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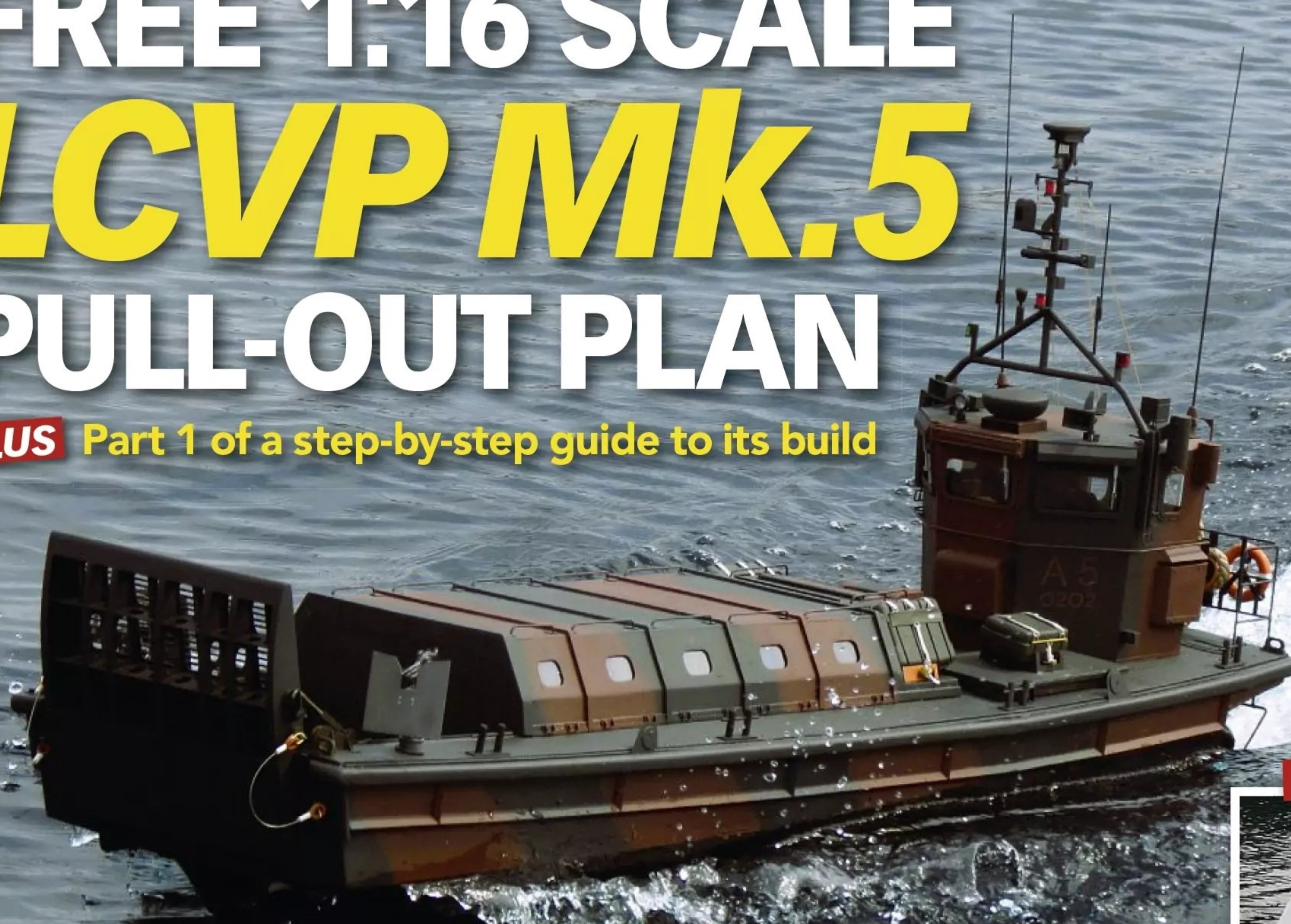
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January 2024

Vol.74 No.878

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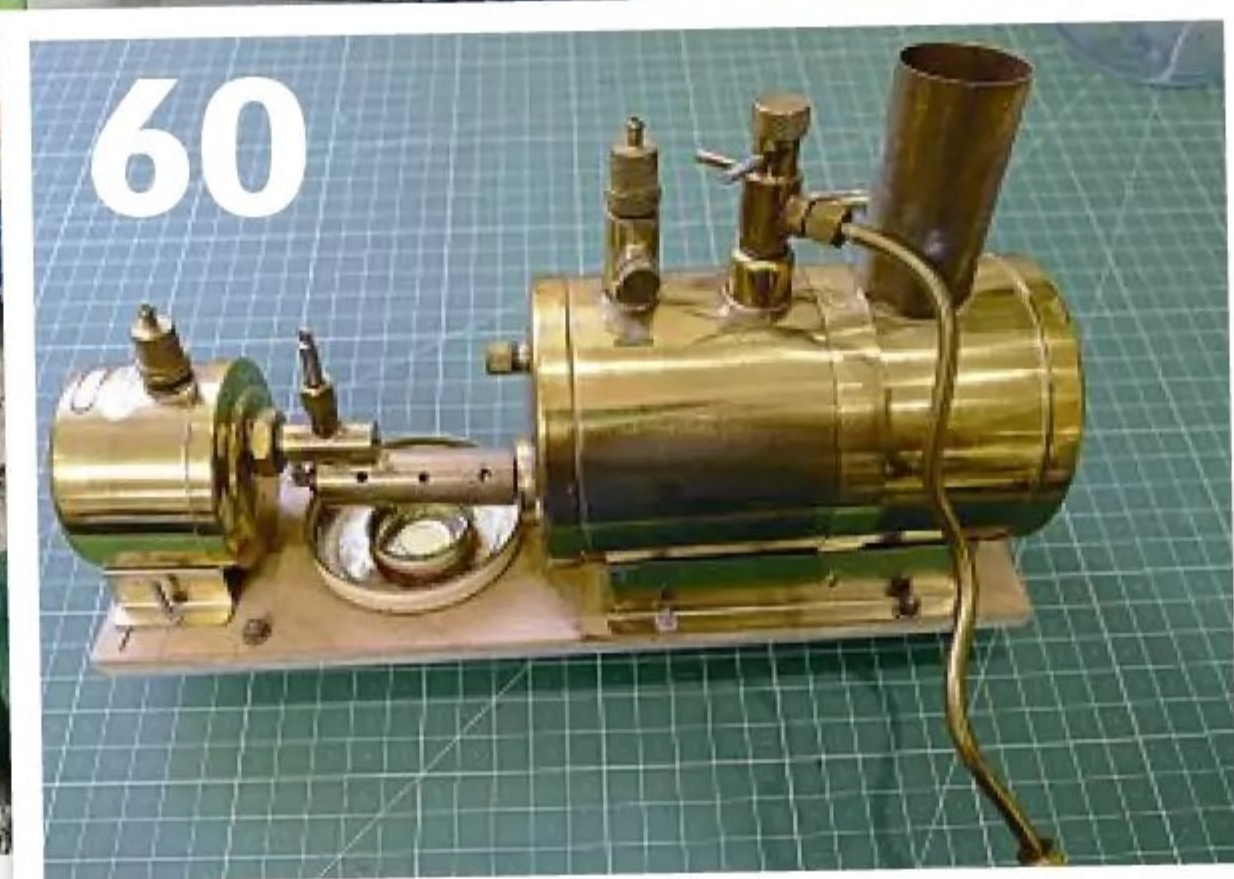
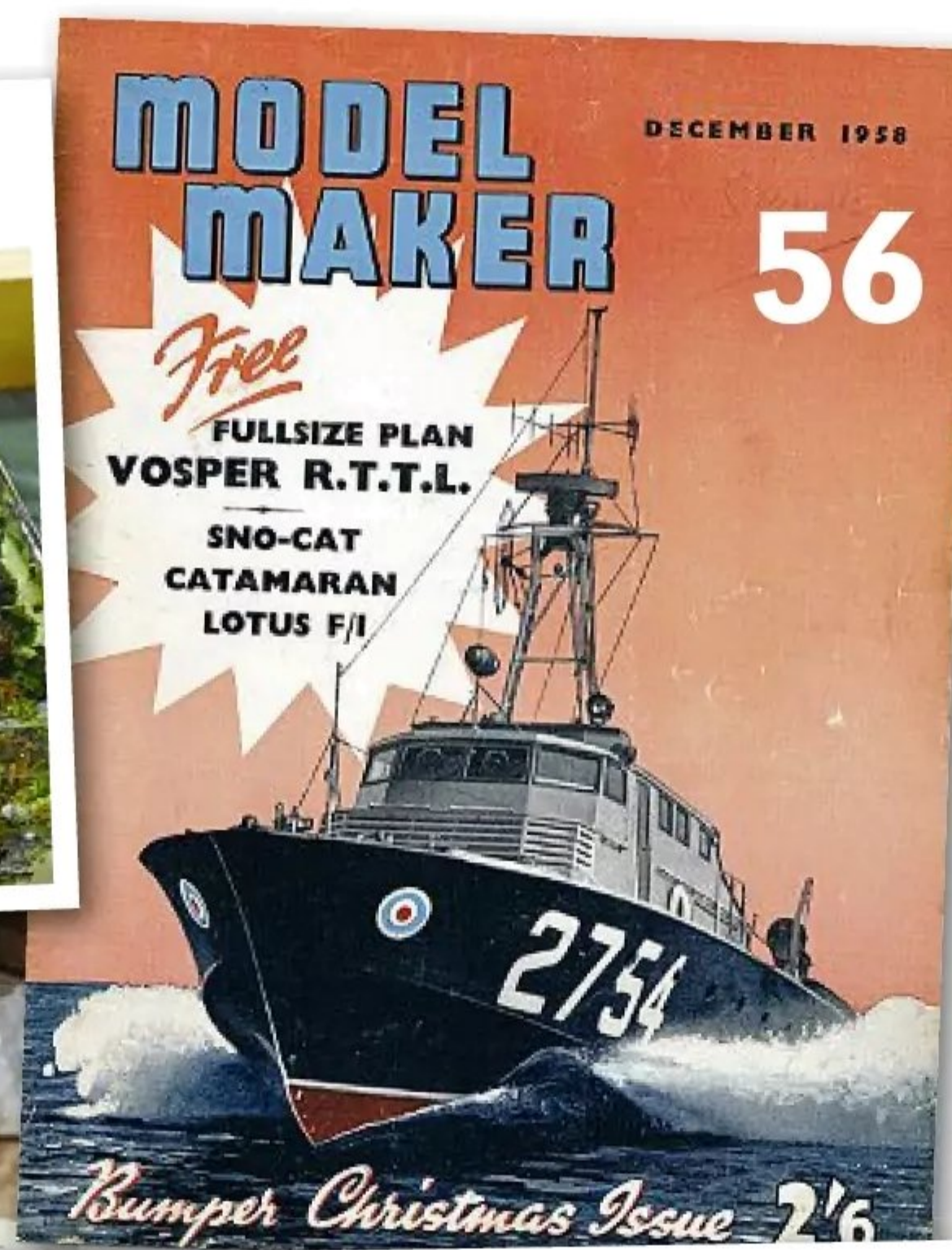
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With this issue going on sale just ahead of the holidays, we've done our best to make it a real cracker! For a start, there are two fabulous prizes up for grabs, courtesy of Stalwart Crafts and The Airbrush Company. That's not the only double whammy, though. As John Parker points out in this month's instalment of Flotsam & Jetsam, free plans were first introduced as a way of adding extra value to festive season editions, so, to continue that tradition, in the centre spread of the mag, sandwiched between their respective build guides, you'll find both a full-size and a mini pull-out plan.

There are, of course, so many traditions associated with this time of year. Perhaps one of the most poignant is the annual dimming/switching off of the Christmas lights in Mousehole Harbour between 8pm-9pm on December 19 in remembrance of the 1981 Penlee Lifeboat Disaster. It is now 42 years since the engines of the *Union Star*, a small cargo vessel on her maiden voyage, failed in heavy seas just off the coast of Cornwall and could not be restarted. When she began drifting towards the treacherously rocky shoreline on that dreadful night, a Mayday was put out. A Royal Navy Sea King helicopter was scrambled to try and winch everyone off the stricken vessel, but this proved impossible due to hurricane force winds. The crew of the Penlee lifeboat, the *Solomon Browne*, which had also been launched and had battled through 60 feet high waves to reach the *Union Star*, then made repeated attempts to effect a rescue. "We've got four off at the moment" (there were eight aboard the *Union Star*) was the last message transmitted from the *Solomon Browne* before both vessels and all those aboard were lost. The helicopter pilot would later describe the crew's refusal to give up as "The greatest act of courage I have ever seen".

Mike Payne's 1:12 scale model of the Watson class *Solomon Browne* (turn to p.16) is the latest in a series of RNLI lifeboats he's built, and which he displays to help raise funds for the RNLI. So, bravo to him, and indeed to all the model boat clubs up and down the country that actively support the RNLI. Keep up the good work!

Kudos, too, to all those who, either individually or collectively, take the time and trouble to welcome newcomers into the hobby. Nev Wade's tribute to the pond side mentors he so fondly remembers (turn to p. 24) is a great example of how a little encouragement and advice can prove invaluable.

Finally, before I wrap up by wishing each and every one of you a very Happy New Year, I just want to say thanks for all the fantastic input over the past twelve months – please keep it coming in 2024.

Enjoy your read!

Lindsey

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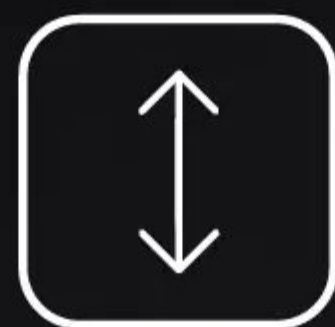
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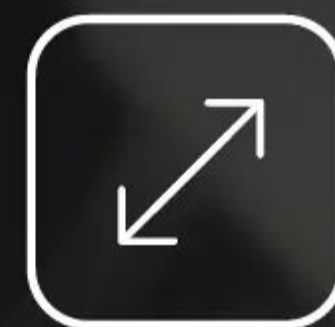
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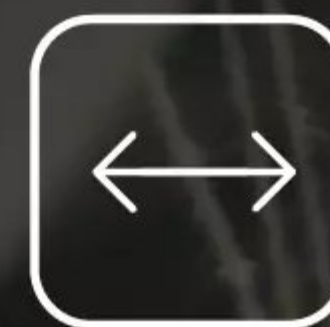
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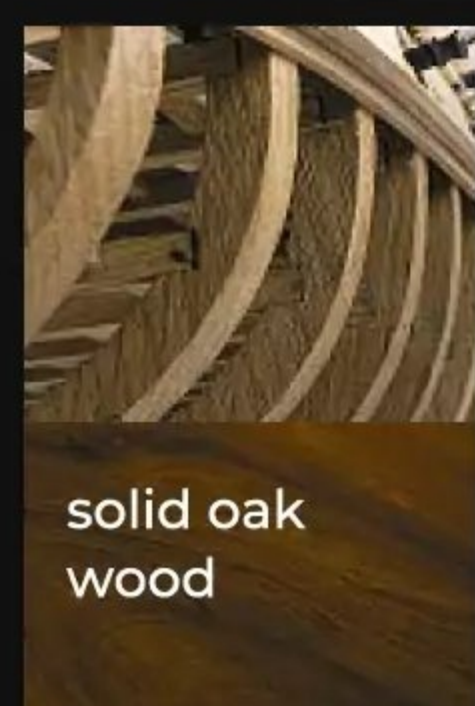
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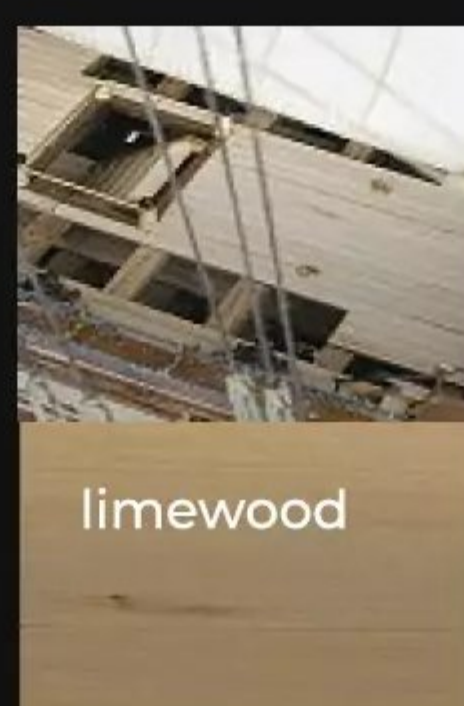
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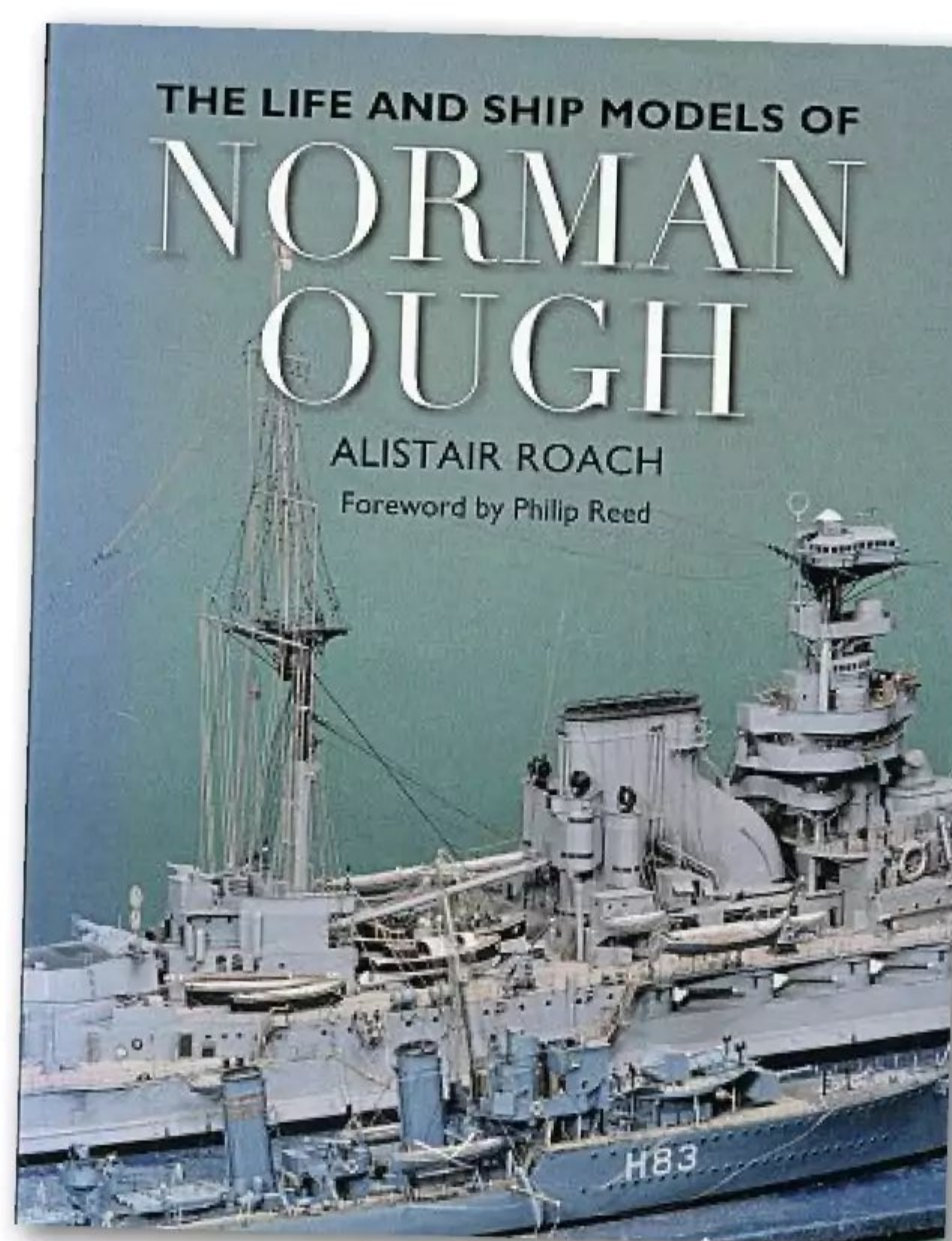
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January 2024 will see Alistair Roach's *The Life and Ship Models of Norman Ough* (originally published in hardback format back in 2016 and now sold out) relaunched as a paperback by Seaforth Publishing.

Part autobiography, part practical manual, the book not only documents how and why the late Norman Ough (1898-1965) came to be widely regarded as the 20th century's greatest warship modeller but also includes many of the articles he wrote for *Model Maker* magazine, his detailed line drawings (now kept in the Brunel Institute) and photographs of some of his models held by various museums and at Mountbatten House. Ough's reputation for outstanding craftsmanship did not escape the attention of the 1st Earl (Louis) Mountbatten, who commissioned him to produce fine scale replicas of the ships on which he'd served.



Carrying an RRP (Recommended Retail Price) of £16.99, pre-orders for the title in its new paperback format can be placed at www.pen-and-sword.co.uk or through your local bookstore by quoting the ISBN 978139 9077965.

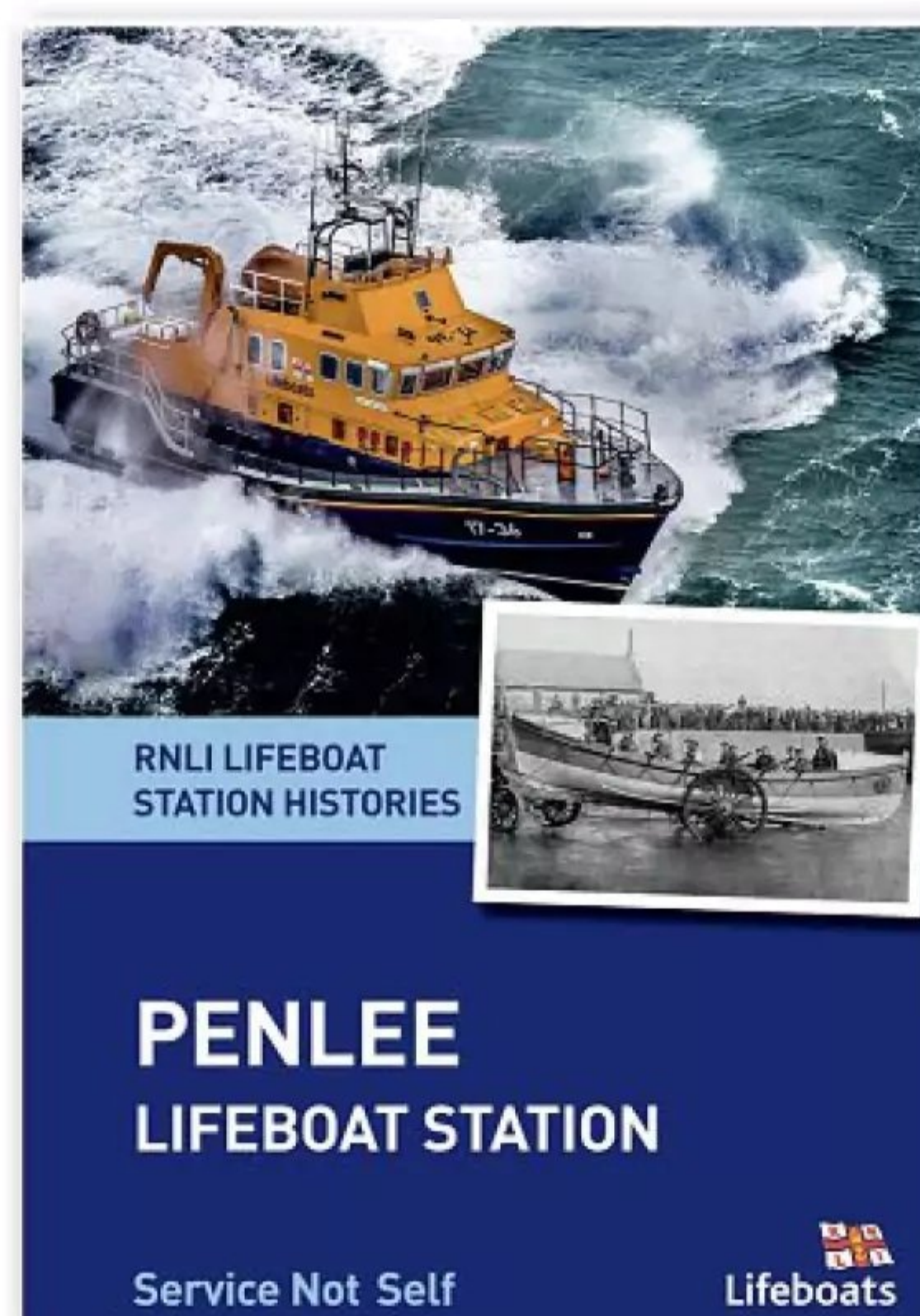
Trial reinstatement of free ads

Due to continued (albeit sporadic) calls for the return of the free classified ads section in the back of the magazine (dropped during lockdown as the majority of the ads we were being asked to publish listed items for sale on a 'buyer collects' basis, not something we could encourage due to the social distance warnings and government travel restrictions in place at that time), we have decided to trial run a reintroduction of the service. If, therefore, you would like to place an ad, a form for submissions can be found on page 72 of this issue.

The purpose of this trial run is to try and determine the value placed upon these private listings by the majority of our readers before committing page space and budget (admin costs) to their permanent reinstatement. So, as well as inviting those of you who wish to take advantage of the service to do so, all thoughts and comments that will help us gauge both the level of interest and how much, or little, they add to your enjoyment of the magazine will be most helpful.

Penlee and the Solomon Browne

For those of you not old enough to remember the loss of the *Solomon Browne* (the vessel on which the model built by Mike Payne is based – see feature starting on page 16), the BBC documentary *Penlee Lifeboat Disaster – The Cruel Sea* is still available to watch YouTube, while the history of Penlee's Lifeboat Station in its entirety is the subject of a book by Rachael Campey. Priced at £8.95, this can be ordered from the RNLI's online shop: <https://shopnli.org/products/penlee-station-history>.



Stand by for action!

Although not strictly model boat related, *Thunderbirds* fans may be interested to learn that Scalextric has just launched a newly tooled FAB 1 into its slot-car range. This 1:32 scale version of the iconic pink Rolls Royce (Ref. C4479) comes complete with working lights, a full luxurious interior and the instantly recognisable figures of Lady Penelope (seated in the back) and Parker (at the wheel).

Carrying an RRP (Recommended Retail Price) of £53.99, orders can now be placed at uk.scalextric.com.

WIN!

A LUXURY LEATHER APRON

All the leather aprons in Stalwart Crafts range are hand made from sustainably and ethically sourced raw materials.

This month, courtesy of award-winning artisan leather goods specialist Stalwart Crafts, we're delighted to be able to offer you the chance to win a truly superb prize: the 'one size fits all' Cross Strap Apron in Deluxe Leather, which usually retails at £205.

Whether you're a kit modeller, a scratch builder or a model engineer, the Cross Strap Deluxe will prove an invaluable addition to your workshop. Not only will it prevent products such as paints, solvents, etc, causing damage to your clothes, it will protect against any flying debris when chipping, chiselling, drilling, grinding, sanding and sawing wood, and, indeed, serve to shield you from heat and sparks while engaging in hot work.

We absolutely love this apron because:

- It's fabulously stylish, yet at the same time extremely practical
- It's been loving hand crafted from sustainably sourced leather
- To ensure complete comfort during long periods of wear, as well as the leather being lightweight and flexible, the apron is of easily adjustable bib and brace (rather than neck strap) design, distributing the weight across the shoulders and back as opposed to around the neck
- The premium quality leather has been specially cured and treated, so it's highly stain and scratch resistant, and, however dirty you get you get this apron, it can be cleaned simply by wiping it down with a soft cloth and some lukewarm water
- It sports a large front pocket with two openings. There is also a handy towel strap (to which, should you wish, you can attach a Stalwart Crafts' leather pouch for even more storage capacity; please note, this is not included in the prize but available to order separately)
- To top it all off, Stalwart Crafts believes in its products so much it offers a lifetime warranty on all its leather goods!

Whatever your needs, Stalwart Crafts has them covered!

The rustic and deluxe leather aprons in Stalwart Crafts’ carefully considered range can be purchased in a number of different colours. On request, orders can also be personalised with laser engraved names, slogans, patterns or logos. The choice, however, doesn’t end there, as, although the company takes great pride in the fact that all the leather it uses is responsibly sourced, aprons fashioned from vegan alternatives (vegan leather and vegan cork) now form part the line-up. Being hand-crafted, each individual apron is, of course, genuinely unique, but a bespoke service is available for those with very specific requirements.

Luxury for less!

What’s more, to celebrate the festive season, Stalwart Crafts is currently offering a very generous 15% discount on all its products. So, to browse the range in its entirety and take advantage of this unmissable money-off deal, visit www.stalwartcrafts.com



HOW TO ENTER

To be included in the draw, all you need to do is complete the entry form below, cut it out (photocopies will be accepted should you not wish to deface your magazine) and then mail it back to us at:

Stalwart Crafts Prize Draw
Model Boats
Mortons Media Group Media Centre
Morton Way
Horncastle
Lincs LN9 6JR

Please note, the closing date for entry submissions will be Friday, January 19, 2024.

Good luck, everyone!

TERMS & CONDITIONS

N.B. We are only able to accept entries from those residing in the UK. The competition closes January 19, 2024. No cash alternatives are available. Terms and conditions apply. To view the privacy policy of MMG Ltd (publisher of Model Boats) please visit www.mortons.co.uk/privacy



The Stalwart Crafts Cross Strap Deluxe offers great workshop protection, no matter how messy or potentially hazardous the task!



The robust yet lightweight premium quality leather, bib and brace design with adjustable cross straps to the back, large front storage pocket and handy towel strap all come together to give you an apron that’s not only stylish but super comfy and extremely practical.

Stalwart Crafts Prize Draw

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Tel No: _____

Email: _____

WIN!

A SPARMAX ARISM MINI KIT

WORTH
£225!



In last month's news section, we flagged up a specially packaged Christmas Edition of the Sparmax ARISM Mini Kit (Ref. C-AR- MINI-KIT-XMAS). We're sure it's now a gift many of you are hoping to unwrap come the big day – just in case you don't get lucky, though, this month, courtesy of the kind folks at the Airbrush Company, we're offering you the chance to win yourself example.

Suitable for beginners through to professional airbrush users, the kit includes:

- A Sparmax ARISM Mini Red Compressor
- A Sparmax MAX-3 Airbrush with 0.3mm nozzle and needle combination
- A Sparmax Cleaning Pot with built in airbrush holder
- Extra filters (x2) and extra airbrush holder (x1)
- Plus, free gifts, including a Cleaning Brush Set, Airbrush Acrylic Colours (x2), Airbrush Cleaner (x1) and Christmas Stencil sheets

The compressor is a powerful but space saving and easily portable, plus, in keeping with its compact nature, has a built-in airbrush holder on its handle, while the airbrush itself features a 0.3mm needle and nozzle combination capable of everything from general purpose to fine detail spraying.

There is also the reassurance of a two-year warranty on the compressor and a five-year warranty on the airbrush (please note, the warranties do not cover fluid needles, nozzles, packing and o-rings, compressor pistons and automatic switches, since these parts need to be replaced occasionally due to normal wear and tear).

Airbrushes
.com

The Airbrush Company

The Airbrush Company stocks an extensive range of market leading brand airbrushes and airbrush-related products (accessories, paints, masking tools, etc). It also runs

a comprehensive training programme, providing expert tuition on almost every airbrushing application imaginable (both online and in person at the company's

premises in Lancing, West Sussex).

Visit www.airbrushes.com, email sales@airbrushes.com or call 01903 767 800 to find out more.



ARISM MINI KIT CHRISTMAS EDITION

HOW TO ENTER

To be included in the draw, all you need to do is complete the entry form to the right, cut it out (photocopies will be accepted if you do not wish to deface your magazine) and then mail it back to us at:

The Airbrush Company Prize Draw
Model Boats
Mortons Media Group Media Centre
Morton Way
Horncastle
Lincs LN9 6JR

Please note, the closing date for entry submissions will be Friday, January 19, 2024.

Good luck, everyone!

TERMS & CONDITIONS

N.B. We are only able to accept entries from those residing in the UK. The competition closes January 19, 2024. No cash alternatives are available. Terms and conditions apply. To view the privacy policy of MMG Ltd (publisher of Model Boats) please visit www.mortons.co.uk/privacy



Sparmax ARISM Mini Kit Prize Draw

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____ Postcode: _____

Tel No: _____

Email: _____



In memory of the
Solomon Browne

Warminster Model Boat Club member **Mike Payne** shares details of the latest, and very poignant, model in his series of RNLI lifeboat builds...





2

As I have been constructing my own fleet of 1:12 scale RNLI lifeboats, usually building from scratch, for some time now, when one of my fellow Warminster Model Boat Club members decided to clear out some of the abandoned projects in his workspace to free up some much-needed space he kindly offered me a fibreglass hull and superstructure for a Solent class lifeboat. Even though my build programme was not at all ready for such an addition, how could I resist? Consequently, I quickly had to make room in my own little workspace for this large hull – some 48 inches (1220mm) long and 13 inches (330mm) wide, sizeable superstructure, and two small but heavy cardboard boxes filled with white metal components.

For a long time, two large lumps of glass moulding sat there seemingly glowering at me every time I went into the workshop, and I began to fear that having hastily accepted this potential project I'd landed myself with a white (literally) elephant. I even persuaded myself that I didn't really like the appearance of the Solent Class – largely because the existing vessels in my fleet (which once completed are mainly used to raise funds for the RNLI) are all sufficiently different from each other to be interesting to the casual observer, whereas the Rother, Solent and Shannon are basically all large orange boxes topping blue hulls (may I be forgiven for thinking, let alone writing, such a thing?). So, having decided I didn't like the superstructure enough to spend hours working upon it, I began to wonder what I could do with the hull.

For very good reason, full size boat development tends to be conservative –

“While all of the lifeboat models I’ve built have historic significance, it’s the wooden Watson class Solomon Browne that hammers home the incredible courage and selflessness of the RNLI’s volunteer crews hardest”

radical changes are rare. So, I looked into the pre-history of the Solent and found the Watson range of designs. They had similar but not identical hulls, with smaller and more distinctive superstructures, so were adequately different to the existing vessels in my fleet. What's more, while all of the lifeboat models I've built have historic significance, it's the wooden Watson class *Solomon Browne* that hammers home the incredible courage and selflessness of the RNLI's volunteer crews hardest.

Penlee and the cruel sea

On December 17, 1981, the motor vessel *Union Star* left IJmuiden in the Netherlands on her maiden commercial voyage, heading for Arklow in Ireland. On passage she called in at Brightlingsea, Essex, to pick up the captain's wife and two stepdaughters so that they could all spend the holidays together; there were now eight on board. On December 19, however, once just off the south coast of Cornwall, eight miles (13 km) east of Wolf Rock, the new ship's engines failed and could not be restarted.

I am aware that this magazine is distributed worldwide so, for those who may not have been there, I will try to describe Cornwall from a sea-going perspective. Situated in the far south-western corner of England, the peninsular juts out into the Atlantic, with dramatic coasts on three sides. These coasts



Memorial plaques at Penlee, Cornwall, by the entrance to the now disused lifeboat station. Image courtesy of Tony Atkin, released into the Creative Commons and featured on Wikipedia.

are punctuated by picturesque coves and hidden beaches, often backed by towering cliffs. It is indeed a beautiful place. But the weather that blows in from the south-west has travelled right across the Atlantic, and for mariners there are few safe havens from incoming storms, either to the north or to the south. Sadly, ample sharp rocky outcrops have claimed many lives and vessels over time.

In dangerously rough seas, the powerless *Union Star* was blown across Mount's Bay towards the rocks of Boscawen Cove, near Lamorna.



The original Penlee boathouse from which the Solomon Browne was launched on that fateful night. Image courtesy of Geof Sheppard, released into the Creative Commons and featured on Wikipedia.



Left: The Penlee Memorial Garden, commemorating the loss of the crew of the lifeboat Solomon Brown in 1981. The roof of the original Penlee lifeboat house, used at the time of the disaster, can be seen in the background. Image courtesy of Chris Wood, released into the Creative Commons and featured on Wikipedia.

In response to the vessel's 'Mayday', a Royal Navy Sea King helicopter was scrambled. Because of the horrendous conditions though – by this stage winds were gusting at up to 90 knots (100 mph, 170 km/h), hurricane Force 12 on the Beaufort scale, with waves up to 60 feet (18 m) high – it proved impossible to winch anyone off. Consequently, just after 8pm, the lifeboat *Solomon Browne* was launched from the Penlee Lifeboat Station at Mousehole (pronounced Mouzle) on the west side of the bay.

The remainder of this heart-breaking story has been well documented, suffice to say that 16 souls and two vessels were lost that night.

The genesis of a model

There are many photographs, and even paintings, of the Watson class 47ft (14.2 m) *Solomon Browne*. She was, therefore, a prime candidate for my hull, as long as I accepted that in scale terms there would be slight dimensional discrepancies, both in length and beam. Now in the latter stages of her build, an idea of what the finished boat will look like can be seen in **Photo 1**, and if you can spot these discrepancies from a distance of 9ft (3m) then your eyesight is far better than mine! The lake at Warminster, by the way, is not green; what you see is simply the reflection of the surrounding flora.

Preliminary design

Fitting out a fibreglass hull has been covered by many far more experienced modellers than I, so here I will simply touch upon the areas that required particular attention when working on this project.

With a model of this size the overall

completed weight is critical, there is, after all, no point in building something I wouldn't be able to lift. A simplistic calculation produced a displacement of 16.5 lb (7.5 kg).

I then filled the bath and floated my boat, using tins and bottles from the larder as 'test weights' until the desired waterline was achieved, in depth, pitch and roll. I noted where I'd positioned each individual item before weighing it, and then put together a spreadsheet from which I calculated a total displacement of 17.3 lb (7.86 kg).

Next came the decisions on motors (twin shafts) and batteries. Yet again, membership of the club came in handy because collated data from previous members' builds suggested I needed two 800 series low current brushed motors for a hull of this size and a vessel of this form. Study of the available motors' characteristics suggested a 12V supply of about 5Ah capacity for each shaft should give an acceptable performance. So, what could be achieved within the weight constraints?

Each motor weighed 1.3 lb (600gms), a 12V 5Ahr battery was 3.8 lb (1.73 kg) and a 7.5Ahr battery was 5.7 lb (2.6 kg). This meant that I could either have two motors and three 5Ahr batteries or two motors and two 7.5Ahr batteries within the displacement allowance, both options leaving about 3.3 lb (1.5 kg) for everything else.

For this type of vessel, I prefer to spread the ballast along the hull as much as possible, primarily to reduce pitching, so I settled for three batteries rather than two. This decision was somewhat driven by the length of propeller shaft needed.

With two batteries up front the motors would have to be placed well aft for balance,

resulting in very short shafts. A disadvantage of glass fibre hulls, however, is that you cannot reliably see the alignment angles, so the longer the shaft the easier it makes things. By having the motors more centrally placed I could have two batteries forward and one aft, but this would mean having 17 in (432 mm) M4 shafts, which was longer than I was comfortable with given there was only a bearing at each end.

In the end I removed one end bearing from an 8in (203 mm) tube and sleeved that tube onto another standard 8in tube, giving a total of 16 ins (406 mm) of tube with a bearing at each end and one in the centre. Admittedly much to my surprise, these assemblies run remarkably smoothly.

Having decided upon the basic fit and having installed the motors and drive trains, I then had to work out how to install the batteries, given that the superstructure, and therefore the access hole in the deck, was mainly toward the aft end, luckily almost exactly over the motors. My solution was to build a battery slide leading forward (tucked away under the deck once fitted) to take two batteries, and a simple retaining box for the single battery aft.

'U' shaped structures, one long, one short, were made from some builders' flat UPVC section that I just happened to have to hand, and then, once again, I floated my boat. The aft battery could only fit in one position, so there was no adjustment possible anyway.

The most forward battery was pushed literally as far as it would go and the central one adjusted until I had the hull level in pitch. The position of everything was marked and a forward bulkhead fitted to the slide, with a small lip added at the motor end. Installing

the aft battery proved straight forward; once electrically connected, the most forward one was slid toward the bow and then a plastic spacer was used to push it up to the slide's forward bulkhead. Finally, the second battery was also slid over the lip, thus locking the whole assembly into place. This was easier to do than to describe, although, naturally, needed a bit of care to be taken.

The initial power setup was for two motors (and associated ESCs) fed from all three batteries in parallel, giving an installed capacity of 15Ahr.

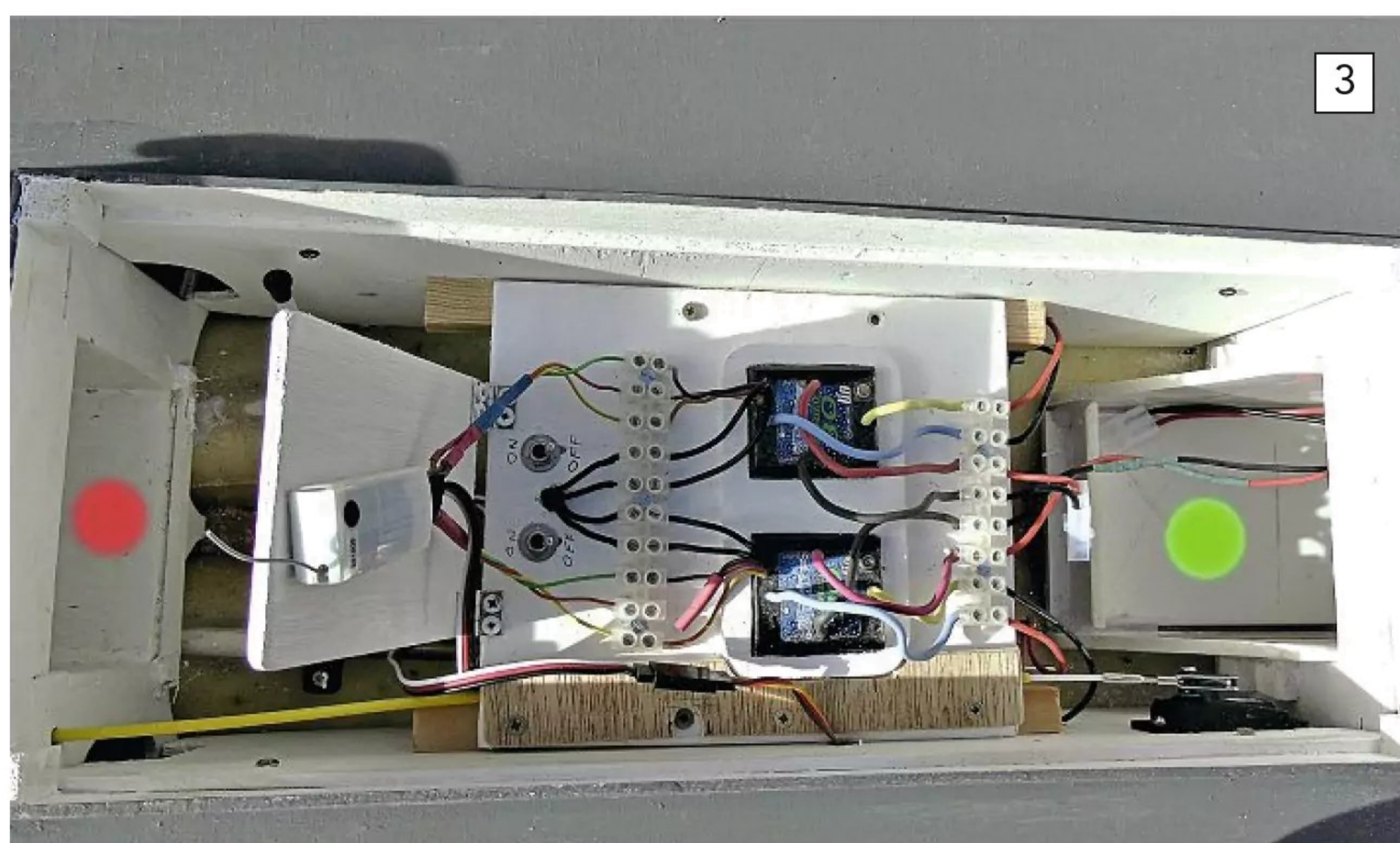
Already aware that a few manual handling 'excitements' were probably inevitable, the rudder was the next consideration. As is normal with lifeboats, the propellers run in tunnels. The Solent class had twin rudders, one in each tunnel. The Watsons, however, had a single stern-mounted rudder, which was therefore physically vulnerable. I hoped that I would get away with 'tank steering' and a fixed dummy rudder.

Proving trials

The initial proving trials were undertaken with the hull sporting just a simple covering deck and preliminary superstructure (see **Photo 2**). After much studying of pictures, I had been able to form the basic shape for the latter, including a wheelhouse in the middle with a compartment at either end. I had no certain measurements, so I sketched a profile and a couple of cross-sections onto stiff card, cut them out and offered the silhouettes up to the hull. It was then a question of viewing from the angles that matched the available pictures. A bit of trimming and a second profile was necessary before I was satisfied it looked about right. After that, by sticking to a 'check twice, glue once' *modus operandi*, construction proved fairly straightforward, although at this point things were still very basic, with limited detail.

You will notice my caution here; I still had no real confidence in being able to cope with the weight and size of the beast. In part, this restraint was justified. Loading the model into the car reminded me of just how vulnerable the rudder was likely to be, while moving the model from the car to the lake also proved an education. At least she floated just about where she ought to, though, and she certainly had presence on the water.

Initially, the tank steering appeared to work very well, pirouettes being entirely possible – indeed, a bit of a party piece! But the ability to maintain a straight line seemed intermittent – until I realised that I only had occasional control over one of the motors. Back on land, I discovered that with both TX sticks left in the same position the starboard motor would from time to time stop for no obvious reason and then, sometimes, restart, particularly if the port TX stick was moved. Individually, both motors operated as expected, if only one was energised at a time.



“For this type of vessel, I prefer to spread the ballast along the hull as much as possible, primarily to reduce pitching”

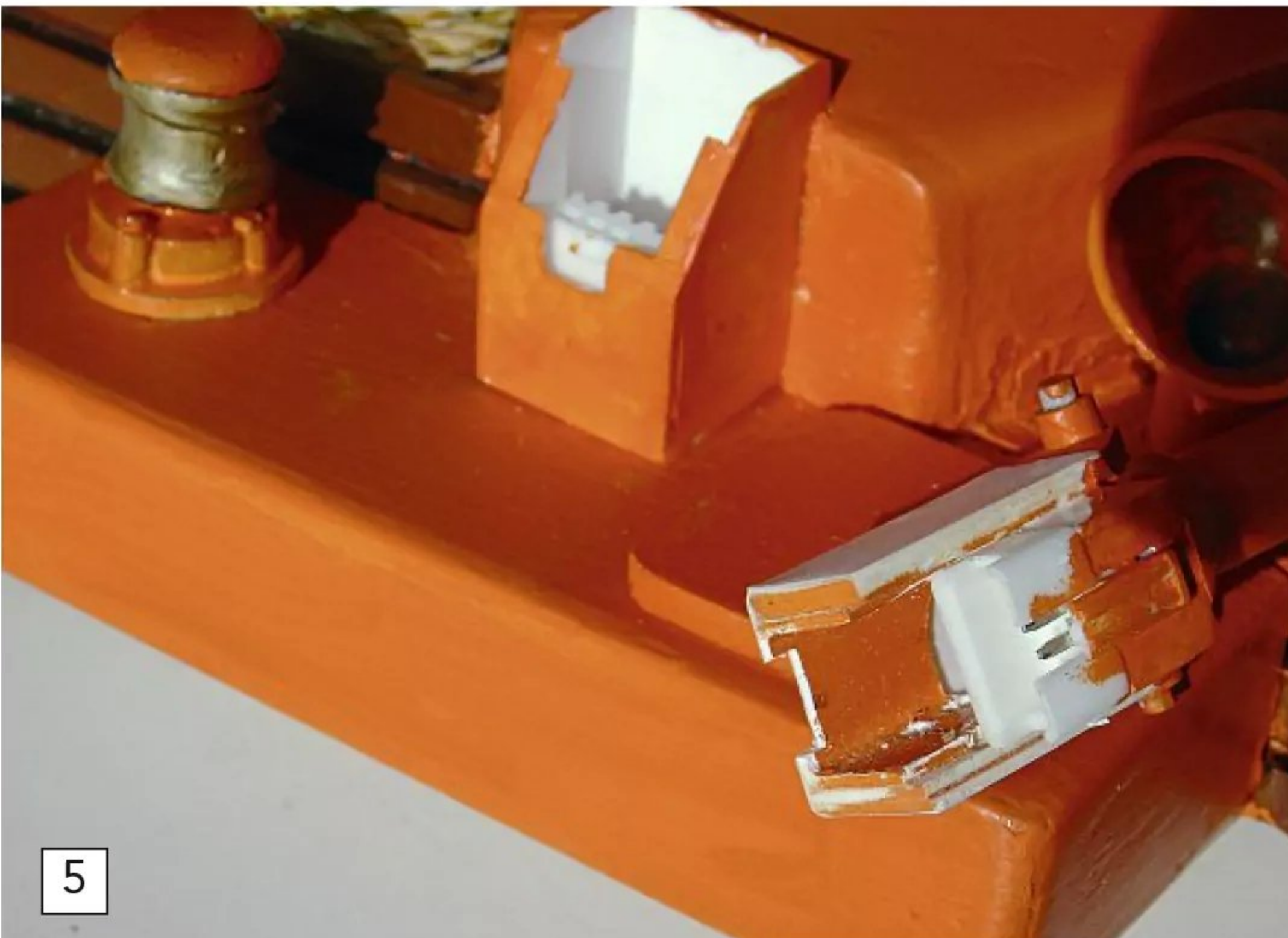
There was obviously some form of electromagnetic incompatibility if fed from a single power source, so once back in the workshop the system was reconfigured to one independent and isolated battery/ESC/ motor combination per shaft. Clearly this reduced the installed power capacity to 5Ah per shaft and I decided to fit steering anyway, without checking if the new alignment would allow rudderless use.

Tweaking results

In practice the overall effect has been illuminating. The hull can still easily pirouette, the actual power consumption is far less than expected, and the loss of 2.5Ah has not been noticed. Straight running is simple, and with only a slight adjustment of

the rudder the boat will cruise quite happily with just one shaft rotating. The aft battery (normally fully charged but not connected) could replace one of the other batteries if necessary.

Photo 3 shows the component layout in its current and probably final evolution. The green dot is the throat of the forward battery slide; you might be able to make out the two Tamiya style power connectors. The red dot is the entrance to the aft battery box. The ESCs and main switches are fitted to a removable sub-deck (permitting access to the motors if required), aft of which is a shelf bearing the receiver, hinged to allow access to the battery box. The yellow snake is the rudder actuator.



