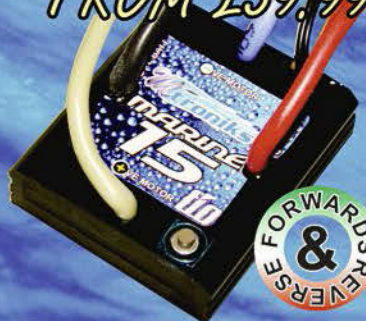


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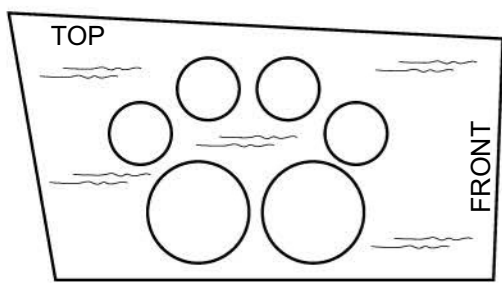
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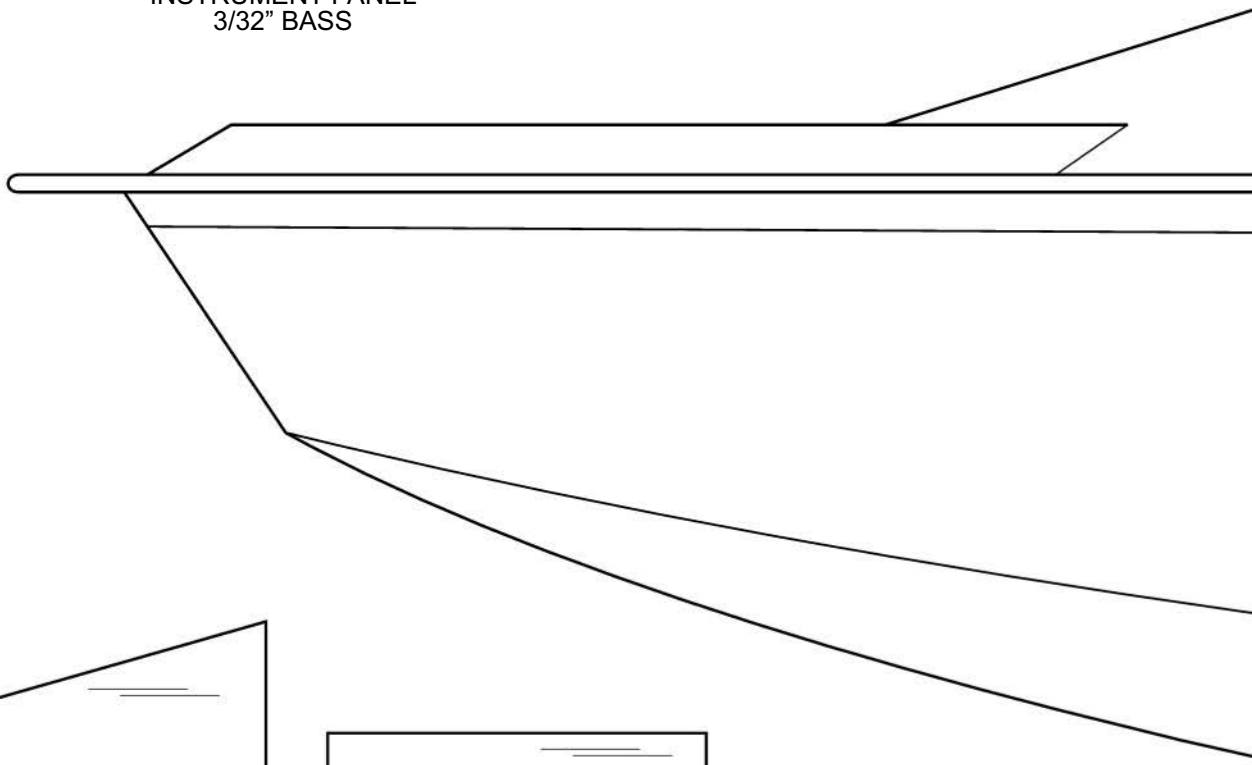
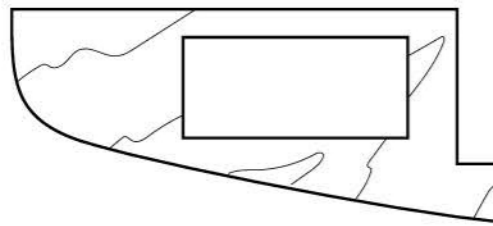
www.mtroniks.net
enquiries@mtroniks.net

10 20 30 40 50
SCALE MM

RUDDER S
1/8"