The visible bits

Now having a fully operational hull, it was time to embellish the deck and superstructure. The major difficulty here was that not only were the various boats in this Class given slightly differing equipment fits over time but there was also a change of livery. The earlier finish had been a light grey superstructure with hi-vis roof panels. This was superseded by the familiar overall orange but without the current large identification numbers. Given I use these boats for fund-raising displays, I opted for the orange and blue scheme potential donors are most likely to be familiar with, and the one carried by the *Solomon Browne* on that fateful night, although I've shied away from portraying her as crewed during that final shout, instead she will be populated as if on a training exercise.

Another interesting observation from some of the non-posed photographs from the 1960s is that the rules around attire were obviously more relaxed back then. Currently, of course, full uniform safety kit while afloat is always evident.

The mast

My usual preference is to build all the LED lights and radar into the removable superstructure – if possible, including a dedicated and independent power supply. The sticking point on this build, however, was the superstructure mounted mast/exhaust. On this mast there had to be a police light, deck light and navigation light, all independently controlled, and all in differing positions on the mast. Additionally, to reduce the overall height for storage, I wanted the mast to fold aft as did the real thing.

I tried out various ideas when it came to producing multiple electrical contacts that would reliably connect as the mast was erected, but eventually admitted defeat. Eventually, I found some four-way miniature connectors with their own small but handy locking mechanism, so now

“There was obviously some form of electromagnetic incompatibility if fed from a single power source, so once back in the workshop the system was reconfigured...”

the mast simply plugs in and locks. The connectors themselves were made from one of those waxy plastics which are a devil to glue reliably. I, therefore, clad each part with a hard styrene sheet cover, shaped and laminated to fit the various indents and protrusions; this allowed adhesion of one half to the plastic mast using conventional liquid polystyrene glue. These covers proved to be the most taxing bit of the whole mast assembly, requiring much trimming of very small pieces to ensure a close and immovable fit. I must say, however, I am very pleased with the result, so far.

Photo 4 shows the fixed connector in the mast tabernacle, **Photo 5** the base connector on the mast, and **Photo 6** the mast in situ. The small thumb push in the centre of the assembly locks/unlocks the two components.

There was little room within the mast for four wires, so I needed some thin diameter electrical conductors. I tried using single core wire, unsuccessfully, as the conductor would repeatedly break with the slightest of movement. So, I dissected a spare USB cable and discovered two very fine multi strand signal cables and two slightly larger power cables, all with extremely thin insulation, adequate to power low voltage LEDs.

Lights

I could now move on to the lighting control and battery stowage. I should, at this stage, offer a word of caution: while LED lights are mechanically very robust and long lived, particularly in comparison with the old grain of wheat filament lamps (if you're old enough to remember them), make sure you're aware of the necessary supply voltage. In this instance I had a mix of 10mm diameter navigation lights, a smaller white deck light,

a flashing blue light and a high-power white light for the searchlight. I had read the technical data when I ordered them and all, except the red navigation light, were quite happy operating from a 3V supply. That red LED, however, needed a dropper resistor to less than 2.5 volts, otherwise it had a very short, albeit brilliant, life. Interestingly, my other boats' navigation lights, including the reds, cope quite happily with 3V, so it must have been a manufacturing or materials issue with that particular brand of LED.

I needed two power supplies, both 3V fed from AA batteries, and so ordered two battery holders, each with their own integrated on/off switch. One provides power to the radar motor via a separate miniature on/off single way control switch; the other powers the lights via their own separate on/off switches. These switches were mounted on a control panel built into the rear cabin, which also contains the AA battery boxes. When the superstructure is in place the control panel is hidden by the rearmost cabin bulkhead, which remains fixed to the hull.

Photo 7 shows the fixed bulkhead supported by the Coxswain and the control panel built into the rear cabin. The black rectangles are the low voltage battery holders, which simply slide out when replacement batteries are required. Note all the switches are down/ 'off' in proper naval fashion.

As mentioned, my models are used for display purposes, and the high-power LED I'd used for the searchlight came with a warning not to look directly into the light. Given I had built the searchlight to include a reflector from a torch, I was keen to ensure I could quickly turn off the LED if necessary. With its primary control switch being hidden, as explained above, power is, therefore, provided via a cam-operated micro switch, so that even if switched on the light is only energised over a small sector of the lantern's arc (see **Photo 8**). I must say it throws quite a beam at night.

“These covers proved to be the most taxing bit of the whole mast assembly...”

Finishing touches

You may notice in my photos that the crew seem to be having some trouble with the aft hatch to the rear cabin. When I decided to cover the switch control panel with the permanently fixed rear cabin bulkhead it rapidly became obvious that the routine removal/refitting of the superstructure may well damage or break the fixed upright, so I needed to put in a physical support for the top edge. Consequently, my Coxswain has been strategically positioned.

Work slowly continues, although the tasks that remain are now mostly cosmetic. In particular, the handrails and grab lines need to be made and fitted, along with a bit more deck furniture, the prominent anchor and, of course, the name plaques. I am using the white metal parts where appropriate, not on the boat itself but as patterns from which to reproduce parts such as the winch, bollards and anchor, usually in styrene plastic. So far not a gram of additional ballast has been necessary, but she currently sits very close to her waterline, so any weight saving I can make will be a bonus. If the worst comes to the worst, I can always remove the spare (aft) battery and replace it with something very slightly lighter.

I must get on with things, though. The RNLI was founded on March 4, 1824, and will therefore celebrate its 200th anniversary in 2024, so the plan is to complete this particular addition to my fleet in time for that.

The box conundrum

My first lifeboat in this series was a single shaft Liverpool class vessel, *the Lucy Lavers*, based upon a Vic Smeed design. She is over ten years old now but still looks largely as she did when first made, simply because she lives in a ventilated plywood box (as do my other lifeboats. This box is starting to look a little distressed, bearing as it does the dings and scratches from many journeys; but rather the box be damaged than the model – for a start, the former is much easier to patch up than the latter!

The box for my Watson will have to be made soon. Perhaps it should have been already, but, as you will appreciate, the model needs to be almost complete so that the minimum size of the box can be determined. After all, it would be really frustrating if, say, I had to increase the size of the model's rudder for practical reasons only to then find the nice new box already constructed for it was then too short in length.

Obviously, there has to be sufficient clearance between model and box so that loading and extraction is simple and non-damaging but, considering how large this model is, it will be essential to keep those

“The former is much easier to patch up than the latter”

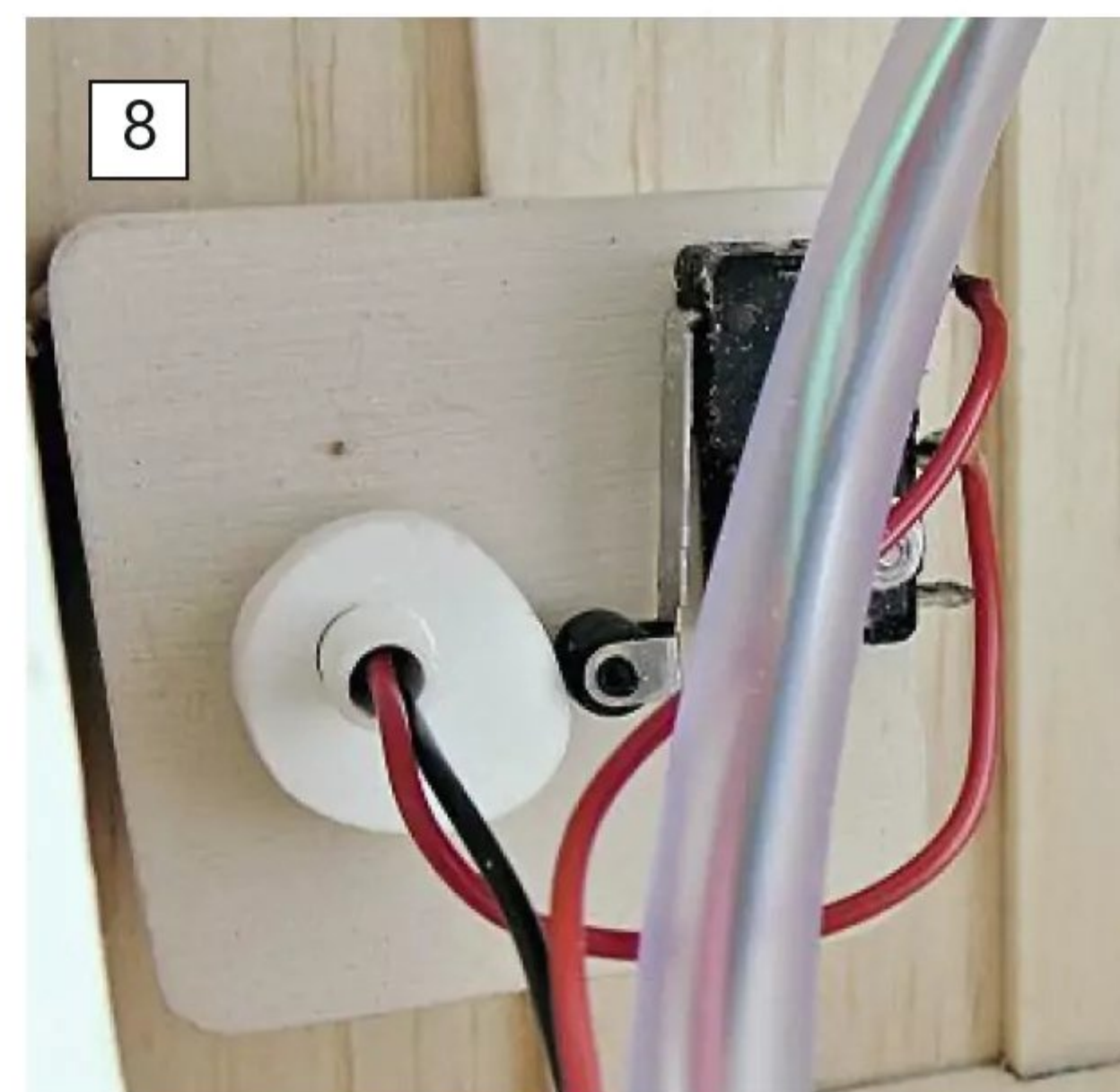


“The RNLI was founded on March 4, 1824, and will therefore celebrate its 200th anniversary in 2024”

gaps to a minimum. Size really is important because the box has to fit in the car and be of a manageable weight to carry. And with weight in mind, this particular model will travel to water without its propulsion batteries installed.

Normally I construct the box from 5 or 6mm builders ply (external quality if I can get it in our local DIY store) bonded to a 12 or 15mm square softwood frame. The frame is largely on the outside, providing multiple finger holds for use during lifting and handling. For this box I plan to use 3mm ply, using the same framing timber but with closer spacing. An even thinner sheet material, perhaps aluminium, may be considered, but structural integrity is going to be an issue given the mass of the entire assembly, both model and enclosure, even with the batteries removed.

A study of damage to the existing boxes shows the vulnerable areas to be the vertical edges, the bottom end corners and the centre of the larger panels, all locations to be expected really. That said, the damage is not excessive, even on the oldest boxes, with only minor dents in the softwood and a few paint chips/scratches. It may be that my approach is overkill, but, as I have already mentioned, all the models themselves have remained dust free and in an almost pristine condition – a great advantage, appreciated on each and every occasion they go on show.



Another issue is my current lack of workspace. Normally I make the box, paint it and fit it out to accept its specific model. As you will appreciate, this takes time, during which I need twice the amount of space allocated to the model once complete and stowed within its box – and this is the highest volume model I have made so far.

Watch out for updates

As I pen this saga, there is still a fair bit of work to be done. Hopefully, I can let you know how things evolve at some point in the future with a few lines in the Your Models section. ●

THOSE LOST

RNLB *Solomon Browne*

- Coxswain: William Richards (RNLI Gold Medal)
- Second Coxswain/Mechanic: James Stephen Madron (Bronze Medal)
- Assistant Mechanic: Nigel Brockman (Bronze Medal)
- Emergency Mechanic: John Robert Blewett (Bronze Medal)

Crew Members:

- Charles Thomas Greenhaugh (Bronze Medal)
- Kevin Smith (Bronze Medal)
- Barrie Robertson Torrie (Bronze Medal)
- Gary Lee Wallis (Bronze Medal)

M/V *Union Star*

- Captain: Henry Moreton
- Mate: James Whittaker
- Engineer: George Sedgwick
- Crewman: Anghostino Verressimo
- Crewman: Manuel Lopez.
- Passengers: Dawn (the Captain's pregnant wife), Sharon and Deanne Moreton (the Captain's stepdaughters)

May they rest in peace

Still making finishes touches to his Watson class lifeboat, Mike hopes to have her finished in time for fund raising activities during the RNLI's 200th anniversary celebrations in 2024. Watch out for future edition updates in the Your Models section of this magazine.





Nev's mentors at the pond in Millhouses Park, Sheffield, in July 2007; Bob is second from the right. These modellers embraced many fashions over the years, this was their 'Footy Phase'.

With a little help from my friends...

Nev Wade pays tribute to the crew who welcomed him into the hobby and inspired his first ever builds...

When I first became interested in model boat building, I went to along to my local pond (in Sheffield) and asked those who were already sailing there about the hobby and how I should go about getting started. They recommended the *Fairwind* as a good starter yacht, and then let me get on with it, only answering questions as I came up with them. When it became obvious that sailing, as opposed to powered boats, was to be the course I would follow, they then opened up to me the world of scratch building and plans and, in the process, became my mentors. Amongst the lovely boats regularly on the water were two small yachts, both built and owned by a man called Bob, and these quickly became the focus of my attention when considering

follow-on projects after the completion of the *Fairwind*. Little did I know back then that the versions of these boats I did indeed build would remain with me, serving as a perfect foil to the square-rigged sailing ships I would go on to construct and sail, and still be in regular use today.

Bob, the builder

If memory serves me well, Bob originally hailed from South Shields in the North-East. In his time, he had built everything from his own steam locos to submarines, and from yachts to square-riggers. After he'd seen my efforts with the *Fairwind*, he gave me three sheets of A4 paper. The first had the side elevation and cross sections of a yacht; the second her general arrangement; and the third, the internal arrangement of her. This

yacht was the *Sheila 2nd*, a yawl designed by Albert Strange in 1911. Her main claim to fame, as far as I am aware, is that she was sailed from the UK to New Zealand, single-handed, by Adrian Hayter, after World War II. He covered the story of this voyage in his book *Sheila in the Wind*. Bob had a lovely model of her, which he'd renamed *Betty* after his wife.

He also had a small gaff cutter called *Emanuel*. The original boat was built in 1928 by Andrew Anderson & Son in Penarth, and she was, if anything, even more attractive than *Betty*. Bob had used all his tricks on her, taking old furniture and making from it strip wood for everything from planks to cabin panels. He made his own blocks, and she had lovely brass portholes. She really was a work of art!

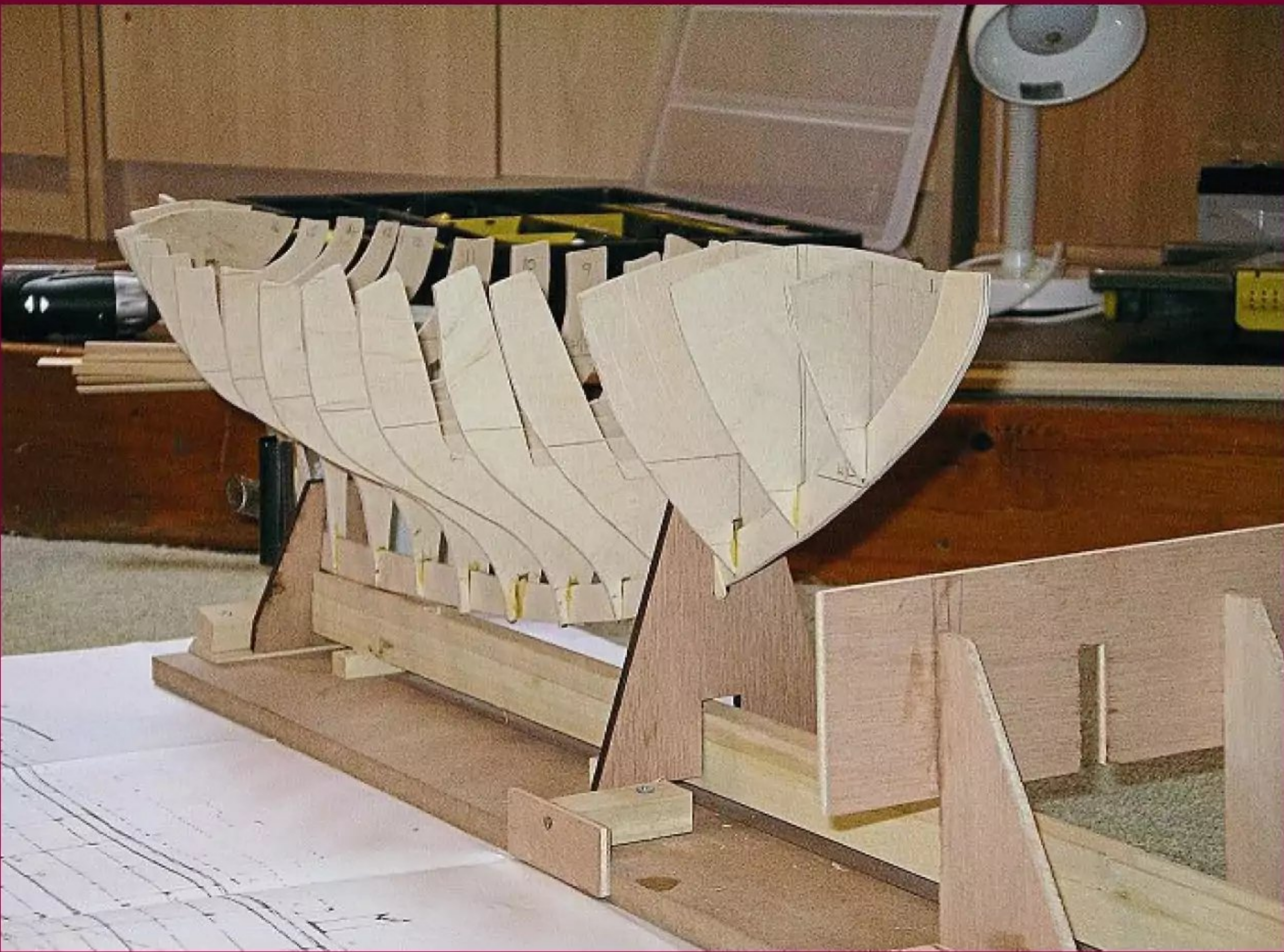


Adrian Hayter's Sheila 2nd, the yacht on which the models of Betty and Bonny Lad were based.

The gift that keeps on giving

The gift of the drawings for the yawl implied a challenge – one that I took it up immediately, greatly desiring my own version of this unusual boat. Using plank on frame techniques around the frames from Bob's drawing, which I'd had enlarged, I crafted a small boat of the same size as Bob's. Measuring 710mm from bow to stern (not including the bumpkin, the 'bowsprit' at the stern), as a nod to Bob, I named her Bonny Lad.

While working on this project I learnt a lot! Initially, she was fitted with a 7.2V battery, a motor and drive shaft big enough for a sizeable scale Hull trawler, a speed controller, a sail arm for the sails, and the vital rudder servo. With lead chips resined into the bottom of the hull, the interior was complete. A huge hatch opening was incorporated to allow good below deck access, with a combined cabin and cockpit constructed to fill in the hole made in the deck and finish off the superstructure.



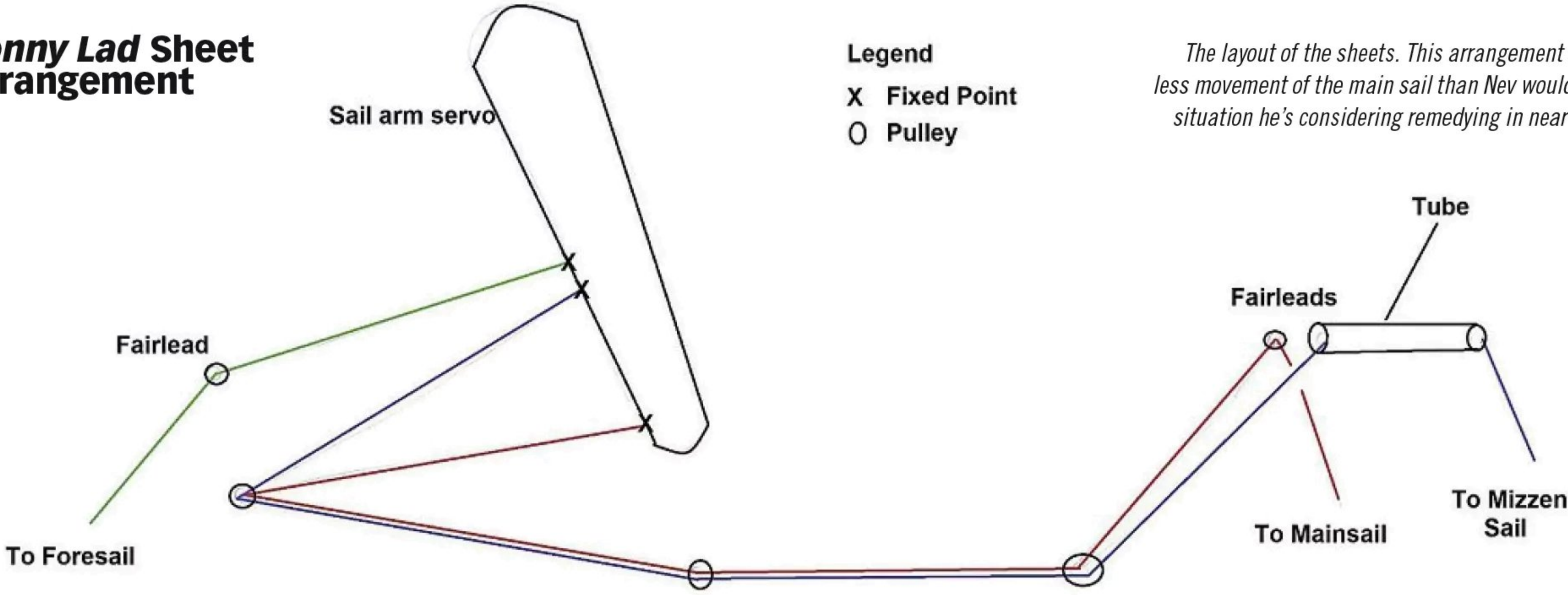
The frames for Bonny Lad on the Billing's building jig.



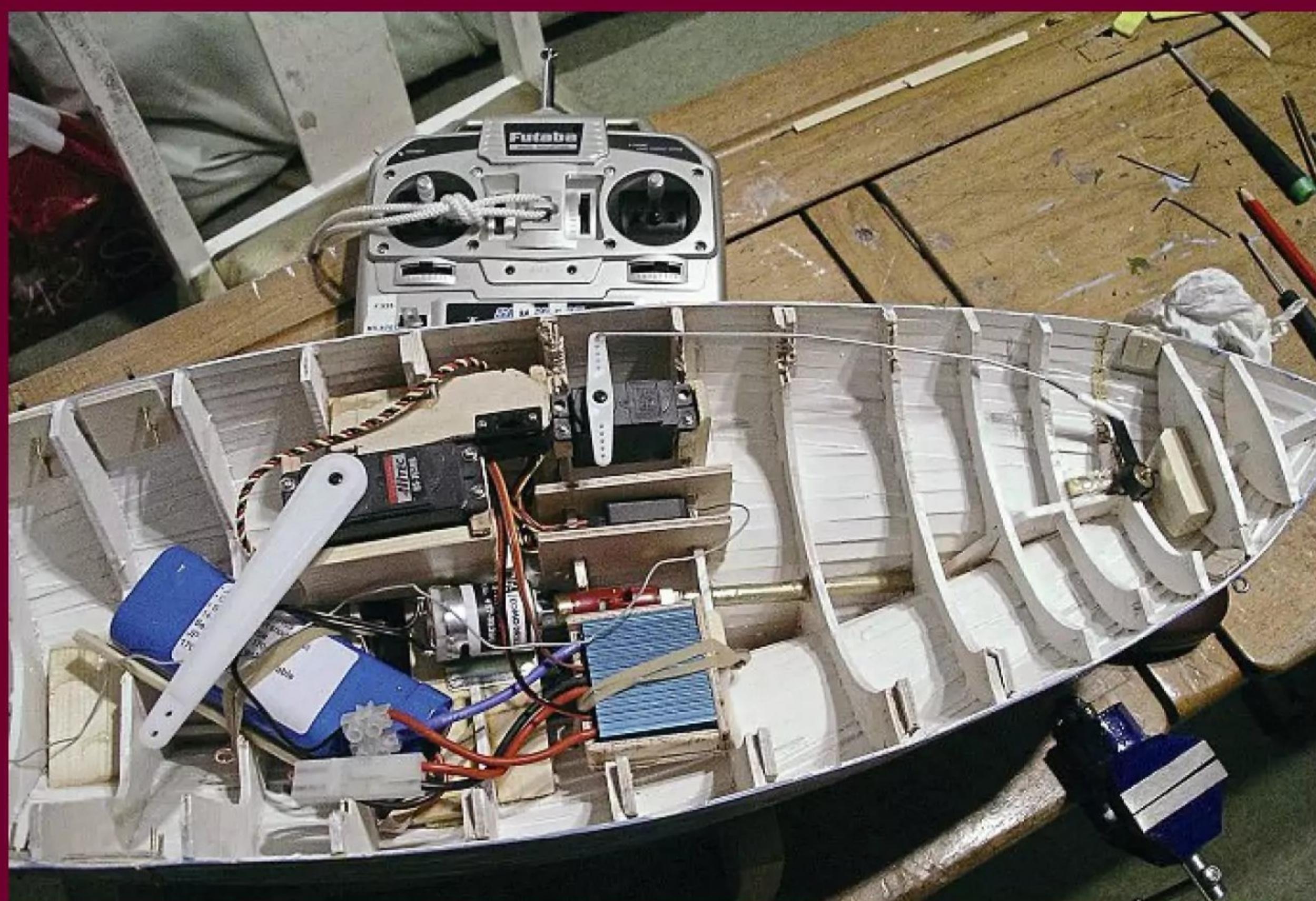
Bonny Lad after planking. While acknowledging he is no yacht expert, Nev believes she has what's known as a 'spoon' stern.

"The gift of the drawings for the yawl implied a challenge, one that I took it up immediately"

Bonny Lad Sheet Arrangement



The layout of the sheets. This arrangement affords less movement of the main sail than Nev would like, a situation he's considering remedying in near future.



The big battery, the prop shaft and the speed controller. Lots of misguided effort!



Now with a deck fitted.

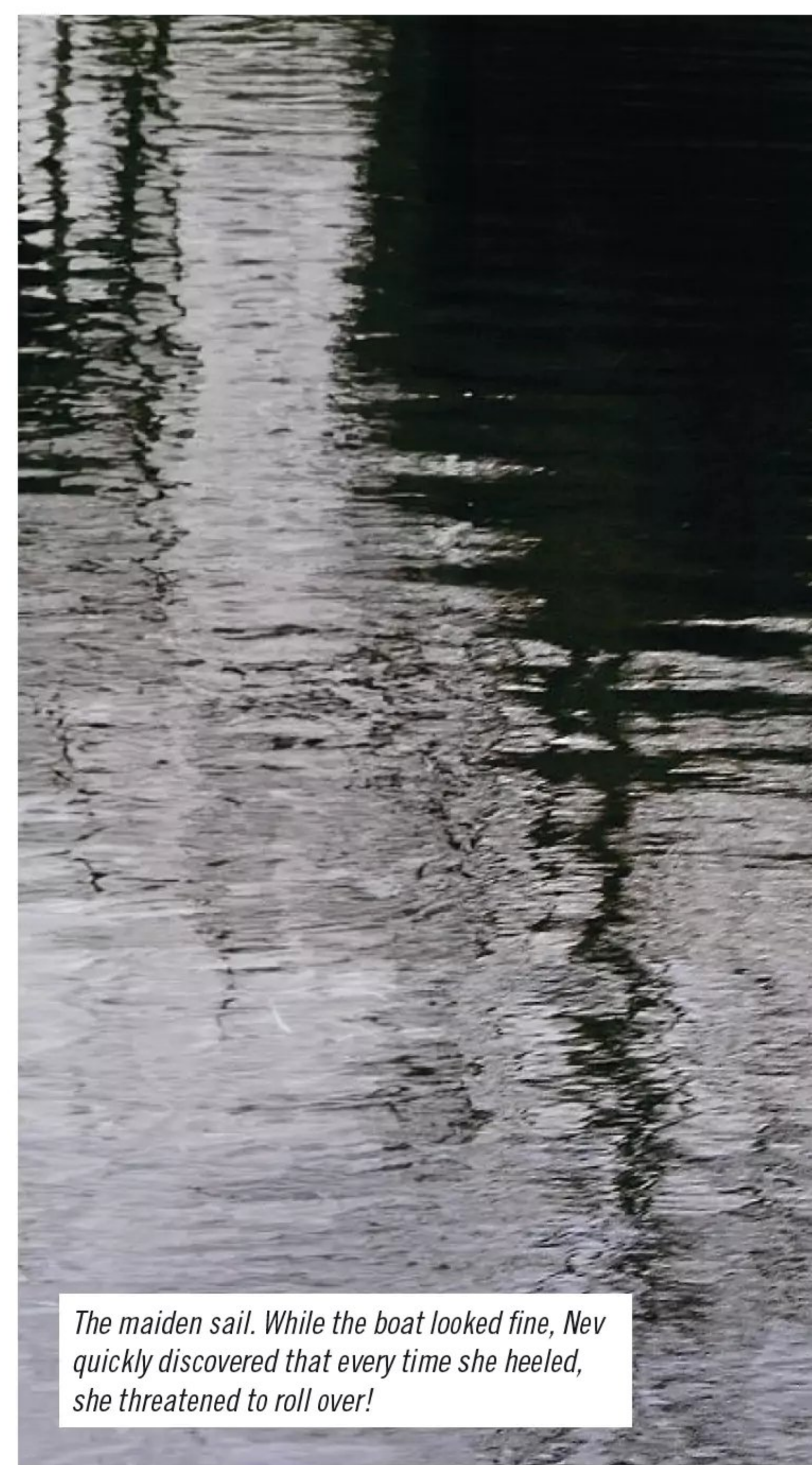


As originally built, Bonny Lad had a built-in cockpit.

“While working on this project I learnt a lot!”

The maiden sail wasn't a complete disaster but, with all that weight aboard, and most of it high up in the hull, when she rolled, she had to think for quite a while before rolling back the other way! She also took on a copious amount of water through the huge hatch opening. This is neither the time nor place to take you through all the ins and outs of the next several weeks; suffice it to say that I put in a smaller battery, took out motor, drive shaft, propeller and speed controller, and replaced their weight with more lead chips, as low down as possible! I've never put a motor in a sailing vessel since, as there is always wind to use, if you keep your wits about you.

I put in a lot of effort to keep out the water, including doing away with the cockpit and using duct tape to seal what amounted to 'inner' hatch covers under the cabin. Some of my mentors at the pond fitted their on/off switches above deck and had charging points sticking out of them, to which they attached charger leads via crocodile clips. All that looked like good stuff to me, so I adapted Bonny Lad similarly, and then put her back on the water.



The maiden sail. While the boat looked fine, Nev quickly discovered that every time she heeled, she threatened to roll over!



Here only the prop shaft tube is left. The big battery and speed controller have been jettisoned.

Right: The little boat sails superbly.



The final arrangement of the deck and its waterproofing. Now only the two taped hatches give access below deck.



I'll never forget that moment of sheer joy on first realising I had built something that really worked. The real boat on which this model was based, the *Sheila 2nd*, was a very hardy craft. If you read Hayter's book you'll be made aware of her sailing characteristics; how much she looked after him; how he could sleep while trusting her to sail herself if she could be left 'reaching' across the wind, but how he had to steer her for hours at a time if she needed to be sailed downwind, with that mizzen sail at the stern pushing her about, making her yaw about her course. It is just the same with *Bonny Lad*. When one of my fellow sailors in Sheffield (not one of my mentors, I hasten to add) 'borrowed' her for a sail, he quickly handed her back, complaining she was uncontrollable downwind!

So, by the summer of 2005, I had two yachts at my disposal, the simple, easy sailing *Fairwind* and the characterful *Bonny Lad*. Reaping more and more enjoyment from the hobby, my wonderful mentors were becoming ever better company as I got to know each of them more individually, and, as my confidence grew, I began to consider the next logical step.

Bob's boat (left) and Nev's version (right) being sailed together.



A wandering eye

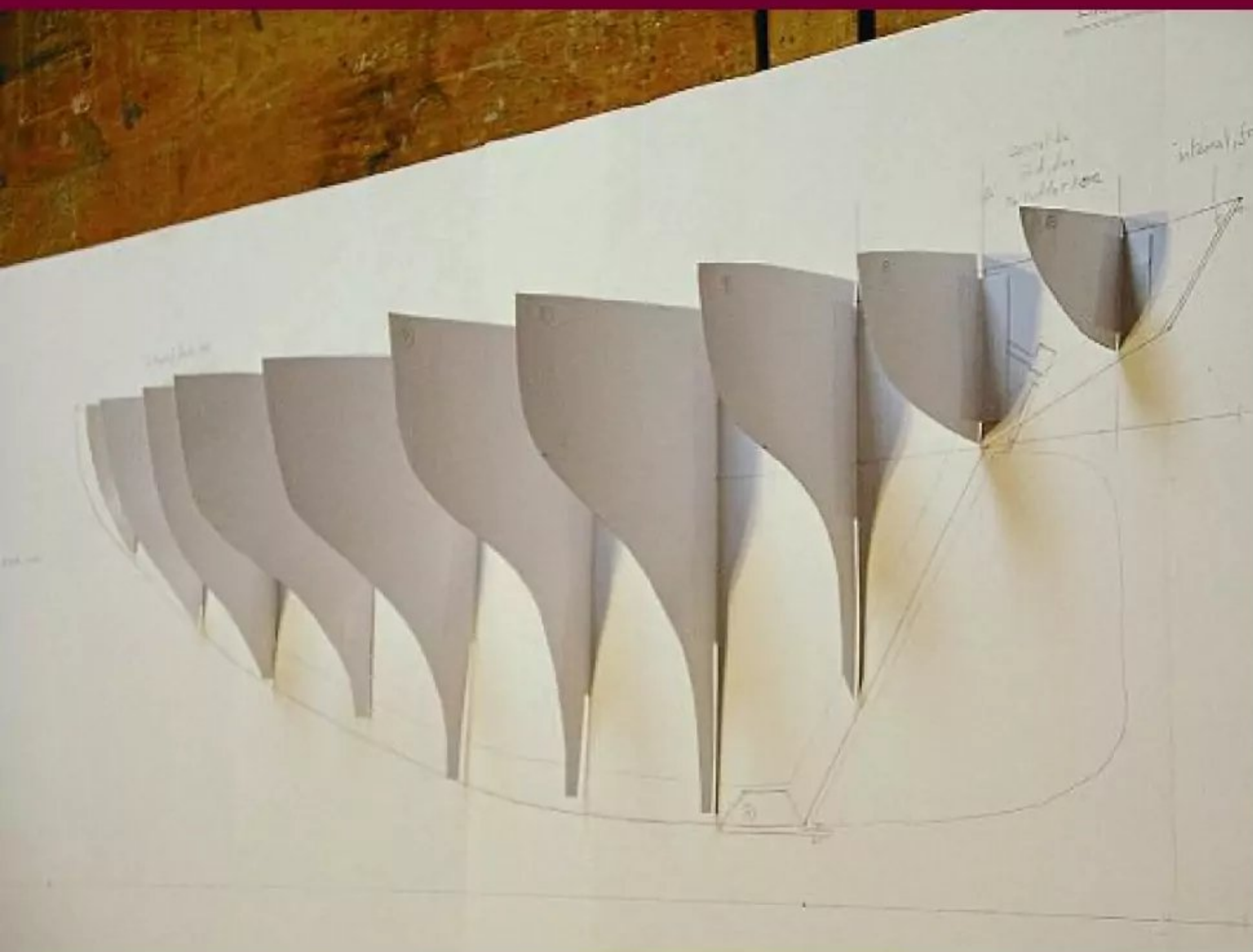
I've already mentioned Bob's beautiful gaff cutter, so it may not surprise you to learn it wasn't long at all after ironing out *Bonny Lad's* teething troubles that I began to cast longing eyes on *Emanuel*, in the hope that Bob had some plans for her too. In the event he hadn't, which felt like a bit of a setback. As the summer wore on, though, an idea began to form. Remember that I was new to our hobby, so what would be obvious to me now wasn't immediately so back then. Consequently, I spent some time racking my brains, trying to think of ways of I could still make a copy of this boat without access to plans. Eventually it came to me. I could do a kind of freehand drawing of the side elevation, full size for the model, then use a profile gauge at pre-determined points on the hull, to create the cross sections. I therefore borrowed *Emanuel* so that I could measure and take pictures of her. Although he never said so, I got the distinct impression that this development pleased Bob no end; he could now watch how the apprentice did!

It all went well. I was able to make the freehand drawing of the side elevation without too much trouble, and a simple tile cutting profile gauge did the job of taking the cross sections – this was amply big enough for the job on a boat that was only 600mm from bow to stern (excluding the bowsprit).

"Although he never said so, I got the distinct impression that this development pleased Bob no end..."



The prototype for Emanuel. Isn't she a beauty!

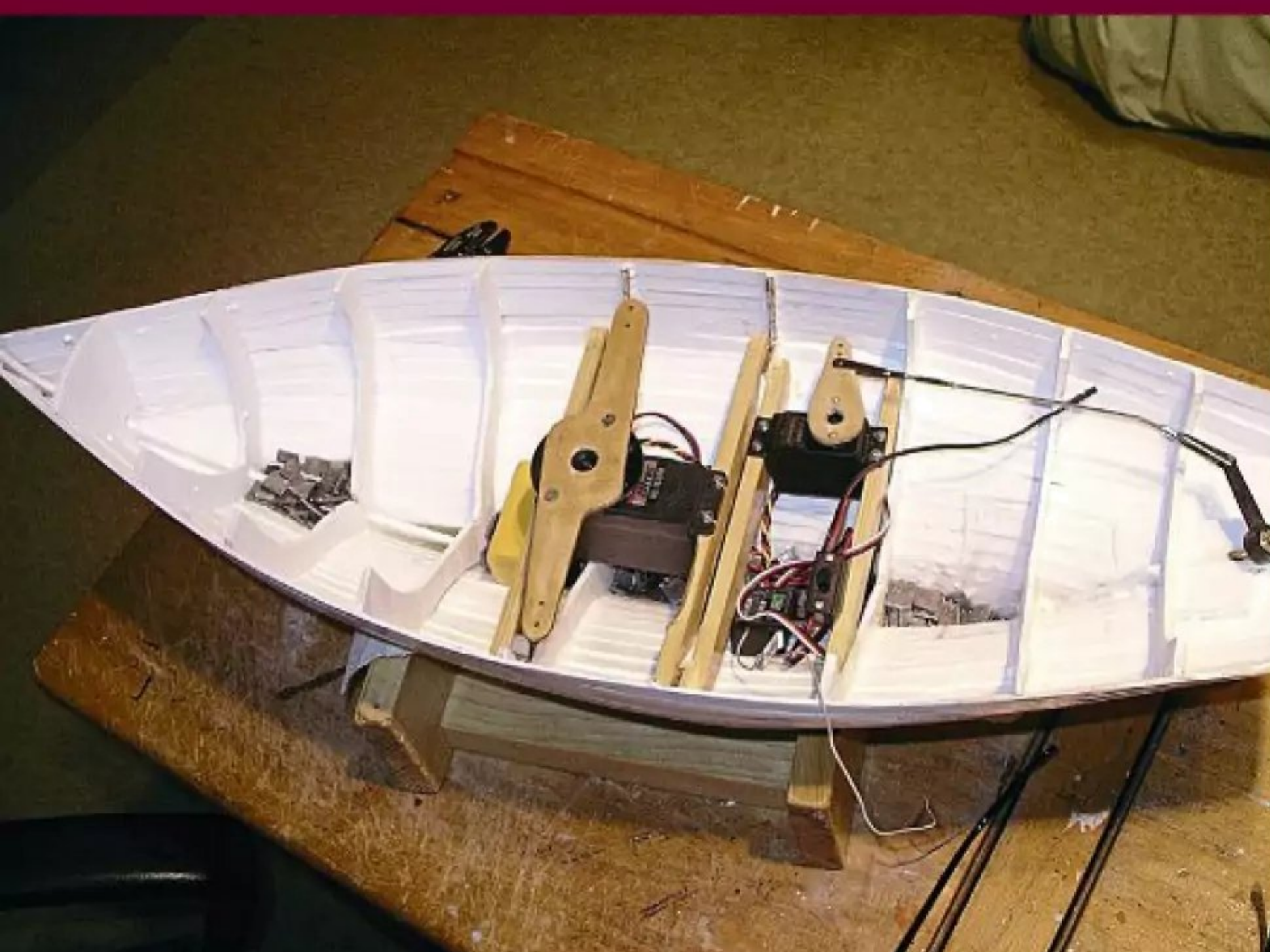
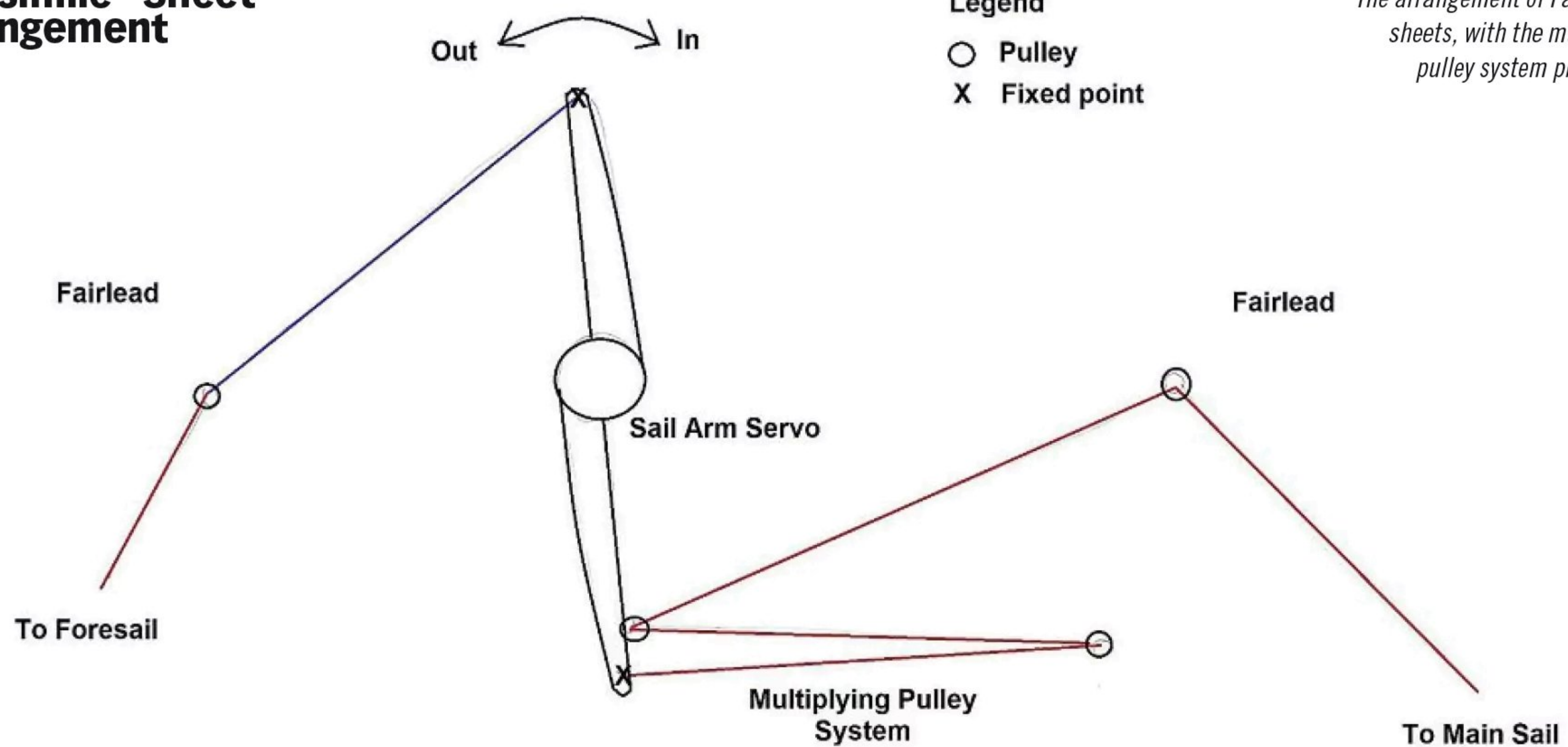


In order to convince himself he was on the right track, when taking the lines from Emanuel Nev cut out paper frames for Facsimile. He then stuck these on to the side elevation to see if they looked OK before proceeding to cut the actual frames out of wood.



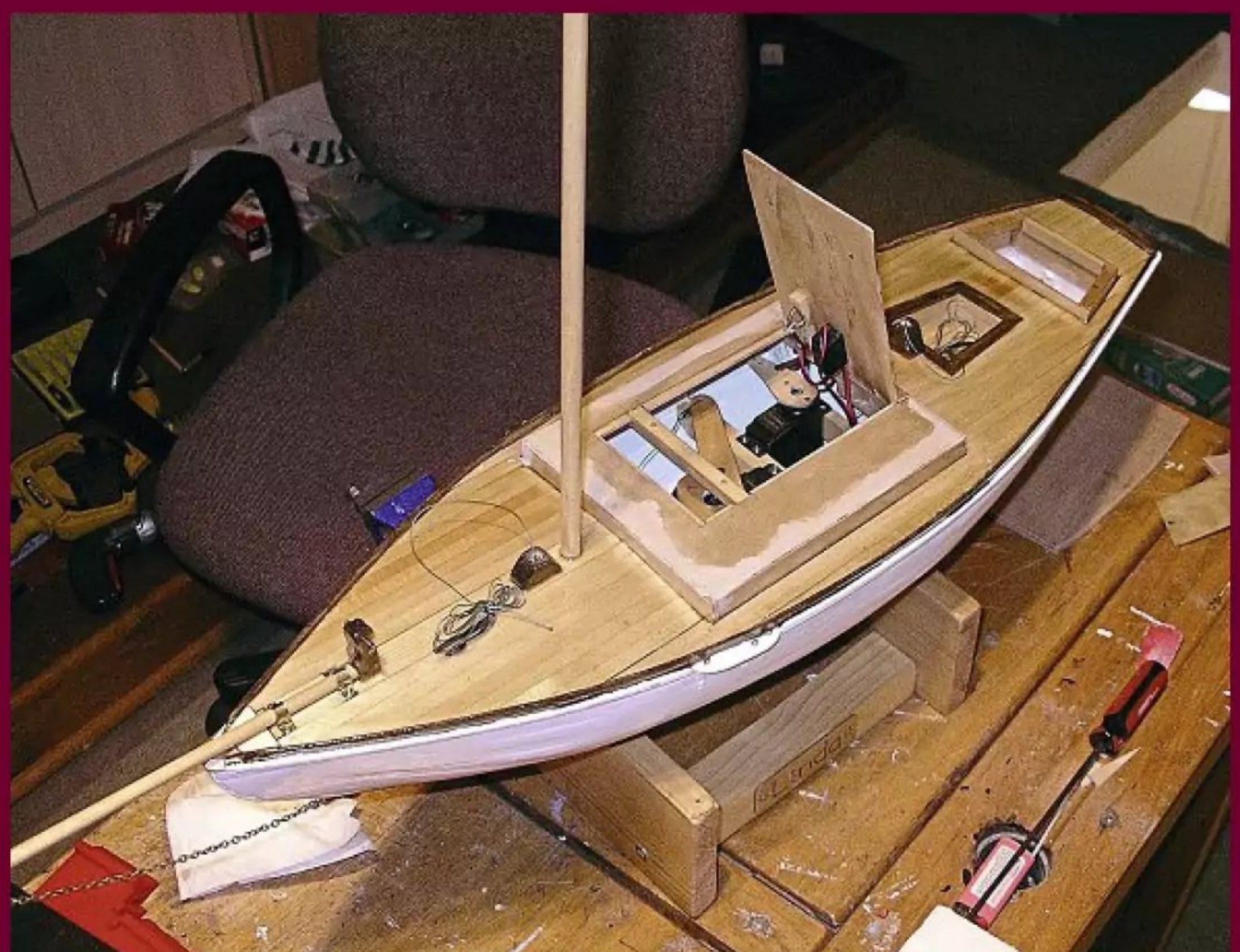
The simple framing of Facsimile. Nev had yet to discover building boards in these early days as modeller!

"Facsimile" Sheet Arrangement



The simple mountings below deck.

Right: The hull finished, ready for the sails.



Bob's and Nev's boats (Emanuel and Facsimile) being sailed together in Sheffield.



Both boats again; that of the master craftsman, Nev modestly tells us, is obvious!

***“I made a straight copy. Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery!
I’ve used this system ever since”***

Having generated the drawings, I made some paper half frames and stuck them on to the side elevation just to see if they looked right. They did, so I carried on, and made all my frames from plywood. I was yet to understand the technique of building upside down on a building board, so I built this boat on a Billing’s building slip.

The building, hatch making and waterproofing all benefitted from the lessons learned with *Bonny Lad*, but for control of the sails I availed myself of the methods employed by Bob on *Emanuel*. He used a multiplying pulley system to give more movement to the mainsail than to the jibs, and I made a straight copy. Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery! I’ve used this system ever since; on every square-rigger I’ve ever built.

The resulting boat, called, for obvious reasons, *Facsimile*, is a delight. She sets a lot of sail for a small boat, so she’s only good for quiet days, but when the conditions are right, she looks really pretty on the water. Her only fault, from the point of view of my created drawing, is that I have the hull a little too full towards the stern, so you’ll see from the photos here that *Emanuel* is the more elegant of the two in terms of hull lines.

The aftermath

After completing these two models, my thoughts then turned to the large iron and steel sailing ships, the windjammers, that I'd been fascinated with since childhood, and my interest in yachts began to wane somewhat. I continued to sail Bonny Lad and Facsimile though, and, after having given things some further thought, I realised that if I wanted to sail two different models on a particular day I just wouldn't be able to fit two square-riggers in the car. Consequently, as time went by and I began to achieve my ambitious build goals, I got into the habit of instead taking one of my sailing ships and one of these yachts to the pond, and sailing the yacht

for 45 minutes before then enjoying the square-rigger for the rest of the session. It's a practice I've continued to this very day.