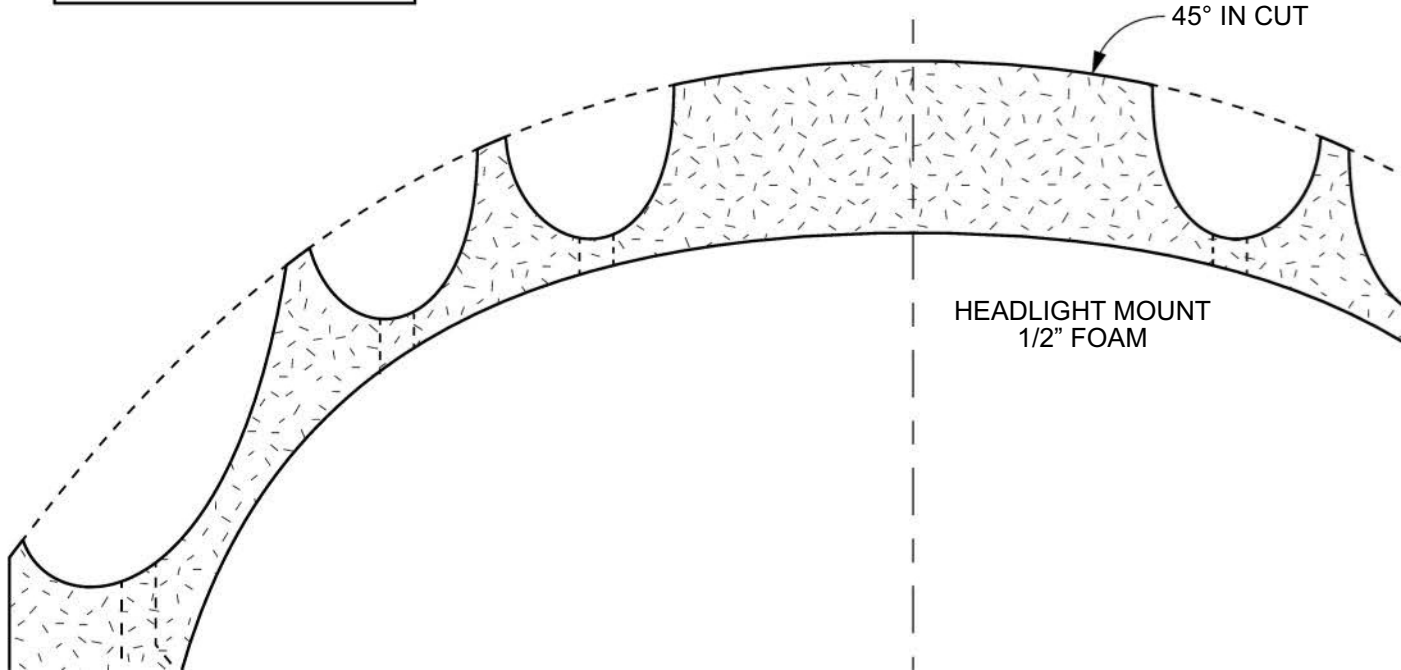
INSTRUMENT PANEL
3/32" BASS



SIDE WINDOW JIG
2 OFF, 1/8" BALSA

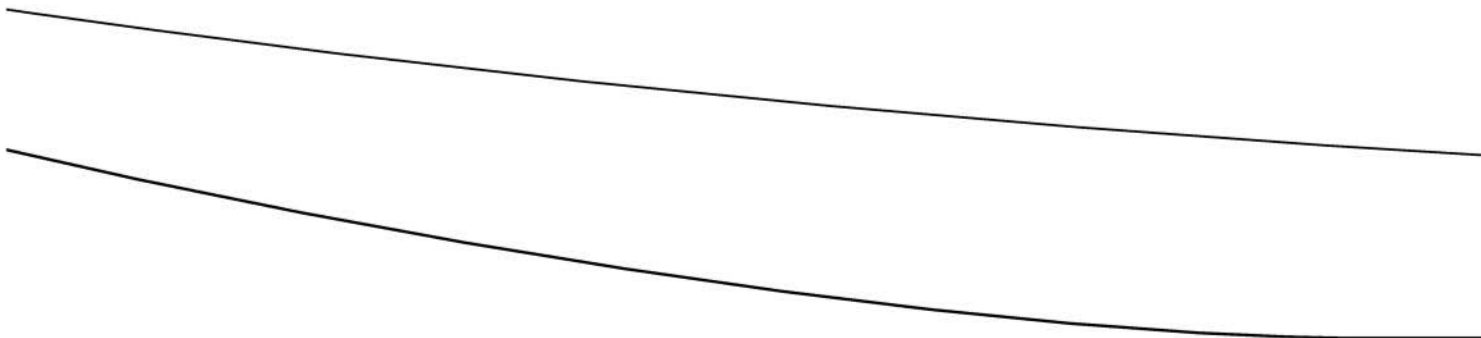
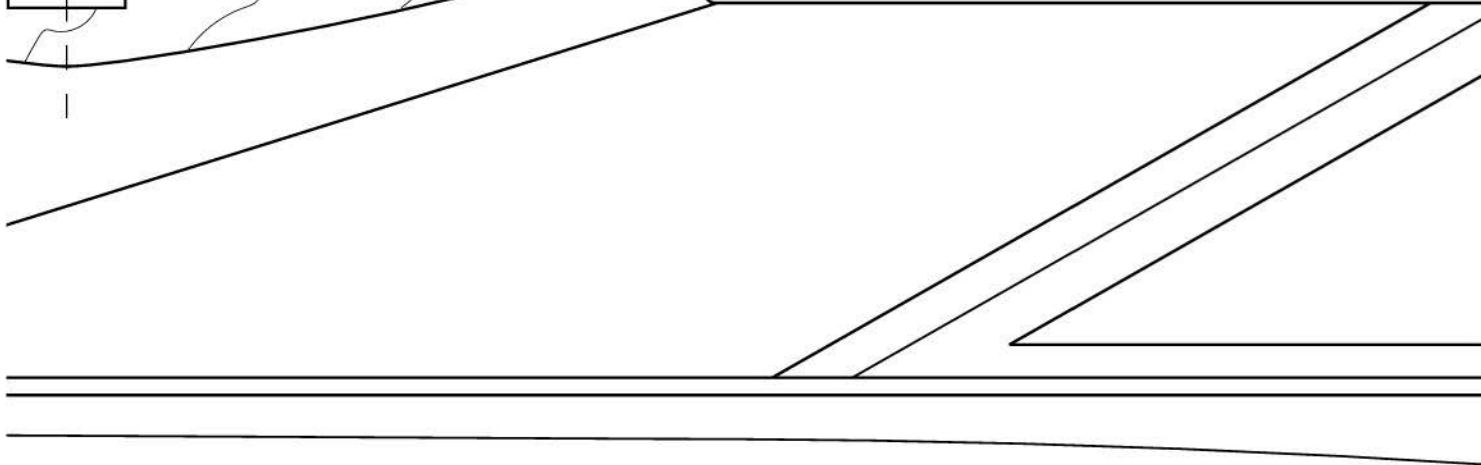
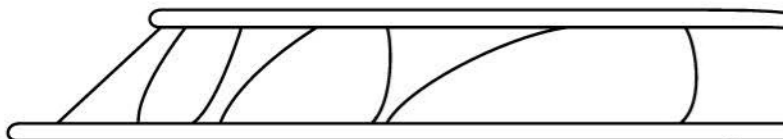
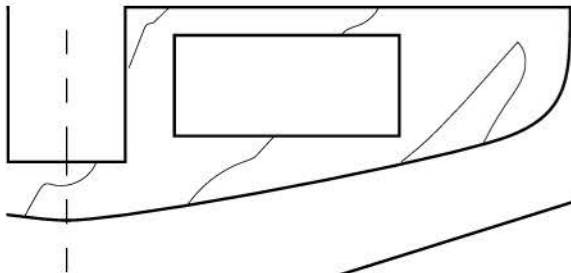


CENTRE
HEADLIGHT JIG
1/8" BALSA

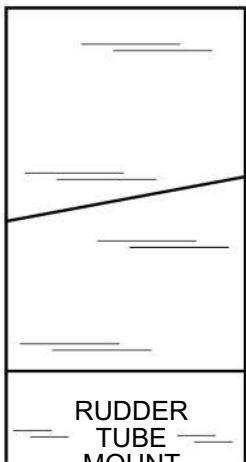
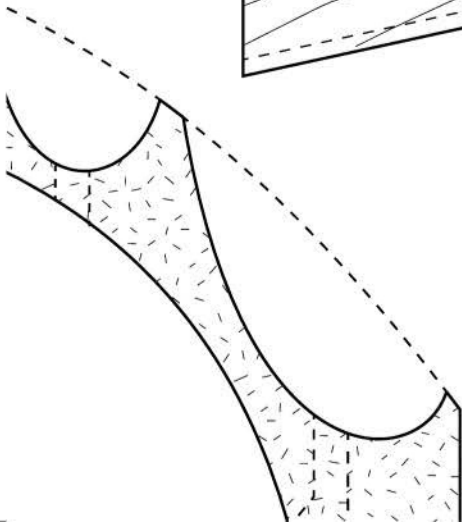
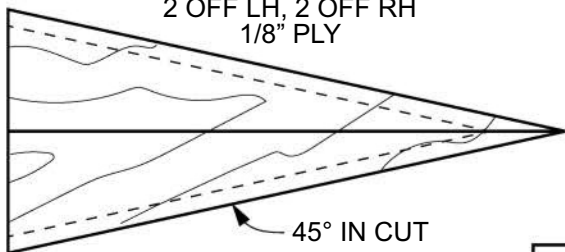


HEADLIGHT MOUNT
1/2" FOAM

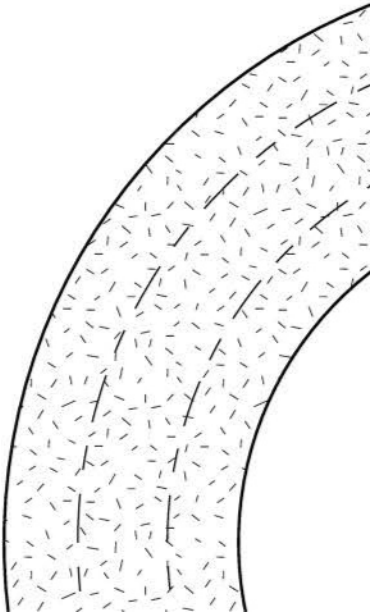
R SERVO MOUNT
1/8" PLY



DRIVESHAFT SUPPORT
2 OFF LH, 2 OFF RH
1/8" PLY

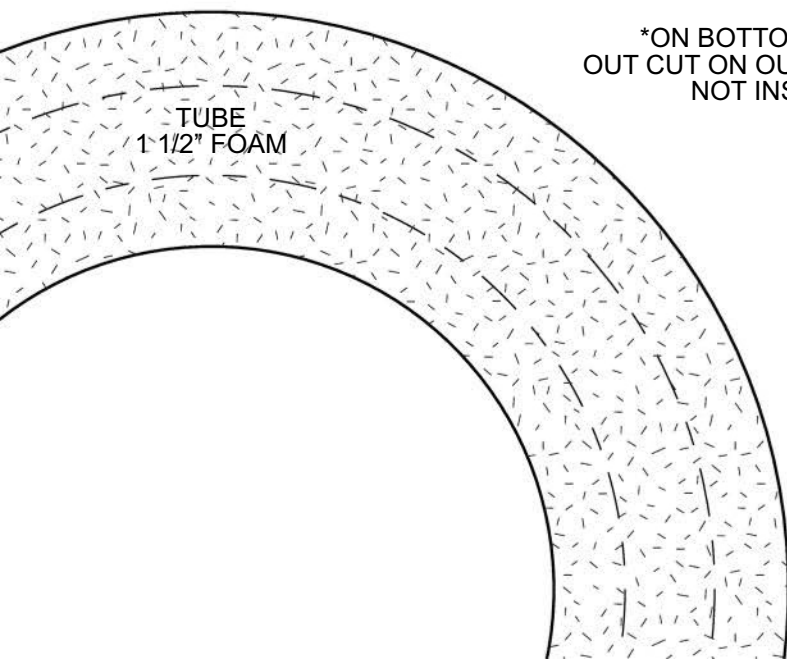
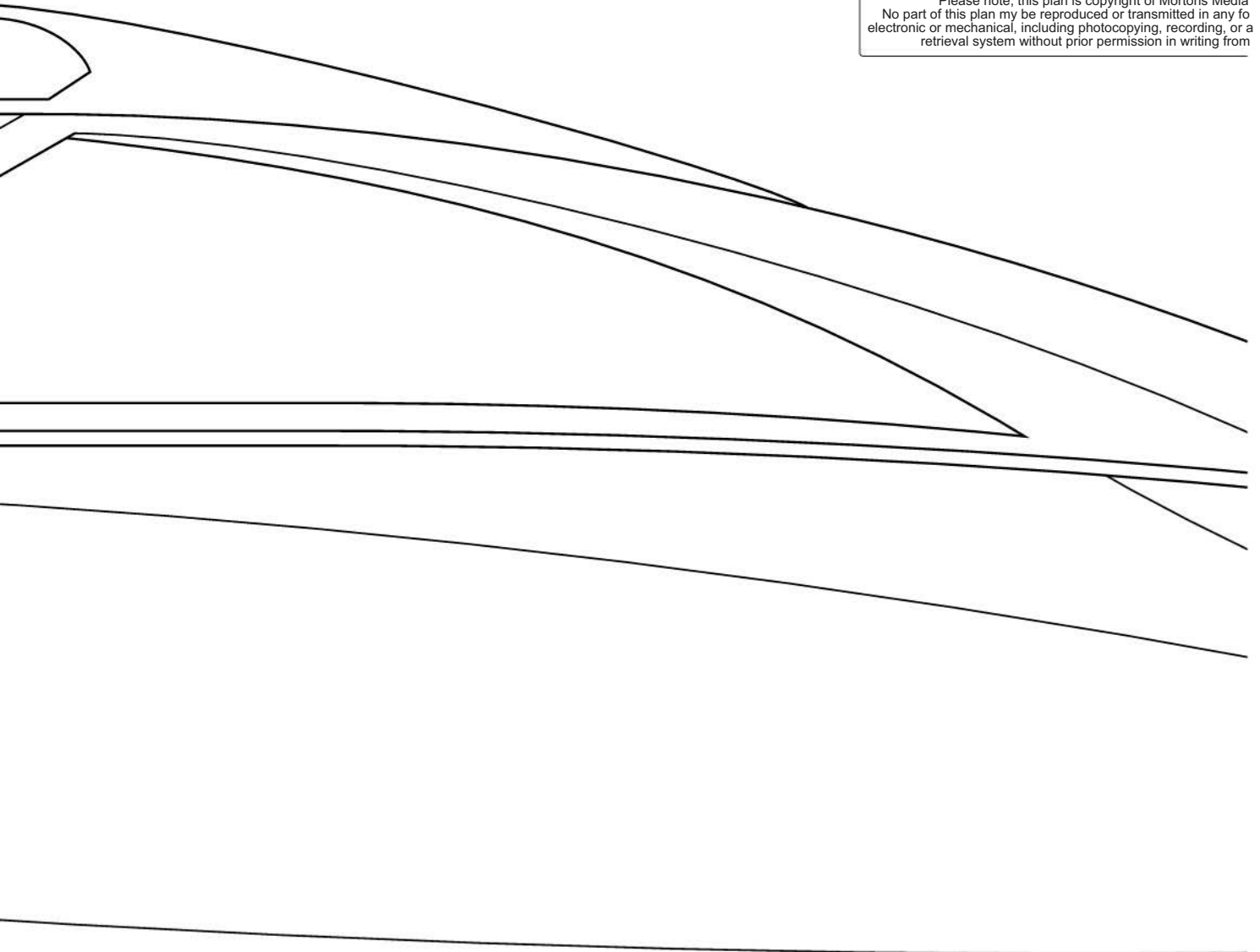


RUDDER
TUBE
MOUNT



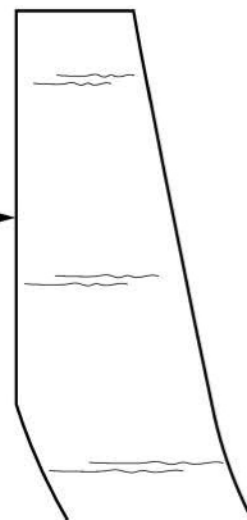
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*ON BOTTOM MAKE
OUT CUT ON OUTSIDE ONLY
NOT INSIDE

14° IN CUT
BOTH SIDES



A

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3

2

1

SCALE INCHES

Model Boats

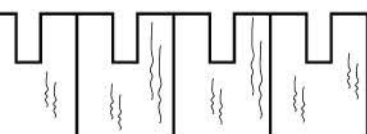
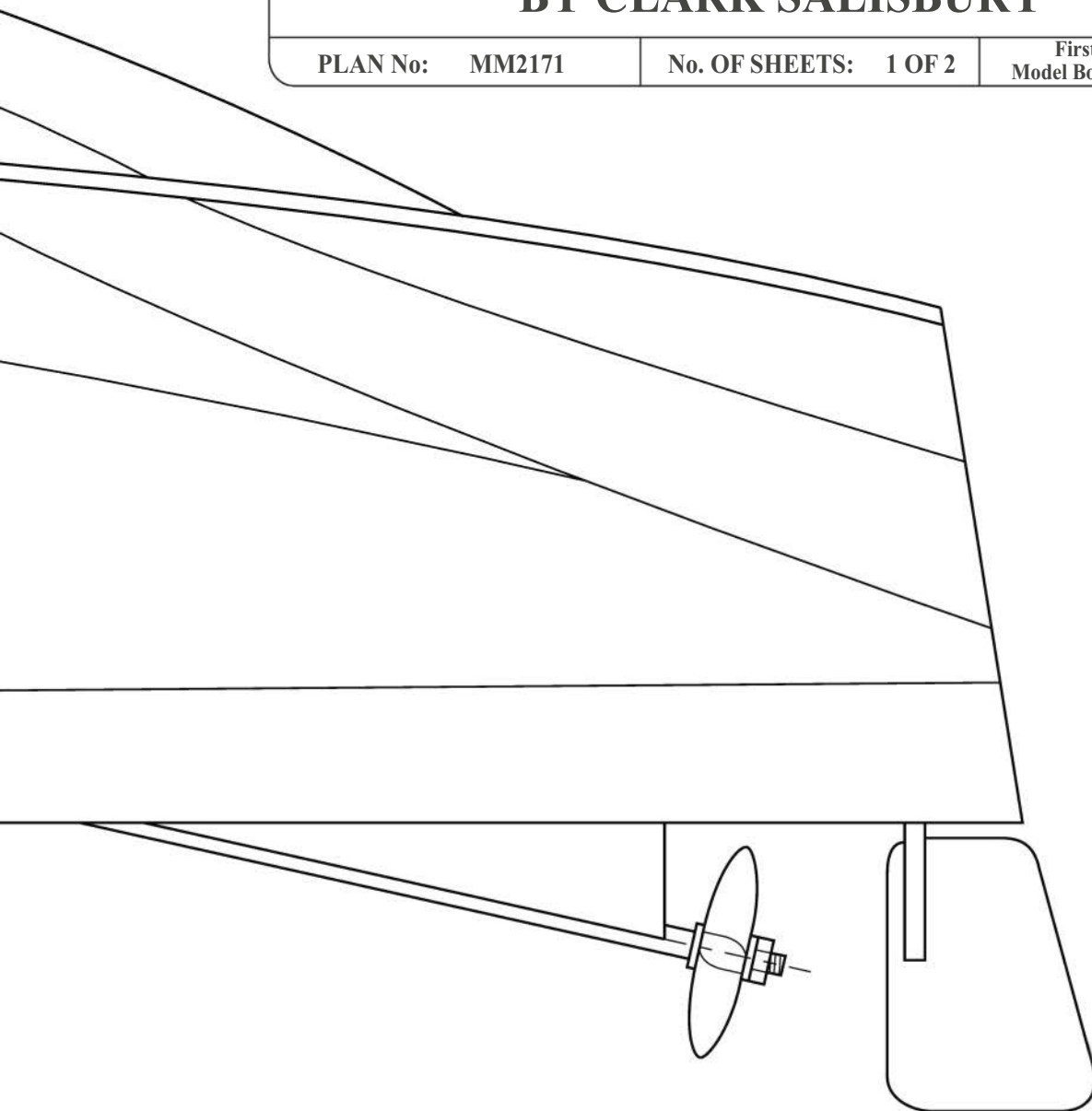
LAKE SKIMMER

R/C SKI BOAT
BY CLARK SALISBURY

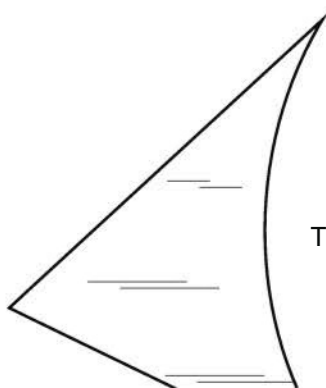
PLAN No: MM2171

No. OF SHEETS: 1 OF 2

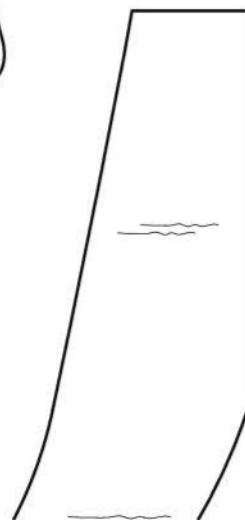
First published in
Model Boats September 2023