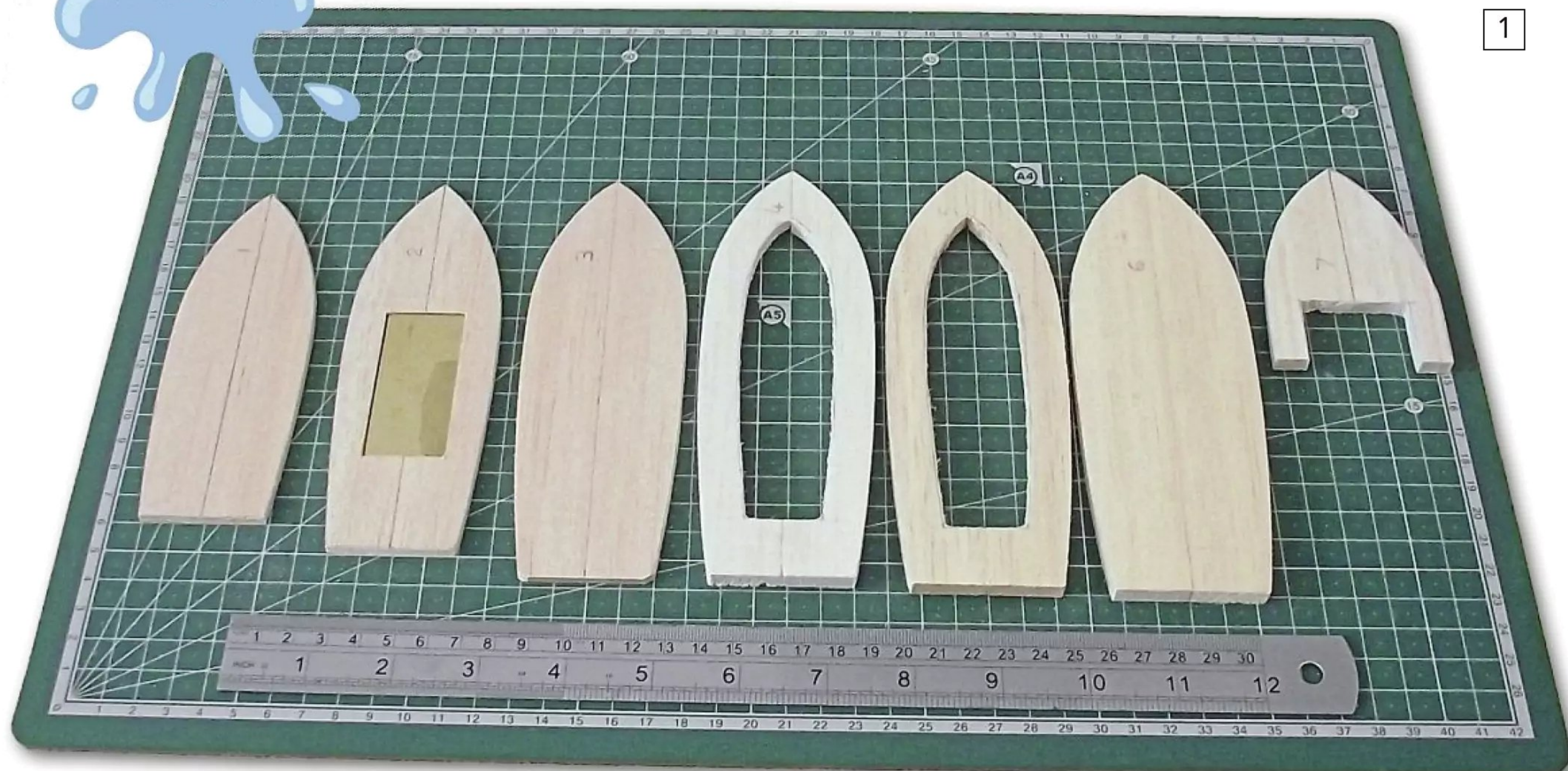
The two little boats still perform well on the small pond in Millhouses Park in Sheffield where I originally began sailing them, as well as on the lake in the Pavilion Gardens in Buxton, and even on the large lake by the North Sea in Tynemouth. As I now live in the North-East, the latter is most local to me, but I have to be careful when I sail these little yachts there, because big (in terms of scale) waves can build on this large, open lake. It's still a pleasure to see them do their stuff though, and I rather suspect that, as I

get older, their small size will become a real boon, long after the big sailing ship models have proved too cumbersome to carry!

Sadly, my mentors from Sheffield days are now all dead, but I think of them often and my memories are only further enhanced by the sight of these little models, whose development they played such a big part in, sailing gaily on a bright day by the North Sea. I'd like to think that they would have been pleased by how much these now well-travelled model boats have been admired by all wherever I've sailed them, and that over the years they've also been copied again by many fellow modellers. ●



*Nev's little boat,
Facsimile, quietly
sailing solo.*



Paddling Pool Boats

Richard Tunstall provides a step-by-step guide to building these adorable little model boats from his mini plan featured on pages 38-39

A few years ago, I became godfather to a friend's daughter and since then I have been on the lookout for suitable birthday and Christmas presents for her. There are plenty of toys and games available but after a while I decided that I would like to make something for her and her sister – something that would be unique, hand-made and a bit more of a connection between us. But what to make? Well, my hobby is making and sailing model ships and boats, so I thought I would make them each a little boat – something nice and colourful for use in the paddling pool or the bath.

This was to be a child's toy, so it needed to be small enough for little hands, fairly robust, and, above all, safe. That meant no small, loose or sharp pieces and so I ruled out anything with masts or spars. I thought that a cabin cruiser of some kind would make a good subject, ideally with a slightly retro look, and I started thinking about some of the lovely post-war British river cruiser designs. I also remembered some of the little toy boats that I was given as a child and the occasional frustration when some of them didn't float very well or capsized at the first bath-tub ripple! I decided, therefore, that my design must be well-ballasted and very stable on the water.



"I remembered some of the little toy boats that I was given as a child and the occasional frustration when some of them didn't float very well or capsized at the first bath-tub ripple! I decided, therefore, that my design must be well-ballasted and very stable on the water"

Finally, I hoped to build these boats from off-cuts and materials already available in my workshop as far as possible. The resulting design is very straightforward to build, and, if you decide to have a go, you may well find that already you have all the materials necessary. Failing that, they should all be readily available from model shops.

Design

I started by searching for cabin-cruiser photos on the internet and in back issues of Model Boats magazine. My eye was drawn to the Thornycroft 38-foot river cruiser DuBarry, featured in 'Flotsam & jetsam' in the April 2022 issue of Model Boats – an attractive craft that seemed to meet all my criteria, and I started drawing.

I have simplified the design and details a great deal to create a toy boat while (I hope) still preserving something of the outline and charm of the original. I have increased the beam a little to make it chunkier, simplified the hull to give a flat bottom and, of course, I have removed everything that would become too small and fiddly at this scale, including the handrails, propeller and rudder, etc.

I wanted the model to be about six inches in length, so I chose 1:72 scale, giving a length of 16cm on the plan (see pages 38-39). The hull and cabin are built up using 'bread and butter' construction with horizontal layers of balsa wood. Some sheet brass ballast is sealed into the hull between

"The hull and cabin are built up using 'bread and butter' construction with horizontal layers of balsa wood. Some sheet brass ballast is sealed into the hull between the lower 'bread and butter' layers, and there is also a cavity within the hull, all of which helps with stability"

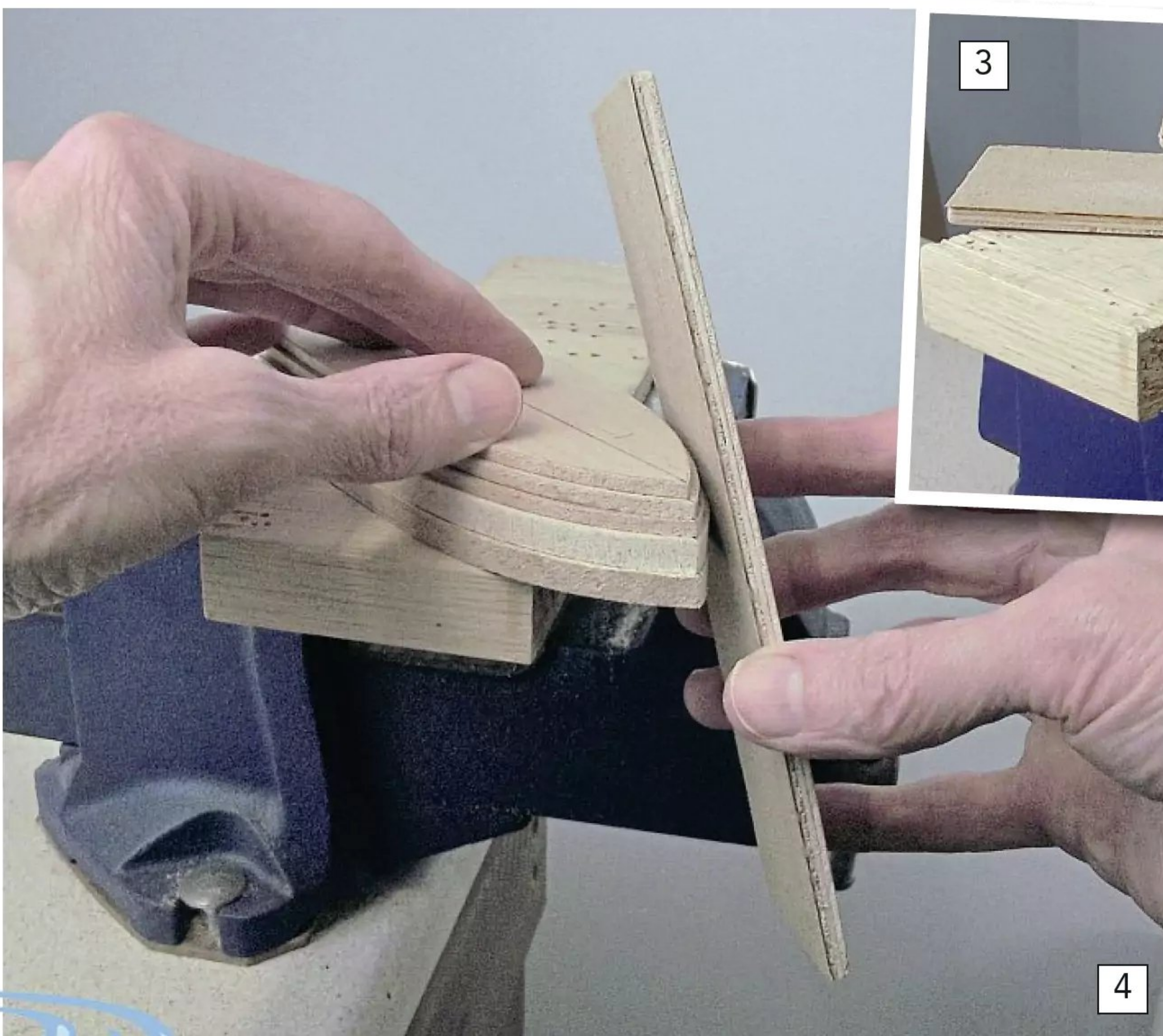
the lower 'bread and butter' layers, and there is also a cavity within the hull, all of which helps with stability. For my models I used 1/32in (0.8mm) plywood for the decks and for the cabin roof pieces. If this isn't available then you could substitute 1/16in plywood, pieces of wood veneer, or even cardboard if you seal and paint it thoroughly. I suppose you could use styrene sheet; however, I was keen to keep my models free from plastic.

Cutting out

Start by cutting out the bread-and-butter balsa layers for the main hull. **Photo 1** shows layers 1 to 7 for the hull laid out from left to right. My suggestion for marking out the shapes on the balsa sheets is as follows... Once you've either pulled-out the central pages of the magazine featuring my mini plan or taken a photocopy of the hull plan view, cut out the outline of one side of layer 7 of the hull. Cut along the centre line to give a template for one half of the hull. Place this on the balsa sheet with the centre line along the grain and carefully trace around the edge of the paper onto the balsa wood, including marking the centre line. Then, turn the paper

template over, place it on the other side of the centre line and trace out the opposite side of the hull. After cutting out this piece you can then carefully trim down the paper template to the outline of layer 6 of the hull and repeat the above steps to trace layer 6 onto the balsa wood. Keep going like this until you have cut out all seven layers for the hull.

Layers 1 to 3 are cut from 1/8in balsa sheet and layer 2 must have a rectangular cut-out in the middle to accept the sheet brass ballast. The 1/8" balsa sheet can be cut with a sharp craft knife with some care, although a razor saw is useful for making neat cuts across the grain. Layers 4 to 7 are then cut from 1/4in balsa sheet; for these I preferred to cut the shapes slightly oversize using a fret saw and then sand the edges down to the pencil lines. If you are using balsa offcuts, then you can cut two half-pieces from smaller scraps and glue the edges together along the centre line to make up the bread-and-butter layers. Don't forget to cut the centres out of layers 4 and 5, leaving 1/2in width all the way around. You can also cut out the rectangular pieces for the cabin at this point.



Ballast

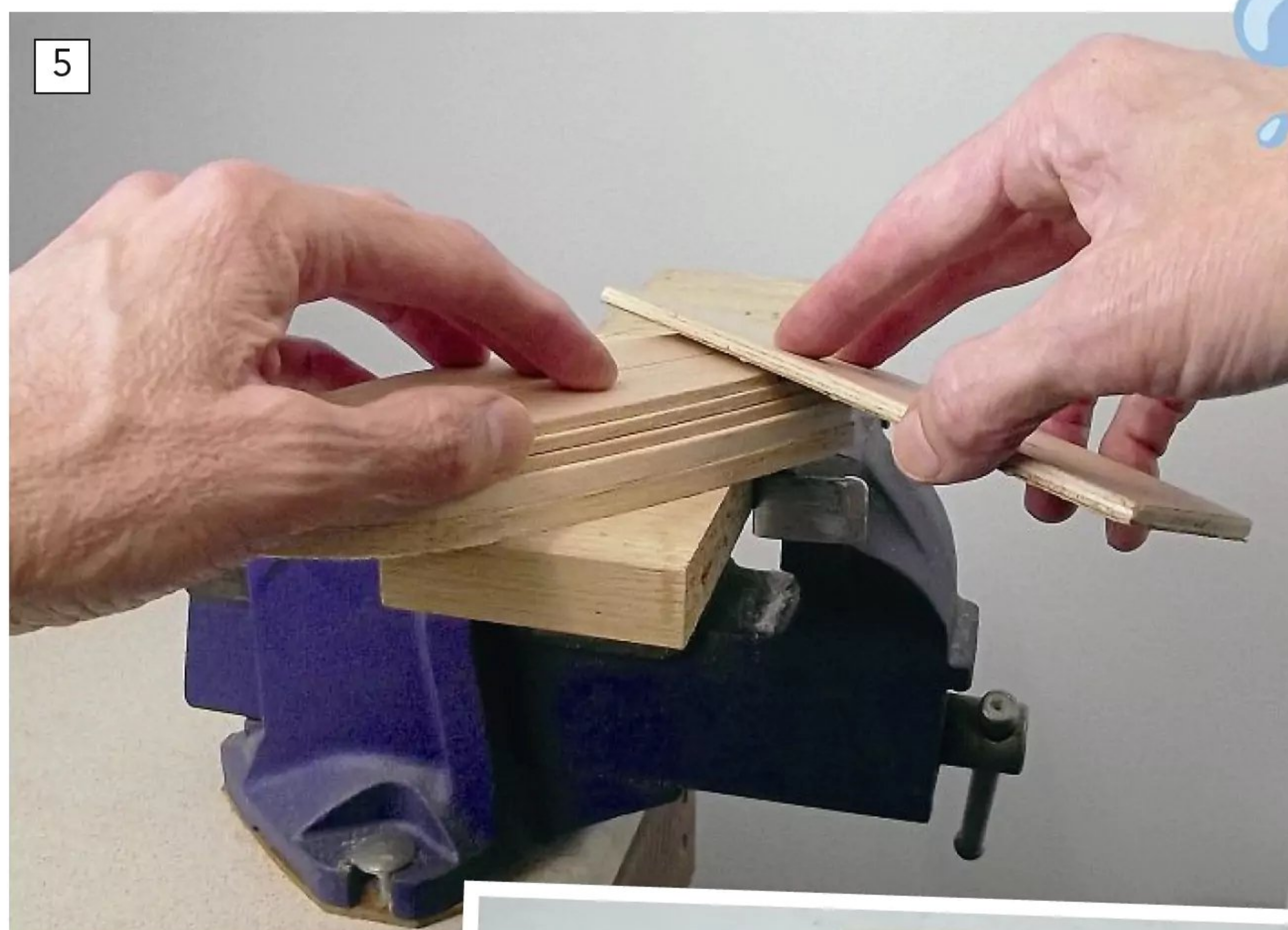
I should say a word about the piece of brass ballast at this point. The finished model before painting will weigh something like 70 to 75 grammes (g) including ballast and I estimated that I needed 30g of ballast in the bottom of the hull to achieve the right waterline and to give good stability. The density of brass is around 8.5g per cubic cm (g/cm³) and I had a piece of 2.5mm thick brass sheet available. I therefore cut a piece of this sheet with dimensions 5.5cm x 2.6cm x 0.25cm which weighs around 30g.

(To work this out yourself, calculate the volume in cm³, which is $5.5 \times 2.6 \times 0.25 = 3.58\text{cm}^3$, and then multiply this volume by the density of brass: $3.58 \times 8.5 = 30.4\text{g}$, which is close enough to 30g). If you have some brass sheet that is anywhere from 2.0mm to 3.2mm thick then this will be ideal, and you can simply adjust the size of the piece you cut to give 30g weight. If you don't have brass sheet available then copper, steel or iron will work, although be sure to use the right density for each metal when working out the size you need. The densities are 9.0g/cm³ for copper, 7.9g/cm³ for iron/ steel and 8.0g/cm³ for stainless steel. If you use plain iron or steel, then I suggest giving the piece a coat of a metal paint such as Hammerite to prevent it corroding. Please don't use lead in this model, and don't be tempted to use aluminium either – it just isn't dense enough.

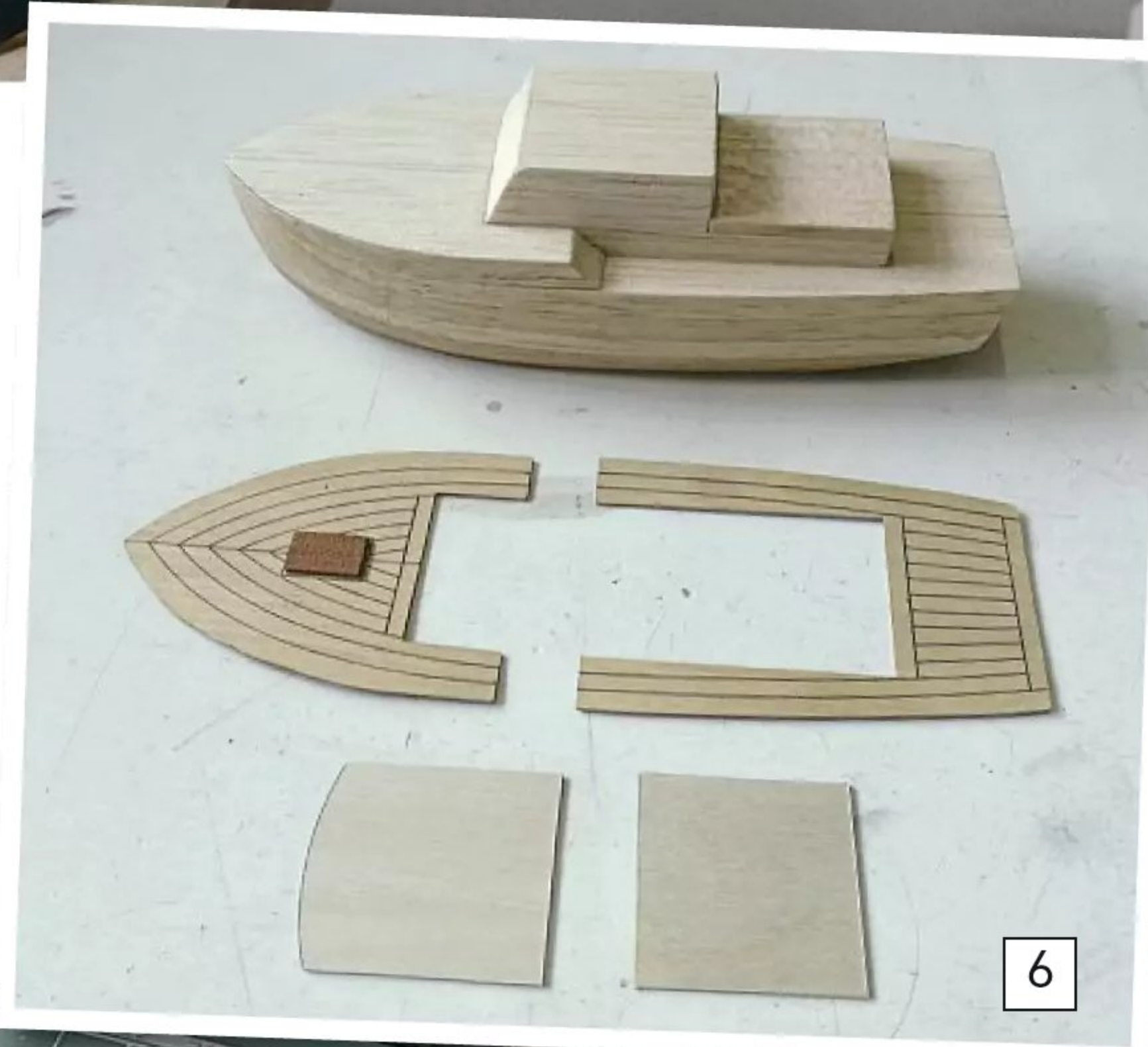
Construction

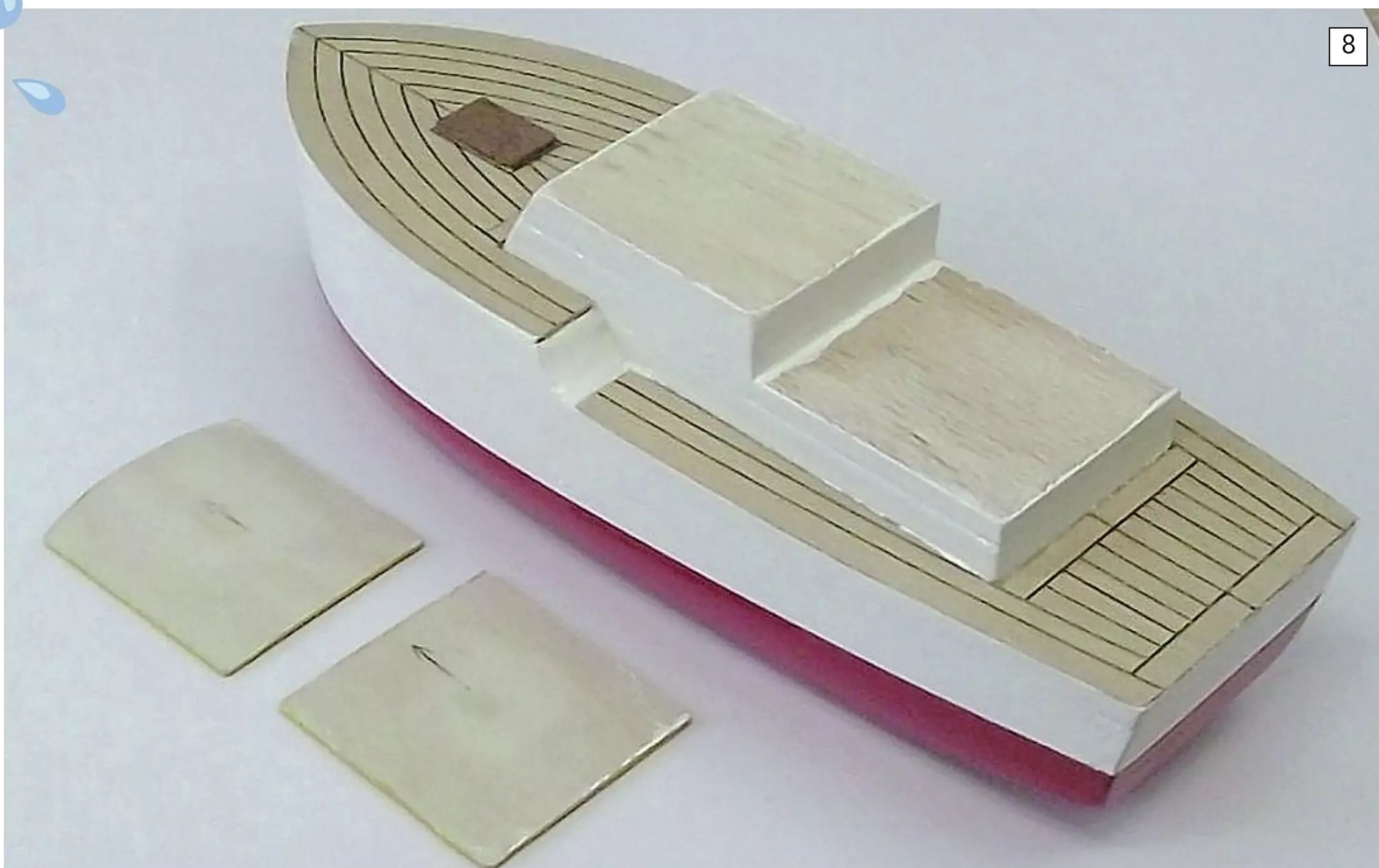
You can now start gluing the layers together using your preferred wood glue, lining each layer up with the next using the centrelines marked on the balsa pieces. I used waterproof aliphatic resin for this. Once layers 1 and 2 are glued together, glue your metal ballast piece into the recess in layer 2 using a general-purpose household glue (such as Bostik, Evo-stik, or similar). Then glue layer 3 onto the first two layers to seal in the ballast.

Next, glue on layers 4 and 5 (1/4in thick layers) and you should have something that looks like what you see in **Photo 2**. I suggest doing some initial shaping of the hull bottom at this stage, which will then allow you to



“If you don't have brass sheet available then copper, steel or iron will work. Please don't use lead in this model, and don't be tempted to use aluminium either – it just isn't dense enough”





check how the model floats before attaching the deck and cabin. For this I strongly recommend that you make some sandpaper boards by gluing coarse and medium grades of sandpaper onto some rectangular scrap pieces of plywood (see **Photo 3**). Start with the coarse sandpaper and then use the medium when you get close to the finished shape. You don't need to remove large amounts of balsa – all you are trying to do is to smooth the 'steppy' sides of the model

“There are many ways to finish a balsa model boat and you may well have your preferred method. Here's what I did...”

into a smooth curve and to round the bilges nicely from the sides into the flat hull bottom (see **Photo 4**). Probably the area that needs most sanding is when creating the smooth sloping section of the hull bottom at the stern leading to the transom (see **Photo 5**). This

took me about 20-30 minutes of sanding for each hull. Once you are happy, give the hull bottom a couple of coats of diluted cellulose dope (50:50 cellulose dope and thinners), with a very light sanding between coats to smooth the finish.



10



11





Now carefully balance hull layers 6 and 7 and the cabin pieces on to the shaped hull in the correct locations and float the model in a small container of water (a sandwich box will do). Check that it floats level side-to-side. It should also float with the bow slightly higher than the stern. If you need to adjust the trim, you can glue small pieces of ballast inside the hollow hull and float the model again until you are happy with it.

After drying the model off, glue layers 6 and 7 onto the hull. Once your glue is set then it is back to the sanding boards to fair in these last two layers and achieve the finished hull shape. Finally, glue on the rectangular blocks that make up the cabin.

Your hull should now look something like what you see in **Photo 6**, in which I have also shown the deck and cabin roof pieces cut from 1/32in (0.8mm) plywood. The plan shows a small rectangular skylight on the fore deck – I used a simple rectangle cut from 1/16in mahogany sheet for this, but other woods could be used instead.

Finishing

There are many ways to finish a balsa model boat and you may well have your preferred method. Here's what I did...For the deck pieces, I drew on the planking lines in pencil and then I applied a very diluted wood stain (one part Pine coloured water-based wood stain to four parts water). When this was dry, I applied two coats of clear water-based varnish to seal in the pencil lines. I also primed and painted the cabin roof pieces, prior to gluing all the deck and roof pieces

onto the hull with wood glue. You may need to apply some filler between the hull and the deck edge and then sand it smooth all the way around. After all this, I applied two more coats of cellulose dope over the hull surface, sanding very lightly between coats to obtain a smooth surface for painting (see **Photo 7**). Finally, I used Humbrol enamel paints applied with a brush for all the painted areas. I painted the hull white and then masked the waterline before painting the red colour below the waterline (see **Photo 8**).

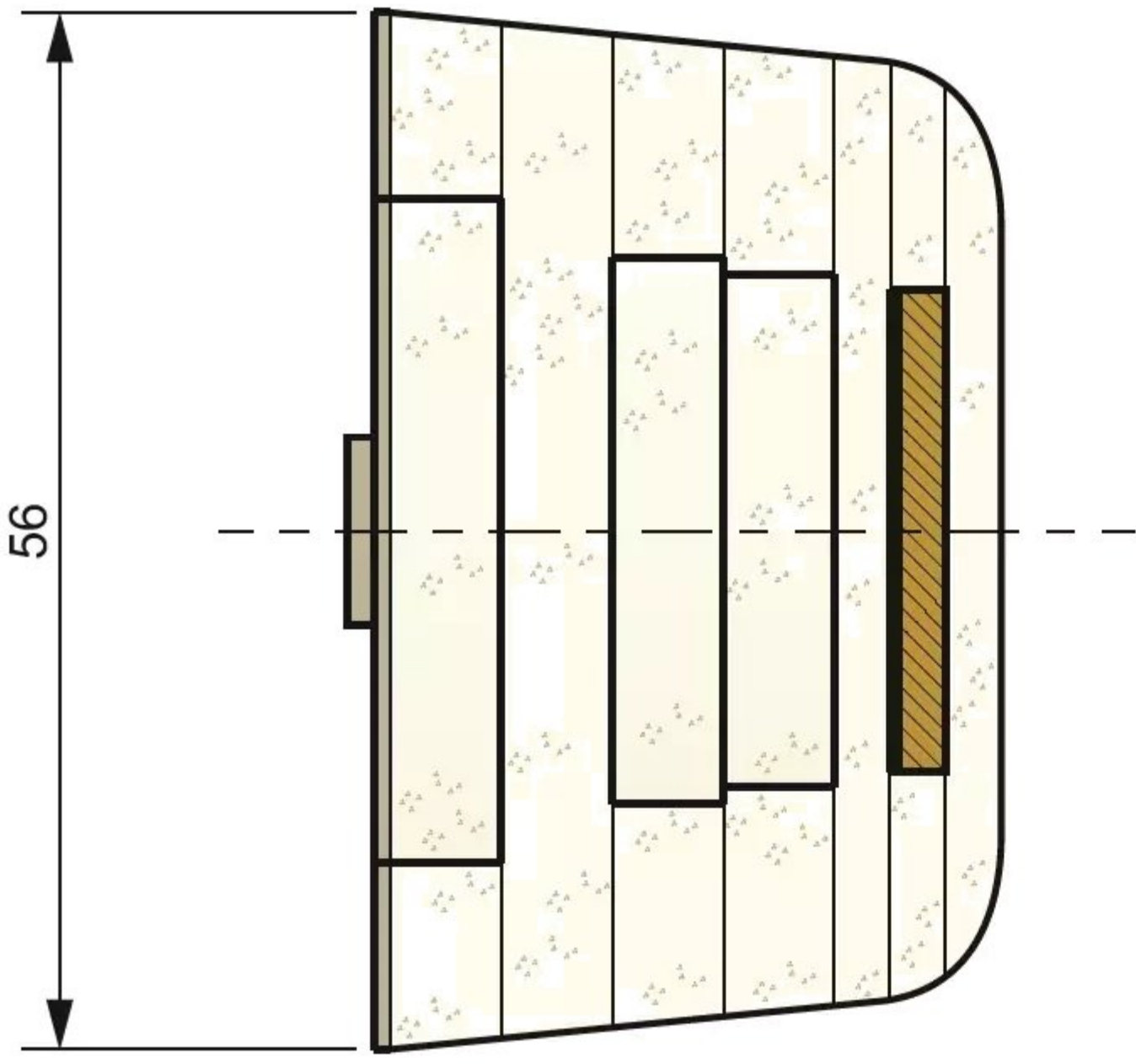
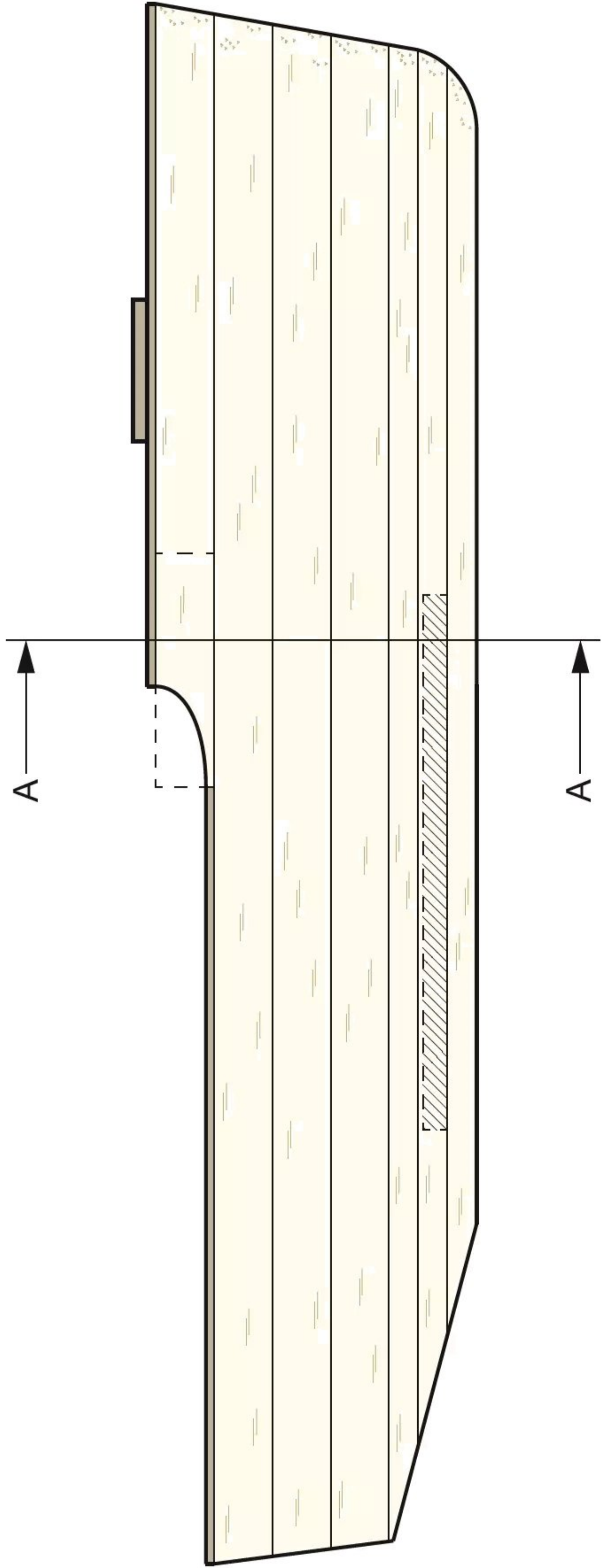
As I'm not good at painting small details, I chose to print the portholes and cabin windows onto photo paper using my inkjet printer before then cutting them out and gluing them to the model with aliphatic resin. You could draw the window and porthole shapes onto paper manually if you prefer. I gave these paper parts a good day to dry thoroughly and then sealed them with several coats of the water-based clear varnish (see **Photos 9, 10 and 11**).

Summary

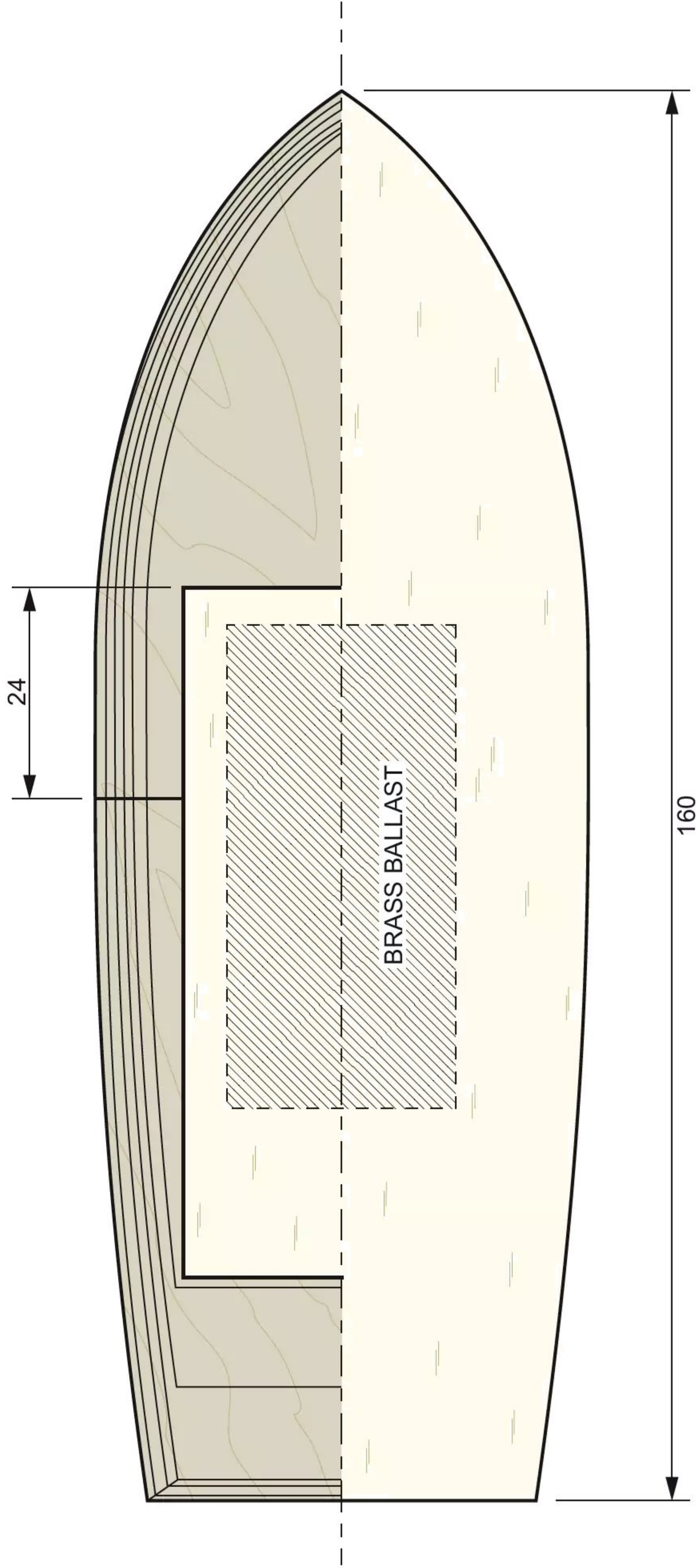
These little boats made a nice diversion from ongoing work on one of my larger models. They were fun to build, and I think the end result has achieved my original aims. They are bright and colourful, and they are very stable when afloat (see **Photo 12**). It is just possible to make them float upside down if you put them exactly upside down in the water, but from any other position they will return to floating the right way up straight away. Hopefully, my goddaughter and her sister will like them! ●



HULL CONSTRUCTION
ALL DIMENSIONS IN MM UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED



SECTION AT A-A

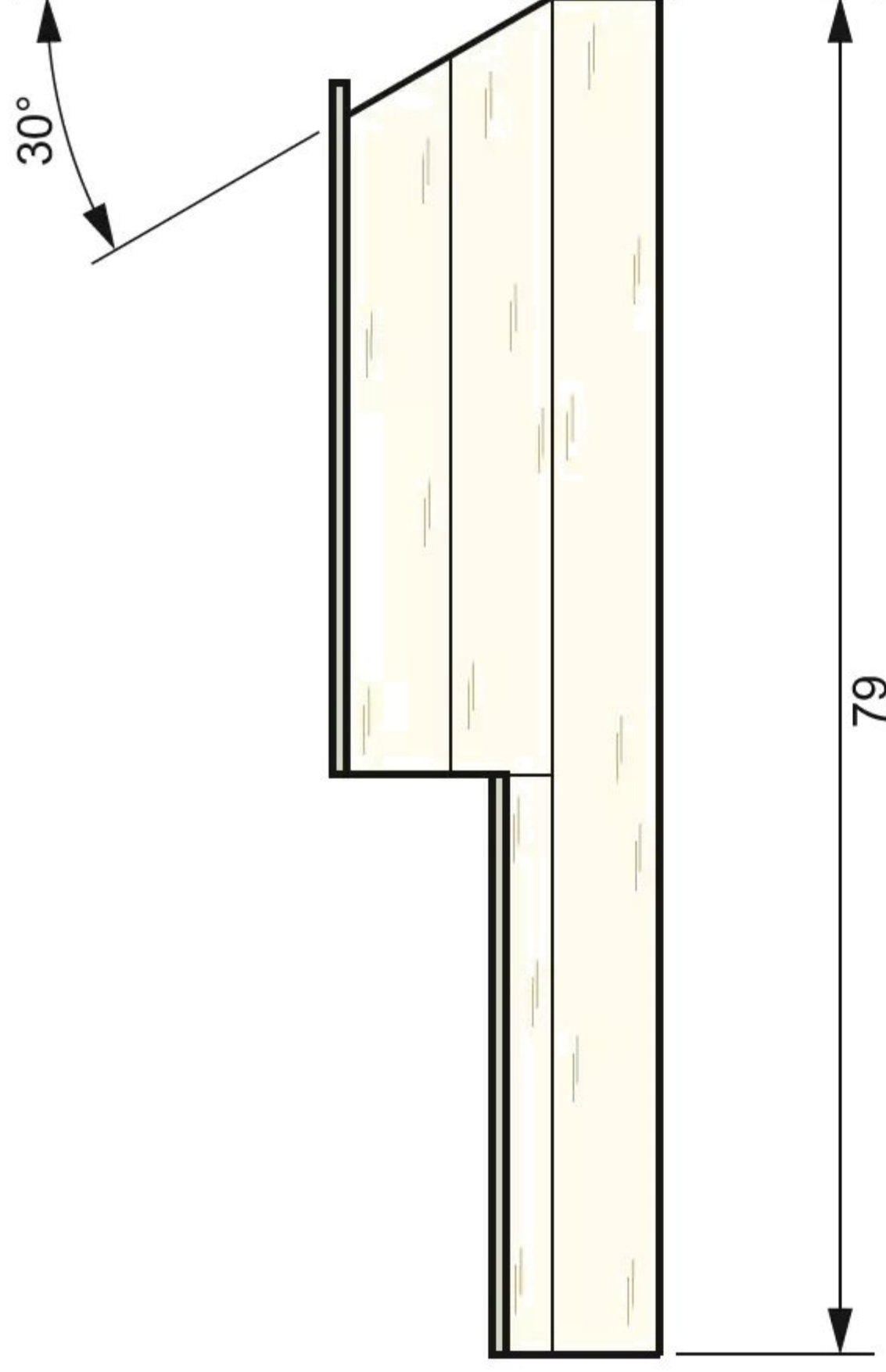
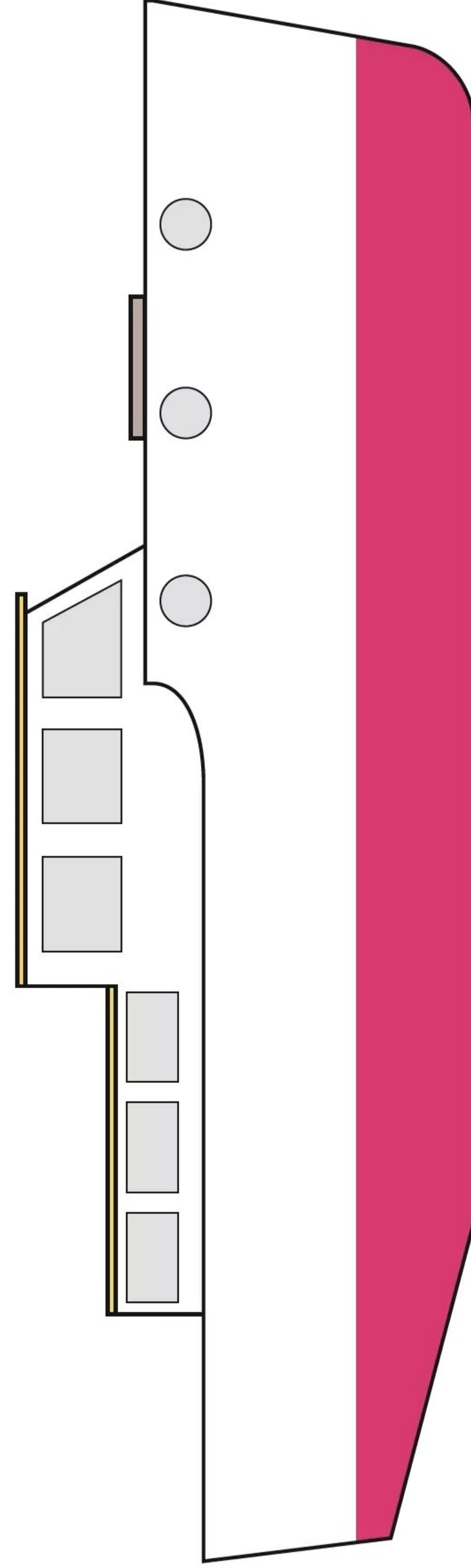


'BREAD & BUTTER' CONSTRUCTION:
LAYERS 1 TO 3 FROM 1/8" Balsa sheet
LAYERS 4 TO 7 FROM 1/4" Balsa sheet
CUT OUT THE CENTRE OF LAYERS 4 & 5
LEAVING 1/2" WIDTH ALL AROUND.
BRASS BALLAST PIECE IS 55 x 26 x 2.5mm
SEE ARTICLE FOR FURTHER DESCRIPTION.
DECK PIECES FROM 1/32" PLY OR SIMILAR.

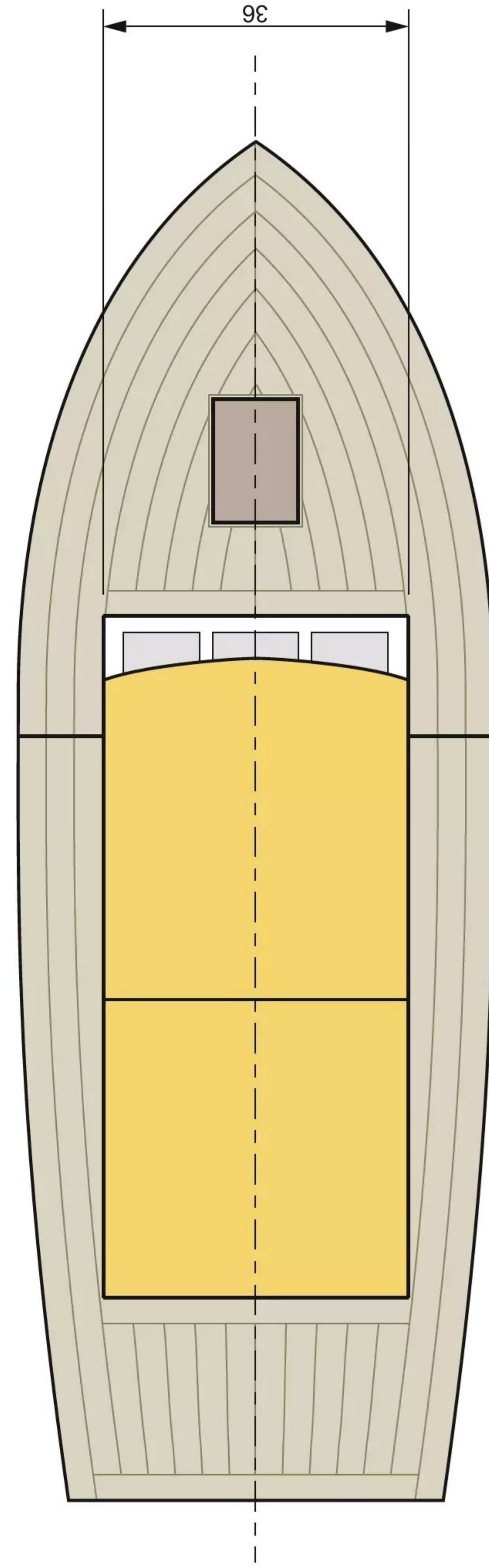
PADDLING POOL BOATS

DESIGNED BY RICHARD TUNSTALL

FINISHED MODEL & CABIN CONSTRUCTION



CABIN IS MADE UP FROM 3 LAYERS OF 1/4" Balsa Sheet & 1 Piece of 1/8" Sheet. ROOF PIECES FROM 1/32" Ply or Similar.



LCVP Mk.5

Dave Wooley provides a hands-on guide to building from this month's free plan, which comes courtesy of former Vosper Thornycroft naval architect Peter Brown

**PART
ONE**

The Royal Marines' LCVP Mk.5 on the beach.





LCVP Mk.5 secured to its goal post davits aboard HMS Bulwark LPD (Landing Platform Dock) after a successful exercise.