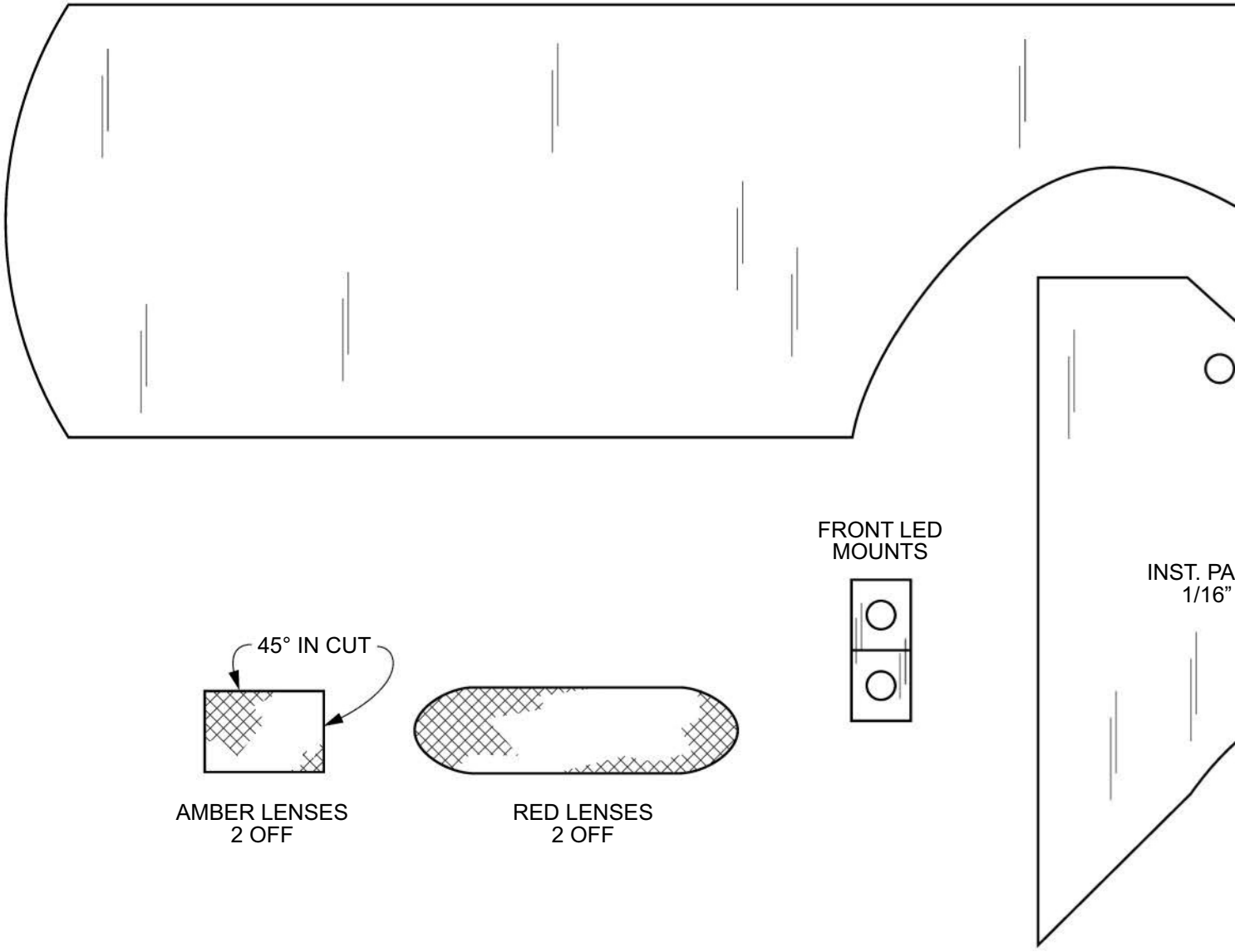
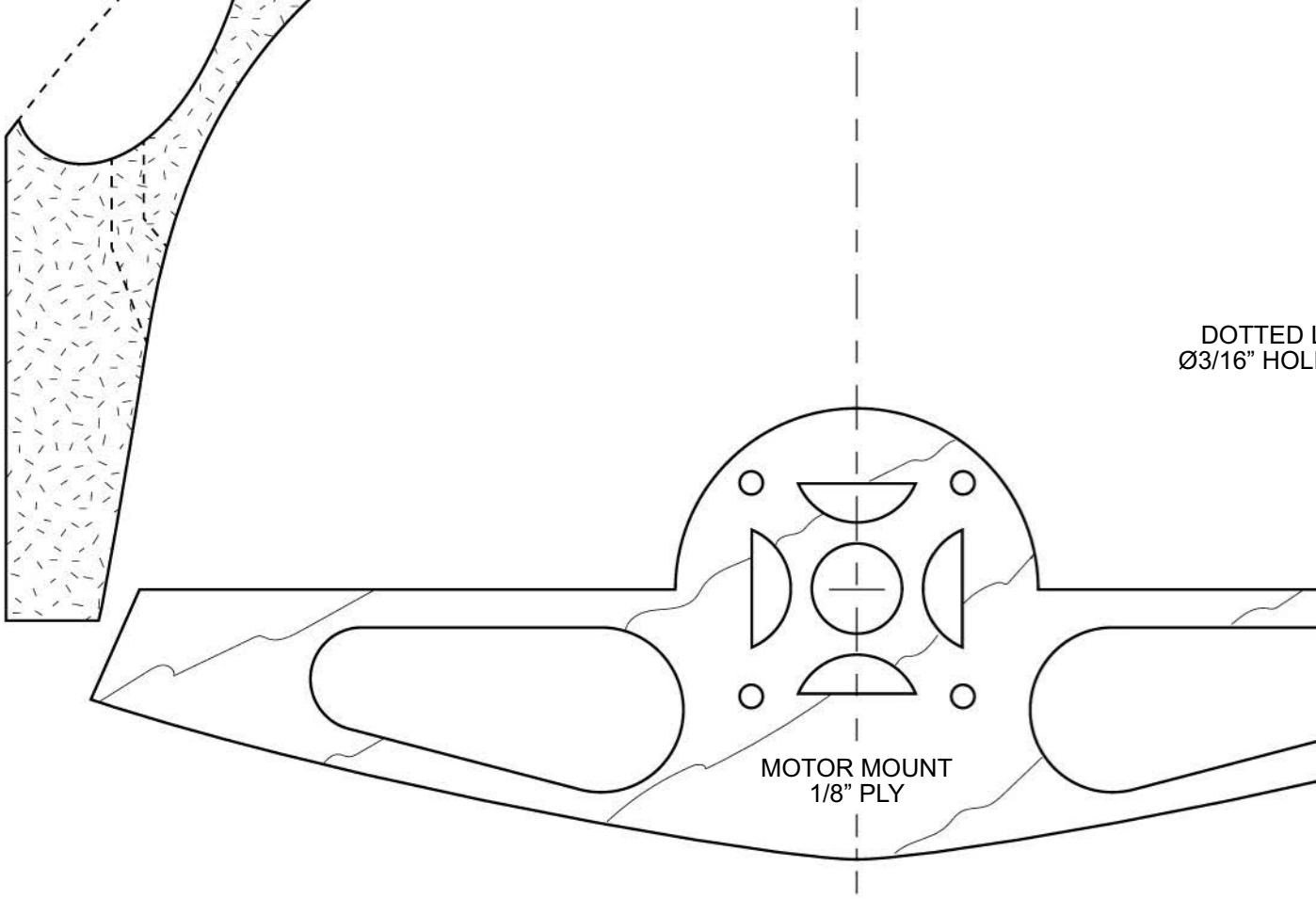
AIR TUNNEL LOCATORS
3/32" BASS