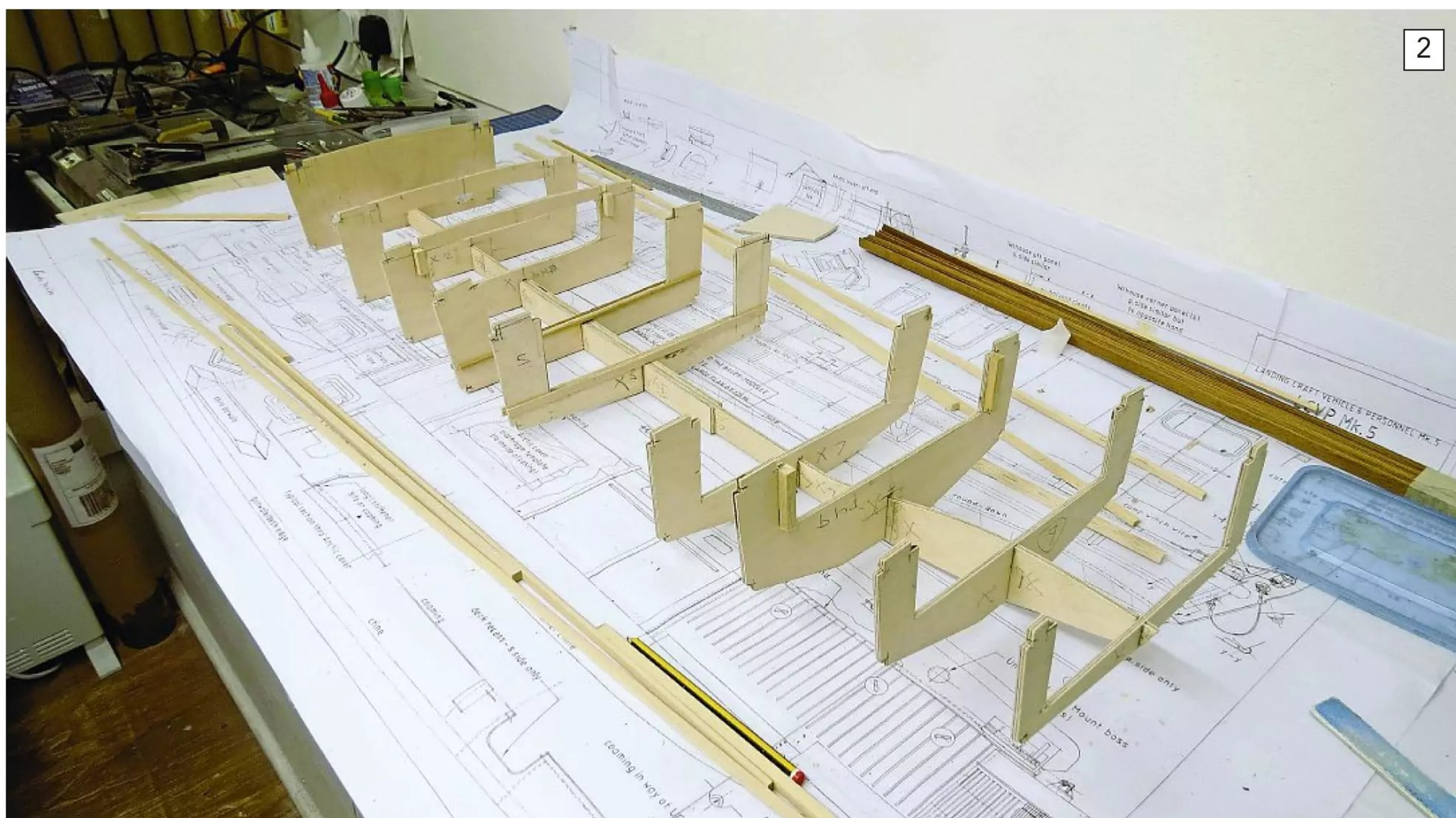
Thanks to Peter Brown, former naval architect at Vosper Thornycroft, a set of modellers' draughts has been prepared for the build of a 1:16 scale model of the current Royal Navy assault landing craft LCVP Mk.5 (Landing Craft Vehicle / Personnel Mk.5) and it is the use of these drawings that this two-part build feature will be focusing on (see **Photo 1**).

Originally designed and built by VT (Vosper Thornycroft) Shipbuilders at Woolston, Southampton and with later ones by Babcock Marine, the LCVP Mk.5 entered service with the Royal Navy in 1996. Capable of transporting 35 fully equipped marines and three crew at approximately 25kts or one 105mm/ 155mm howitzer, a tracked snow cat and trailer can also be accommodated. Displacement is 24 tons, with a length 15.7m and a width of 4.3m. Power is provided by two Volvo-Penta diesels to two water jets. Both the amphibious LHDs HMS *Albion* and *Bulwark* carry the LCVP Mk.5.

The all-aluminium Mk.5 has a 20-year life cycle, and a replacement is now being considered, which may enter service some time towards the close of the decade.

Hull construction

The prime purpose of the LCVP is to deliver troops/vehicles onto the beachhead at speed, thus enabling a significantly increased number of sorties than was previously possible with its predecessor. The hull design is box-shaped with a flat after body and semi-planing fore body to enable the craft to ride the shallows onto the beach. However, there are features on the underside which improve performance while maintaining a high level of stability, even in rough conditions.



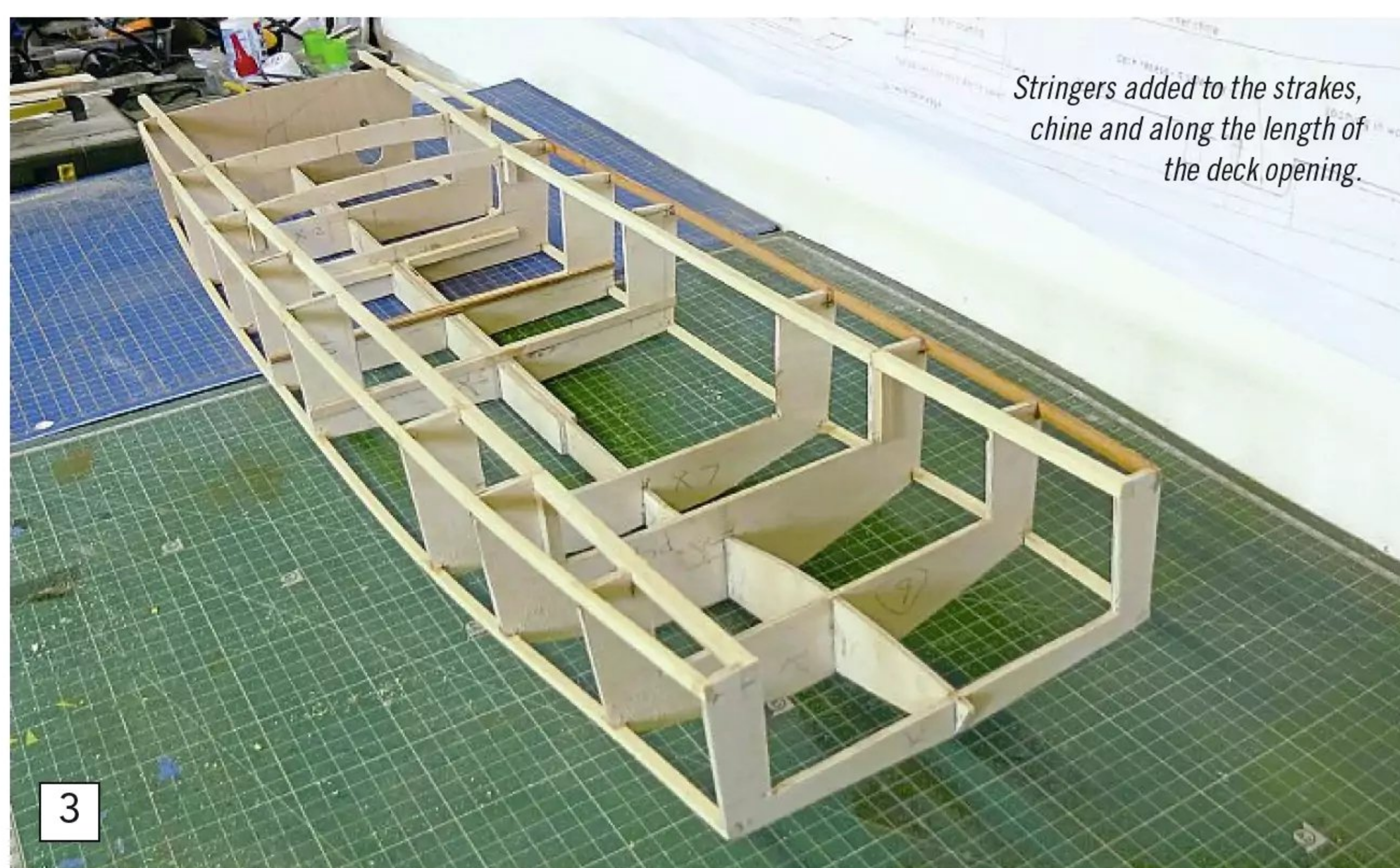
Each of the frames set onto the keelson.

“The LCVP Mk 5 is water-jet powered, with a flat after body and semi-planing fore body, but, as we shall see, there are features on the underside which improve performance while maintaining a high level of stability, even in rough conditions”

From the beginning it was my intention to build the model in timber, using a well-tried method of keelson, frames and stringers. The choice of timber for the hull was 1mm marine ply, while the keel and frames are 3mm in thickness. The stringer consisted of 4.4 mm x 5 mm spruce for each of the chines and the gunwale, with the inner stringers denoting the internal area for access into the vehicle deck.

The frame shapes were lifted from the plan first, using grease proof paper (the latter being inexpensive and readily available), followed by the keel, which was doubled amidships (see **Photo 2**). Using 3.5mm marine ply, each frame was cut to size, with sections removed at the lower chine and gunwale allowing for the stringers. As part of the same preparation, an opening was formed in the transom for the jet drive stators (see **Photo 3**).

The next stage involved covering the underside with 1mm marine ply, taking into account the compound curves along its length. This required six separate sections or sheets, commencing from the transom (see



Stringers added to the strakes, chine and along the length of the deck opening.



Sheeting up the underside forward.

Right: Sheeting the underside aft with 1mm marine ply.

Photos 4 and 5). My adhesive of choice for fixing these marine ply sheets was Evo-Stik exterior waterproof PVA.

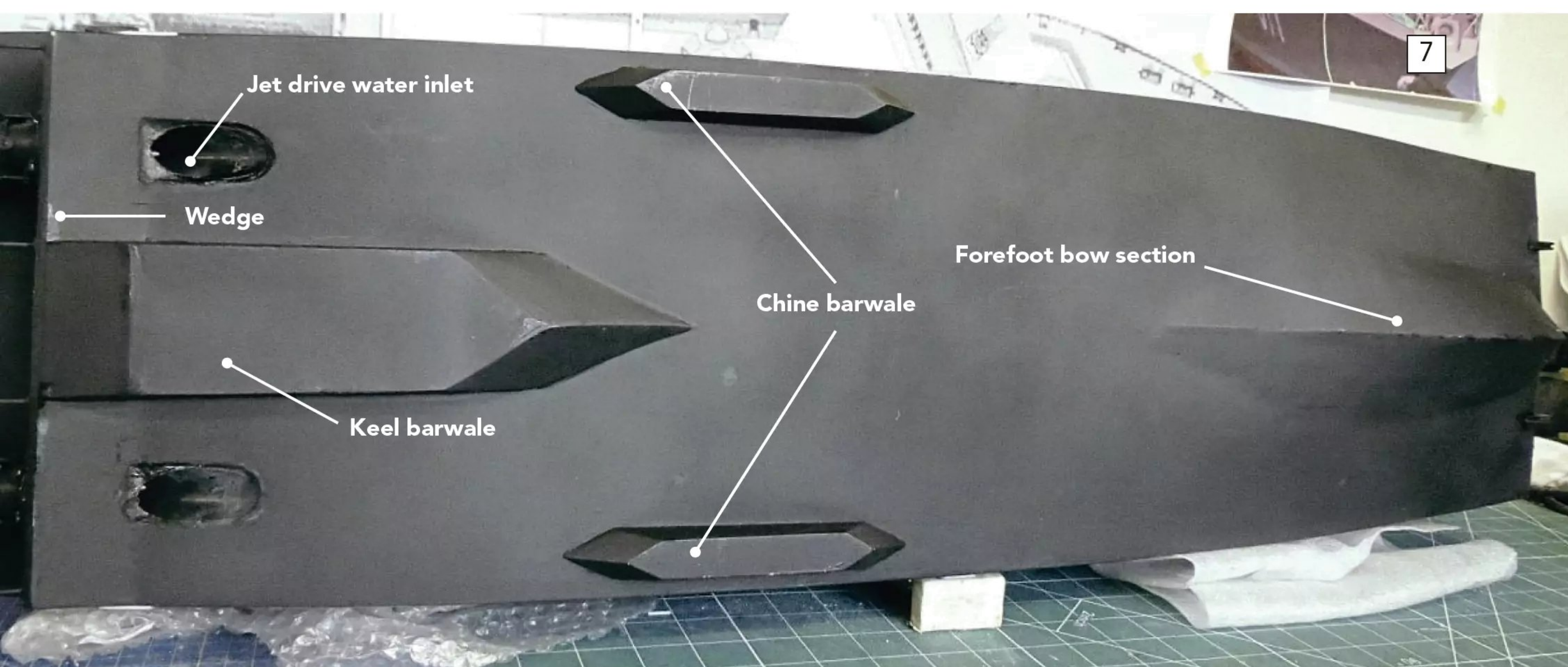
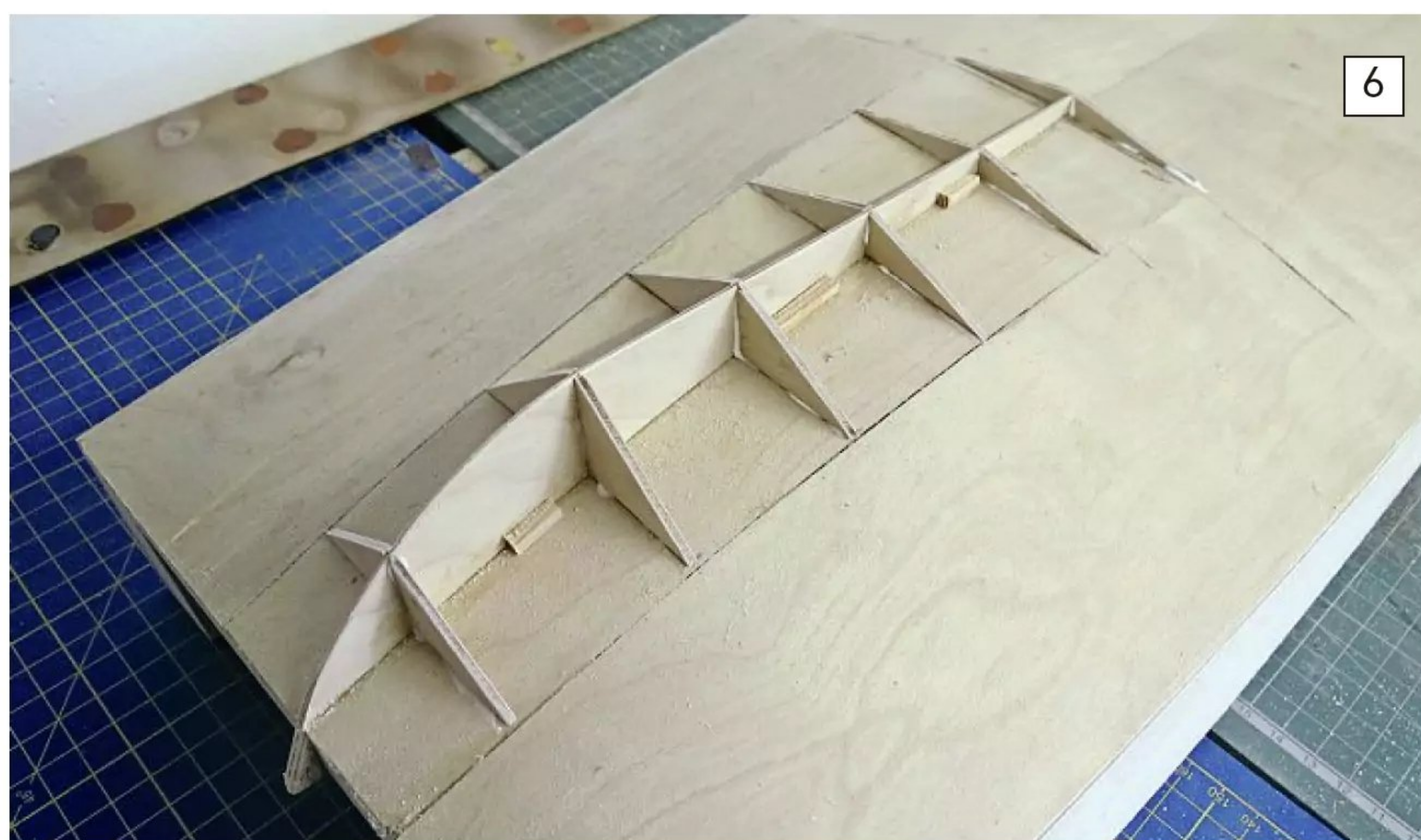
With the entire underside sheeted, work could begin in forming the bow section (see **Photo 6**), followed by the outer and centre barwales (see **Photo 7**), with a wedge section formed at the transom. Once the underside had been completed, the sides could be marked out on 1mm marine ply and fixed into place.

Forming the vehicle deck and round down

The round down, as the name would imply, is a curved section between the arctic cover and the ramp. This, along with the vehicle deck, was, in the interim period, kept removable, so that the entire inners of the hull could be covered with GRP matt resin.

Once I'd prepared the basic hull form, the internal spaces between the frames were filled with fibreglass matt and coated with resin (see **Photo 8**). The round down and vehicle deck were constructed in box form from 1mm marine ply as separate units (see **Photo 9**). Both have raised strips at the joint intended to form a watertight seal when fixed into place. Aft of the transom is a removable overhang, which allows access to the outboard linkages on the jet drive (see **Photo 10**).

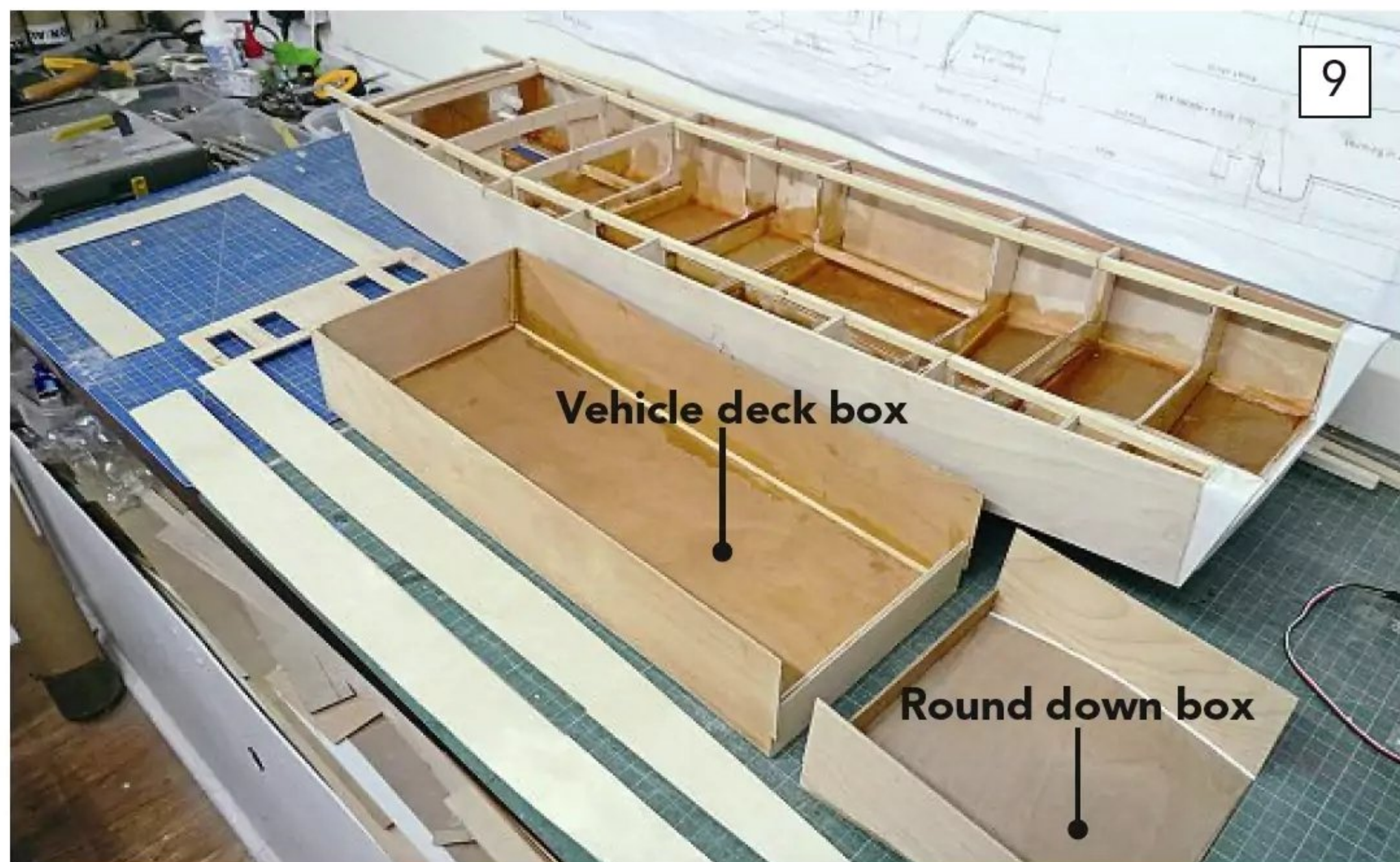
Right: Building up the bow section.



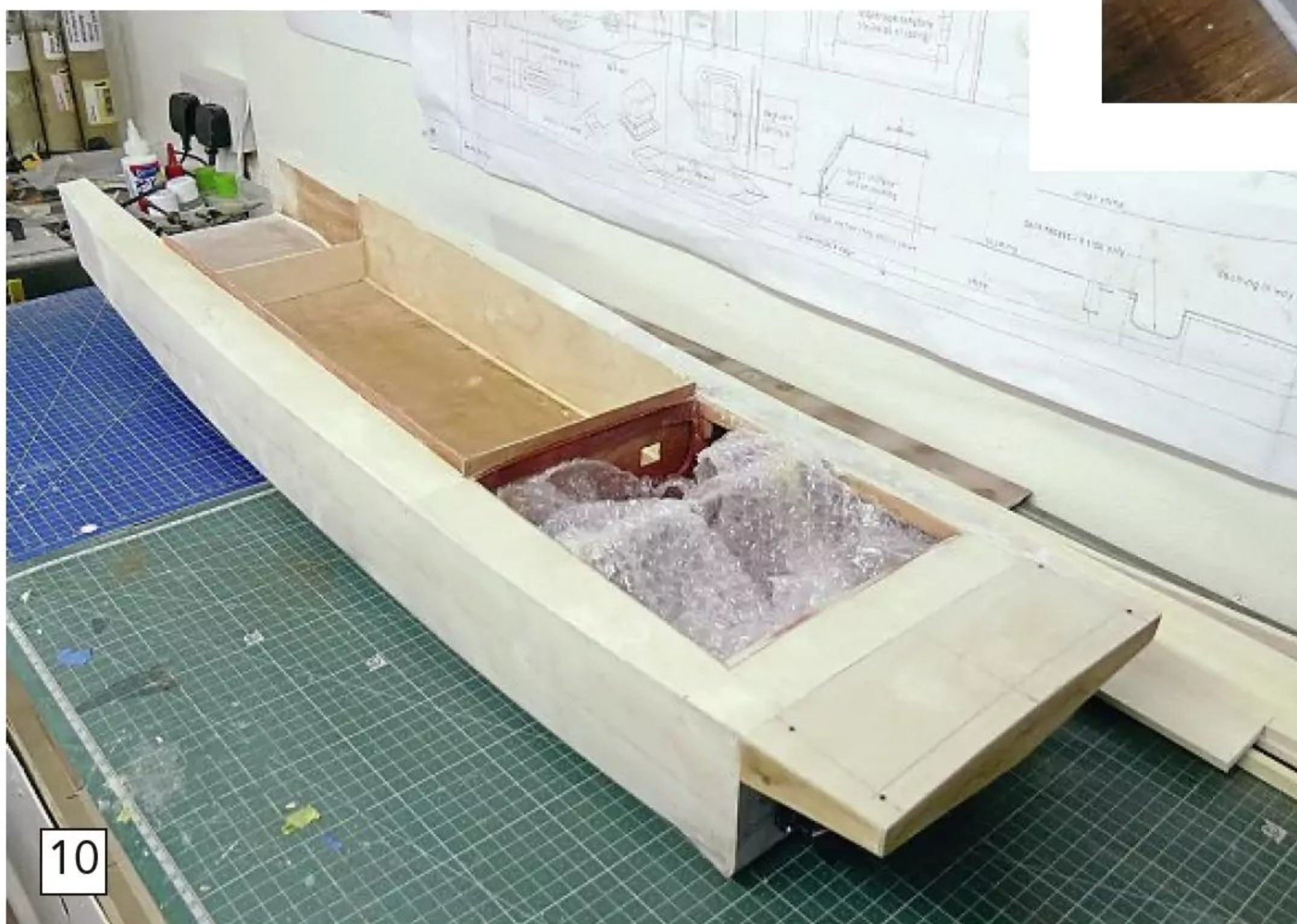
Completing the barwales, bow and water-jet intake.



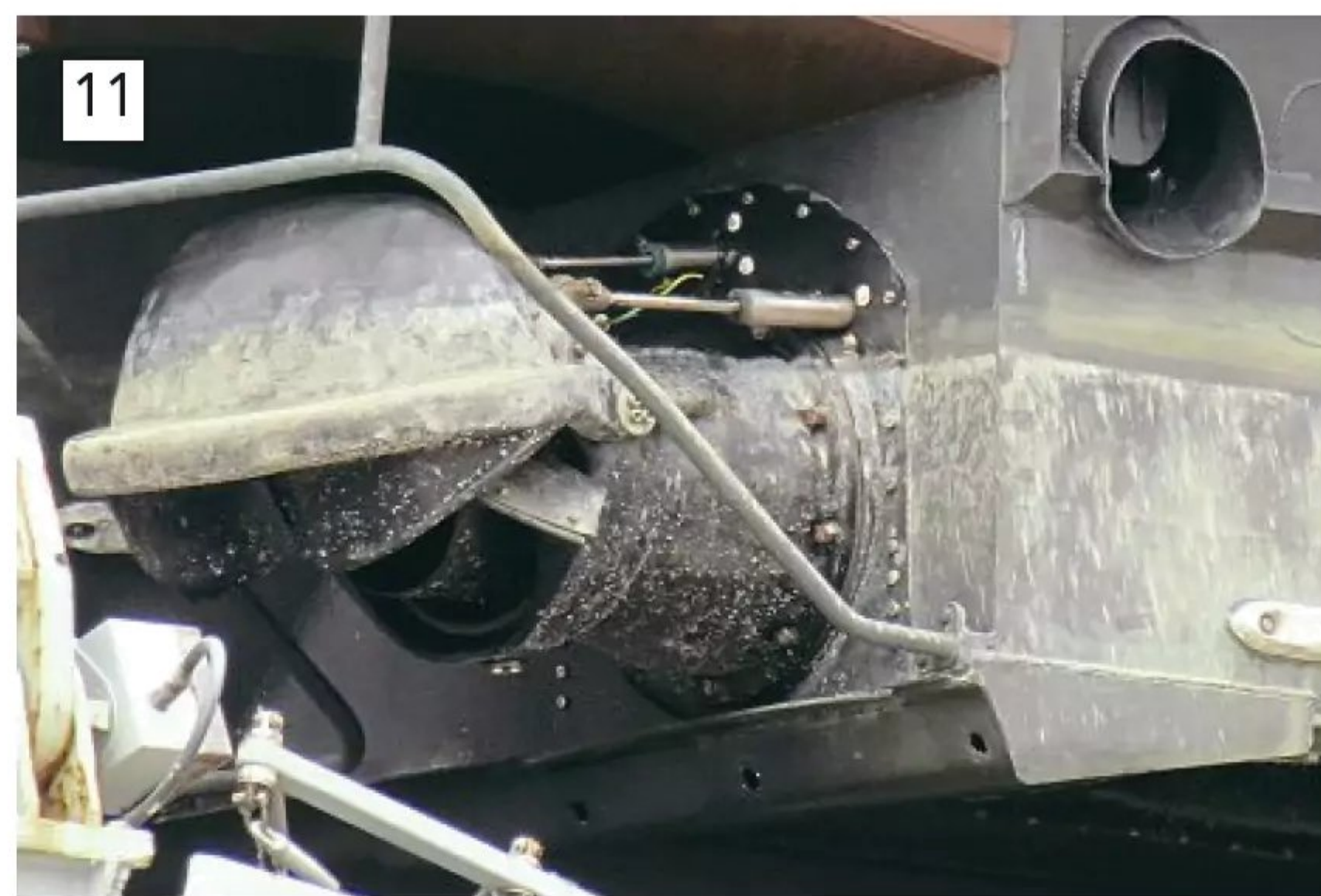
Glass fibre is applied to inside the hull and coated with GRP resin.



Preparing the inner vehicle deck box and round down; both will be fixed into the hull.



Adding the transom overhang, which will remain detachable.



A water-jet drive nozzle and reverse bucket as fitted to the LCVP Mk.5.

Water jet drives Installation

The scale of 1:16 for the build of the LCVP Mk.5 was chosen to suit a Bauer-Modelle 19BM water-jet drive, powered by two BL 3500KV brushless motors. Although not identical to that employed in the full size LCVP (see **Photo 11**), this offers a good option in achieving the best results (see **Photo 12**). At first glance it may look small, but it has a sufficiently sized inlet for moving a considerable amount of water through the nozzle (see **Photo 13**). For ease of access, installation of the jet drives, servos and linkages is best undertaken at this early stage. Following on from the successful installation of water-jet drives in my Finnish Missile boat (detailed in Model Boats in

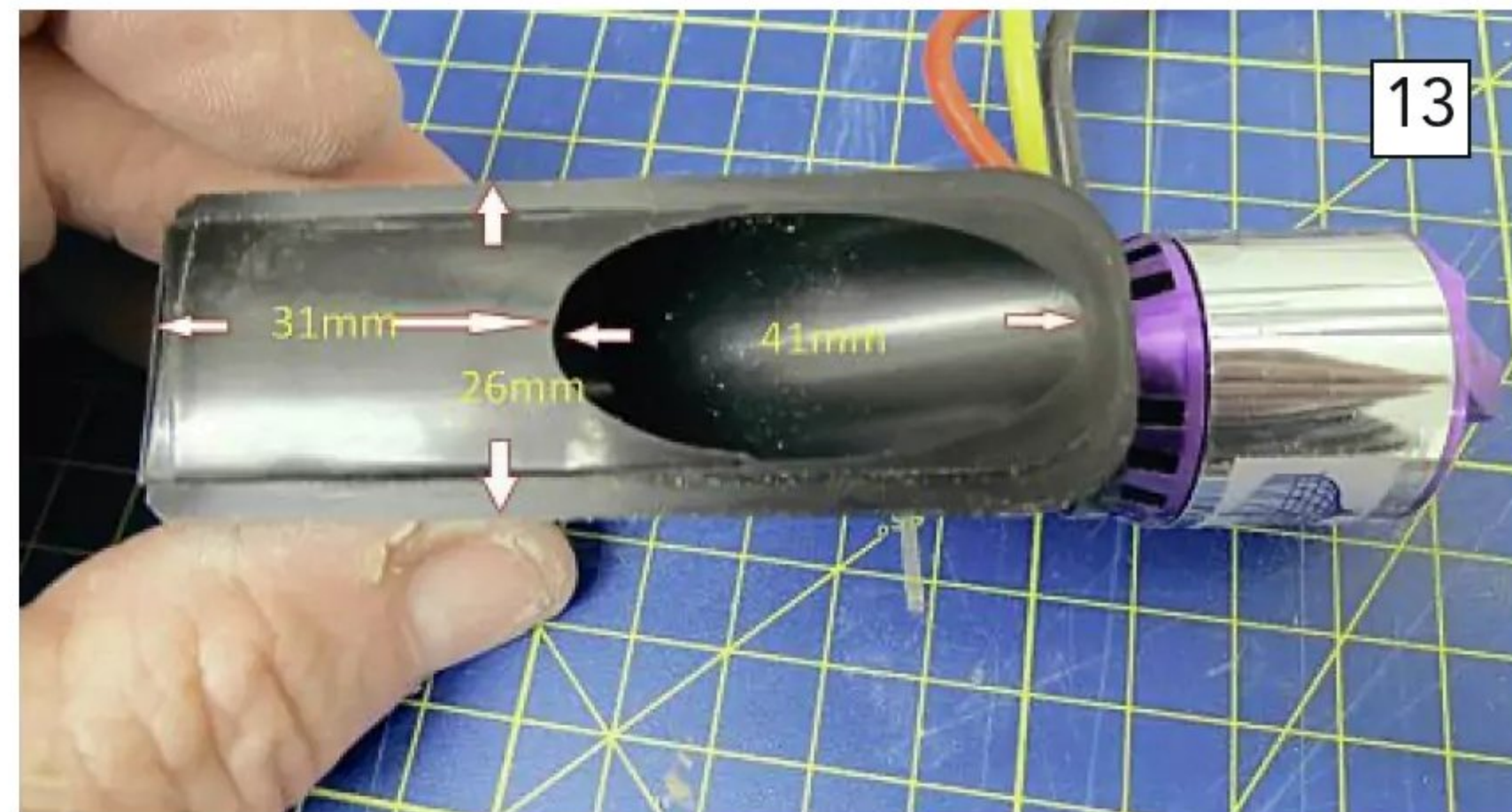
“For ease of access, installation of the jet drives, servos and linkages is best undertaken at this early stage”

2022), here both drive units were fitted into a coffer dam, which provides a tight fit around the edge of the drive when sealing the unit into place (see **Photo 14**).

Servo installation

A removable tray arrangement, again an idea first used in my Finnish Missile boat, was installed across the beam of the ship (see **photo 15**). This incorporates four servos, denoted in my illustration by their respective letters: A (flexi- rod) marked in red operates

the port bucket; B (brass rod) operates the direction of the port nozzles; C (brass rod) operates the starboard nozzle; D (flexi-cable) operates the starboard bucket. Previously I had used rubber bellows to feed the linkages to both the buckets and nozzles via the transom. To ensure a watertight fit, each of the linkages were fed through the transom via a larger bore plastic tube (see **Photo 16**). Each linkage was then coupled to both the bucket and the tiller arm linked to the nozzle (see **Photo 17**).



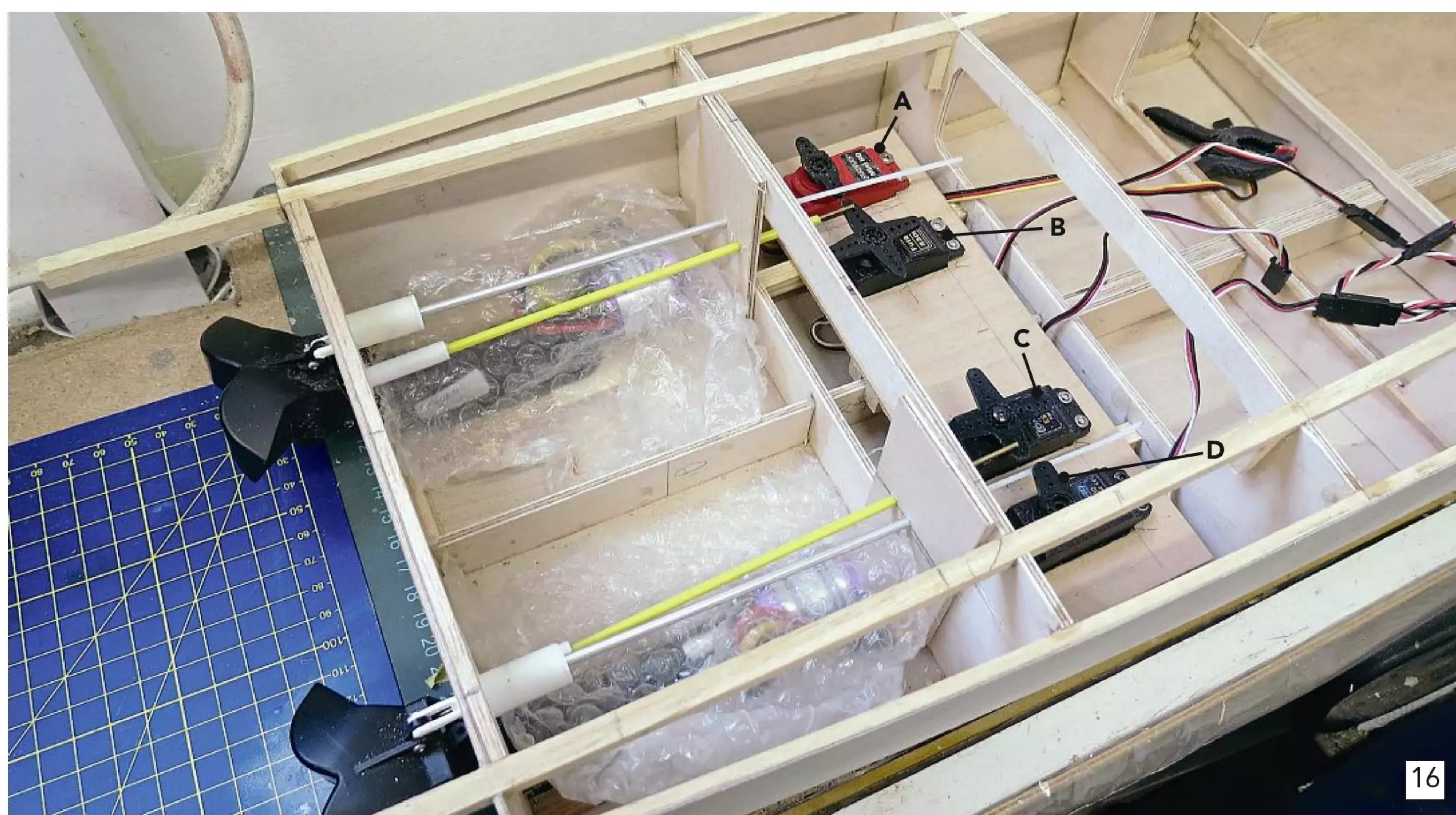
Water intake on the Bauer water jet unit.

Left: Bauer jet drive nozzles and reverse buckets fitted into the transom.



The water-jet unit and brushless motor fitted into the coffer dam to correspond with the inlet opening beneath the hull.

Right: Servos operating the nozzles and buckets fitted to a common tray.



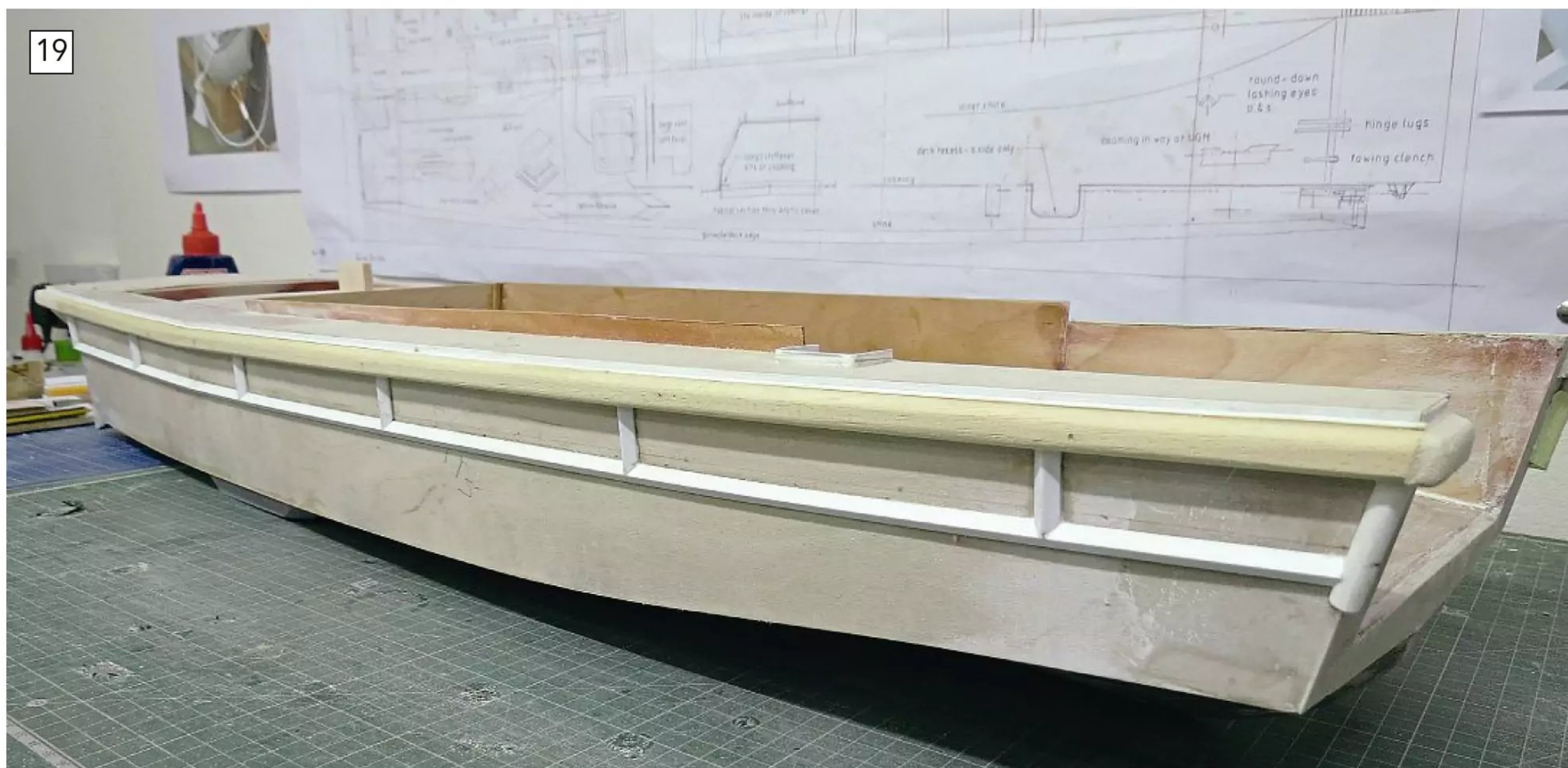
The function of each servo identified.



The linkage connections to both bucket and nozzle.

Right: Fixing the Evergreen V-form section to the side of the hull below the D section fender.





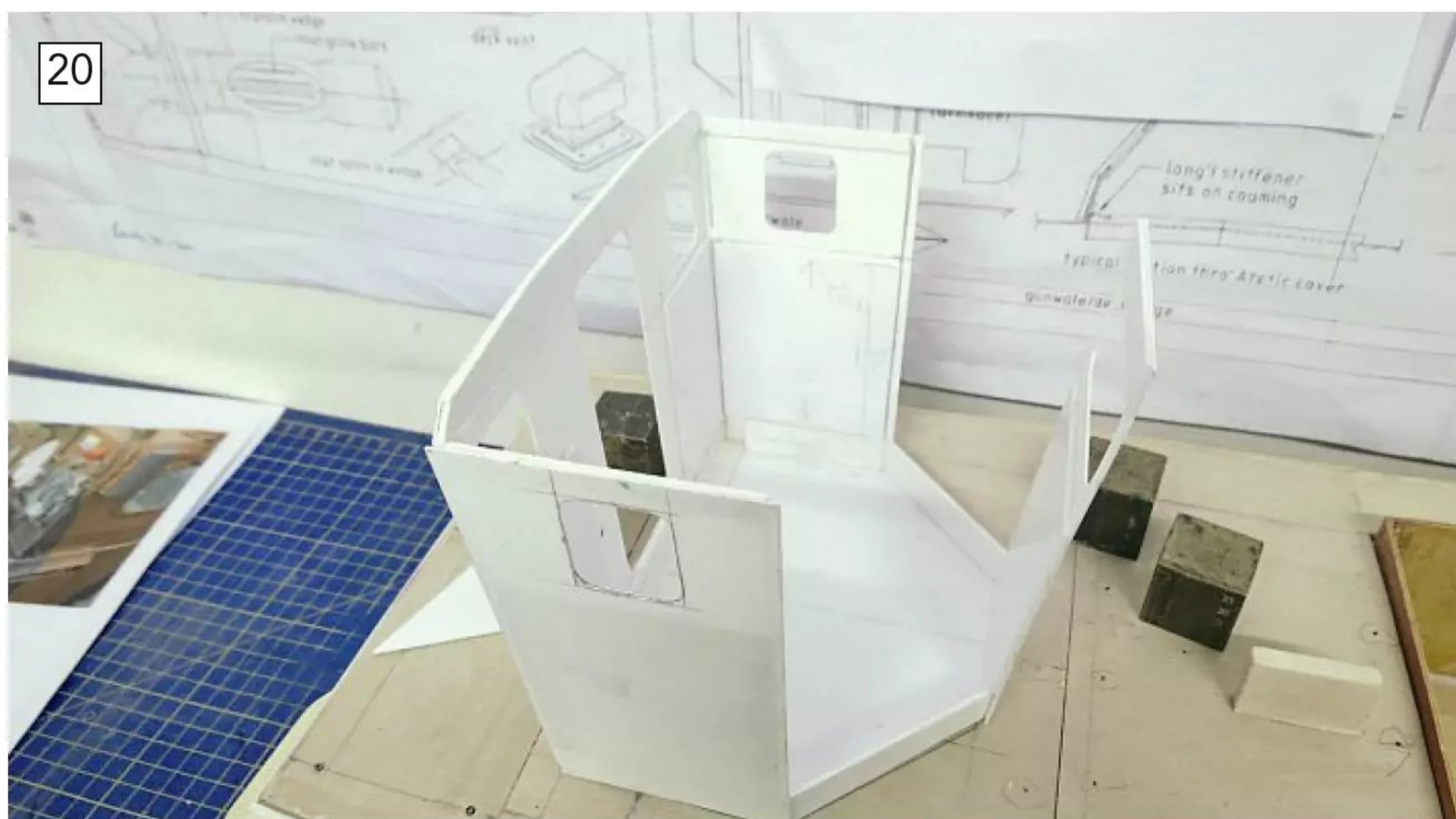
Both D-section fender and V-form section fully fitted.

Gunwale D section fender and hull side V section

The gunwale D section is fitted along the top edge of the hull and follows the gunwale from the transom overhang right forward to the ramp. The chosen material was box section hard balsa, which is both easy to form into a D section and to conform to the sheer of the hull. The D section can be prepared prior to fixing to the gunwale or formed in situ. Beneath the D section and fixed to the entire length of the hull port and starboard is an Evergreen V form section in both the horizontal and vertical (see **Photos 18 and 19**).

Wheelhouse

At this stage, as the wheelhouse windows would be glazed and the interior fitted out, I made sure the roof was firm, but not fixed. Essentially, I formed the wheelhouse from 1.5mm styrene sheet, with each of the six sections lifted from the drawing, five of which sloped slightly outward, with the after section upright. The wheelhouse was fixed onto the after access panel, giving access to the jet drives (see **Photos 20-22**).

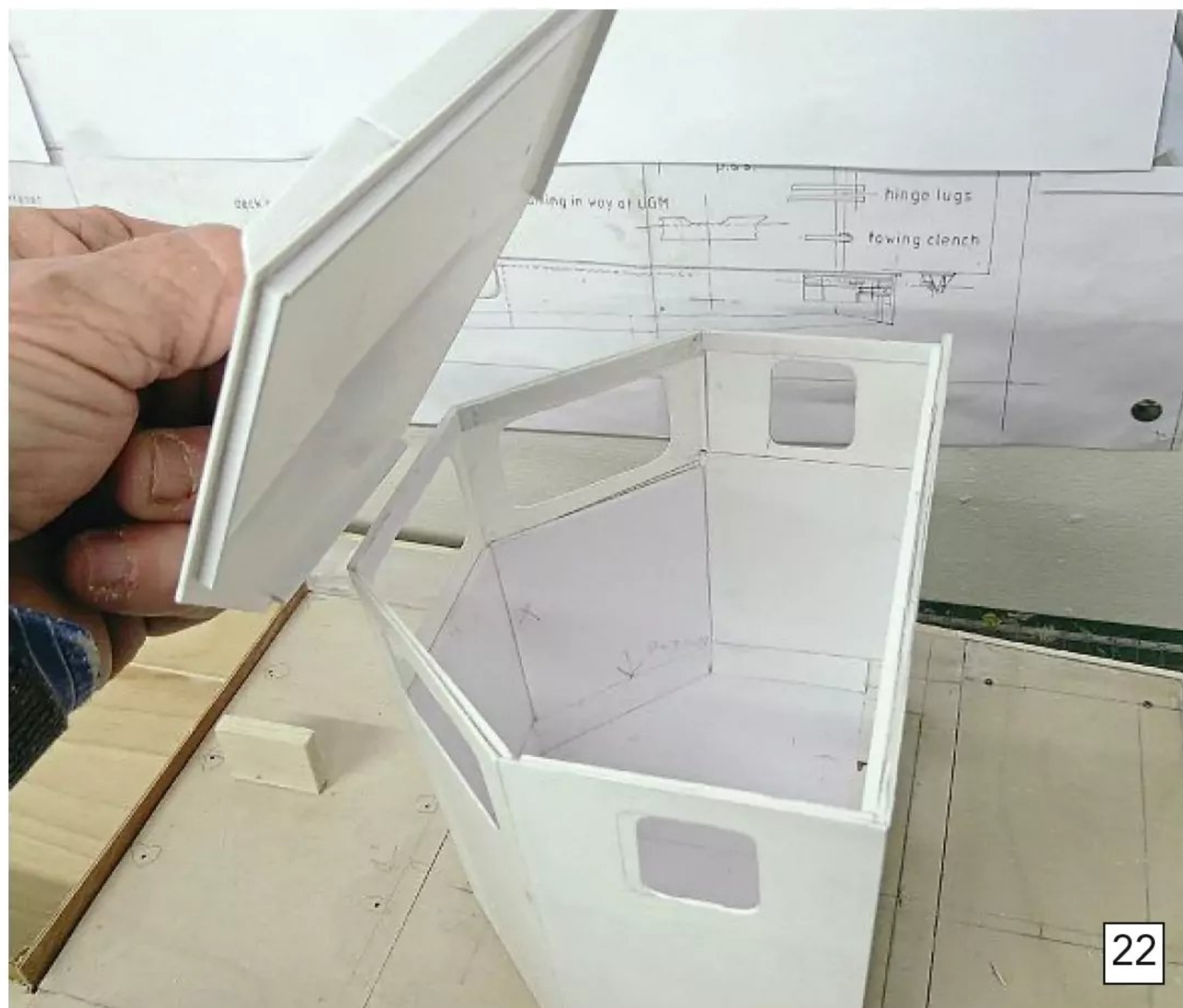


Commencing assembly of the six-sided wheelhouse.

Right: As the inside is to be detailed, the roof will remain detachable.