TRANSOM LOCATOR
4 OFF, 1/8" BALSA



DOTTED L
Ø3/16" HOL



D LINES ARE
OLES FOR LED

14° IN CUT
BOTH SIDES

RUDDER
TUBE
MOUNT
PARTS
1/8" BALSA

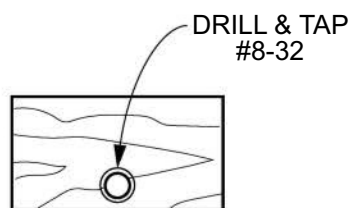
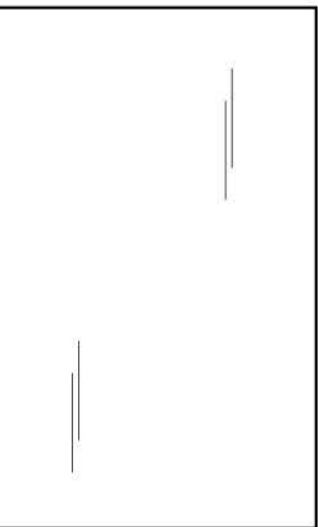
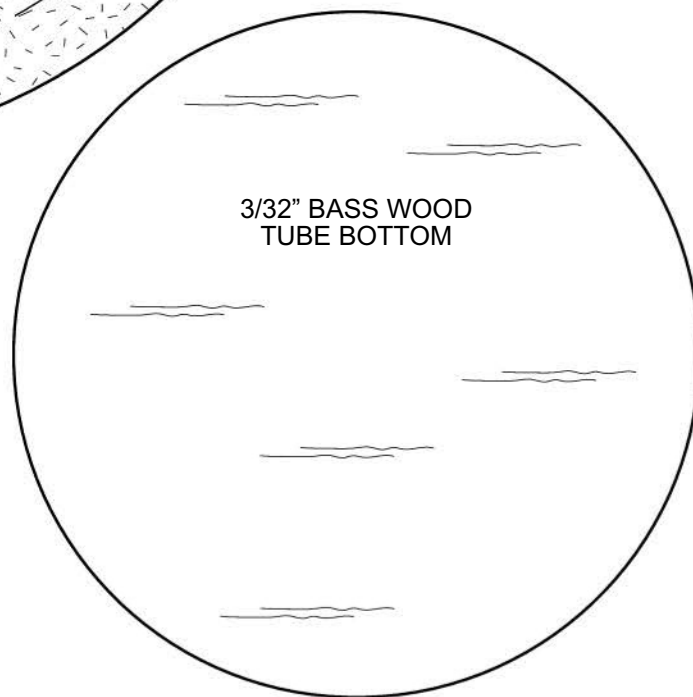
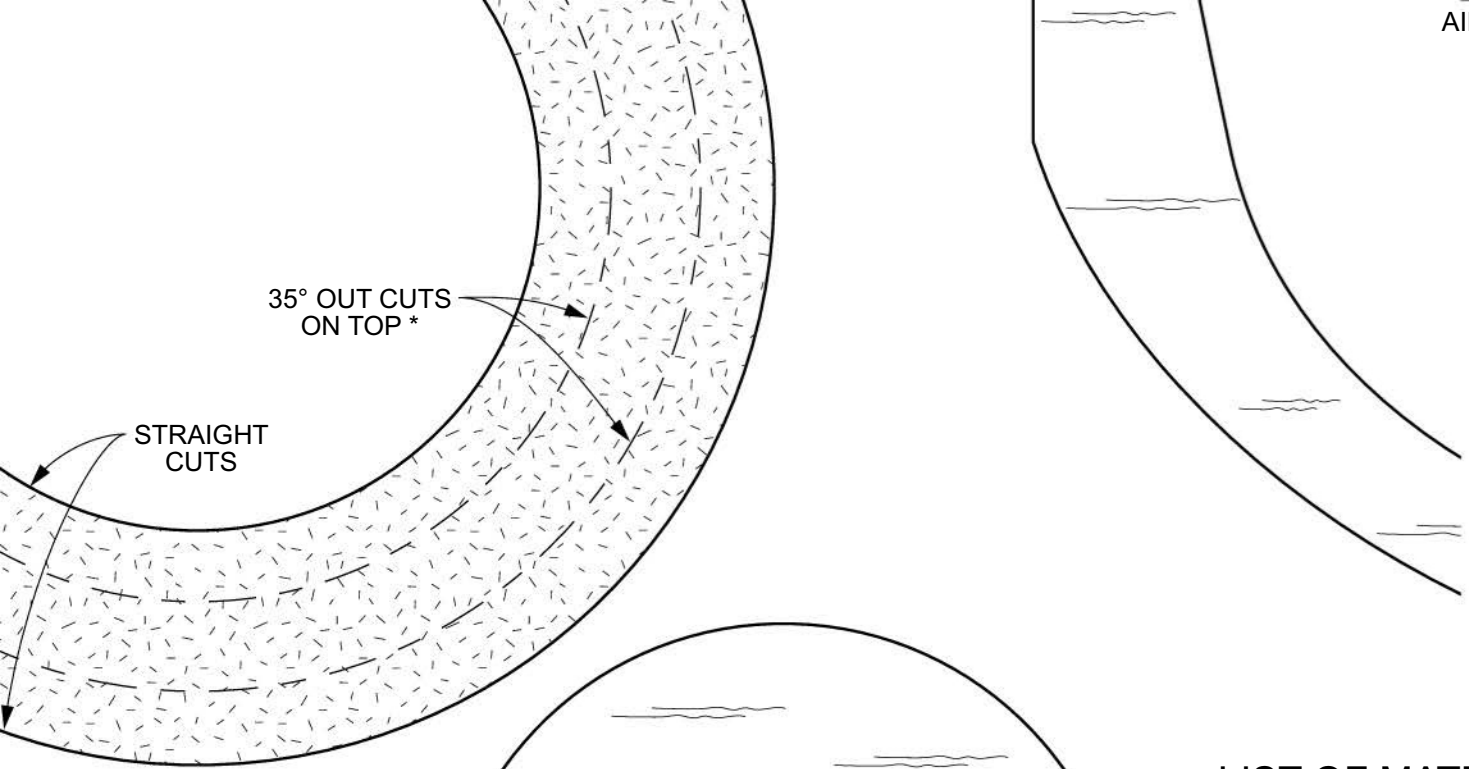
15° IN CUT

AIR TUNNEL TOP
1/16" BALSA

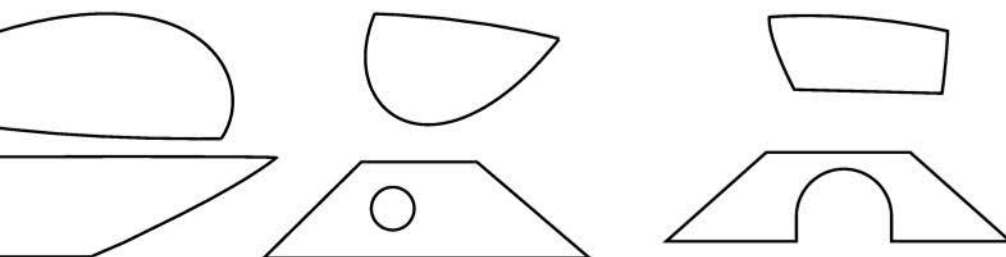
PANEL BASE
6" BALSA

INST. PANEL
RIGHT FILLER
1/16" BALSA

SEAT BACK CONNECTORS
1/16" BALSA



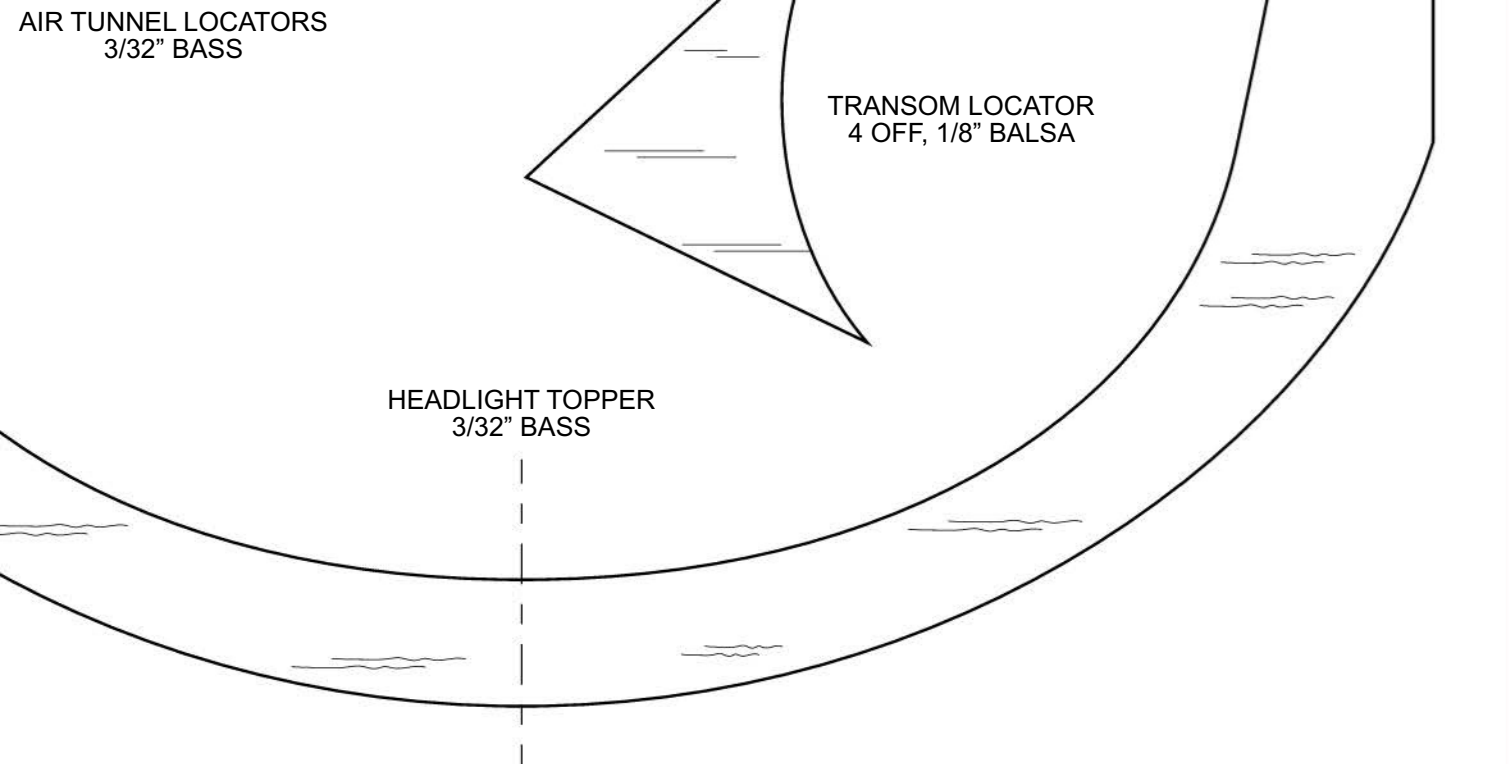
FLOOR MOUNT
2 OFF 1/8" PLY STACKED



HEADLIGHT WELL REFLECTORS
2 OFF EACH
ONE WITH CHROME FOIL ON TOP
ONE WITH CHROME FOIL ON BOTTOM

LIST OF MATERIALS

ITEM NO.	QTY.
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	20
8	25ft
9	
10	
11	
12	
13	
14	
15	
16	
17	1 ROLL
18	1 SET
19	1 ROLL
20	
21	