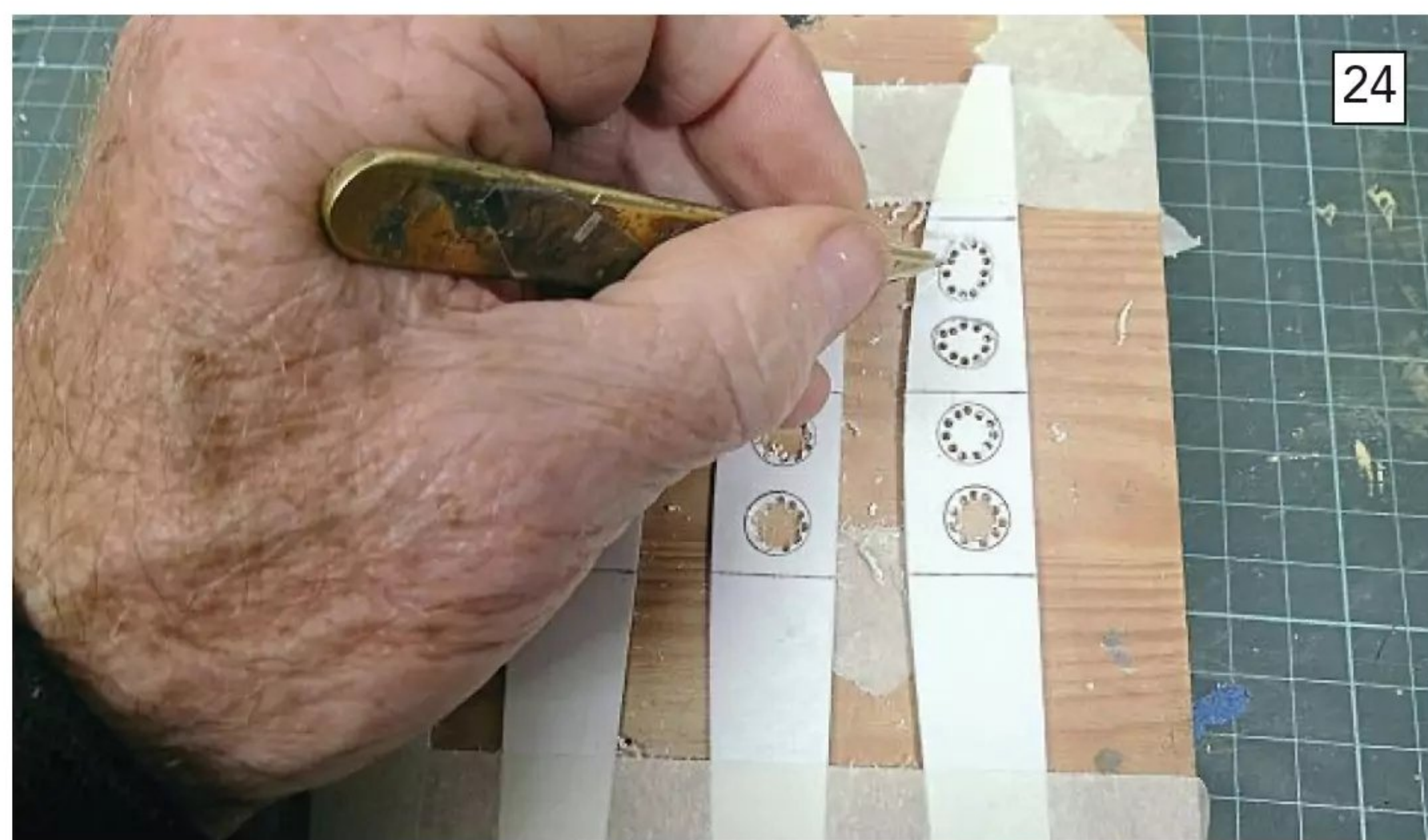


Forming the curved roof of the wheelhouse.

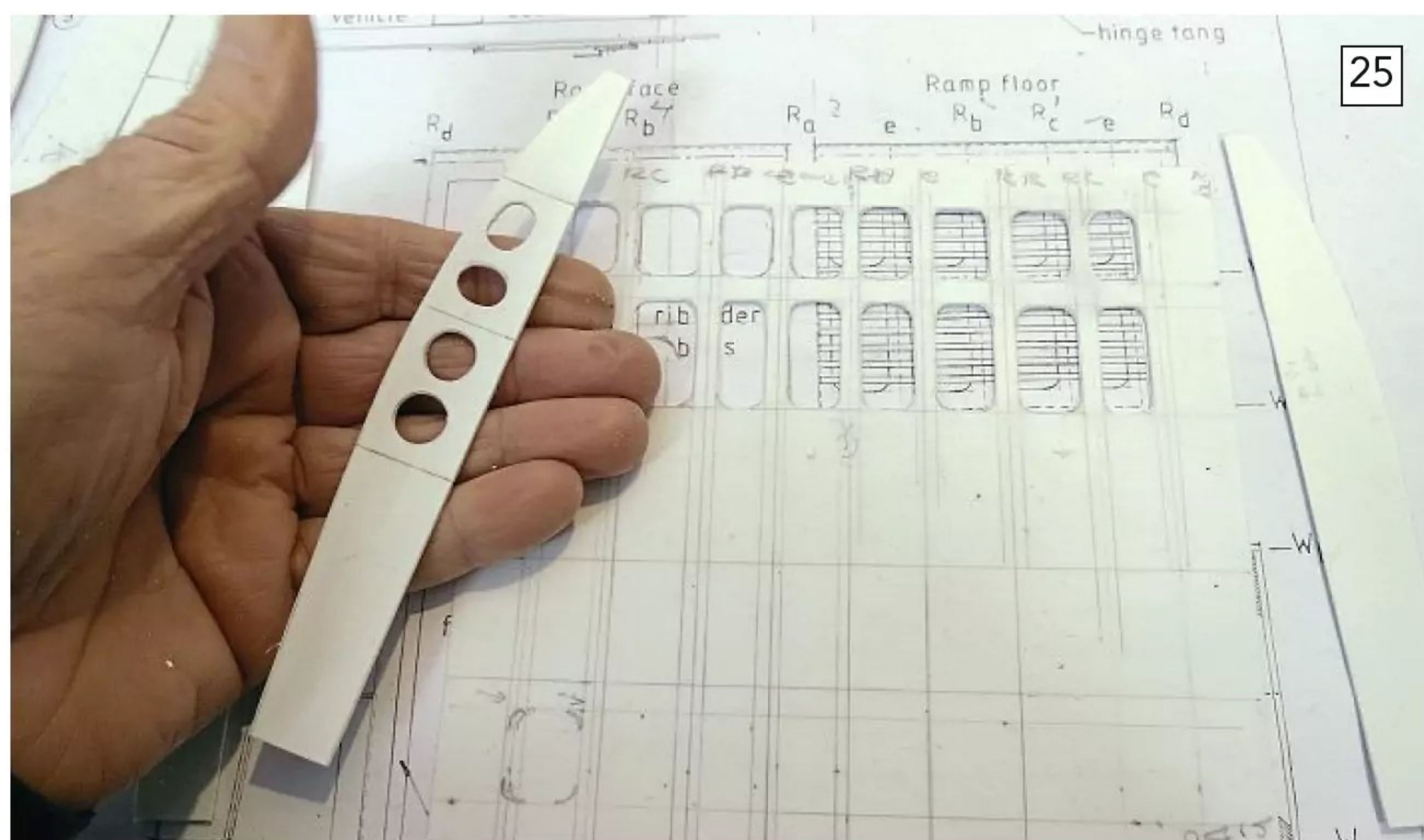




Honeycombed and light, the ramp as fitted to the LCVP 5.



Removing a rounded and an oval section from the ramp ribs.

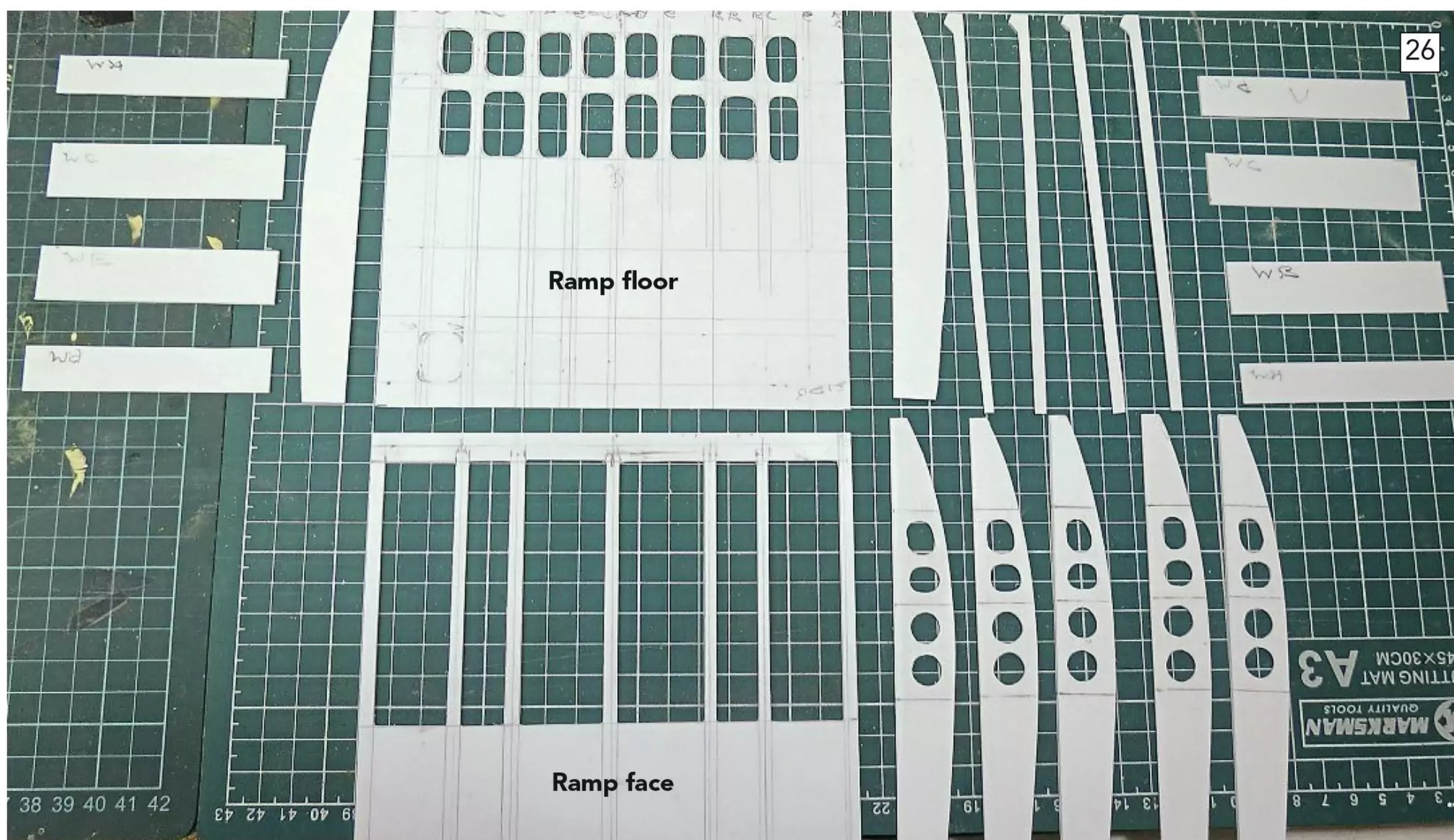


A prepared ramp rib.

Forward ramp

The construction of the ramp was complex but not difficult, as the drawing covering this part of the model is comprehensive. It's essentially a series of honeycomb sections, following the design purpose of the full size LCVP to be both light and very strong (see **Photo 23**). Carefully referencing the drawing, each of the 7 ramp ribs were cut to size, five having sections removed (see **Photo 24** and **25**). Using 1.4mm styrene, the ramp floor and face were cut to size, along with preparation of the ramp webs (see **Photos 26** and **27**).

Having prepared all the component parts of the ramp, assembly could now begin, starting with locating the ramp ribs to the ramp floor, followed by the fixing of the ramp webs. Then, with all the frames in place, the ramp face was fixed into position (see **Photo 28**).

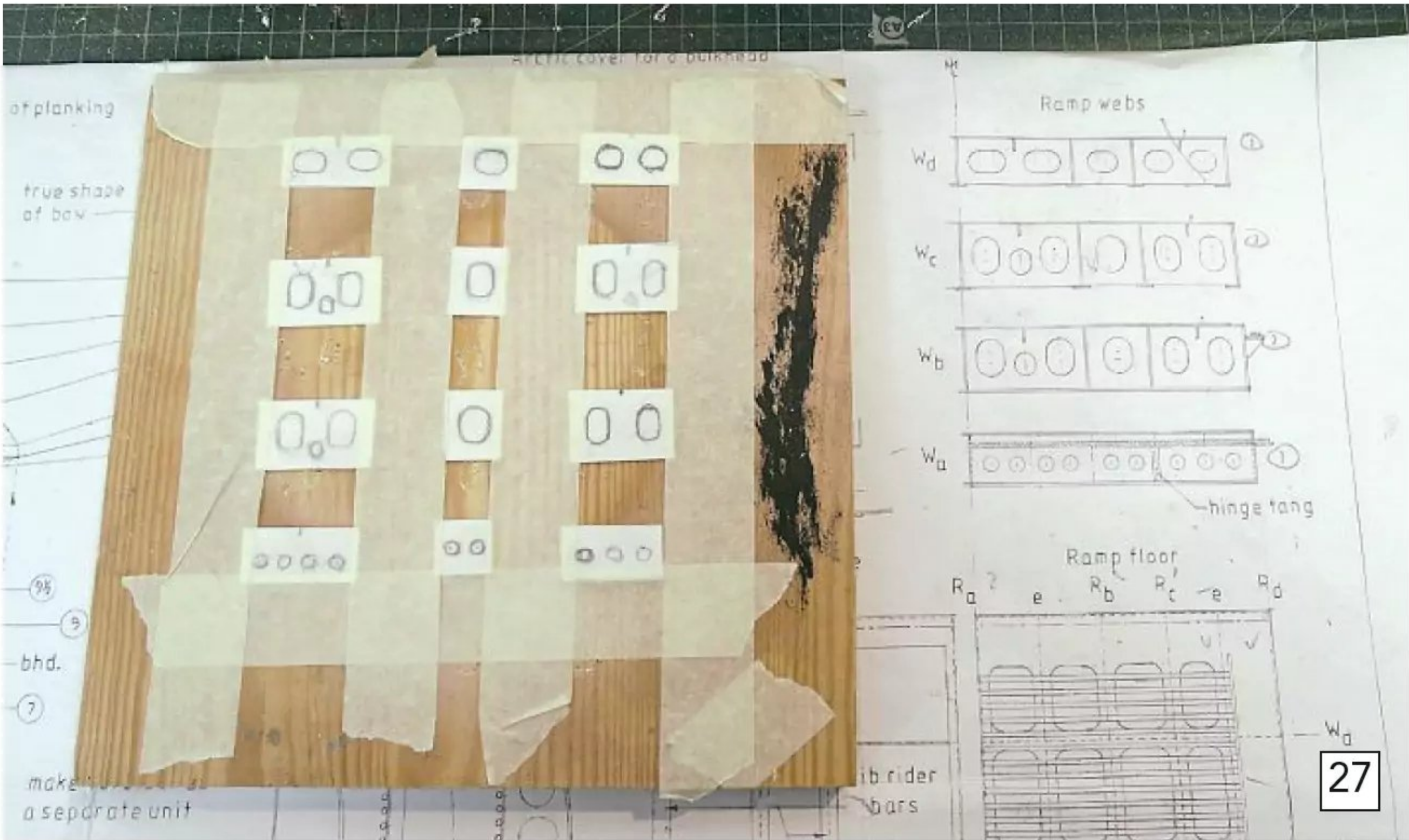


Each of the prepared parts that form the ramp.

Using a spacer, each of the twelve 1mm thick brass bars were fixed to the inboard surface of the ramp floor (see **Photo 29**). Beneath the bars were located eleven treads formed from 1mm Evergreen box section (see **Photo 30**). All that remained was to secure around the bottom and sides sections that would form the seal against the front of the opening (see **Photo 31**).

Arctic cover

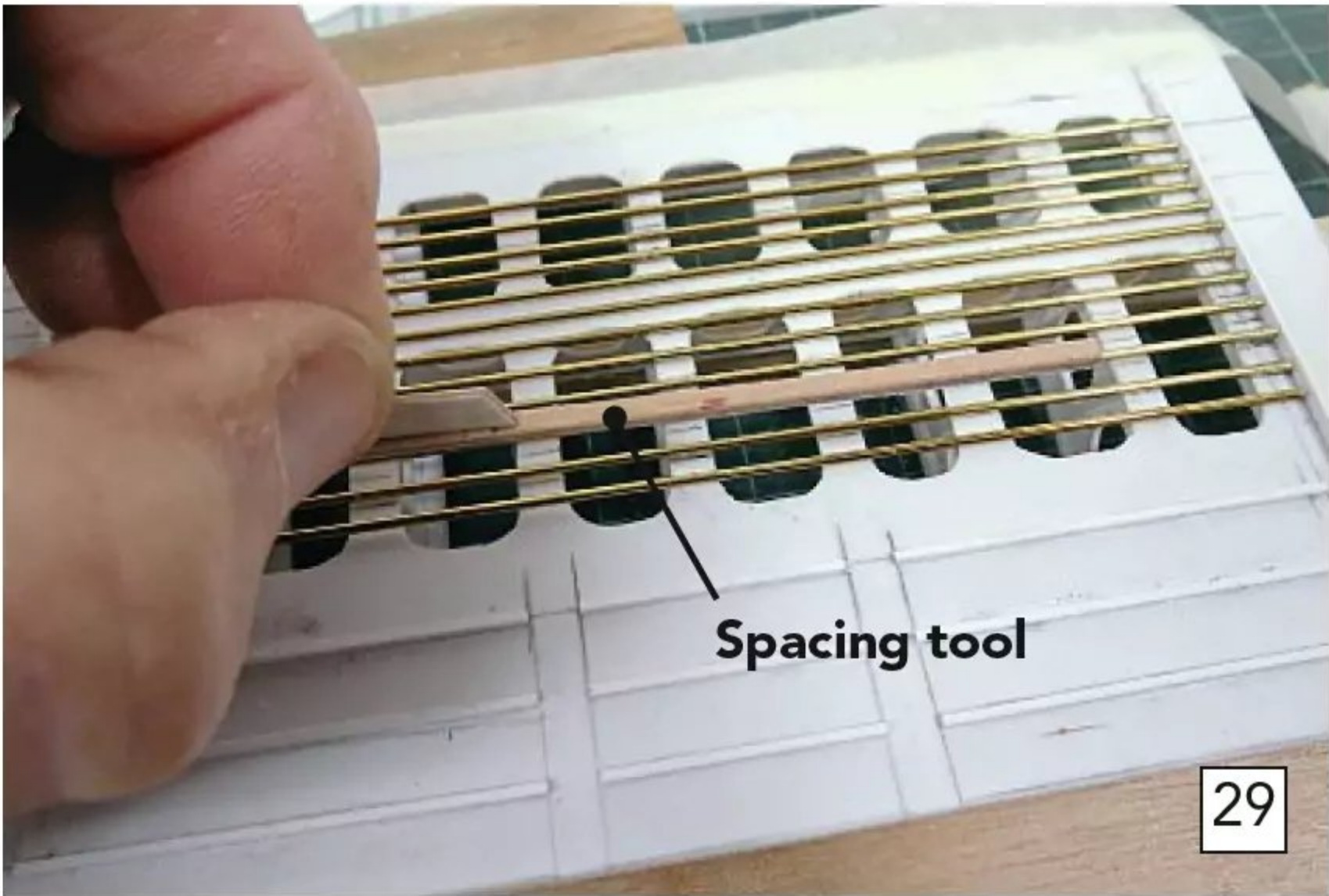
Situated over the vehicle deck of the full size LCVP Mk.5 are the six segments of the arctic cover. Each of these segments is made from GRP and can detach and stack back aft (see **Photo 32**).



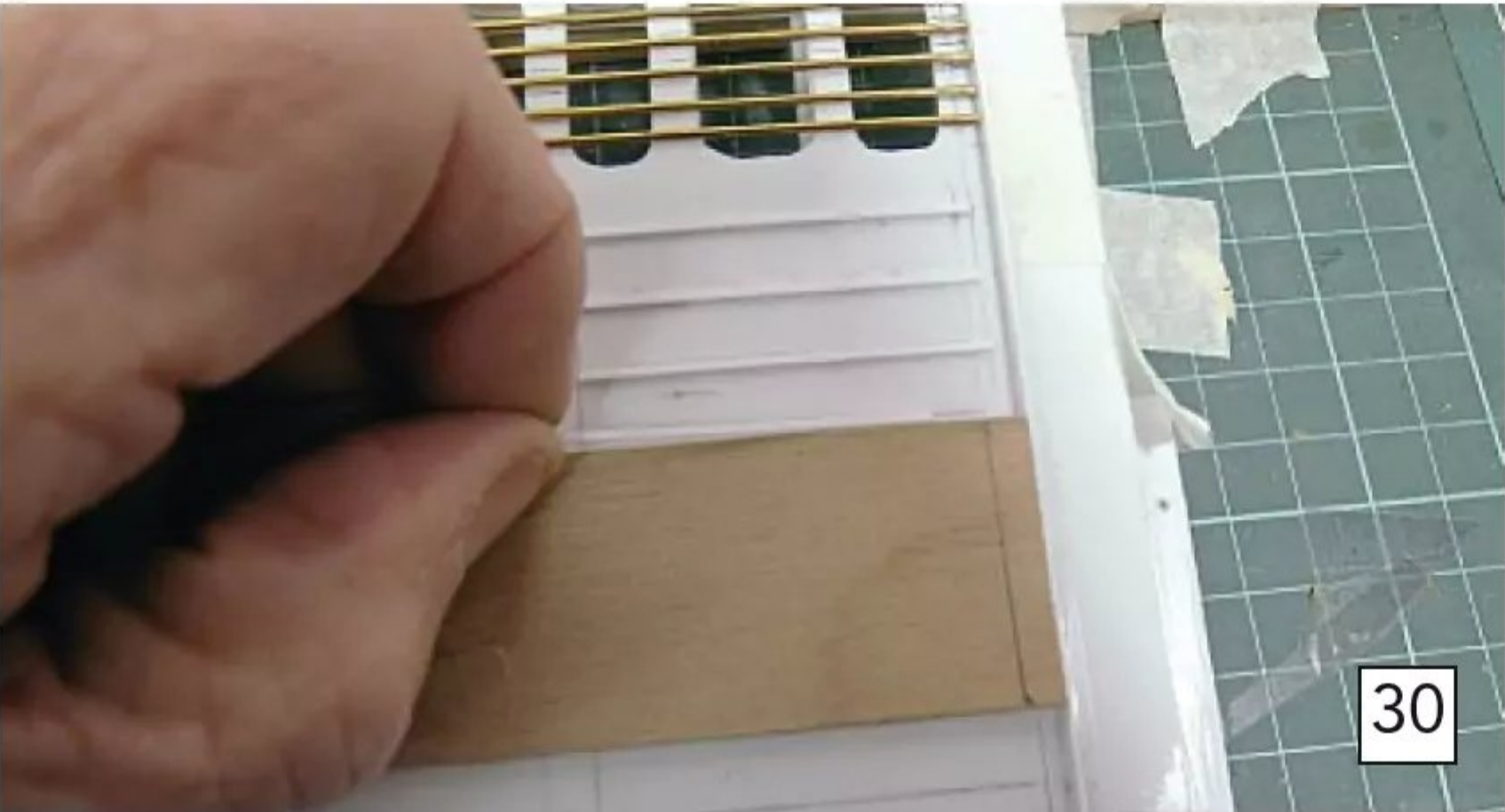
Preparing the ramp webs.



All the ribs and webs in place on the ramp floor.



With the ramp face in place, each of the brass rods are equally spaced, as per the drawing, across the ramp floor.



Strips of Evergreen section are evenly spaced across the ramp floor.



The completed ramp temporarily fitted.



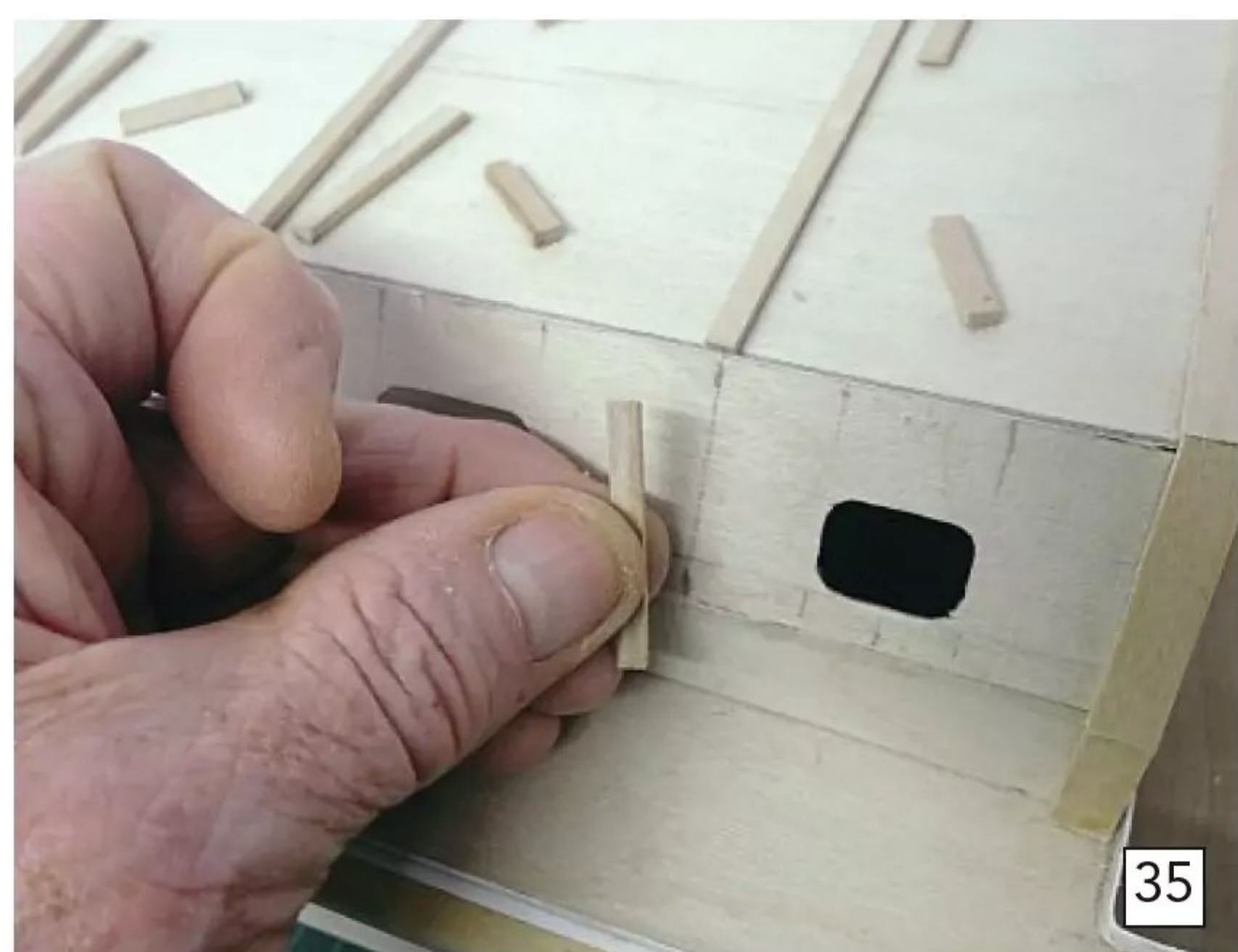
The arctic cover on an LCVP Mk 5 aboard HMS Albion looking aft.



Forming a one-piece arctic cover to fit over the vehicle deck.



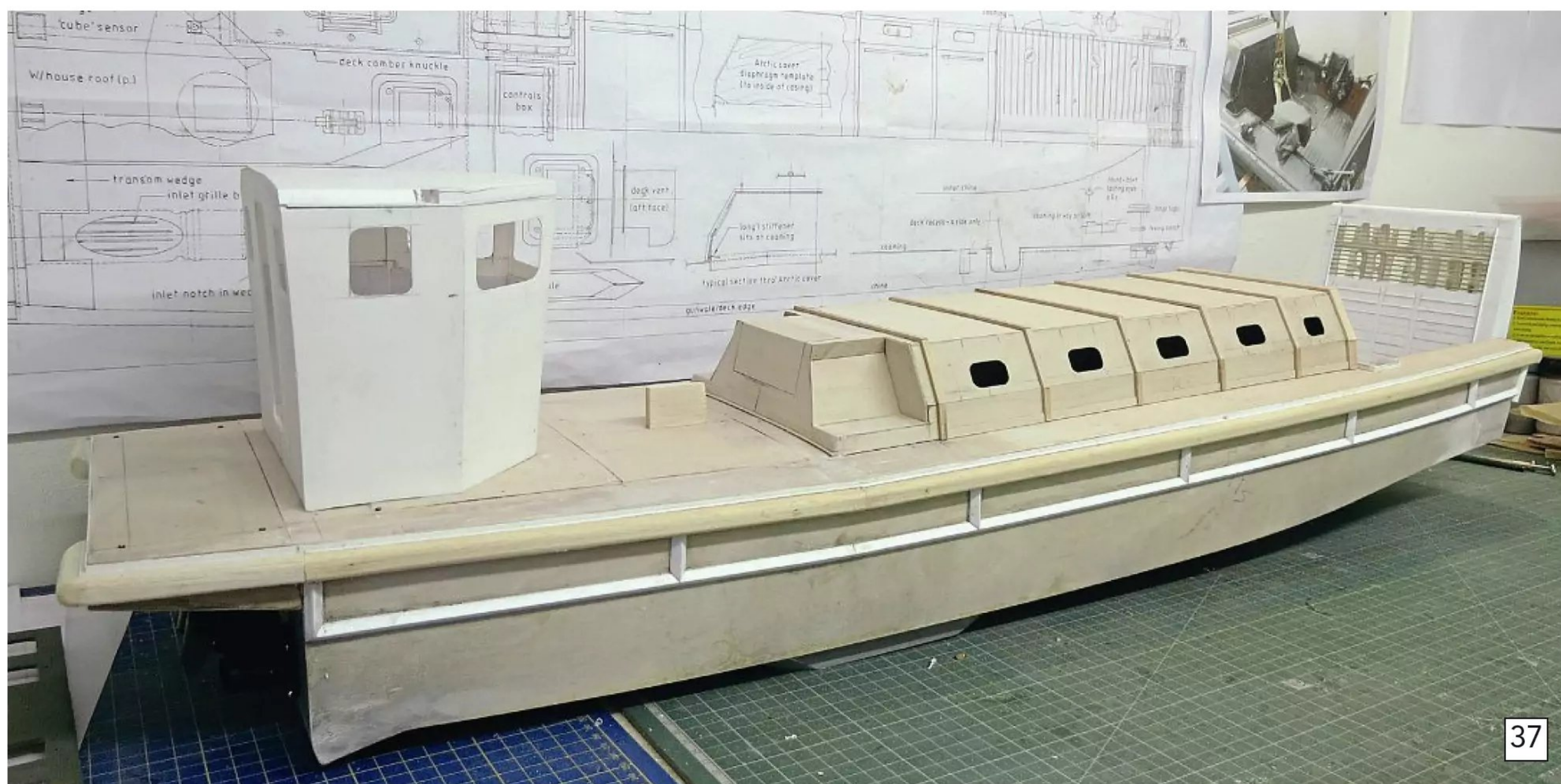
Cladding the arctic cover with .50mm marine ply and forming what will become the control box, as per the drawing.



Timber strips forming the ribs that separate each section the arctic cover.



Preparing the arctic cover forward bulkhead with door openings.



Construction thus far, denoting the various openings into the hull spaces.

For this build, the entire cover is constructed as one. I used 2mm marine ply fore and aft, with stringers linking each end (see **Photo 33**). The top and sides I constructed from 1mm marine ply. The after end houses a hatch, which will be used for access to the power switches (see **Photo 34**).

Rounding up Part 1, illustrated are the 5mm x 2mm timber strips over each segment of the arctic cover (see **Photo 35**) and the styrene door openings forward of the cover (see **Photo 36**), plus an overview of the progress thus far (see **Photo 37**). Note that the overhang aft of the transom should

remain detachable for access to the nozzles and bucket linkages at this stage.

Next month

Part 2 will cover fitting out, airbrushing and on the water trials. ●

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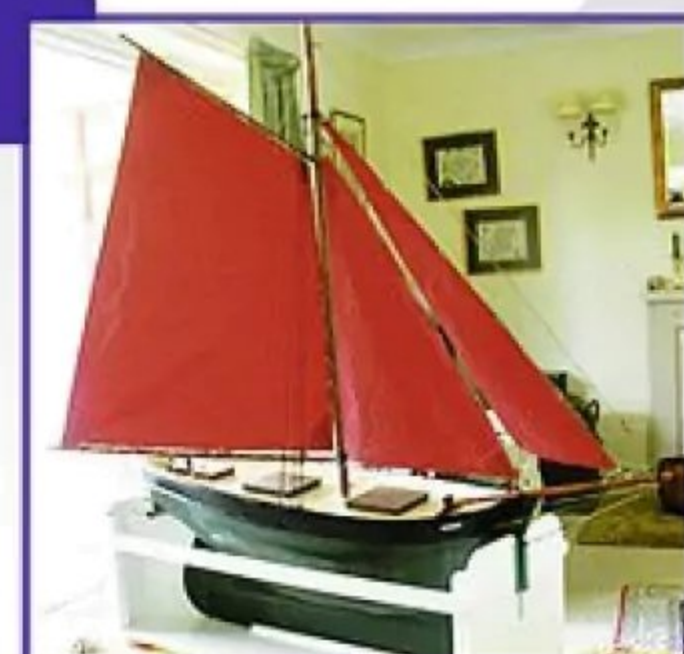
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Food for thought: a charming but rather poignant scratch-built diorama exhibited under the title 'War and Peace'.

SCALE MODEL WORLD 2023

Dave Wooley reports back from this spectacular show

Organised by the IPMS (International Plastic Modellers Society) UK, Scale Model World is the largest event of its kind in Europe. The two-day (November 9/10) 2023 event was, as it has been in previous years, held in the three large halls of the Telford International Conference Centre, which is in the centre of Telford and very easy to get from the M54 and a host of other main A roads.

As its organiser's name suggests, the show's original aim was to promote injection and resin moulded static modelling but, while that remain its core purpose, it has over the years evolved to also embrace models that are radio-controlled or have R/C potential. For those that like statistics, and to give some indication of just how big this annual show has become, this year an impressive 107 UK clubs, 98 SIGs (Special Interest Groups), 30 overseas clubs and 109 traders, many from overseas, exhibited.

Indeed, it's such a spectacular event that I am going to let my photos do the talking, as I believe they'll convey far better than words why the 2024 Scale Model World show should be on your 'must visit' list. Enjoy! ●



Don McKeand's super cool polar research icebreaker HMS Protector II demonstrates the art of packing in detail even while modelling at the diminutive scale of 1:700.

HMS Protector II
A scratch-built polar research icebreaker bows into the Arctic as an Ice Patr...



Left and above: Barry Sharman's 1:72 scale Flower class corvette HMCS Agassiz, cleverly designed and constructed to afford views of the internal fittings in the engine room, boiler room and radio room.



This airbrushing technique demonstration was one of many trade 'show and tell's.



Oozing character and detail was Austrian modeller Rene Hieonimus's 1:50 scale model of the USN fleet tug AFT 88 Warragansett.



For those wishing to pursue a career in model making, the Arts University Bournemouth provide a BA (Honours) degree course.



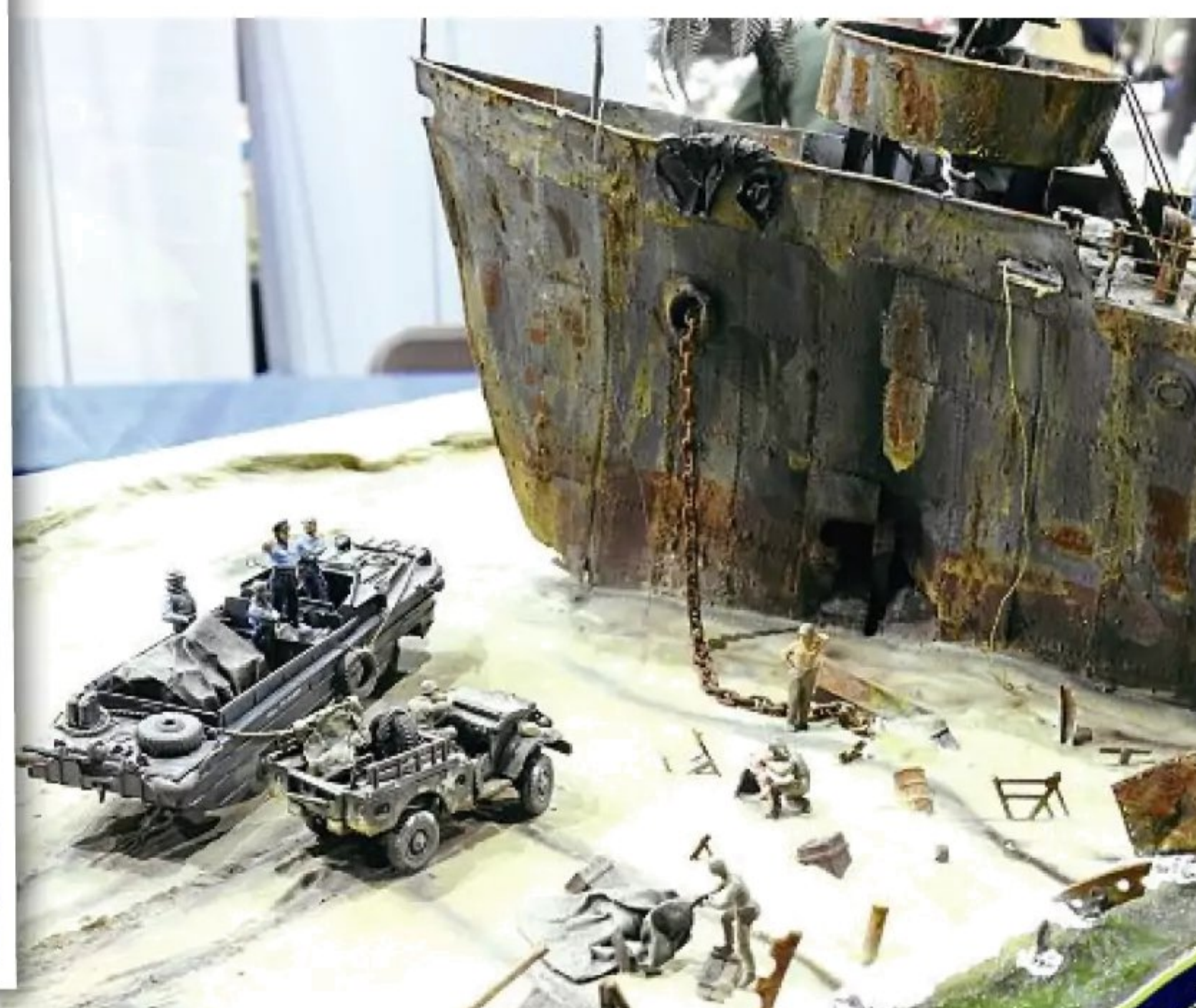
The 1:350 scale Higgins LCV from Italian modeller Danilo Marchino



Just a small section of the magnificent D-Day diorama built and displayed by Barry Sharman.



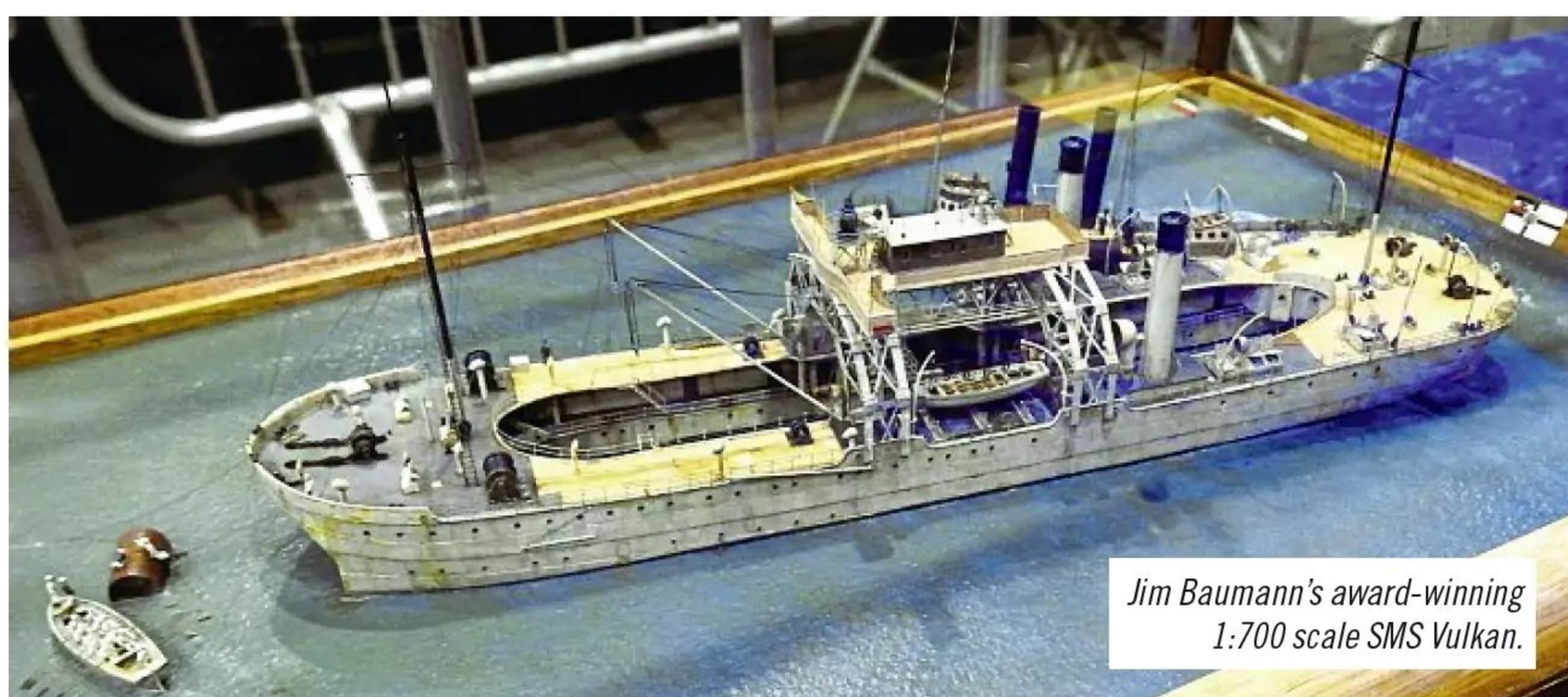
Achieving a gold award for Jim Baumann at this year's show, the 1:700 scale side wheel paddler PS Lorna Doone.



Check out the fabulous rust effect achieved on the vessel featured in this diorama entitled Remains of Empire.



A large scale (1:72) model of the USS Seaview (note the incorporated flying submarine) from the 1960s' TV series Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea.



Jim Baumann's award-winning 1:700 scale SMS Vulkan.



Spotted and admired by Dave (and no doubt many others) in the competition enclosure was this weathered and superbly camouflaged 1:72 Flower class corvette.



Above: Another gold award competition winner was this simple but beautifully scratch built 1:24 scale Danish rod and line fishing boat, entered under the title 'Pram from Vorupor' by Stephen Newton.



Left: An unusual subject choice was this model of the USS Langley (the USN's first aircraft carrier) with float planes, which captures the vessel prior to having been fitted with a full flight deck.



The Dorset Print Man stand had a fully 3D-printed 1:200 scale Queen Elizabeth aircraft carrier, suitable for R/C conversion/operation, on display.



Kit manufacturer Trumpeter shows off its 1:200 scale Titanic kit.



A superb 1:350 scale competition build of the USS Saratoga from Czech modeller Petr Kopic.



A silver medal was awarded to this 1:700 scale 1910 Dutch tug, Mannzee, built from scratch.



Left: Ian McGonagle's Vosper MTB competition entry.



Above: Being promoted on the Italieri stand was the company's magnificent new 1:35 scale WW2 Kriegsmarine S-boat kit, ideal for R/C conversion.



Left: Featured on general display was this highly detailed 1:48 scale model of the Admiralty rescue tug HMS Buccaneer W49 by Barry Sharman..

PLANS FOR CHRISTMAS

John Parker takes a nostalgic look back at the 1950s' and '60s' free plans designed to add extra festive cheer

It was not unusual for a magazine publisher to produce an enlarged December/Christmas issue, but in 1958 *Model Maker* went one step further and offered a free plan to mark its 'Bumper Christmas Issue'. The cost was an extra sixpence, a 25% impost on the normal two-shilling price, so perhaps the 'free' plan wasn't really free, but it was reckoned to be worth eight shillings and sixpence and definitely provided a good return for the sixpence premium. The editorial was quick to point out that this was for the enlarged copy only and not a permanent increase.

December 1958 issue

The subject chosen for the first plan was Vosper's Rescue and Target Towing Launch, then suffering from delays in the supply of its Rolls-Royce Sea Griffon engines and having to make do with Napier Sea Lions in the interim, with which it could only manage 24 knots. It wasn't until 1959 that the Sea Griffons could be retrofitted to make the RTTL, the flagship of the RAF with its top speed of 38 knots. It was an inspired choice for a model, being a topical and handsome fast patrol craft that could be built without much difficulty. The plan was to 1:24 scale and made a 34-inch (864mm) model. (And could I make a plea at this point for the return of my plan if the 'borrower' happens to be reading this? The lack of it has quite spoilt the layout!).

December 1959 issue

Encouraged by the ready acceptance of its 1958 Christmas free plan, *Model Maker* continued the idea the following Christmas. Vic Smeed had ascended to the editor's chair from assistant editor by this time and he designed a fine model of the Thames tug *Cervia* with the co-operation of the owners, William Watkins Limited, and regular contributor on maritime matters Arthur Pollard. The double-sided plan produced a 28-inch (711mm) long 1:48 scale model with a bread-and-butter (laminated) hull. The January 1960 issue followed this up with further notes on construction and a photographic survey of the full-size *Cervia*'s details.

Tugs were, of course, a popular choice of model, and the *Cervia* was no exception. This, however, was no plan for beginners, requiring skill in shaping the hull properly and

"It was an inspired choice for a model"



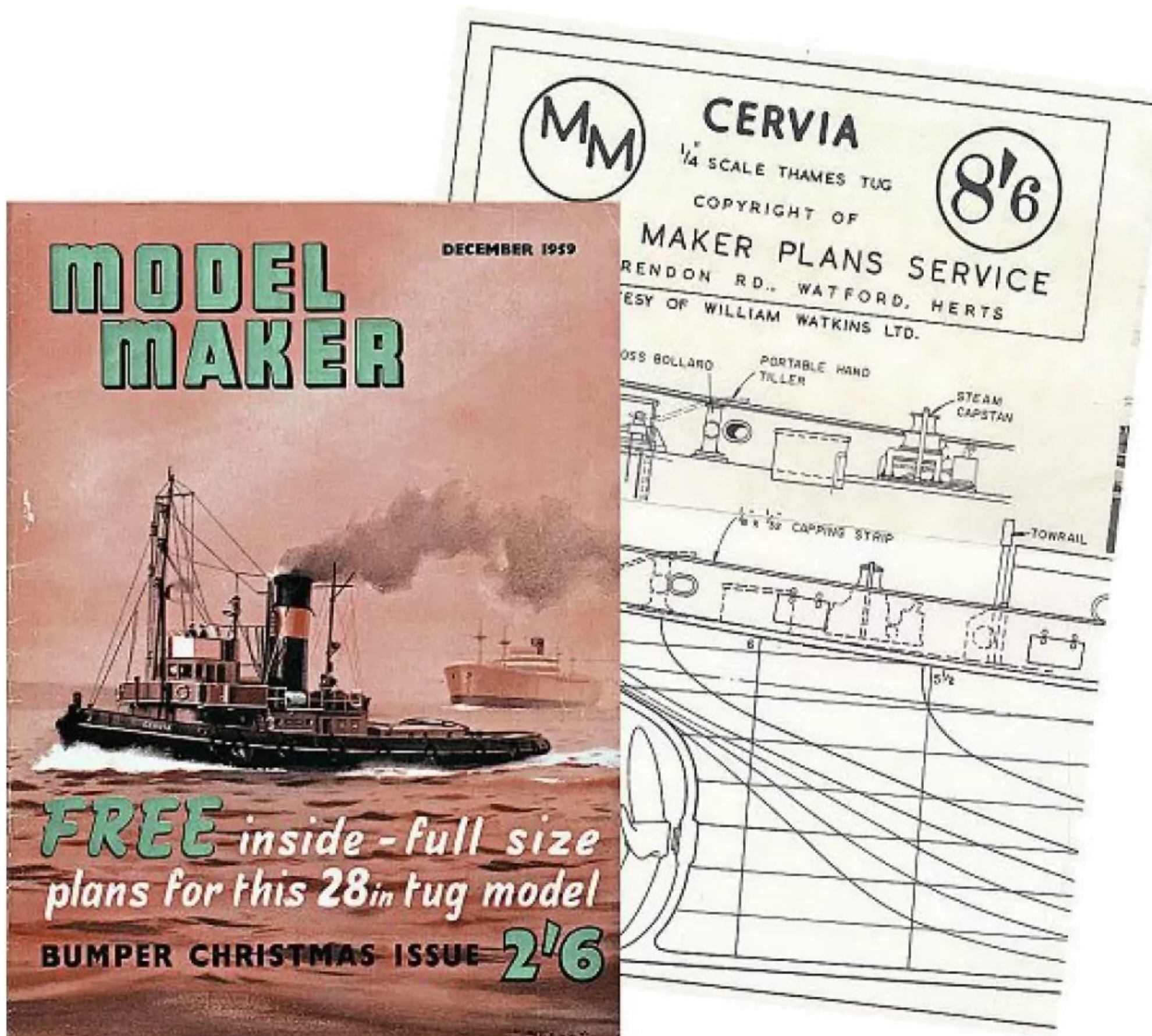
The December 1958 issue of *Model Maker*.

patience in making the many small details shown. The real vessel had a 1,000 HP steam engine and was to go on to become the last serving sea-going steam tug in the UK. Alas, its days now seem numbered, as it needs expensive restoration work on its hull.

December 1960 issue

December 1960's free plan was to prove very influential in the development of fast model boats. Named *Piranha*, this was described

as a 28-inch (711mm) freelance express cruiser that could be built with a simple sheeted-in hull or with a more advanced hull diagonally planked in two or three layers. It incorporated all of Vic Smeed's then current thinking in such matters as length/beam ratio, thrust line, planing area, spray strips and so on, which was to be proven by the great success the design had in speed and steering events. Indeed, the influence of the *Piranha* is evident in many subsequent designs.



The December 1959 issue of Model Maker.



The December 1960 issue of Model Maker.

“December 1960’s free plan was to prove very influential in the development of fast model boats”

December 1961 issue

A dramatic cover by artist Laurie Bagley foreshadowed the free plan that was included with December 1961’s issue for a German ‘E’ boat, or more properly ‘S’ boat. The ‘S-boat’ designation stemmed from the German *schnellboot*, or high-speed boat, while the more commonly used ‘E-boat’ designation may have been derived from reports of ‘e. boats’ being sighted, i.e., enemy boats, as mentioned in Vic’s introduction to his plan.

The S-boat was a round-bilge design, unusually for an MTB, and the plan calls for a form of hybrid construction, with a bread-and-butter lower hull and planked sides, all in balsa. A scale of 3/8" to the foot, or 1:32, gives a 35-inch (890mm) long model with a 5.5-inch (140mm) beam. For powering, a 1 to 1.5cc diesel was recommended, or one or two electric motors with the Graupner Nautocraft mentioned if sticking with a single shaft. A fairly comprehensive array of fittings is detailed on the plan, but it is noted that some are conjectural as there was limited information available at the time.

In his editorial Vic notes that in its eleventh year *Model Maker* was attracting a greater readership that now came from 81 countries; he acknowledges the progress made with radio control but warns that “craftsmanship and ambition need encouraging in this television age; these plus ingenuity and curiosity brought us out of the Stone Age, and they are more than ever needed today”. Still true, I think.

December 1962 issue

A freelance design, *Slalome*, described as a missile launch, was the offering in 1962. Intended for fast free-running or radio control steering competitions, this 31-inch craft of ply construction was for a diesel engine of 1.5-2.5 cc or large electric such as the Hectoperm. A conventional cabin could be readily substituted for the missile armament shown, and the hull was designed for good handling rather than out-and-out speed.

PIRANA

A 28 in. express cruiser for up to 2½ c.c. or medium size electric motors; two hulls, simple or advanced.

by Vic Smeed



The introduction to the Piranha article.



Piranha with modified cabin, built by S. Day in the 1970s and still performing today.

"This balsa and ply model, approximately 24 inches (610mm) long, made an unusual and attractive subject"

December 1963 issue

R.A. Sweet, who contributed the 'Marine Miniatures' features for *Model Maker*, came up with 1963's plan, *Whale Catcher*. This balsa and ply model, approximately 24 inches (610mm) long, made an unusual and attractive subject, as captured well by artist Laurie Bagley on the cover. Construction is plank on frame in balsa, with some ply used on the superstructure. No construction details are given for the 250mm long 80-foot blue whale that accompanies the model – presumably it has a thick skin over closely-spaced ribs! This makes the model about 1:96 scale by my reckoning.

December 1964 issue

Another of Vic Smeed's designs for a competition steering boat, *Remora*, was a 30-inch (762mm) ply over balsa craft for up to 3.5 cc engines or Taycol Standard, Marx Hectoperm or similar motors. It represented a more conventionally handling, if slightly slower, design to the preceding *Piranha*. The inset feature on the windscreen appeared on the prototype model but is not shown on the plan – this was an experimental cooling inlet for the i.c. engine.



The December 1961 issue of *Model Maker and Model Cars*.



The December 1962 issue of *Model Maker and Model Cars*.



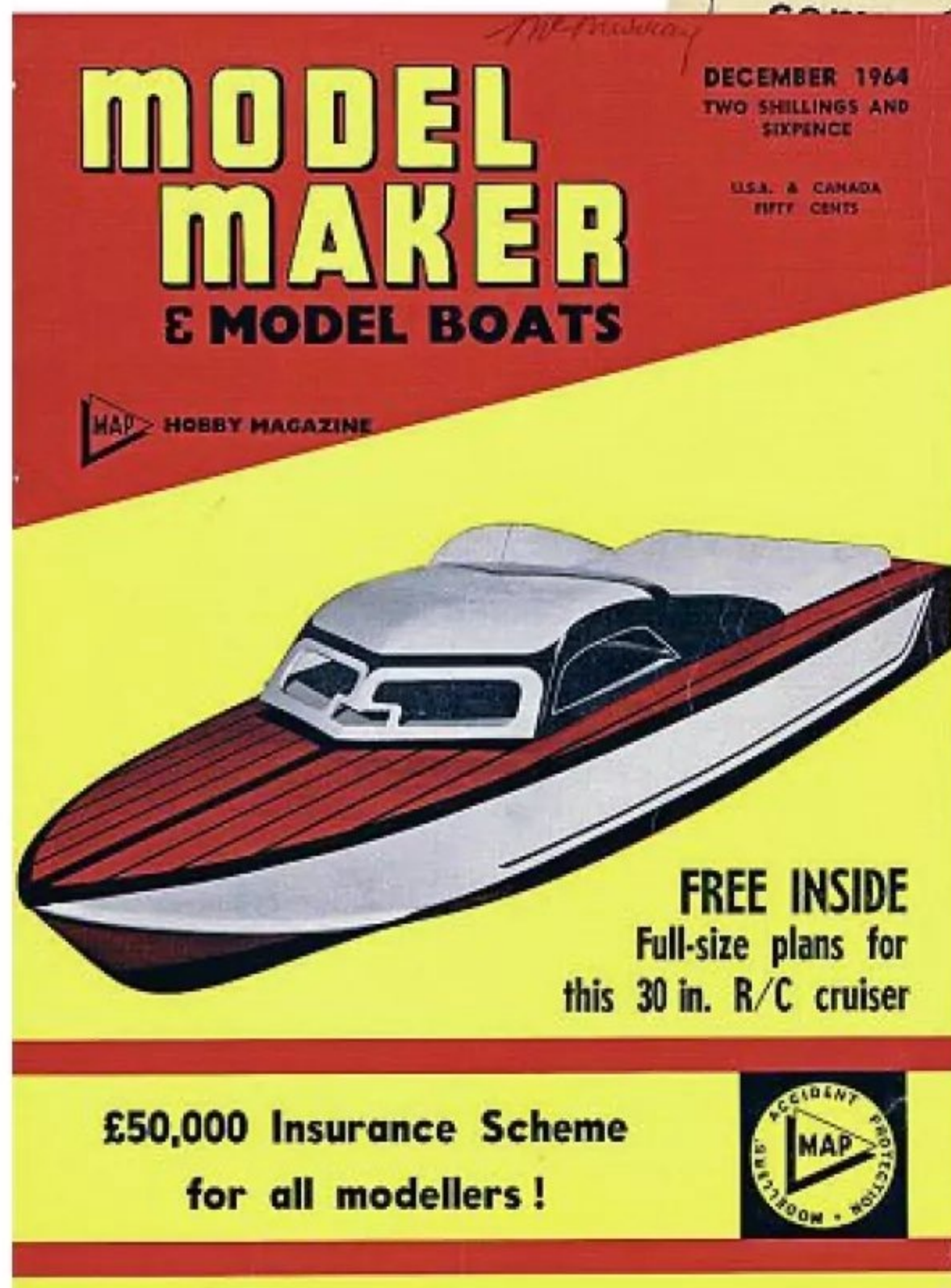
The December 1963 issue of *Model Maker and Model Cars*.

1965 and 1966 December issues

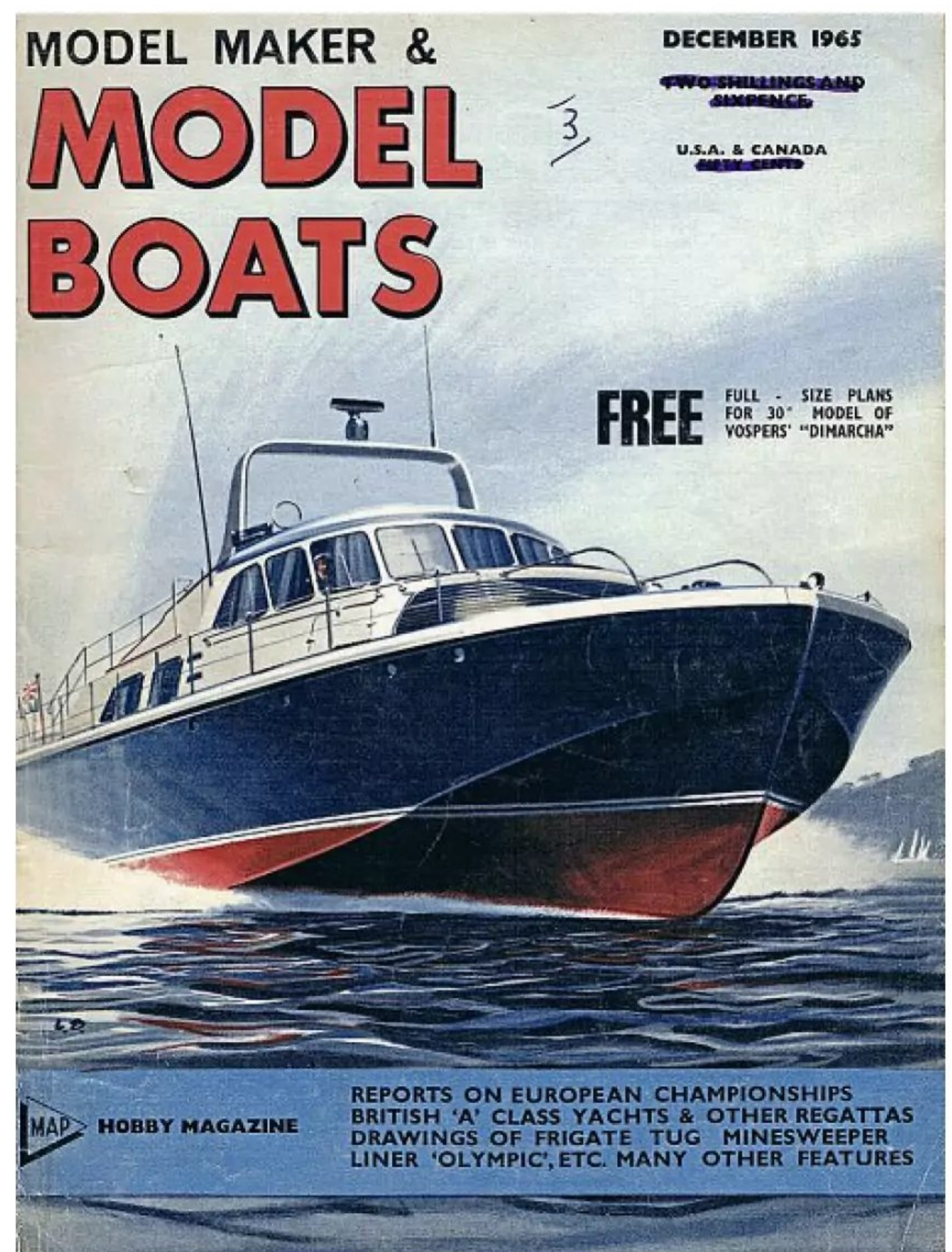
The Christmas free plan was by now a well-established tradition and no longer came at a price premium, though inflation had pushed the price of a standard issue up to two shillings and sixpence. The evolution of *Model Maker* into *Model Boats* via *Model Maker* and *Model Cars* and *Model Maker* and *Model Boats* had been underway for some time and the April 1966 issue was the first to be labelled just *Model Boats* on the cover.

In December 1965 the free plan was for *Dimarcha*, a 30-inch (762mm) scale model of the 60-foot Vosper motor yacht.

The December 1964 issue of Model Maker and Model Boats.



"There must have been thousands of models built to this design, which remains popular to this day"



The December 1965 issue of Model Maker and Model Boats.

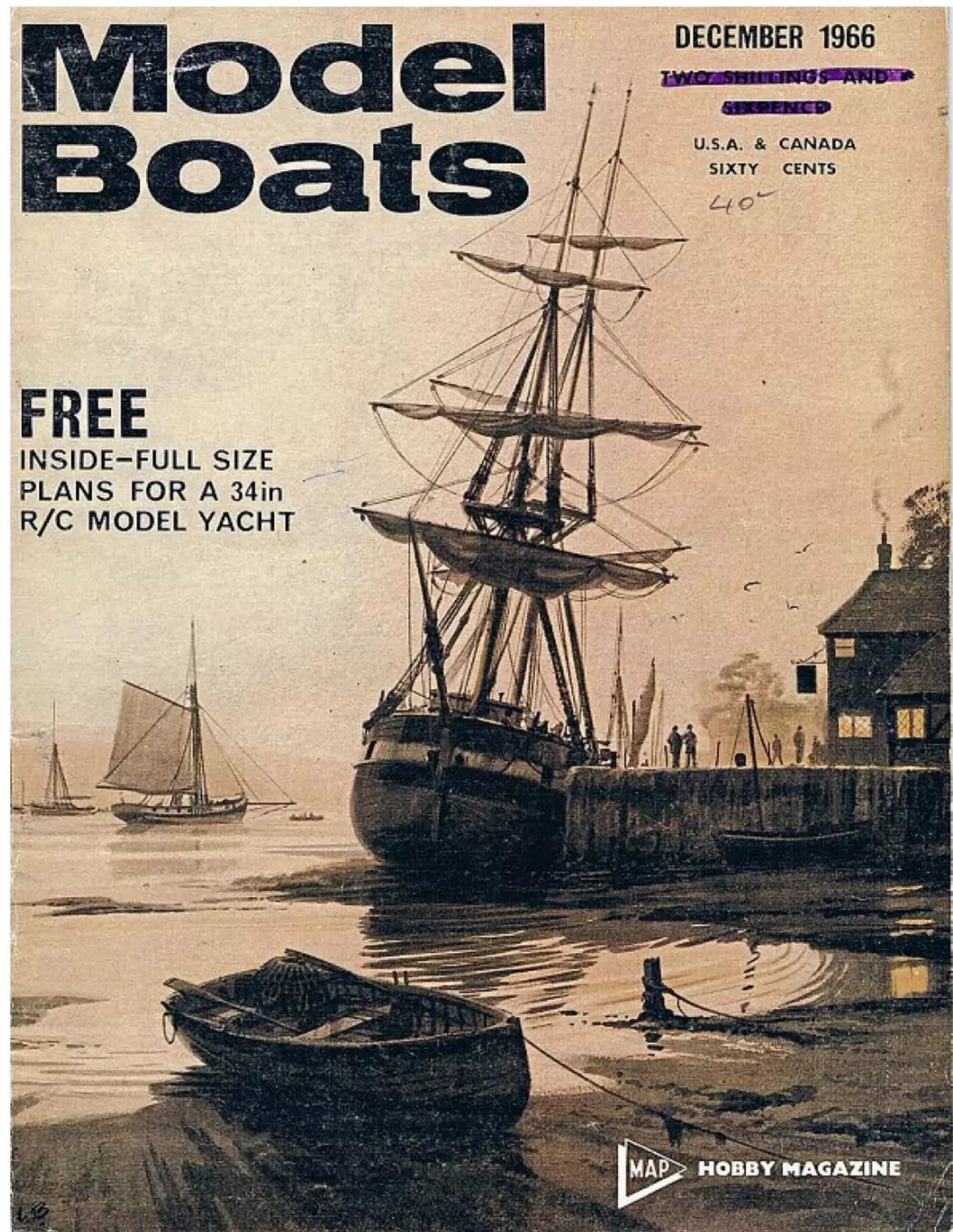


The introduction to the Starlet article.

Right: December 1966 Model Boats.

December 1966 came with a plan for the 34-inch (864mm) Starlet, a yacht designed by Vic Smeed to support the magazine's 'Boating for Beginners' series. There must have been thousands of models built to this design, which remains popular to this day; as an easy-build chined-hull cabin yacht well suited to radio control, it takes some beating. It is a design I have recommended to complete beginners with every success.

Today a free plan is a more frequent inclusion, and a very welcome one to most readers, but inevitably it has lost some of the unique appeal of the original Model Maker free plans, which tempted so many modellers into giving it a go, many for the first time, and from which so many models were made worldwide, some still operational today, 60 years on. Most of plans mentioned are still available from Sarik Hobbies: MM530 Vosper RTTL; MM567 Cervia; MM620 Piranha; MM667 E Boat; MM718 Slalome; MM836 Dimarcha; MM1048 Starlet. The exceptions are MM812 Remora and the Whale Catcher (no number). ●



BOILER ROOM

Richard Simpson compares pressurised liquid burners with gas burners

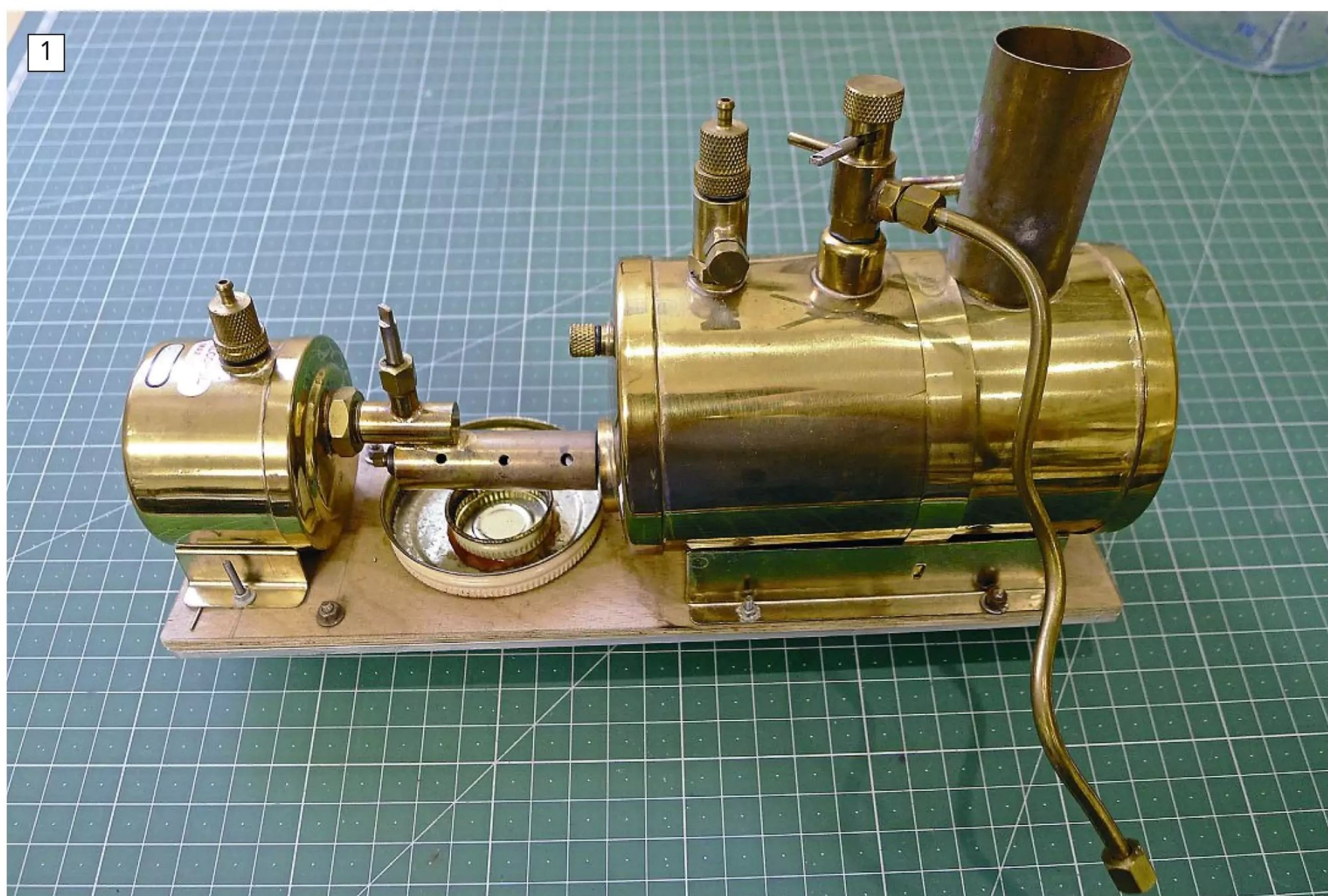
Yet again this month's instalment of Boiler Room was generated by a question that I received from a reader in New Zealand. He was having a play around with turbine propulsion and wanting advice on how much steam was necessary to drive such a unit. Interestingly, he explained he was using a Saito burner and boiler unit. I've had very little exposure to Saito units, so I decided to do some research and, more specifically, try to evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of pressurised liquid burners when compared with gas burners. As luck would have it, a browse on a popular online auction site revealed a Saito boiler and burner unit was available and so a couple of offers went backwards and forwards before

a mutually agreeable price was reached. A few days later my Saito boiler and burner arrived, complete with original instructions (see **Photo 1**).

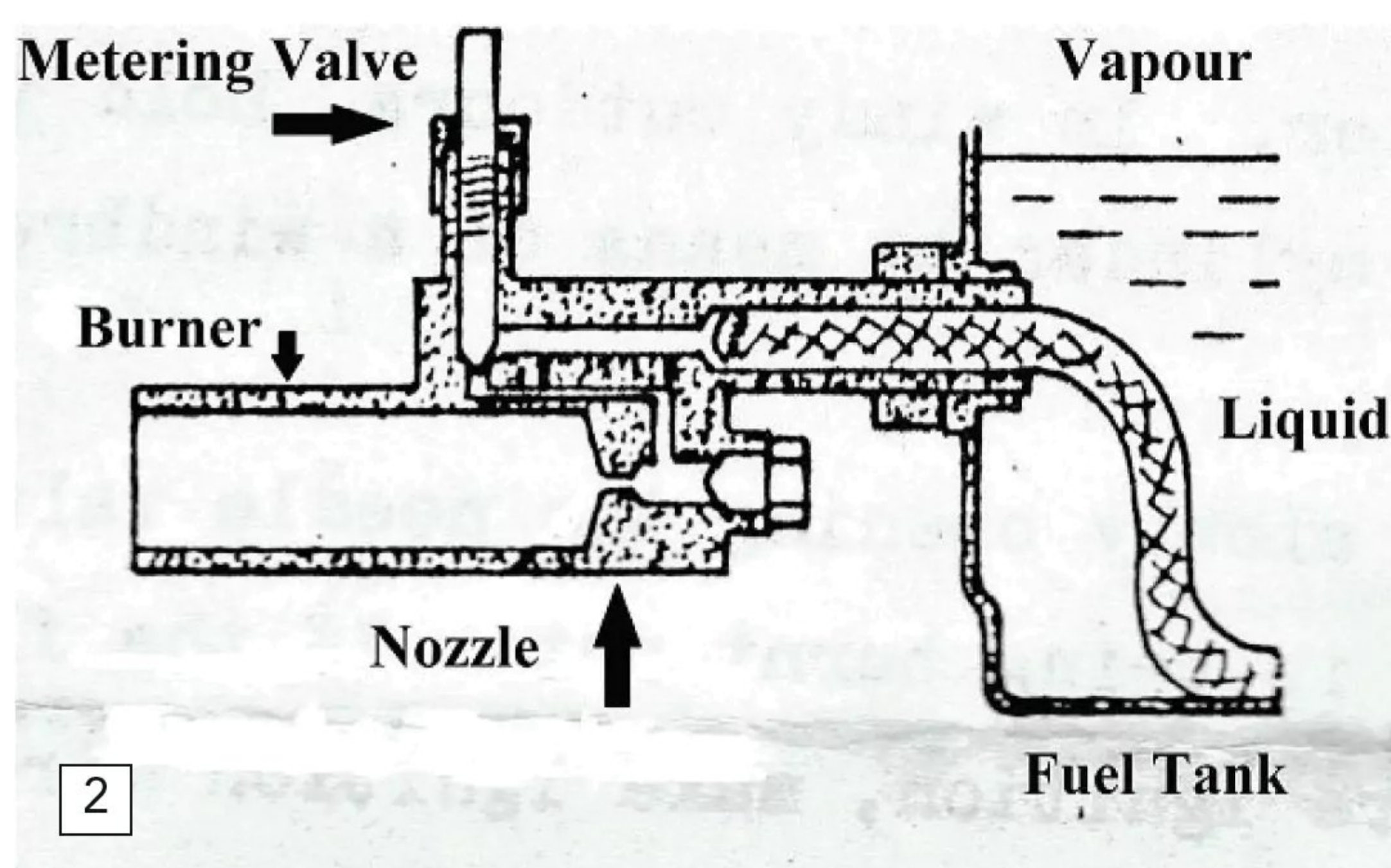
How a pressurised liquid burner works

A pressurised liquid burner uses a liquid fuel, stored in a tank, that has pressure applied to it. This pressure then forces the liquid out of the tank via a tube that dips into the bottom of the tank and through a metering valve and a nozzle. At the nozzle the liquid vapourises and is ignited by the flame in the burner, as can be seen from this diagram included in the Saito manual (see **Photo 2**). So how is the pressure generated?

Well, in the case of a Saito burner the pressure is generated by gently heating the fuel tank. The heat comes from the burner itself, and by conduction along the thick-walled connecting tube heats the brass tank shell. This heats the fuel inside, which then increases the evaporation rate in the tank, thereby increasing the saturation vapour pressure, and hence the vapour pressurises the sealed tank. Over pressure is controlled by a safety valve which vents into the boiler flue, thereby taking excess fuel fumes safely away. This then pushes the liquid fuel out of the tank via the dip tube and into the metering valve and then the nozzle, where it evaporates and ignites in the burner tube (again, see **Photo 2**).



The Saito boiler and burner as it arrived: in perfect condition, and, while not supplied with an engine, this did give Richard the opportunity to see exactly how the burner works.



The diagram that is included with the instruction sheet, with some additional labels for clarity. It is easy to see from this that pressure in the tank vapour space pushes the liquid fuel out through the metering valve and the nozzle.

I'm sure many of you will remember the old plumber's paraffin torch that used the same principle. The liquid fuel was pressurised by the heat from the blow lamp, which then pushed the liquid fuel out through a metering valve and then a nozzle.

A couple of challenges with the process

Firstly, with a tank that's not under pressure when cold, how do you get the thing going? With the old plumber's torch mentioned above there was a little hand pump incorporated into the lid so you could manually pressurise the tank before igniting the burner. With the Saito burner, you heat the burner with a small dish of fuel sat below it until it is hot enough to apply some pressure to the tank. Yes, you have to manually intervene and generate some pressure in the fuel tank so the process can be started, but once the burner is lit, everything settles down to looking after itself.

Another challenge is dealing with a liquid fuel. Leaking gas is fairly straightforward to disperse with either a fan or a good blow, but leaking liquid fuel can be more problematic. It can soak into wooden structures, and it can seep below plant and fittings where it can then present a very serious hazard should it become ignited. Naturally, therefore, great care need to be taken when handling liquid fuel. Spills are a serious concern, especially when you're warming the burner through initially and have liquid fuel sat in an open tray in the bottom of a boat – more on this later.

Firing up the Saito burner

Having read the manual, chatted to a couple of Saito owners, and given my own new plant a thorough once over, I was ready to give it a run. Filling it is simple enough; you simply remove the safety valve and the level plug, then fill the boiler through a syringe until you

“With a tank that is not under pressure when cold, how do you get the thing going?”



Filling up the fuel tank is a little hit and miss, as you are simply advised of the amount of fuel required to fill the tank. How you gauge what's left in the tank when it needs topping up, however, remains a mystery!

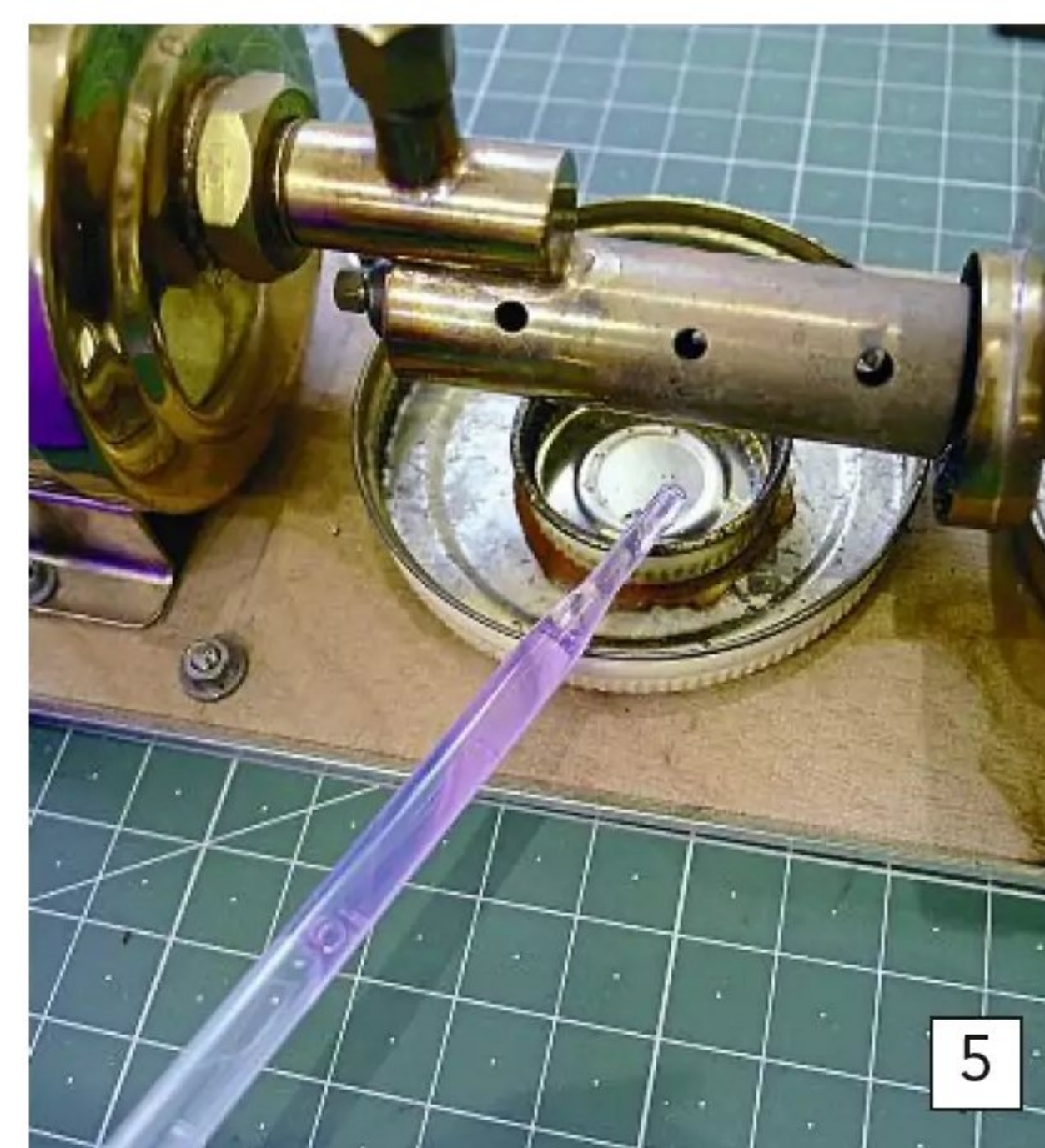
get water coming out of the filling plug. Try to avoid the excess water filling up the tin lid for warming the burner (see **Photo 3**).

The recommended fuel, according to the instructions, is either methanol or alcohol. I didn't have any methanol and I certainly wasn't going to waste any of my best Barbados rum! However, questions revealed that many Saito owners use methylated spirits, and I did have some of that, as I use it for cleaning model railway tracks. While I was guided by the instructions on the amount required to fill the tank, though, gauging exactly how much to add when it needs topping up may prove a challenge, bearing in mind you need vapour space above the fuel to generate the pressure (see **Photo 4**).

Fuelled and watered, I then added a few ccs of meths to the tin tray (see **Photo 5**) and ignited the fuel. As already mentioned, as the fuel burns it heats the burner, which in turn heats the tank to create some pressure, so a



One concern with Saito burners is the fact that they are brass and not the more normal copper. This makes them less flexible and therefore more prone to cracking over many years of use. Having said, Richard has never heard of one fail. They also don't have a sight glass, which is more of a concern.



You need to put enough fuel into the dish to warm up the burner, then ignite the fuel as you crack open the metering valve. Richard ran out of fuel before he opened the valve, so had to put a bit more in. However, he points out that when you get it right, it works surprisingly well.



As soon as you crack open the metering valve the fuel should ignite in the burner, and you will hear a gentle roar. Only open the valve further as the burner continues to heat up and transfers heat to the tank. There will come a point where opening the valve further will have no effect.



Once everything is settled down and established, you should see and hear a nice clean blue flame at the boiler and feel the hot exhaust gasses at the top of the flue.

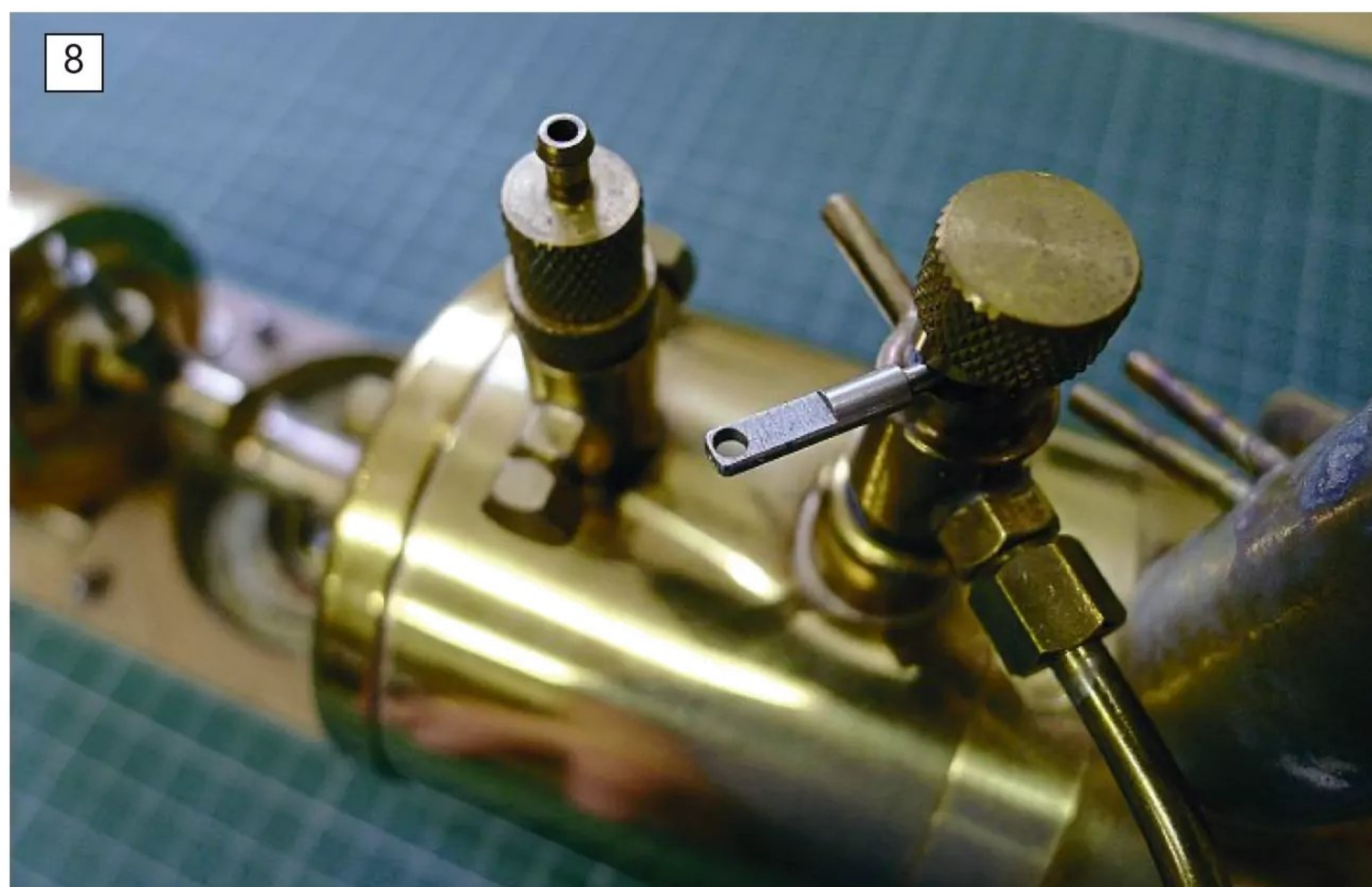
suitable amount of fuel is needed to do the job. It did occur to me when I ignited the fuel with a small torch that maybe the process could be started simply by heating the burner with a torch, rather than having liquid fuel sat in an open tray within the model – something to consider.

With the meths almost used up in the tin lid, I just cracked open the metering valve on the burner (see **Photo 6**) and was pleased to hear the fuel ignite almost immediately. By the time the meths in the tin lid had gone the burner was already self-sustaining, so I slowly started to open up the metering valve. Soon I had a nice roaring flame going into the boiler (see **Photo 7**) and the fuel tank was getting very warm to the touch. I didn't want to raise steam pressure as I didn't have an engine connected, and I was concerned that the control valve might pass and spit hot water all over my workbench, so I shut things down again. On the Saito boiler the steam outlet is conveniently controlled by a servo-operated valve sat neatly on top of the boiler, which I kept closed throughout the test (**Photo 8**).

Pressurised liquid burners versus gas burners

Having now seen how the Saito burner works, it's worth doing a comparison with the gas burners most of us are so much more familiar with, whether ceramic side fitting or bottom fitting burners (see **Photo 9**) or a poker burner as (see **Photo 10**).

The first point has already been mentioned, and that is the fuel. To reiterate, liquid fuel needs to be handled with caution, and even the smallest of spills must be dealt with before going anywhere near a model with any form of ignition. This is particularly relevant when refilling an already hot fuel tank for a second run, as the fuel starts to heat up and become volatile as soon as it enters the tank. Gas is easy and convenient as a fuel, and much easier to deal with if it should leak.



The steam outlet valve operates from fully closed to fully open in 90 degrees of movement, making it convenient to connect to a servo. Richard kept it closed for this test run.

Another factor to consider is the cost of fuel. Meths is still fairly cheap and readily available, and can be picked up from hardware suppliers. Gas tends to be more expensive, particularly when you are using 100gm disposable tanks, and is a bit more challenging to track down. Buying in bulk helps but is still an expensive fuel.

How the different types of burners are fired up also comes into the equation. Gas burners are very easy to open up and ignite – well, usually. Liquid burners have to be pressurised, so a much more involved and lengthy process is required to get the burner up and running, either by pre-heating or manually pressurising the fuel tank. Hence, convenience is definitely on the side of the gas burner, which can be a significant

advantage at the pond side when there may be a little breeze blowing or a slight reduction in ambient temperature.

You would think, then, that the gas burner is going to have it all its own way, but we haven't yet looked at the elephant in the room, the issue of the gas cooling effect. Liquified gas cools as it evaporates into gas, and the temperature of the remaining liquid gas gets lower and lower as the gas evaporates, until such point as the evaporation rate is reduced and then burner performance is affected. We have looked at many ways in which we can combat this over the years, but the gas cooling effect is probably still the single biggest challenge that we have to contend with when we use a gas burner.

“Another factor to consider is the cost of fuel”

“You would think, then, that the gas burner is going to have it all its own way, but we haven’t yet looked at the elephant in the room, the issue of the gas cooling effect”

The pressurised liquid burner, however, does not suffer from this effect. This is because the liquid doesn’t evaporate until it reaches the nozzle, and the tank is kept pressurised by the heat from the burner. Interestingly, this is exactly the same way as we use heat shunts with gas tanks to try to offset the cooling effects in them. So, the pressurised liquid burner does not suffer from the same effects and is consequently a far more consistent and reliable burn throughout the contents of the fuel tank, a significant advantage not to be underestimated.

Finally, it’s worth noting that the amount of heat transferred into the fuel tank can be designed into the burner and the safety valve lifting pressure to give it the desired tank pressure and hence the amount of heat out of the burner. Pressurised liquid burners can be designed to give out very significant amounts of heat, far in excess of gas burners, and so are often favoured for installations where a large steam demand is required, e.g., steam turbines or straight running performance models.

Conclusions

Gas burners seem to have become almost universally used in model boat steam plant, based almost exclusively on convenience. Offering easy handling, leak management and ignition, the gas bottle certainly has a lot going for it. Unfortunately, that comes with the significant issue of the gas cooling effect,



Typical ceramic disc gas burners, both by Miniature Steam for vertical boilers, the base mounted one on the left and the side mounted one on the right.

which many modellers find quite a challenge. If you’re prepared to take a bit more care and attention when handling and starting up and you want a burner that will remain steady and reliable, or if you want greater performance than a gas burner would normally give, then maybe a pressurised liquid burner would be worth considering. After all, the large numbers of Saito owners out there have been enjoying the advantages for many years now and know they are on to a good thing. It would be very interesting to see the Saito plant in a model, although, with the starting up requirements and handling fuel considerations, I would suggest an open hull would probably be easier to handle, maybe something along the size of the launch shown in **Photo 11**. Anyone got a Saito engine they no longer need? ●

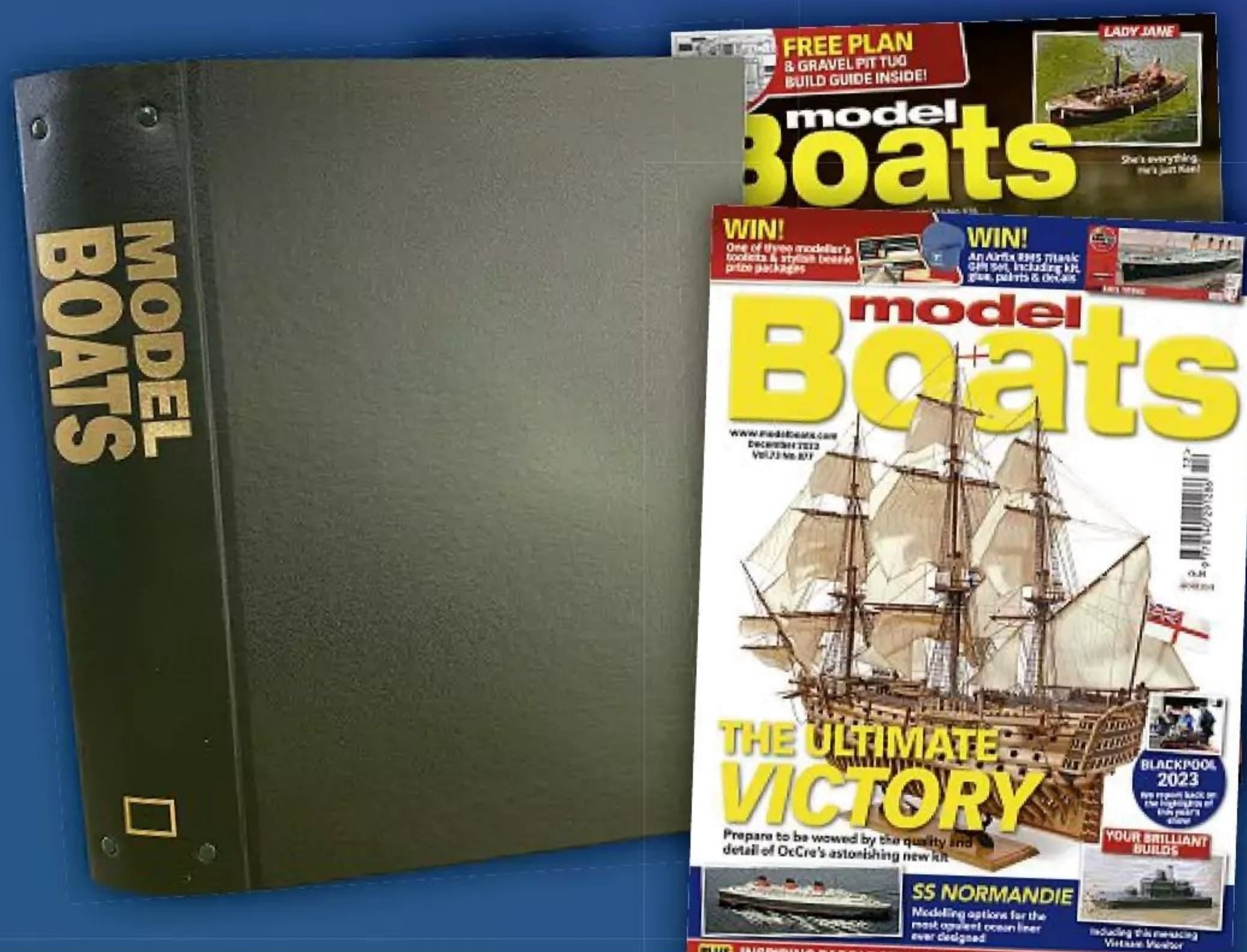


Another fairly typical gas burner arrangement is the poker burner. This one, actually fitted with ceramic tipped nozzles, is manufactured by Hemmens and used in its Ribbersdale horizontal boilers.



The weight and size of the Saito plant lends itself perfectly to an open launch of around 800 to 900mm long. The starting up procedure would be easier to deal with in an open launch, and who wouldn’t want to see all that brass work polished up out on the pond?

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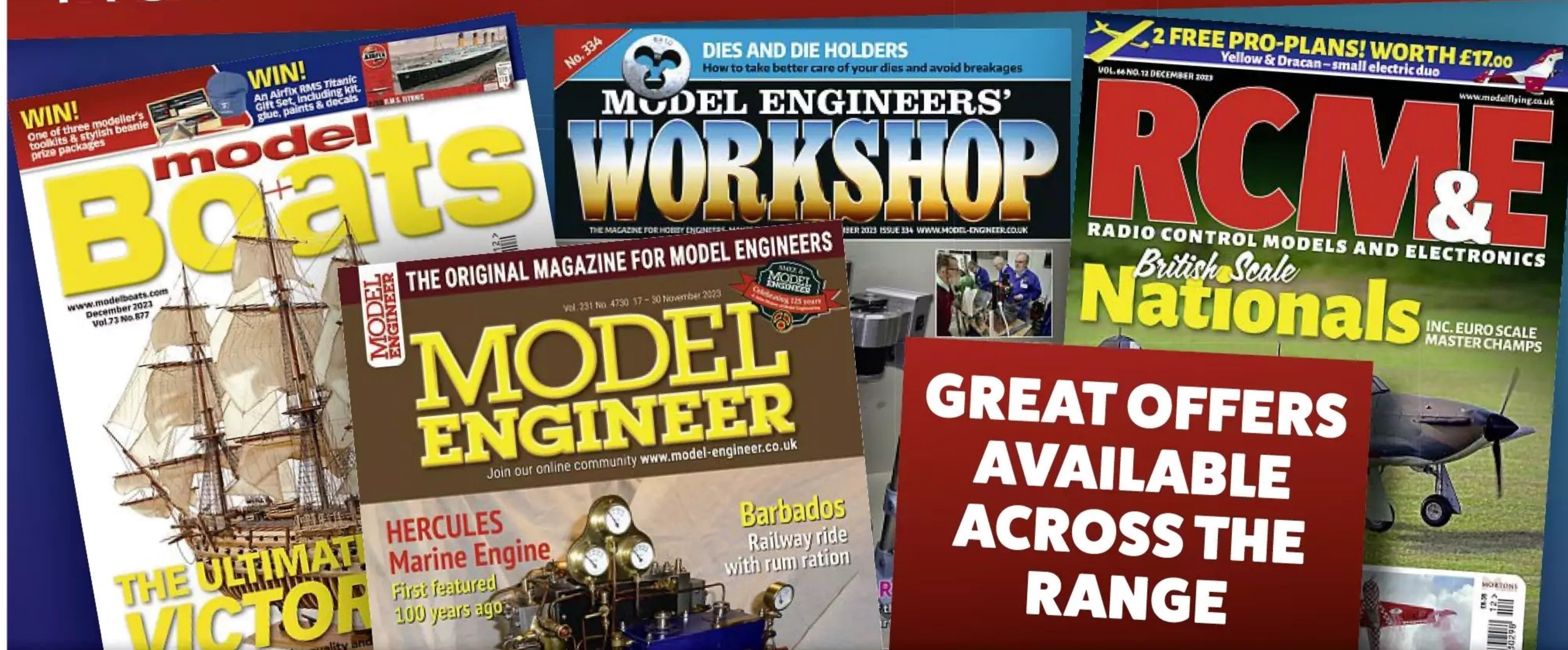
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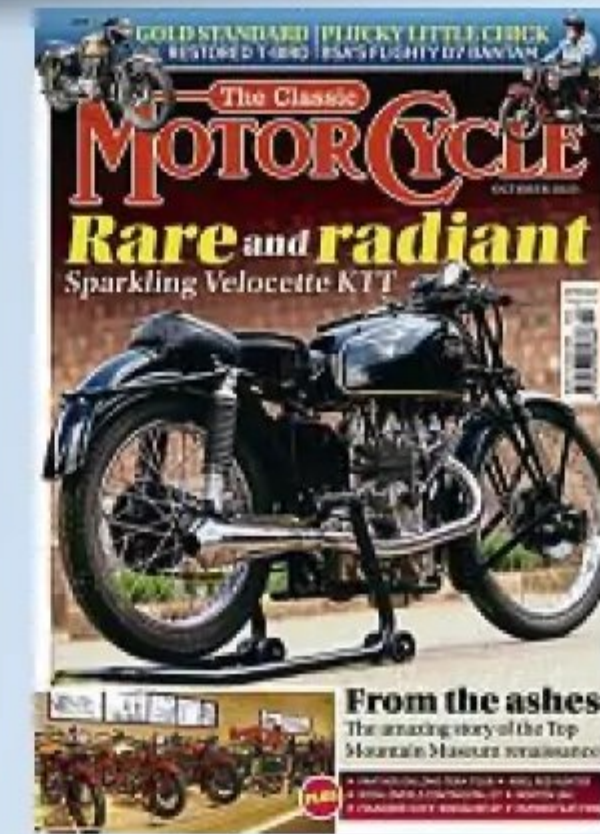
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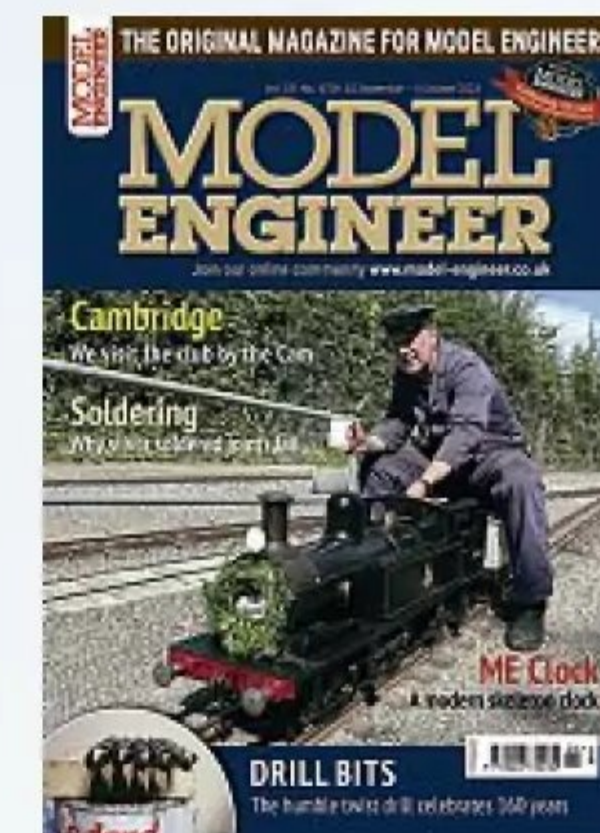
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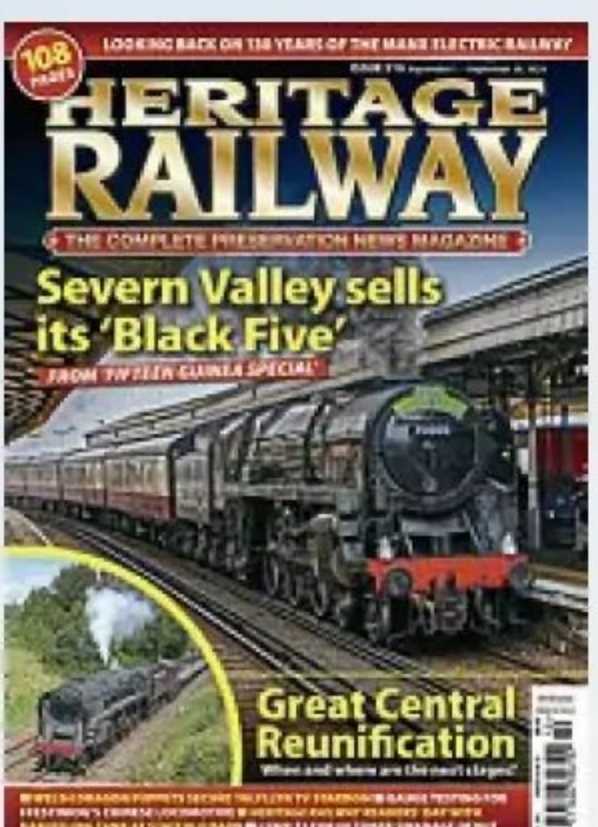
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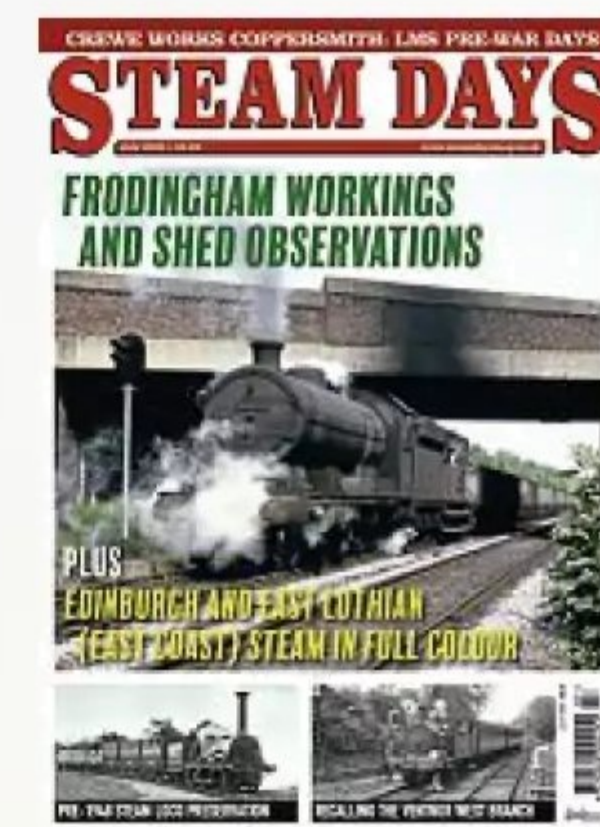
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Your Models

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



TS *Prince Charles*



Although it's more than 20 years ago since its demise, I think the magazine's older readers will remember when the Ostend-Dover Line was one of the most popular passenger services operating between the UK and the Continent.