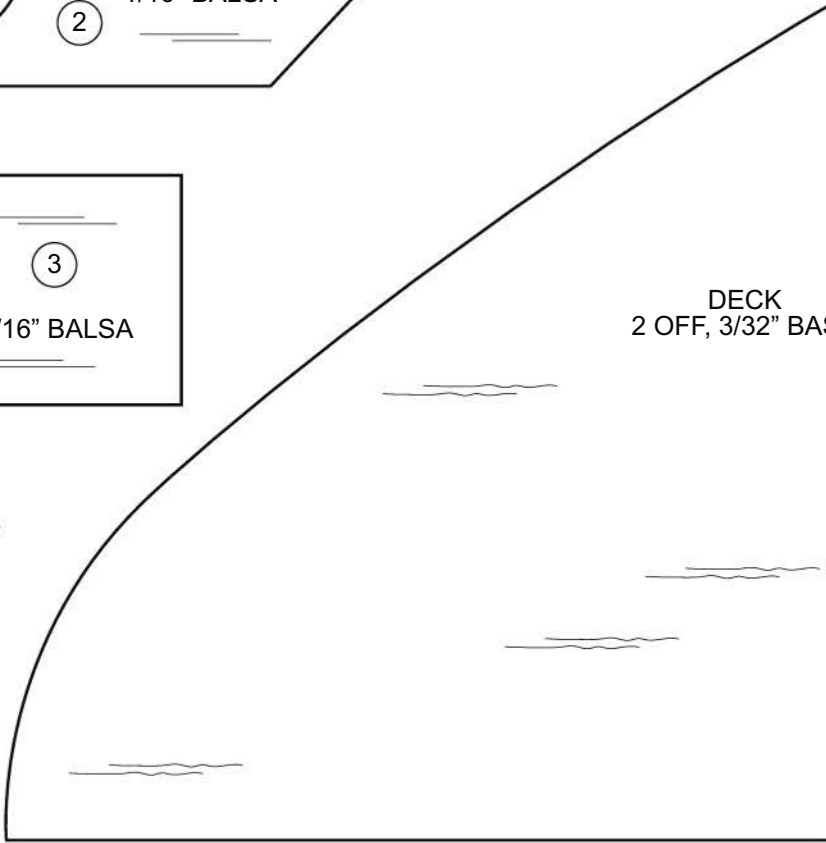
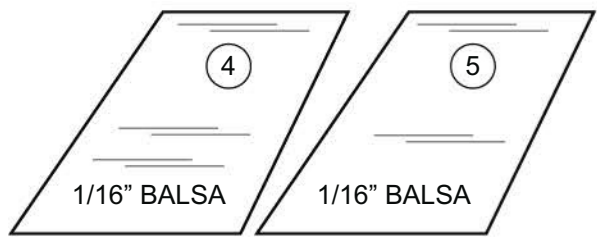
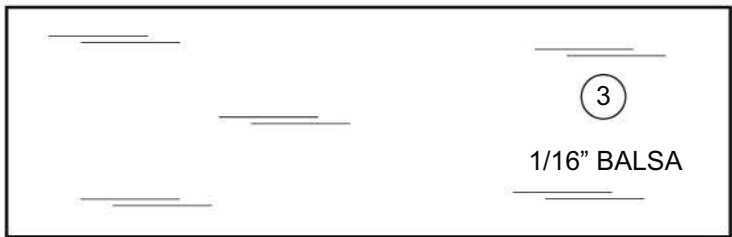
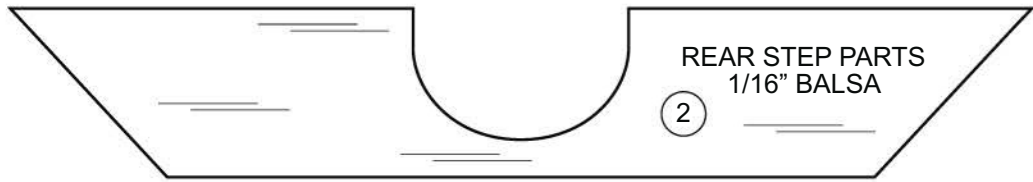
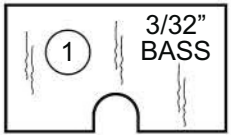


MATERIALS:

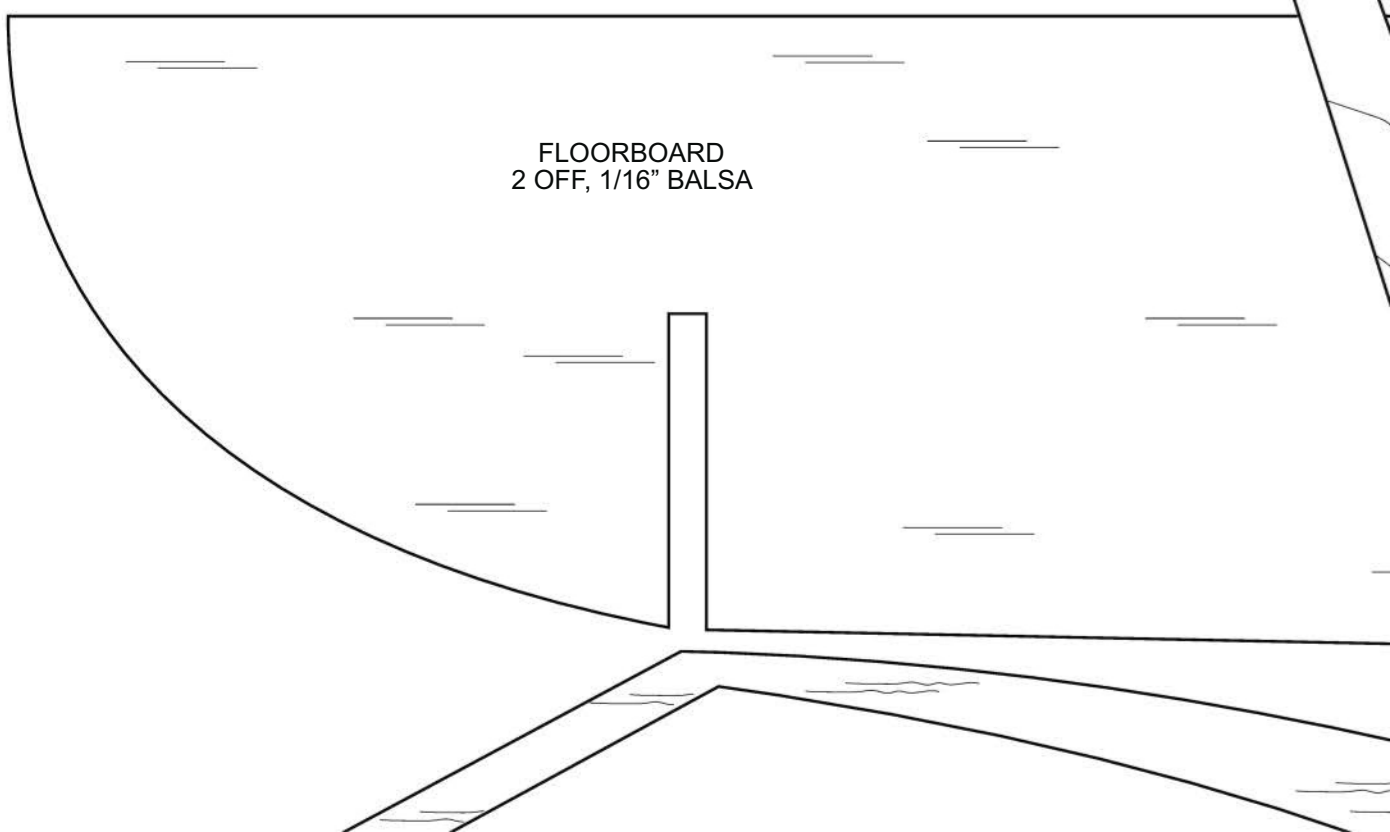
QTY.	DESCRIPTION	AVAILABLE
1	RUNNING HARDWARE #2370 (ORDER EXTRA COUPLING FOR MOTOR)	DUMASPRODUCTS.COM
1	RADIO & RECEIVER, 2 FUNCTION	HORIZONHOBBY.COM
1	BATTERY 3S 2500mAh #EFLB25003S30	“
1	OUTRUNNER MOTOR, PARK 480, 910kV #EFLM1500	”
1	ESC, 50A #EFLA1050	”
1	BATTERY HOLDER (AAA) #23-BH3-1	DIGIKEY.COM
20	WHITE 5mm LED #2368-NTE 30139-ND	“
25ft	BLACK 30AWG WIRE	”
4	BALSA SHEET 1/8" x 6" x 36"	HOBBY STORE
2	1/9" PLYWOOD 6" x 12"	“
2	3/32" BASS WOOD 6" x 24"	”
2	1/16" BALSA SHEET 6" x 36"	“
1	FOAM BOARD 1 1/2" x 6" x 18"	” OR HOME IMPROVEMENT STORE
1	SERVO, HITEC #HS-85BB	HORIZONHOBBY.COM
1	Ø3/8" WOOD DOWEL x 36"	HOBBY STORE
1	.015 CLEAR PETG PLASTIC 15" x 24"	“
1 ROLL	NEON ORANGE COVERING	HORIZONHOBBY.COM
1 SET	RED & AMBER TRAILER REFLECTORS	AUTO PARTS STORE
1 ROLL	CHROME VINYL STICK-ON FOIL	HOBBY STORE
1	BOTTLE, BLACK PAINT, ACRYLIC	”
1	1/16" x 1/8" x 36" BASS WOOD	“

SCALE MM

10 20 30 40 50



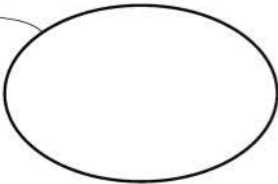
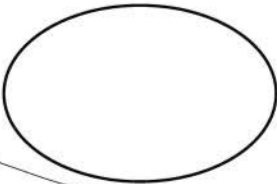
DECK
2 OFF, 3/32" BASS