My father served as a purser for the company and mostly doing his duty on the last of its steamers, the *Prince Charles*. Ordered by the Belgian government in 1929 as part of a series of four fast ferries for cross-channel use, and completed in 1930, the *Prince Charles* (named for Prince Charles of Belgium) was requisitioned by the Royal Navy during World War II, during which she took part in the D-Day Landings at Omaha Beach. Then, when hostilities ceased, she

resumed her civilian role until withdrawn from service in 1958 (sadly being scrapped in 1960).

Aware of the fond memories my father had of the *Prince Charles*, I therefore decided to create a model of the ship as a surprise birthday present for him. This I built from scratch and mounted on a heavy piece of heavy glass that I finished so as to make the vessel look as if afloat. I enjoyed working on this project so much that I quickly realised that I'd found a new hobby, one that two decades later I am still practising with much enthusiasm!

DIRKE BONNE
EMAIL

The thought behind and all the work put into this must have made your father not only very happy with the gift itself but also incredibly proud of you. What a remarkable achievement, and I love how you went that extra mile by adding so much life to the deck.

Unfortunately, I've been unable to include historic images of the Prince Charles you kindly sent me as, having run a quick online search, both could potentially put me in breach of copyright, so naturally I've steered clear. However, if anyone reading is interested, typing the ship's name into a web browser should call up loads of results. Ed.

Award winning ATCH

Being based on such an interesting and unusual subject, as soon as I saw Glynn Guest's plan for the ATCH published back in the January 1996 issue of Model Boats, I knew I had to build it.

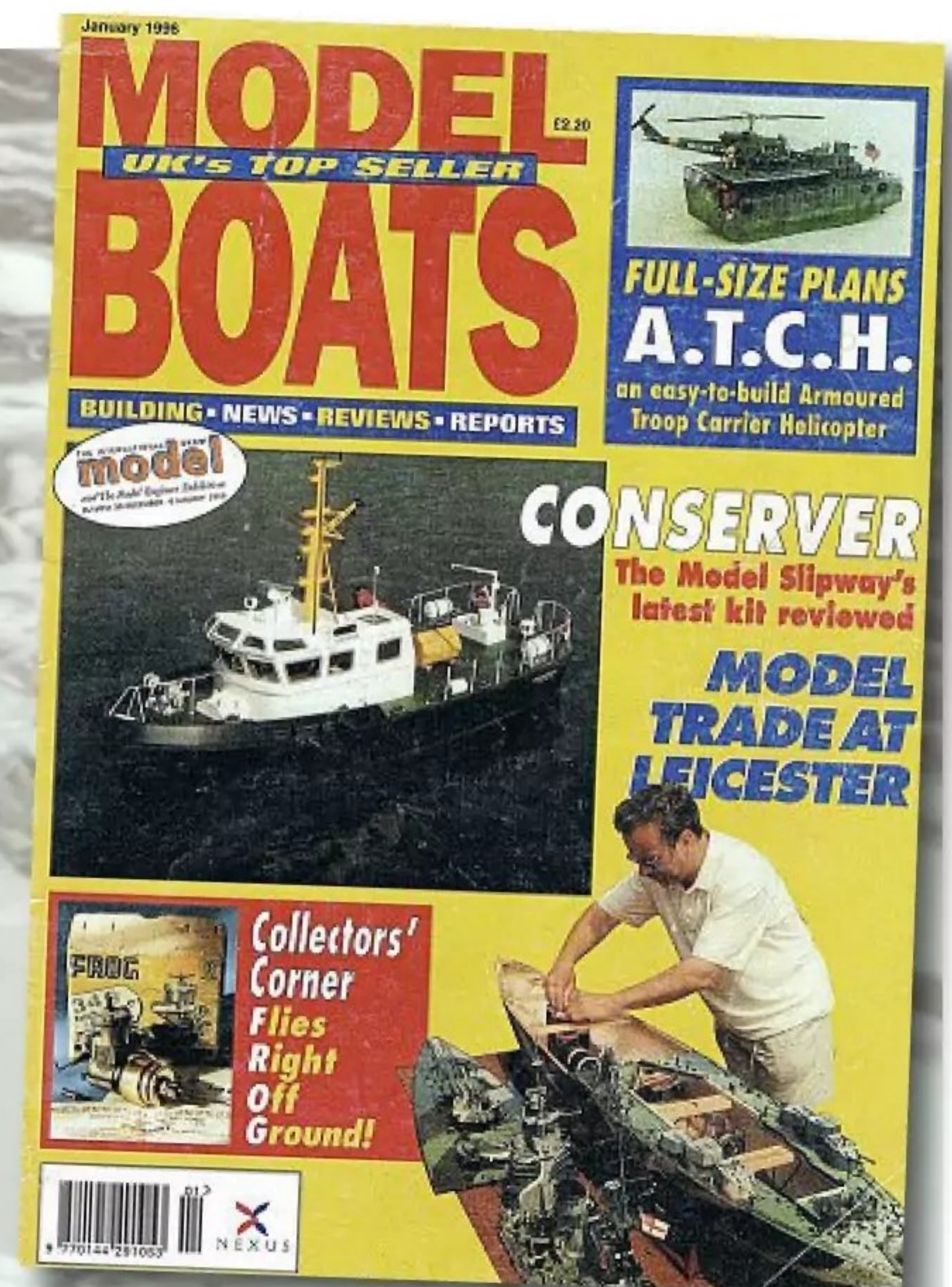
Once I'd studied the armoured troop carrier plan, I decided to increase the size of my model, scaling up to 1:35. This made it easier to source the military items with which I wanted to accessorize it, namely a decent Huey helicopter and some very good Verlinden figures.

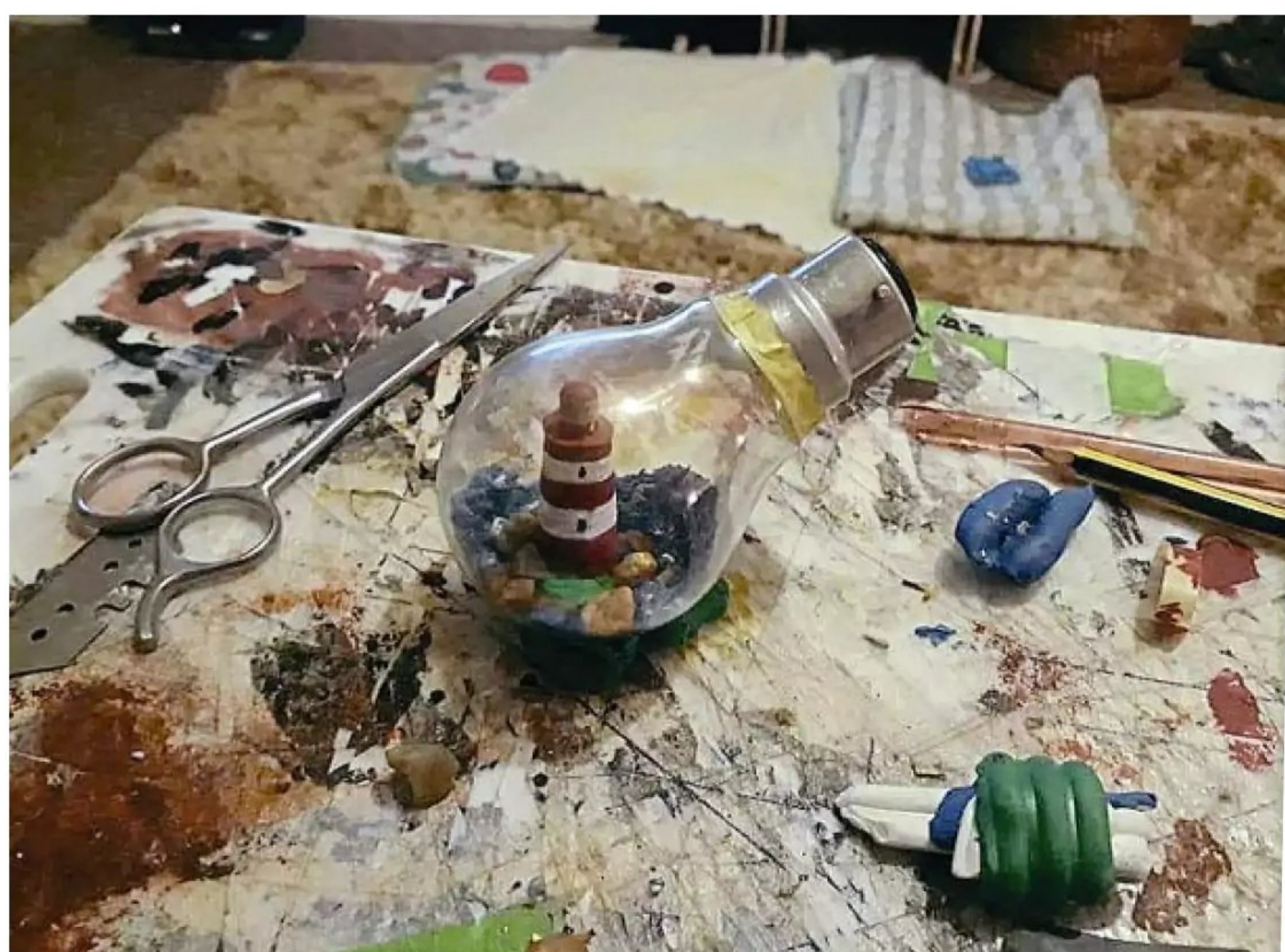
Construction was mainly from balsa and ply, plus a large amount of plastic card. To solve the problem of tank steering, twin rudders were fitted, and Prop Shop props were used. Additional items fitted included a working radar

screen, driven by a small motor through a set of gears and an elastic band. The helicopter is fitted out with working navigation lights and interior lighting, with the main rotor works driven by a speed controller. Power comes courtesy of a 7.2-volt battery driving two small electric motors. The water cannons were made from old Humbrol paint tins. The paintwork was done using Tamiya paints.

It was an easy model to build, and it quickly attracted a lot of interest, winning the 'Best Glynn Guest Model' award at the 2015 Model Boat Convention.

STAN REFFIN
KIRKLEES MBC





Tweezer pleasers

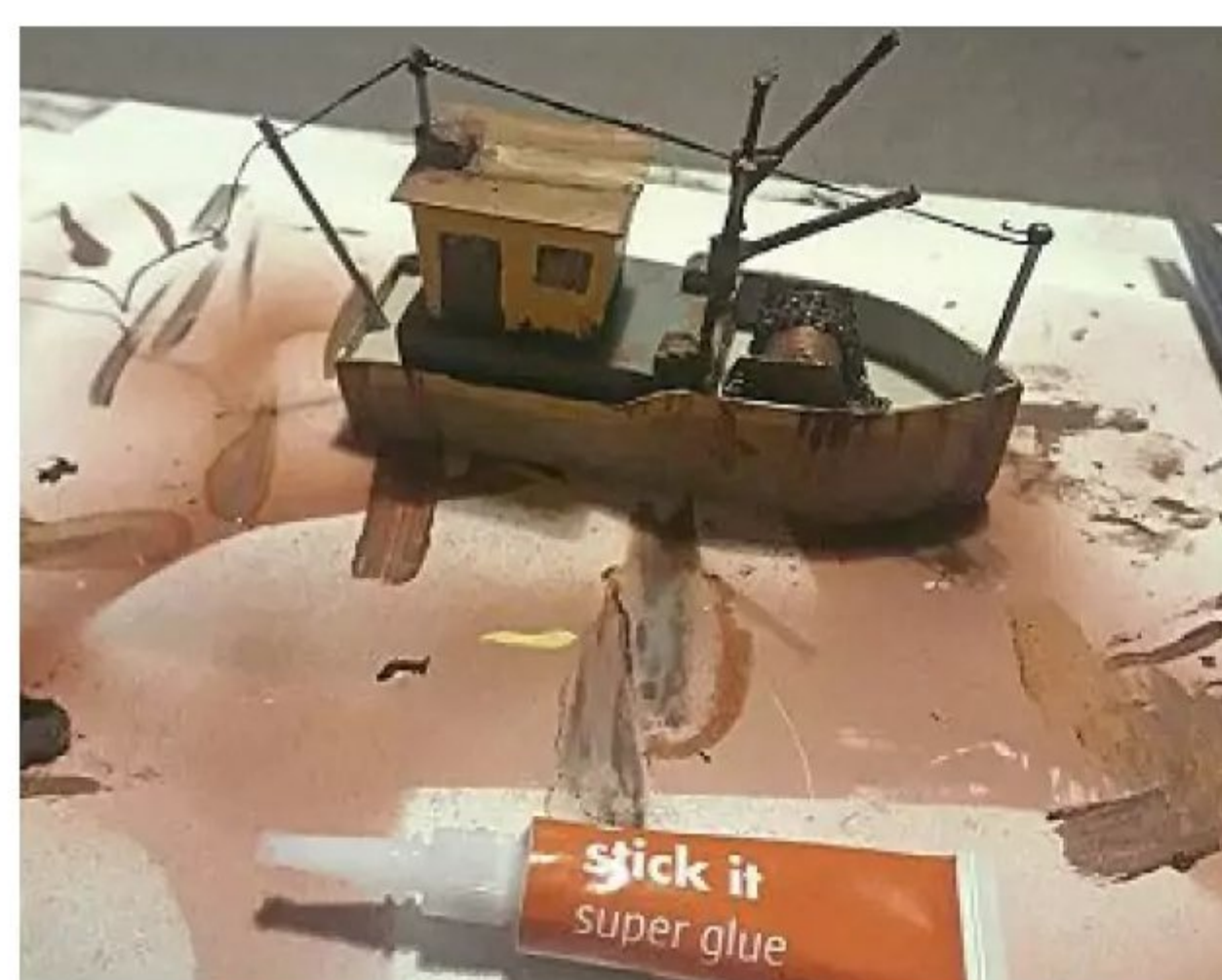
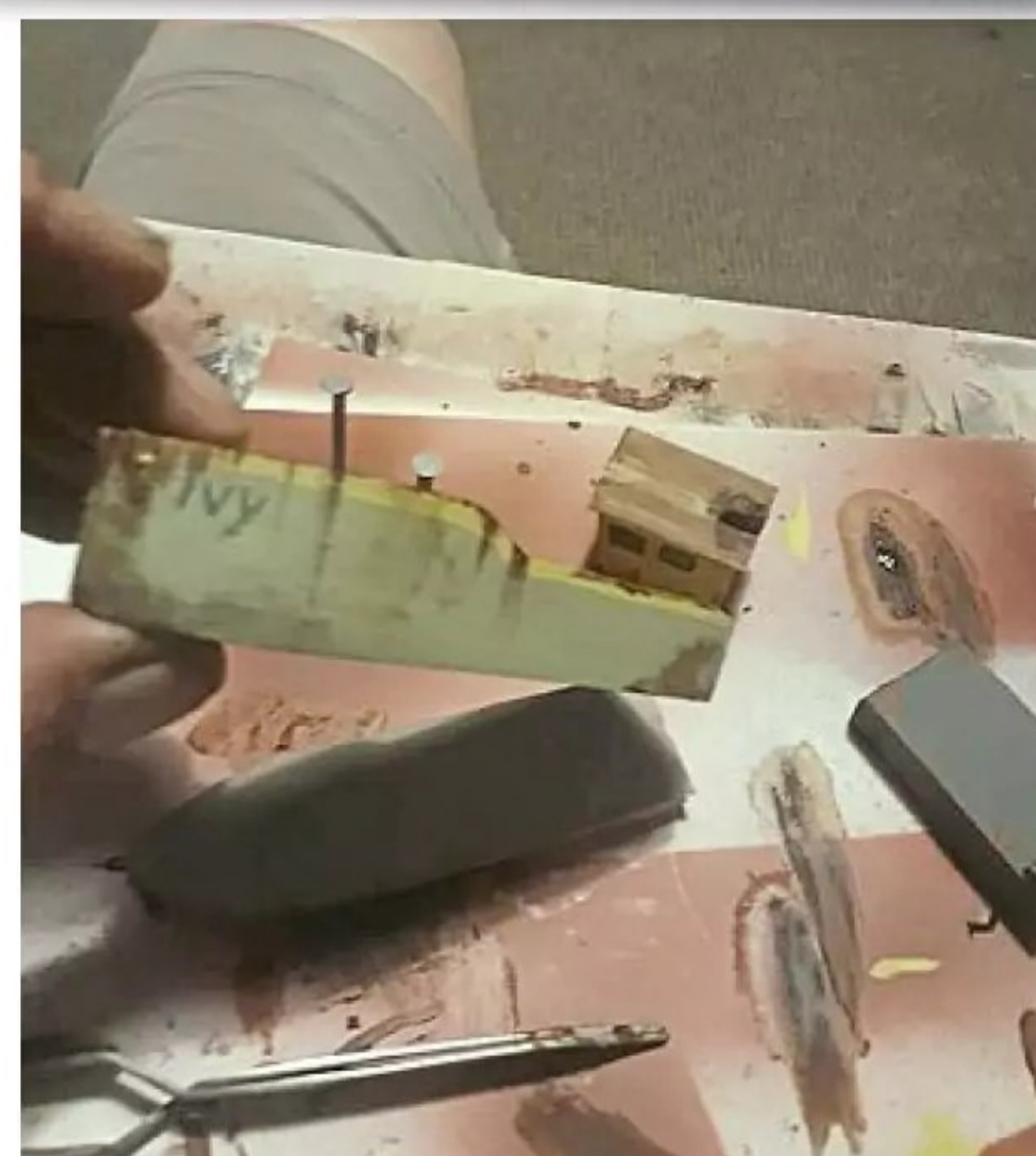
I thought I'd share some photos of two fun little projects I've recently completed.

The first began with the design of a little boat that could be made up from plasticard and other bits and pieces. Having constructed and finished the hull, superstructure and fittings, and carried out a satisfactory dry assembly run, everything was then broken back down into sections small enough to fit through the neck of the bottle (which I found in a charity shop while on holiday) before being brought back together again in situ using tweezers. The lighthouse in the light bulb was created in the same way.

JAMES COXALL

EMAIL

Absolutely love these, James! Ed





Mississippi paddle boat

I thought I would share some photos of the working Mississippi paddle boat model that I built from plans (purchased from Cornwall Model Boats) only.

Construction began in 2008 and took 17 months to complete. I've modelled my paddler to 1:50 scale and she is powered by a 50:1 geared motor and a 12-volt lead acid battery. The receiver is powered separately by a 6-volt battery, while the ESC is an Electronize design. I've fitted 87 differently coloured LEDs to her, and, using an old cassette player reel to reel tape, music can also be played. The paddler's hooter can also be emitted through an amplifier.

Before being put into the water a 4lbs lead weight is



attached 10 inches below the hull to keep the boat steady.

As a project this proved quite a challenge, but one that I thoroughly enjoyed.

SID HARVEY
CHEDDAR STEAM CLUB

She's gorgeous, Sid, and it's lovely to see how she looks all lit up, too. Ed.



Your Letters

**Got views to air or information to share?
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Rude Dolphins!

The December issue of Model Boats has had me drooling over OcCre's model of the oldest commissioned naval vessel in the world, HMS Victory. If only I had the space and time! While on the subject, has anyone noticed that the Royal Navy is the only current naval organisation whose title does not include its country of origin?

The "ornately designed fish-shaped mountings" are a nice touch. Such ornaments are often used when displaying boat models from this age of sail but take many forms, seeming based upon the fanciful sea monsters adorning empty spaces in contemporary charts.

Routinely referred to as 'Dolphins', the beasts themselves rarely conform to any dolphin shape in nature, often having exaggerated foreheads, swollen lips, bulging eyes and scales. I assume the habit of real dolphins displaying at the bow of a vessel led perhaps to sailors imagining that they were lifting the ship forward. Animals with 'whale' tails, scaly bodies and horses' heads are also used, presumably derived from the term 'white horses', used to describe foaming waves.



A charmingly cheeky example of one of Mike Payne's 'rude' Dolphins.

I am as guilty as anyone applying 'rude' Dolphins to the stands of my little fleet to amuse the kids, 'rude' as in sticking their tongues out!

MIKE PAYNE
EMAIL

Every day is a school day for me, so thank you so much, Mike, not only for pointing out the correct terminology for these delightfully ornate mountings but also for providing this fascinating explanation.

I am totally in love with the example of the 'rude Dolphin' you've shared, and the fact that you give thought to how you can add a fun factor to your fleet for the little ones in your life. Such a charmingly cheeky touch! Ed.



The magnificent model that results from OcCre's new 1:87 scale kit for the HMS Victory. The stand supplied features these ornately designed 'Dolphin' mountings.



A small sailboat with a dark hull and white sails, numbered 'MH232', is sailing on green water. A yellow buoy is visible in the background.

A photograph of two sailboats on a body of water. In the foreground, a larger three-masted schooner with white sails is sailing. In the background, a smaller two-masted sailboat with a prominent red sail is visible. The water is calm with some ripples, and the background shows a shoreline with trees and buildings.

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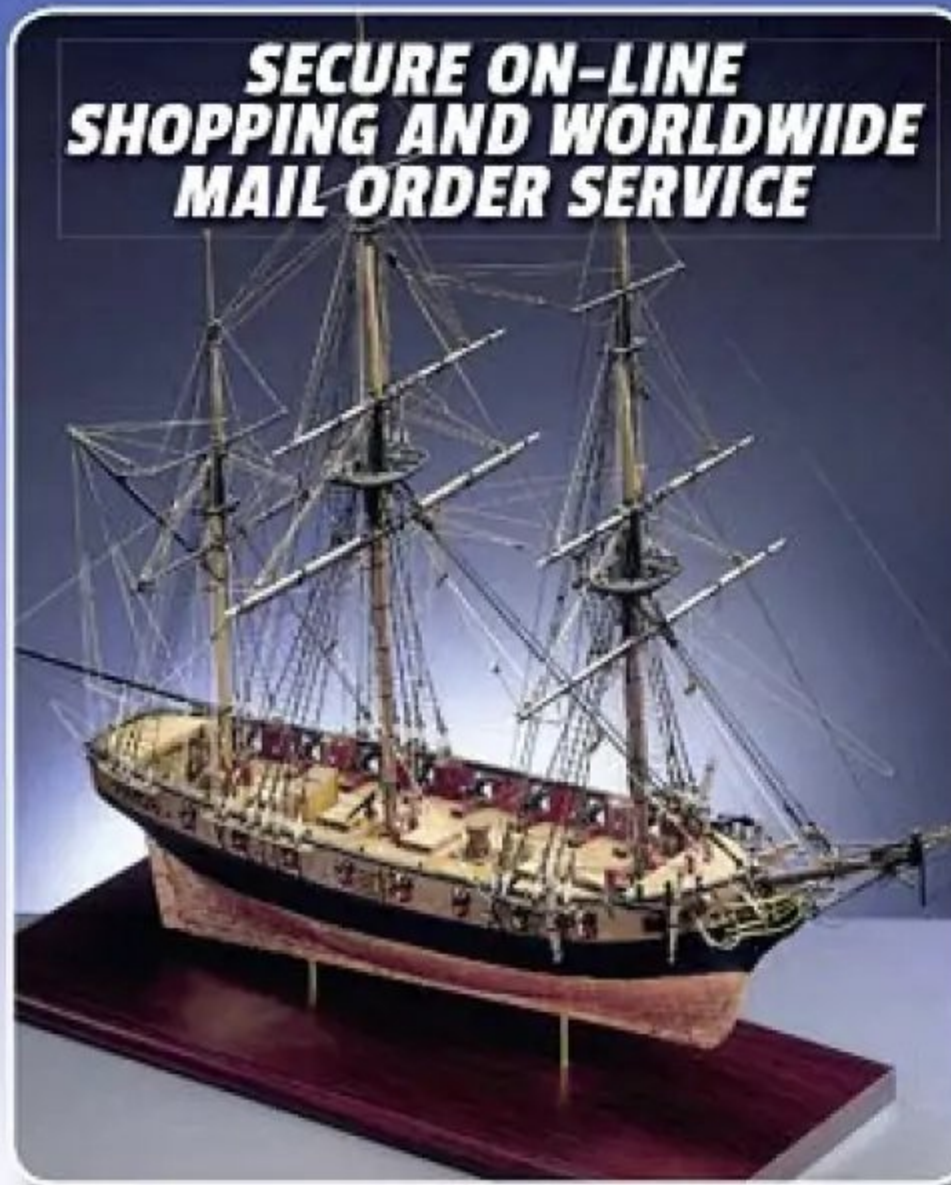
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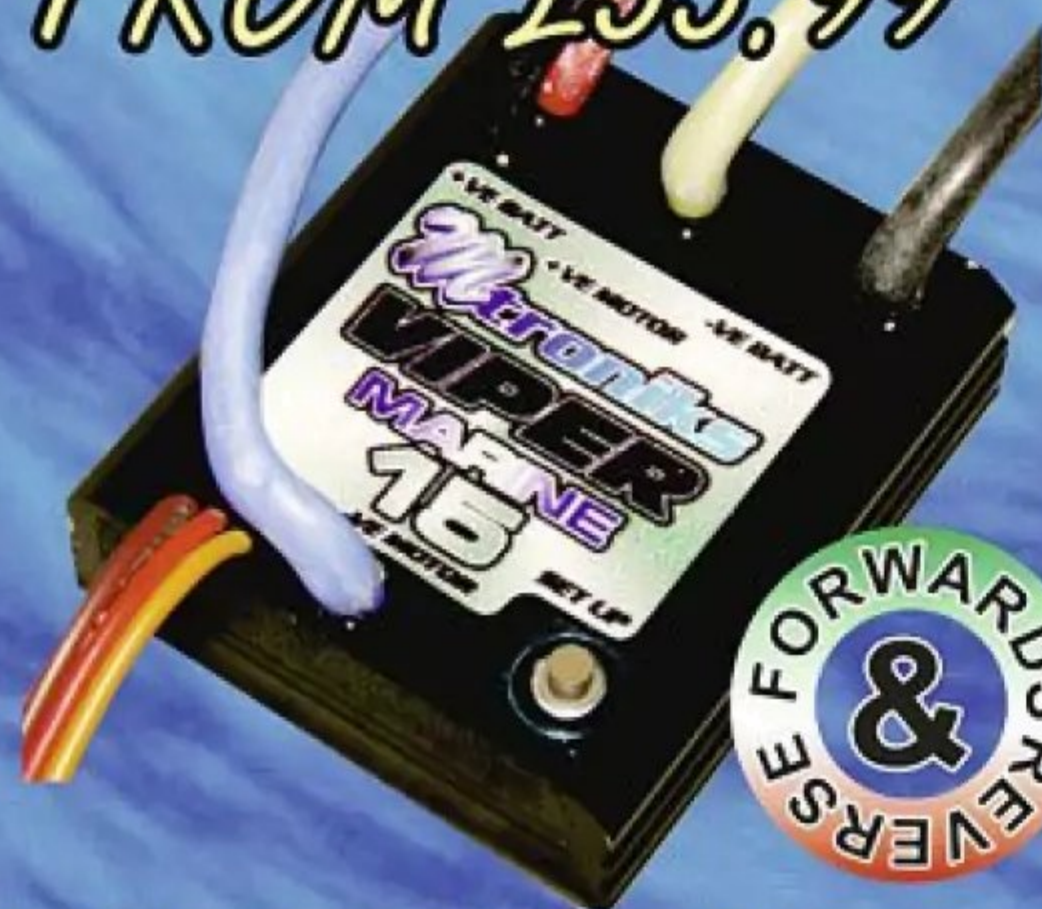
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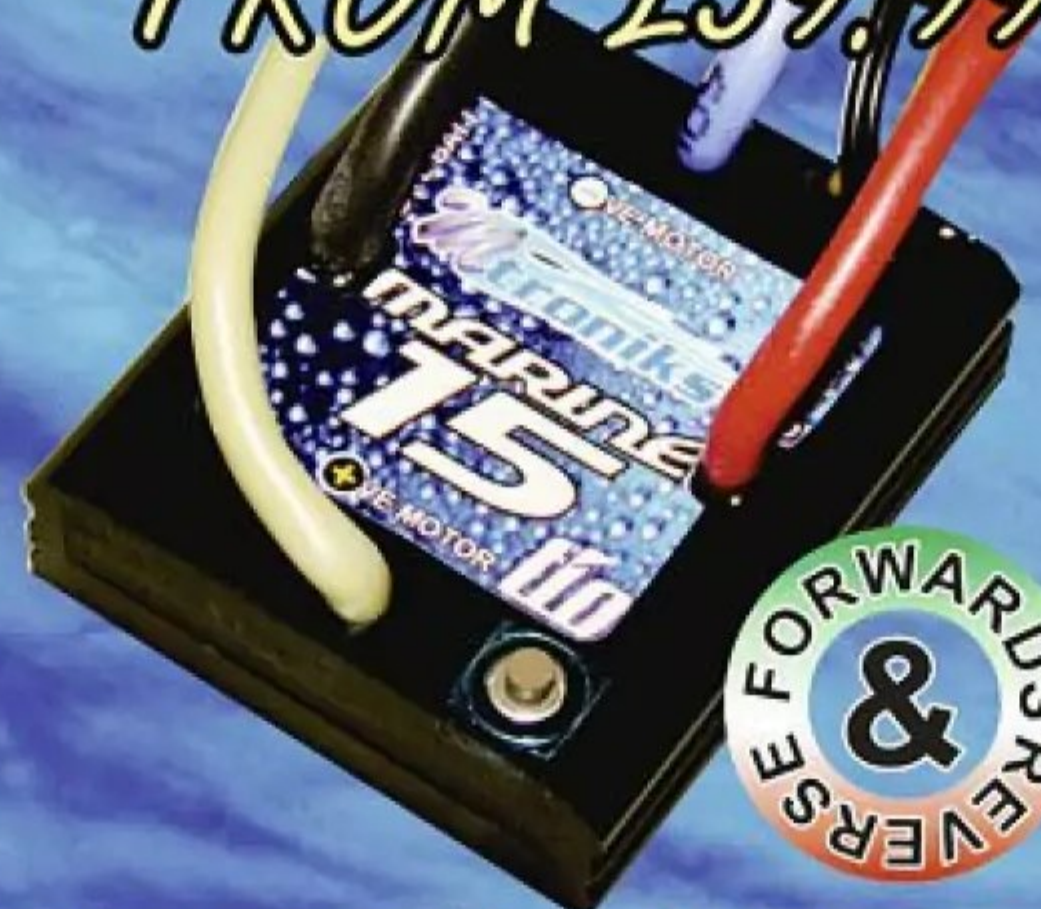
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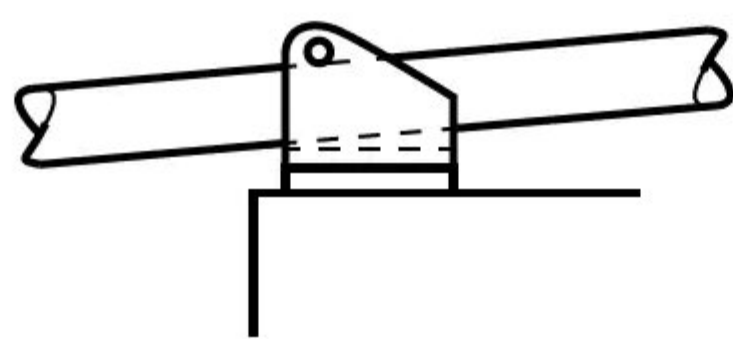
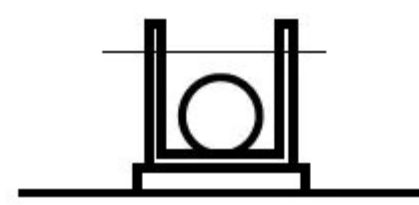
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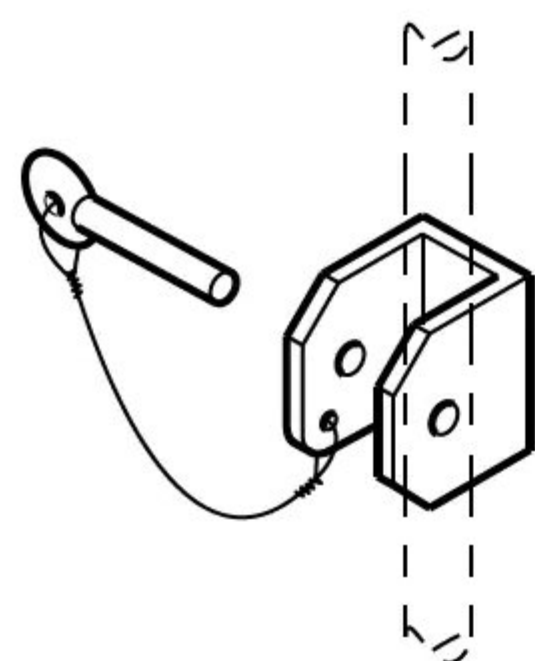
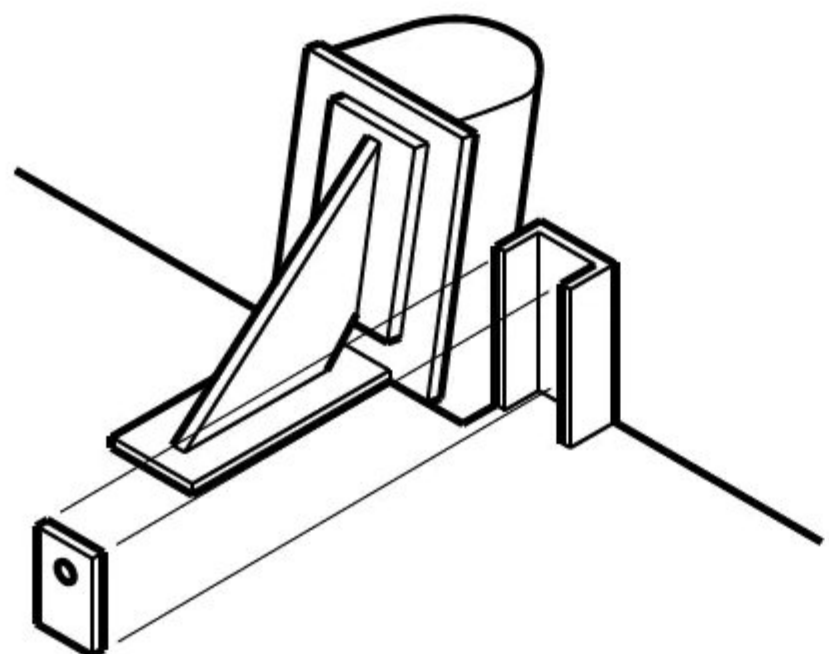
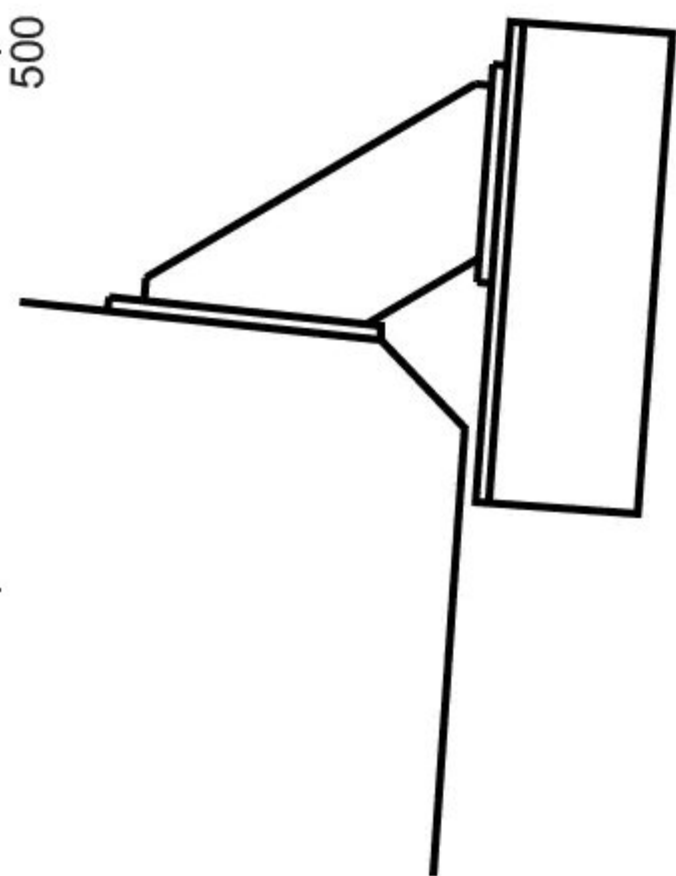
41A Ilkley Road, Otley, LS21 3LP, UK
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enquiries@mtroniks.net

MAST CRUTCH



WHEELHOUSE FOR'D
BUFFER ASSEMBLY
& MAST HINGE STRUT



ANTENNA HANDLE LOCK
WITH SECURING PIN

S. ANTEN

M/E EX HAUST (P & S)

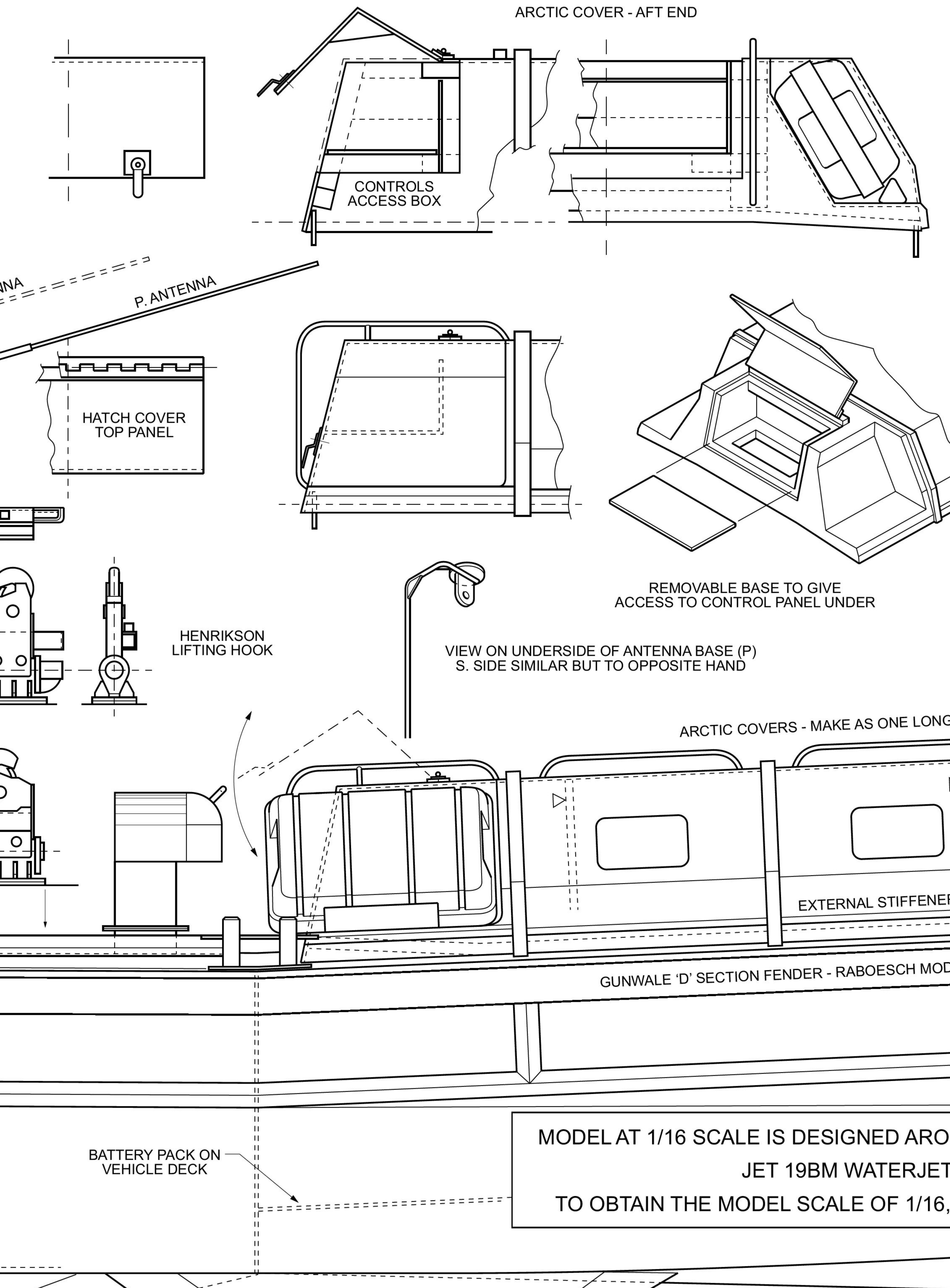
W/JET GUARD
BAR

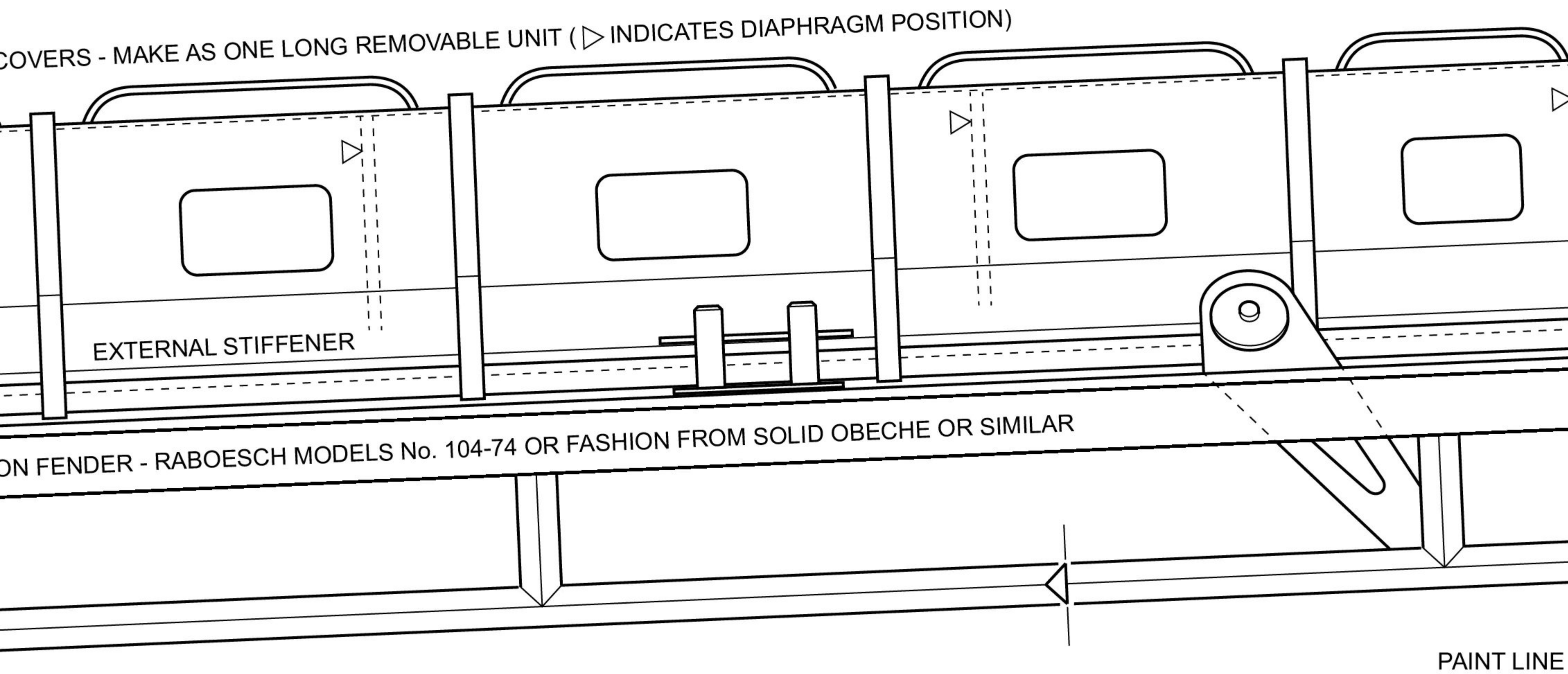
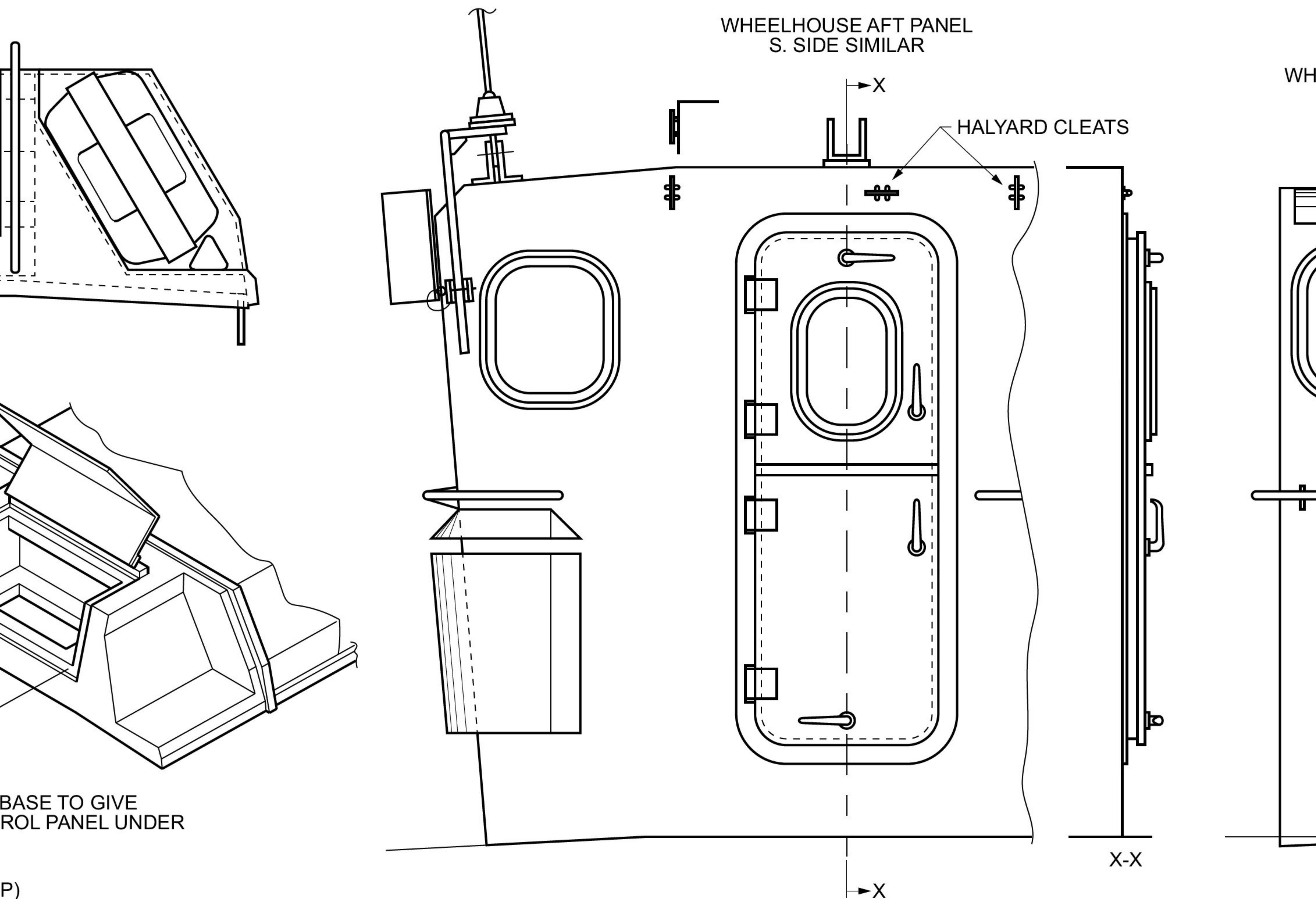
500