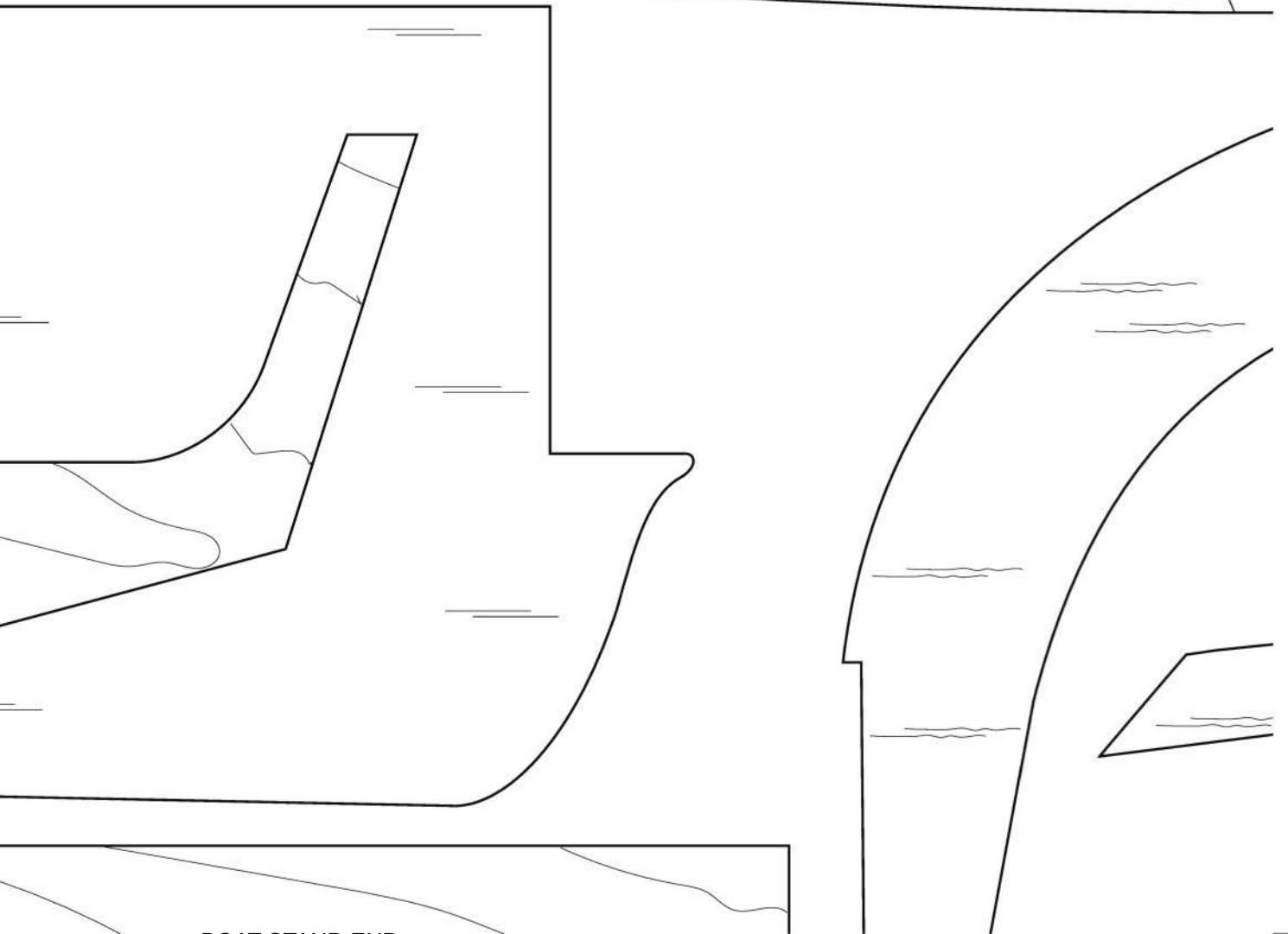
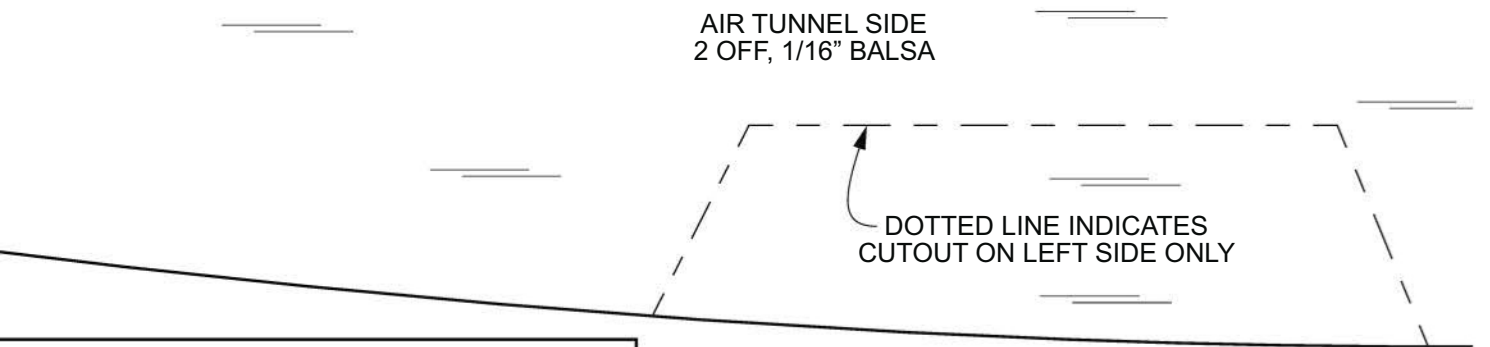
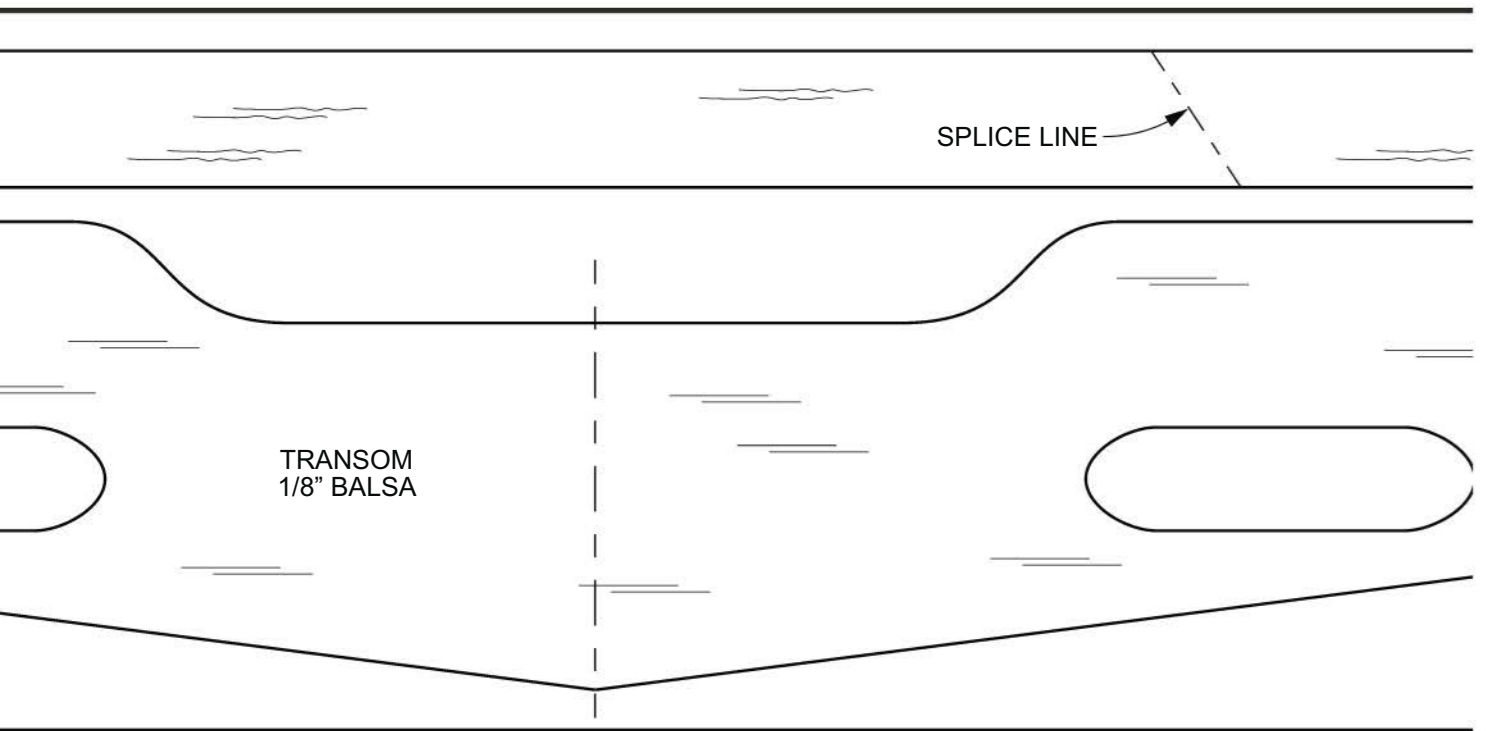


FLOORBOARD
2 OFF, 1/16" BALSA

BASS

FRONT BULKHEAD
1/8" PLY





Model Boats

LAKE SKIMMER

R/C SKI BOAT
BY CLARK SALISBURY

PLAN No: MM2171	No. OF SHEETS: 2 OF 2	First published in Model Boats September 2023
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1

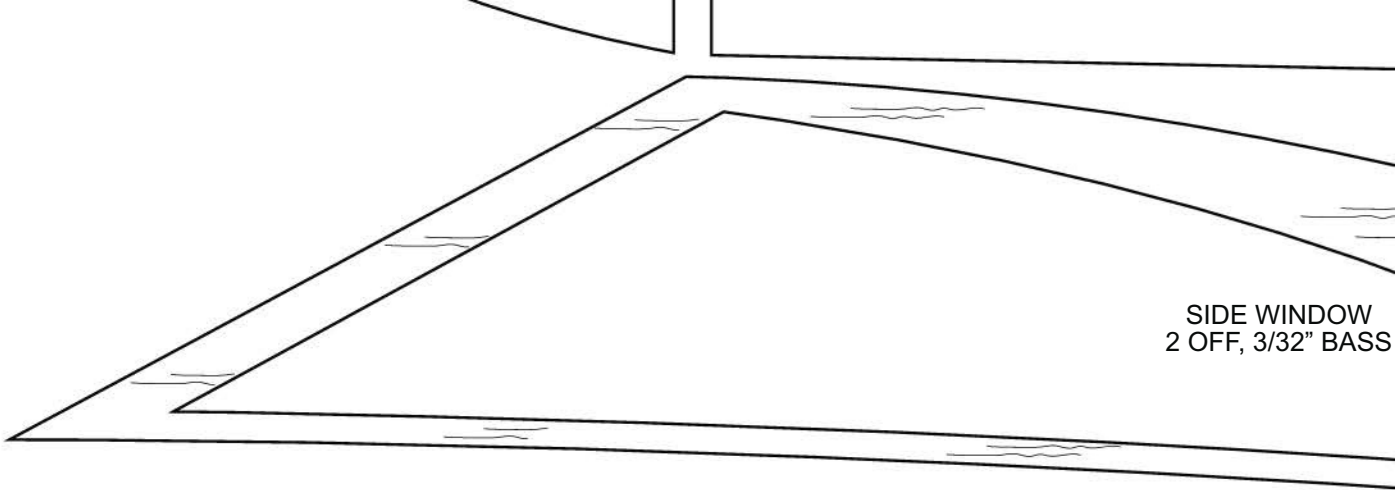
WINDSHIELD
UPPER RIM PARTS
3/32" BASS

SPLICE LINE

WINDSHIELD PILLAR
2 OFF, 3/32" BASS

HEADLIGHT SIDE
2 OFF, 3/32" BASS

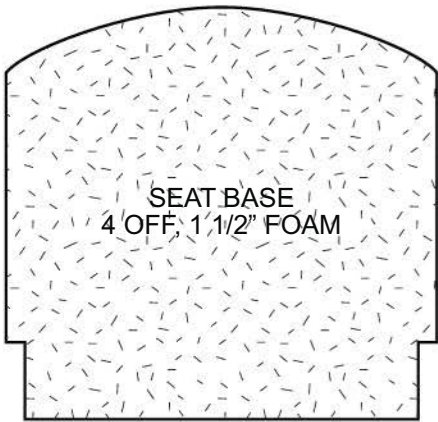
MOTOR MOUNT GUSSET
2 OFF, 1/8" PLY



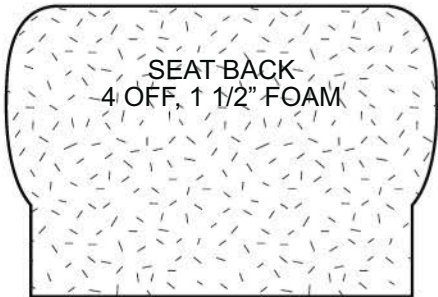
SIDE WINDOW
2 OFF, 3/32" BASS



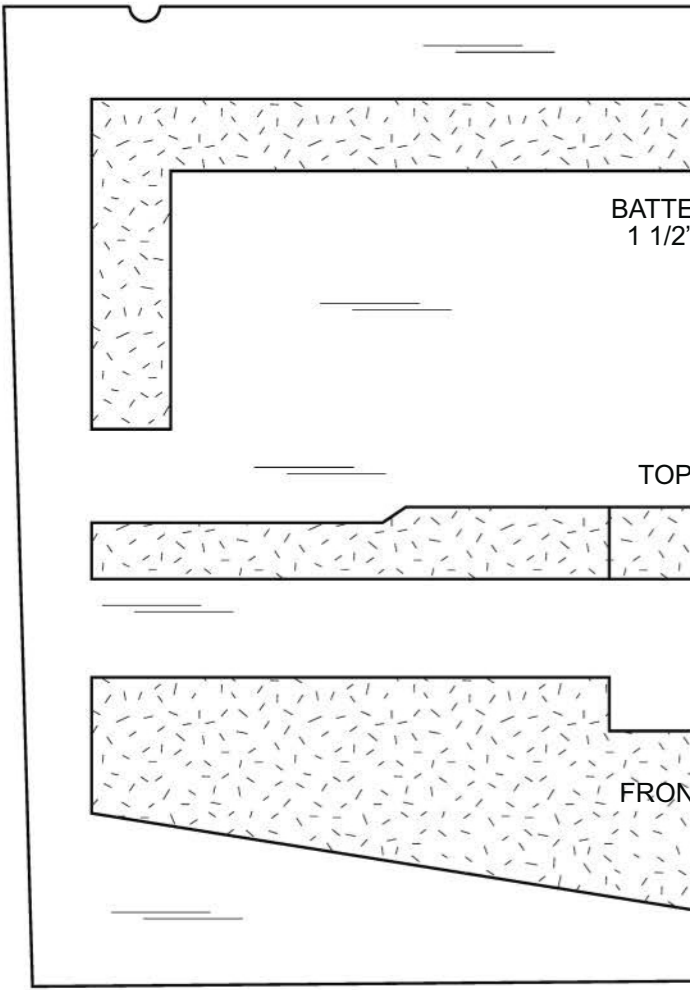
BASE & BACK FRONT VIEW



SEAT BASE
4 OFF, 1 1/2" FOAM



SEAT BACK
4 OFF, 1 1/2" FOAM

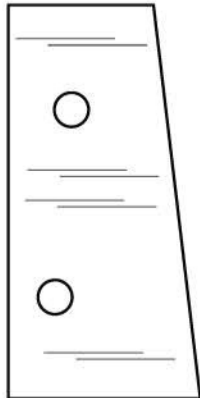


BATTERY
1 1/2"

TOP

FRONT

TAIL LIGHT MOUNT
2 OFF, 1/16" BALSA



W
SS

BATTERY BOX
1/2" FOAM

TOP VIEW

FRONT VIEW

HULL SIDE
2 OFF, 1/8" BALSA

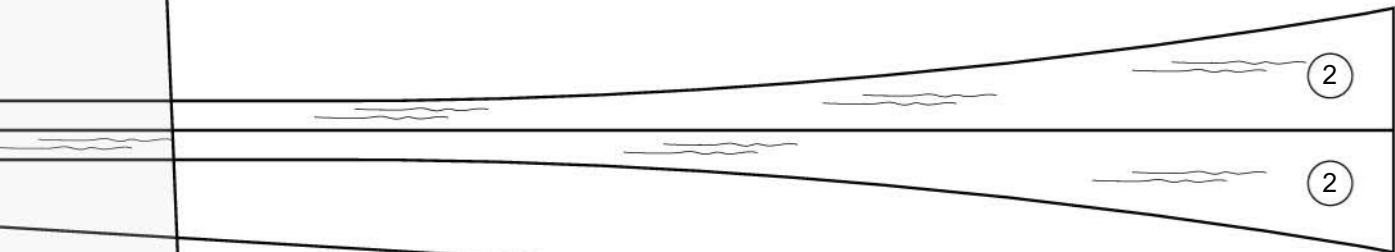
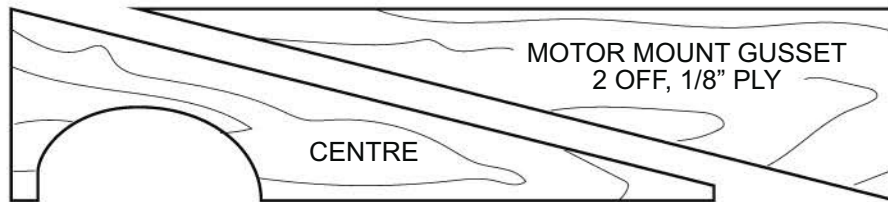
TOP

BOAT STAND END
2 OFF, 1/8" PLY

WINDSHIELD
.015" CLEAR PETG PLASTIC
SHOWN SHADED

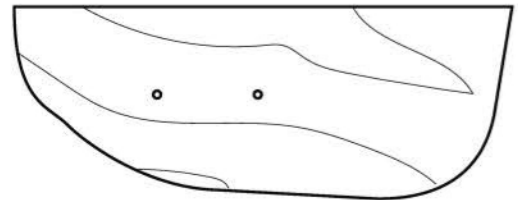
SIDE

HEADLIGHT SIDE
2 OFF, 3/32" BASS



HULL BOTTOM
2 OFF, 1/8" Balsa

AAA BATTERY HOLDER MOUNT
1/8" PLY



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