400

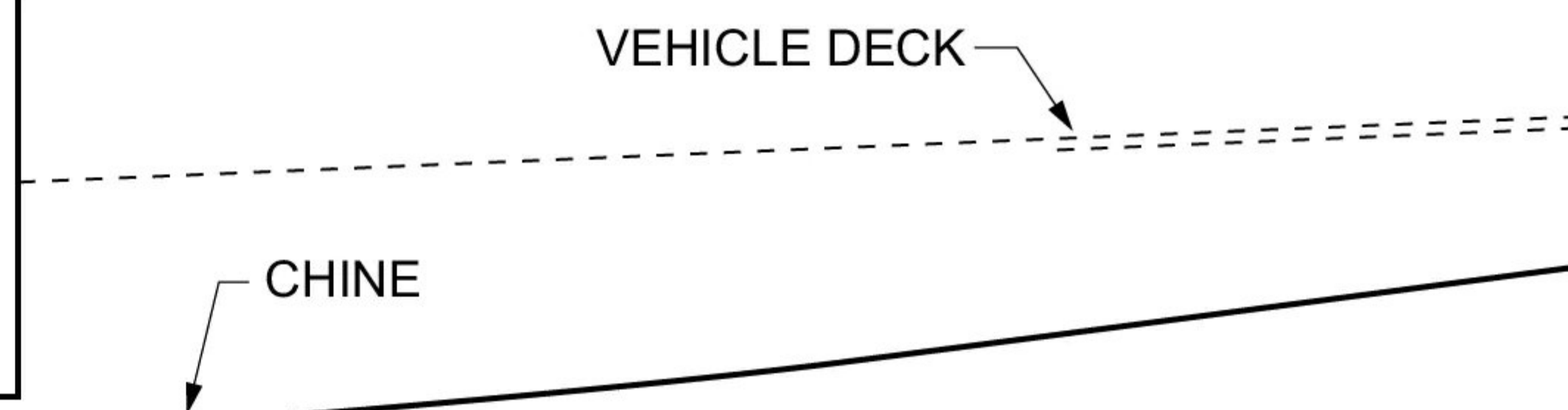
300

ARCTIC COVER - AFT END





LE IS DESIGNED AROUND THE BAUER-MODELLE
JET 19BM WATERJET UNITS
MODEL SCALE OF 1/16, ENLARGE PLAN BY 125%



EELHOUSE CORNER PANEL(S)
P. SIDE SIMILAR BUT
TO OPPOSITE HAND

Boats

LANDING CRAFT VEHICLE & PERSONNEL Mk.5

LCVP Mk.5

BY PETER BROWN

PLAN No: MM2173

No. OF SHEETS: 1 OF 2

First published in
Model Boats January 2024

WHEELHOUSE FRONT PANEL

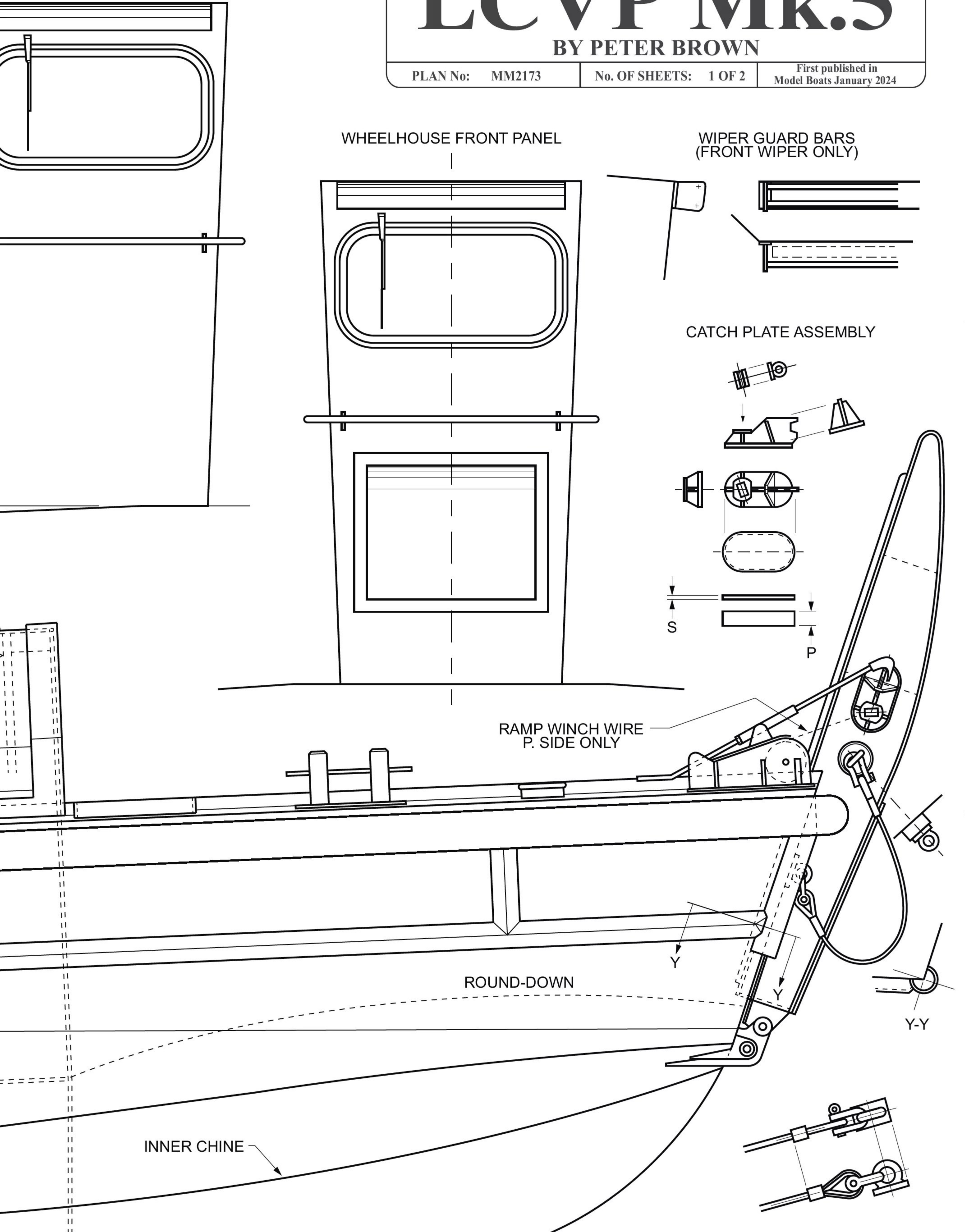
WIPER GUARD BARS
(FRONT WIPER ONLY)

CATCH PLATE ASSEMBLY

RAMP WINCH WIRE
P. SIDE ONLY

ROUND-DOWN

INNER CHINE



W/JET GUARD
BAR

TOWING
CLENCH

KEEL BARWALE

0

TRANSOM
WEDGE

1

2

BUFFERS AS FOR
GUNWALE FENDER

ANTENNA
HINGE

'CUBE' SENSOR

W/HOUSE ROOF (P)

TRANSOM WEDGE

INLET GRILLE BARS

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SCALE
MM

100

200

BATTERY PACK ON
VEHICLE DECK

MODEL AT 1/16 SCALE IS DESIGNED AROUND
JET 19BM WATERJET
TO OBTAIN THE MODEL SCALE OF 1/16,

CHINE BARWALE

BHD

3

4

5

16 MAN LIFERAFT (P & S)

M/E HATCH
COVER
(P & S)

6 MAN
LIFERAFT
(ONLY)

DECK CAMBER KNUCKLE

CONTROLS
BOX

DECK VENT

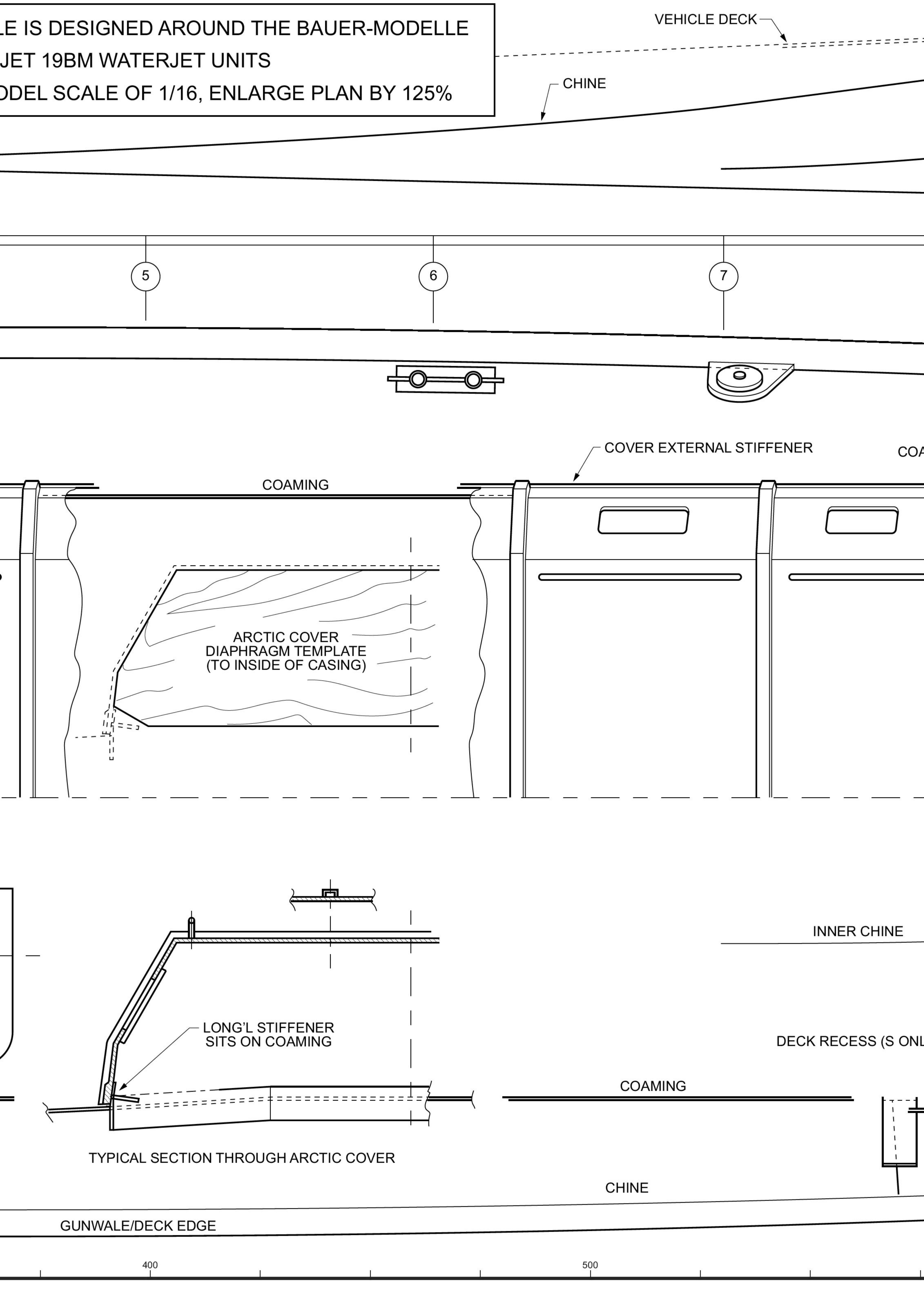
DECK VENT
(AFT FACE)

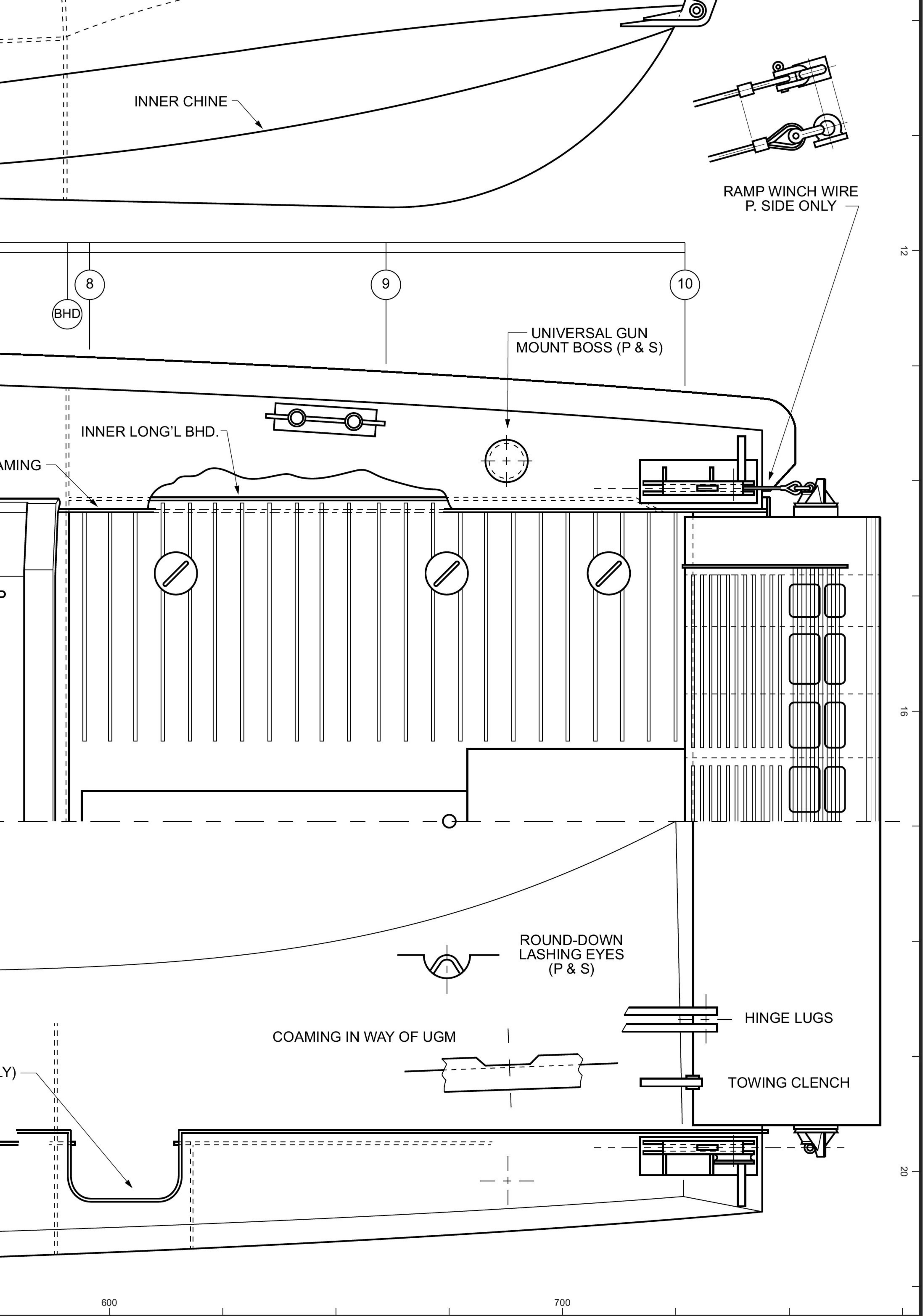
CHINE BARWALE

TYPICAL SECTION

GUNWALE/DECK EDGE

LE IS DESIGNED AROUND THE BAUER-MODELLE
JET 19BM WATERJET UNITS
MODEL SCALE OF 1/16, ENLARGE PLAN BY 125%





LOOKING TO PORT

P

S

$$W(\text{AR})$$

- W

$$-R(AR)$$
$$Y_{-}$$
$$-W(AR)$$

W

$$-R(AR)$$

W

$$-R_G$$

WAKE LIGHT BOXES
(OPEN ON AFT SIDE)

C/L HINGE PIN

MAST HINGE STRUT & HINGE PLATE

- ROOF LINE WITH MAST STRUCK DOWN

MAST ARM STOP, LOCKING PIN
& KEEP LANYARD

MAST CRUTCH

W/HOUSE ROOF (S)

WINCH

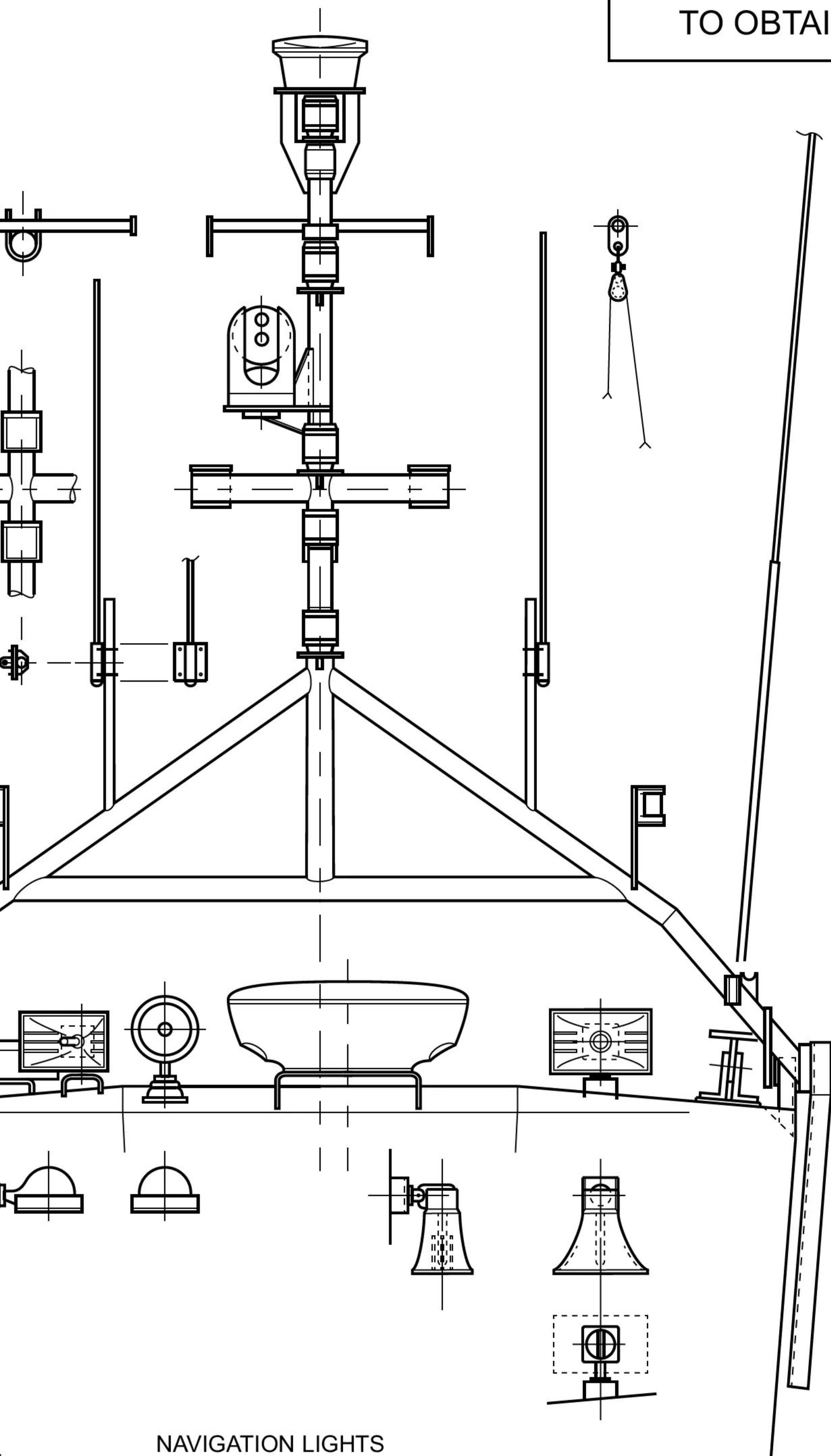
500

400

300

MODEL AT 1/16 SCALE IS DESIGNED AROUND THE BAL
JET 19BM WATERJET UNITS
TO OBTAIN THE MODEL SCALE OF 1/16, ENLARGE PL

FORWARD FACE OF MAST
LOOKING AFT



NAVIGATION LIGHTS

AR = ALL ROUND (VISIBILITY)

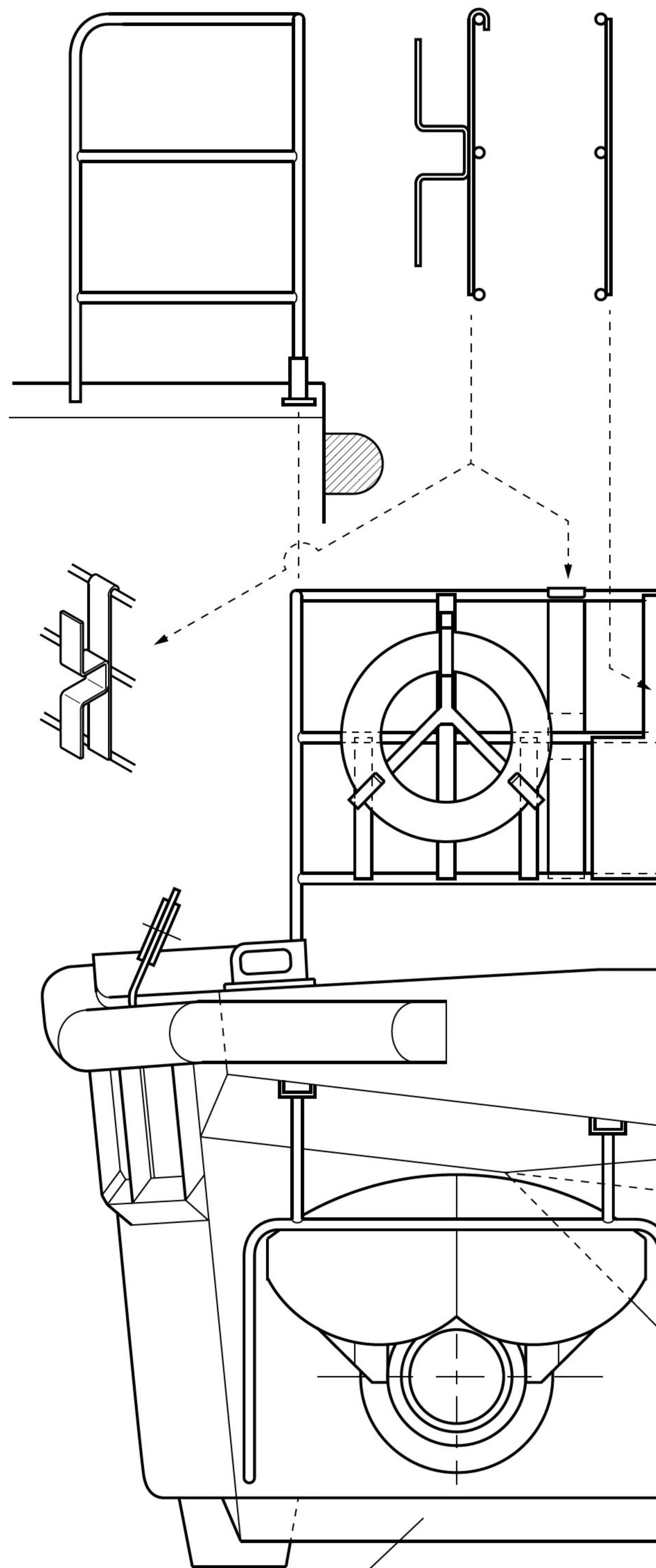
W = WHITE

Y = YELLOW

R = RED

G = GREEN

LAMPS IN WAKE LIGHT BOXES ARE W



TRANSOM WEDGE

M/L

SECTION
NO'S 3

ED AROUND THE BAUER-MODELLE
TERJET UNITS
OF 1/16, ENLARGE PLAN BY 125%

12

RAMP WINCH WIRE SHEAVE

S.

HOLDBACK & CLAW

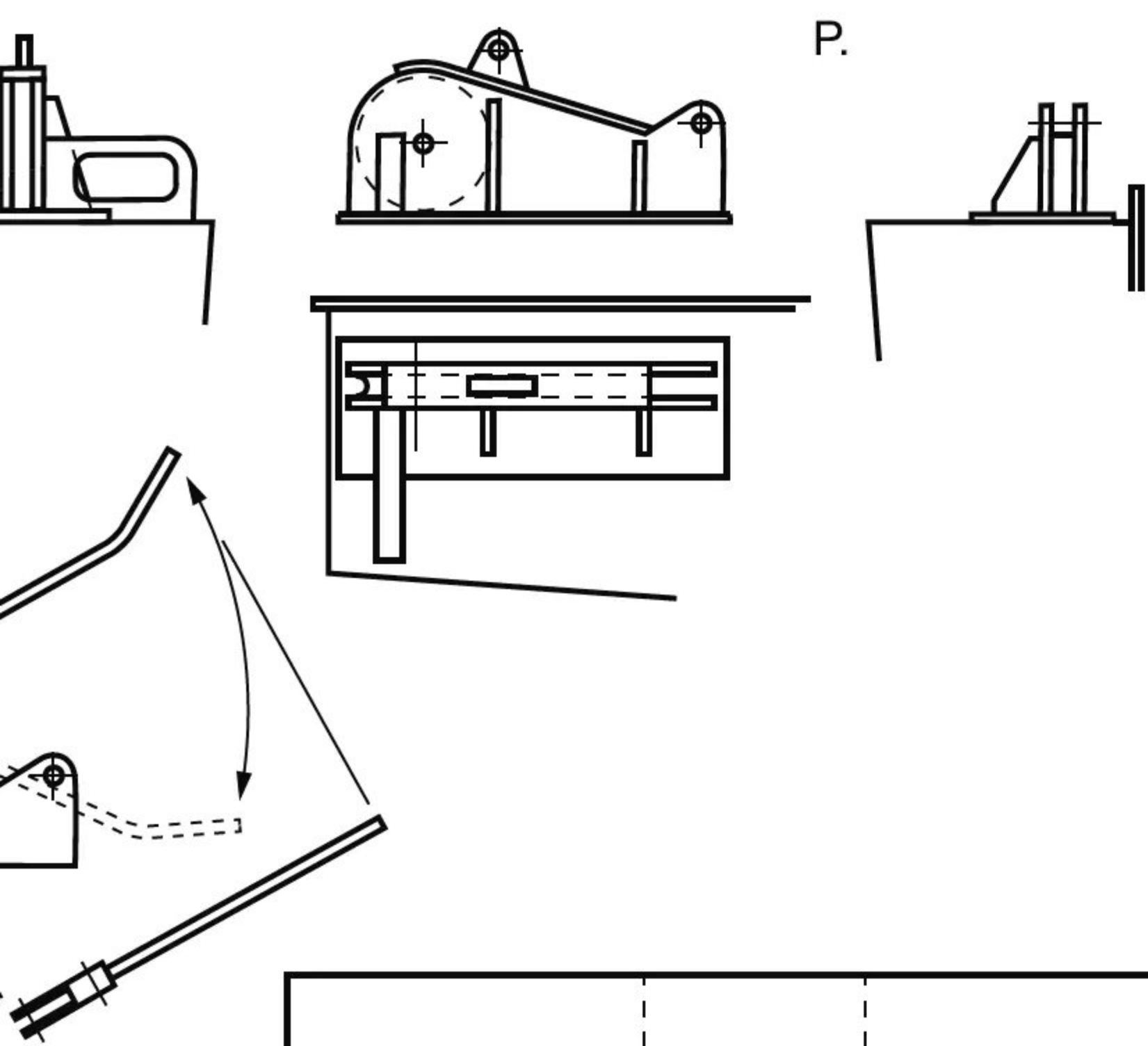
HOLDBACK
CATCH PLATE
P. & S.

COVER

SECTIONS DRAWN TO OUTSIDE OF PLANKING
NO'S (3), (6), (8) & (10) OMITTED FOR CLARITY

BHD
TO

BOXES



P.

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SCALE
INCHES

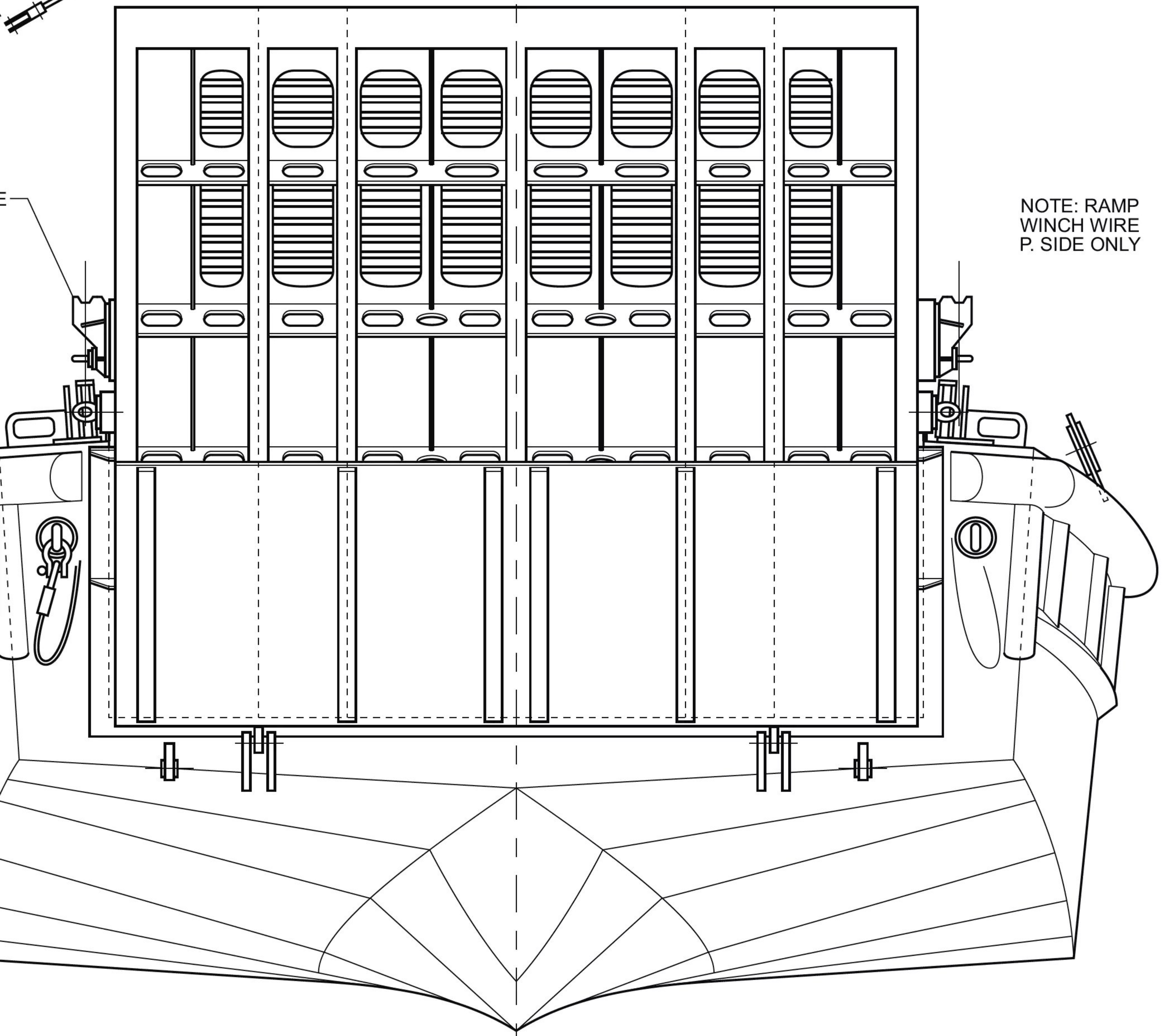
Boats

LANDING CRAFT VEHICLE & PERSONNEL Mk.5

LCVP Mk.5

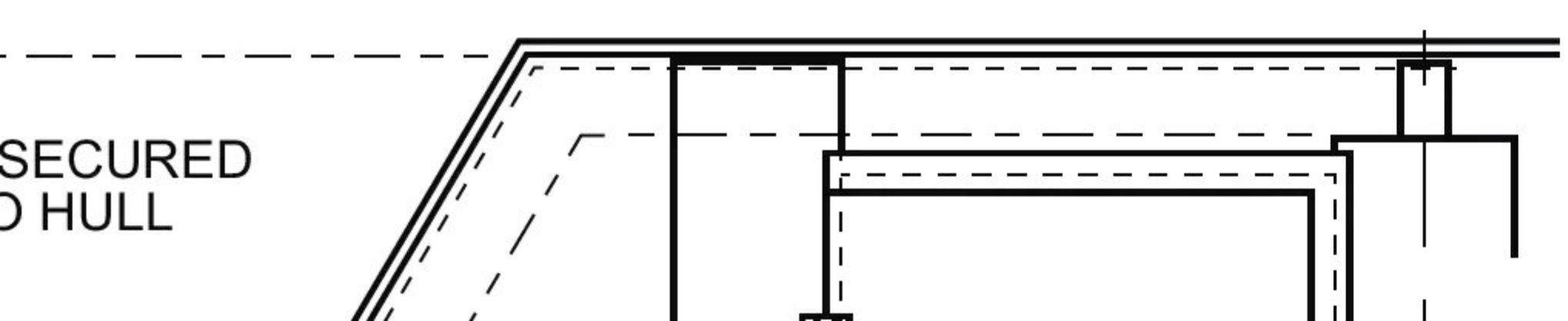
BY PETER BROWN

PLAN No: MM2173	No. OF SHEETS: 2 OF 2	First published in Model Boats January 2024
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NOTE: RAMP
WINCH WIRE
P. SIDE ONLY

ARCTIC COVER FOR'D BULKHEAD
S. SIDE LOOKING AFT, P. SIDE SIMILAR



SECURED
HULL

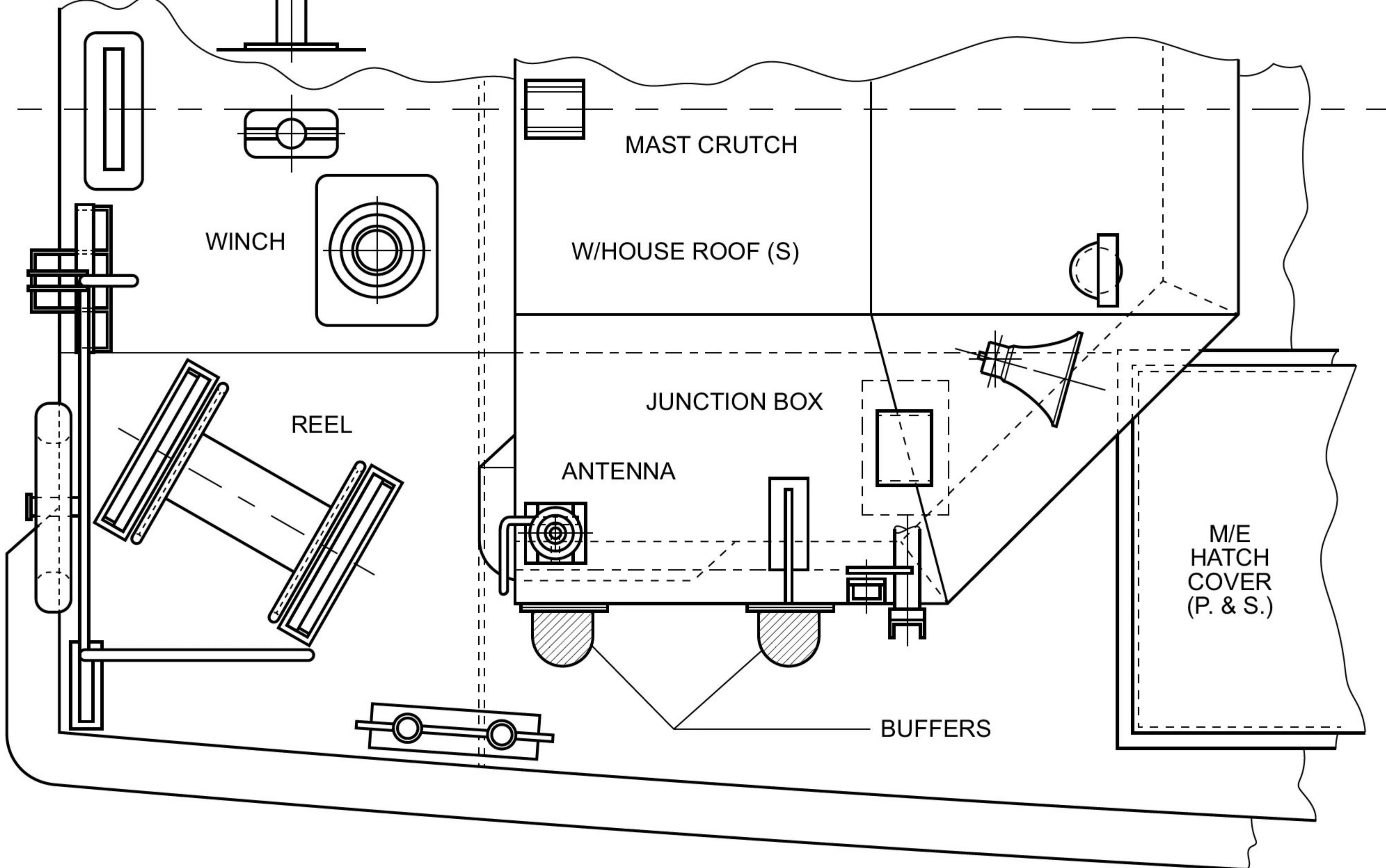
M/L

RAMP WEBS

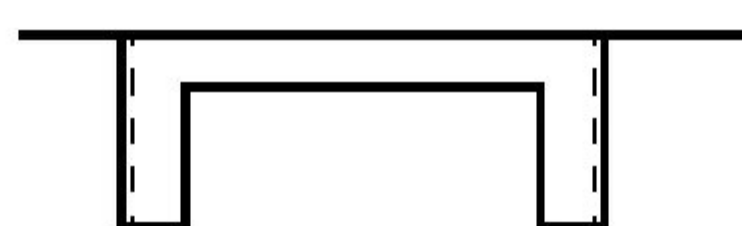
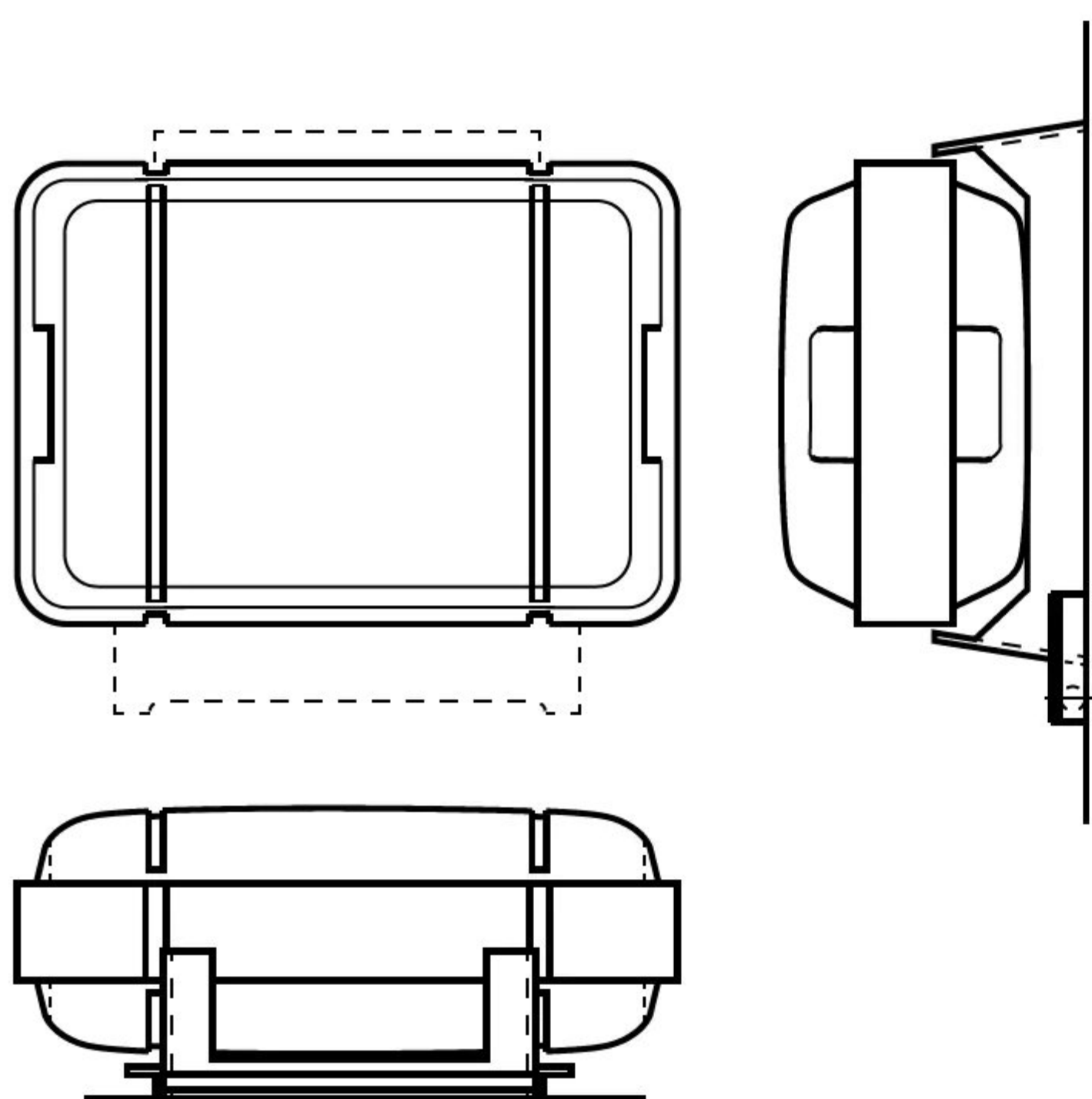
Wd



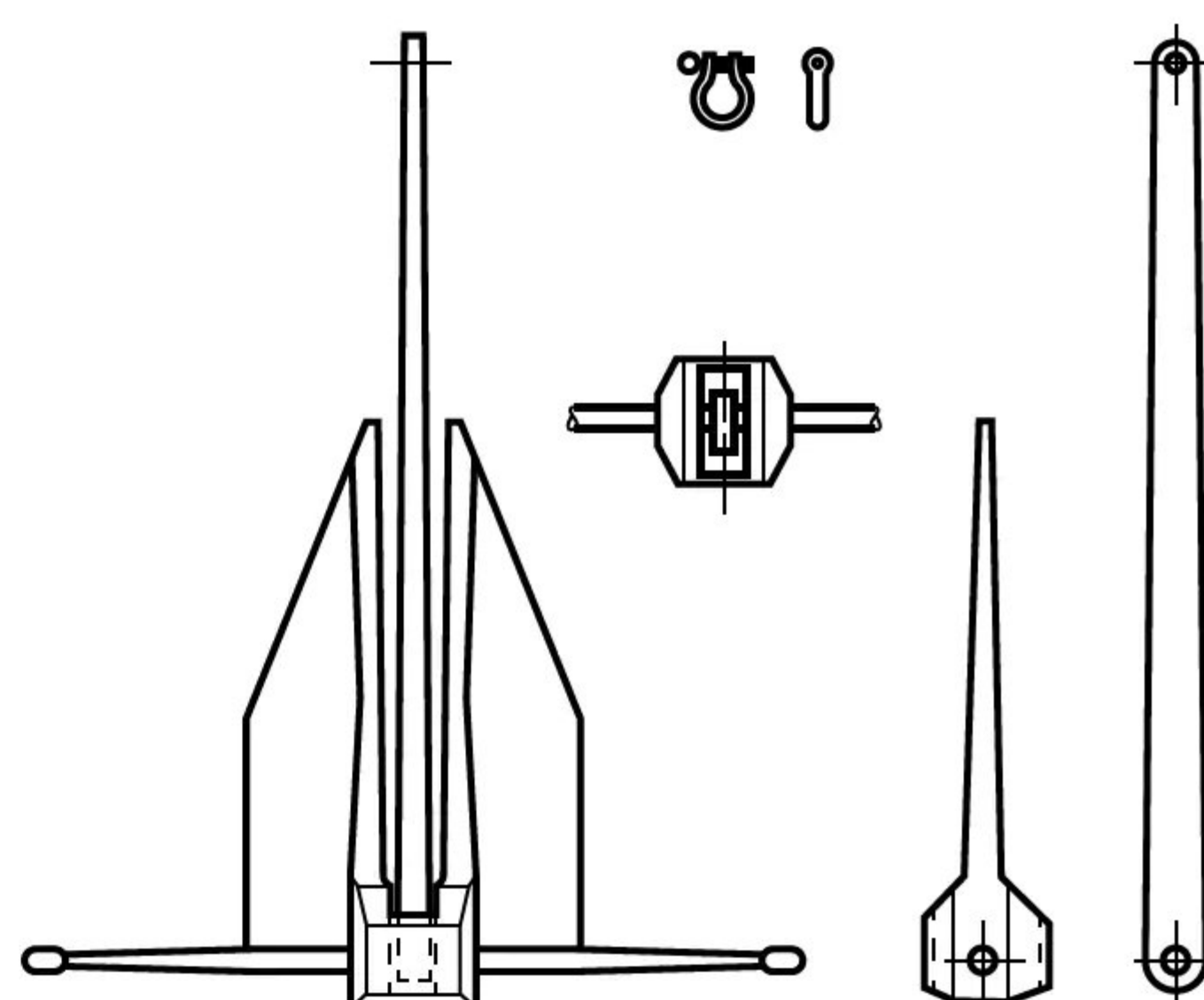
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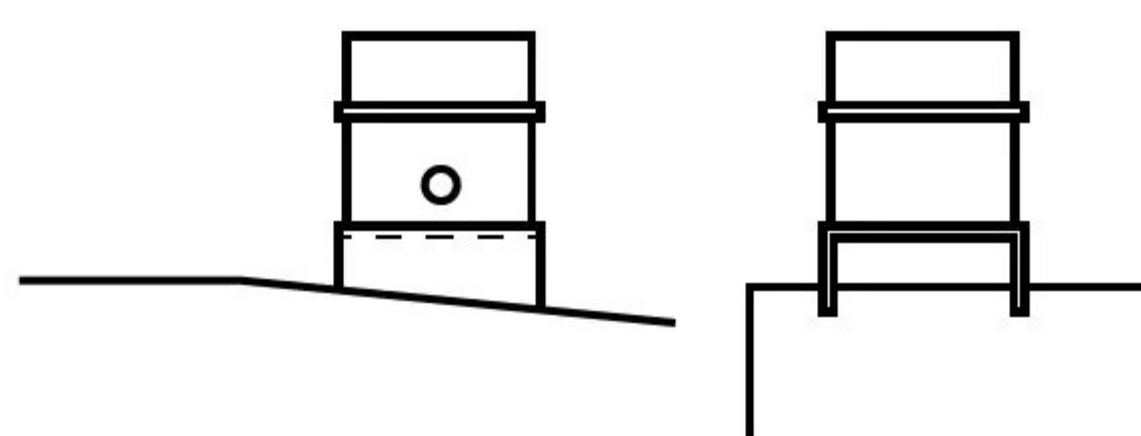
6-MAN LIFERAFT & CRADLE



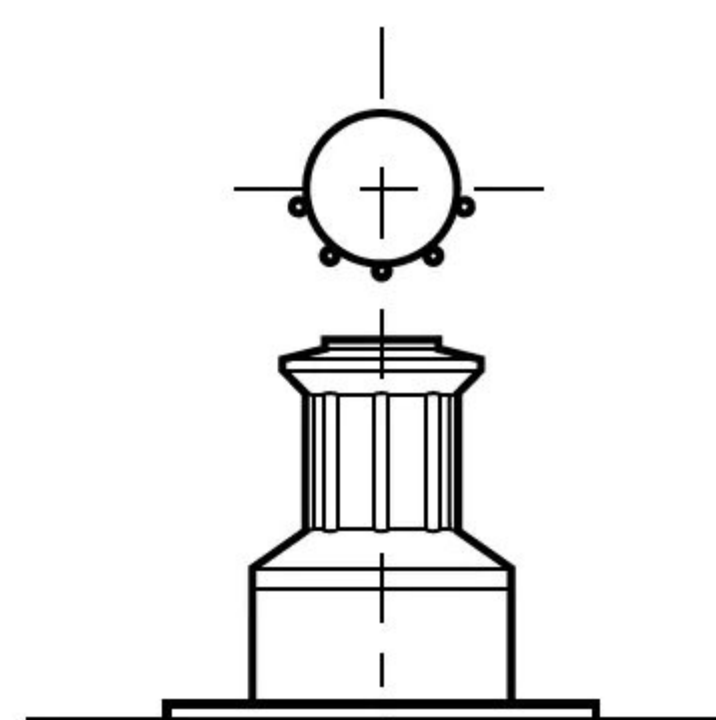
DANFORTH ANCHOR



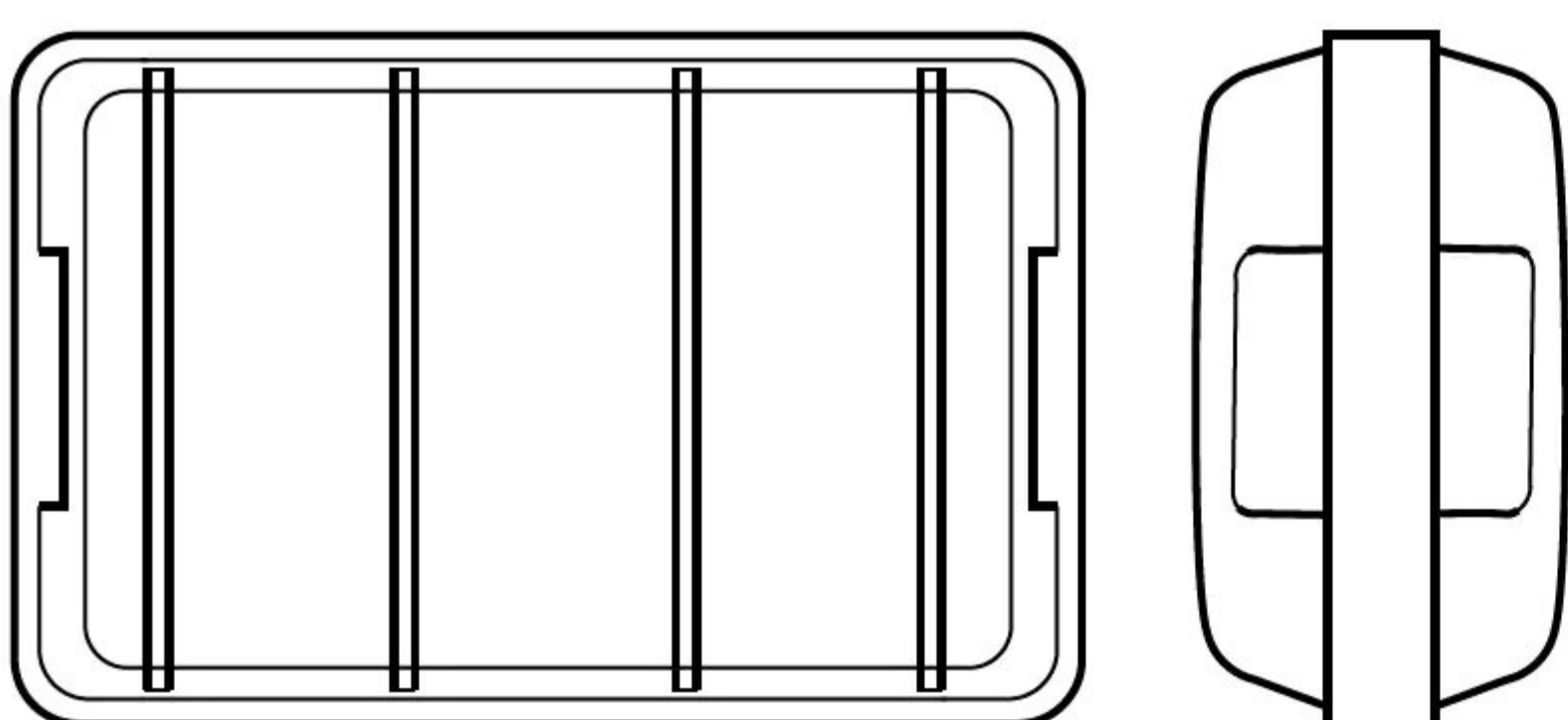
'CUBE' SENSOR



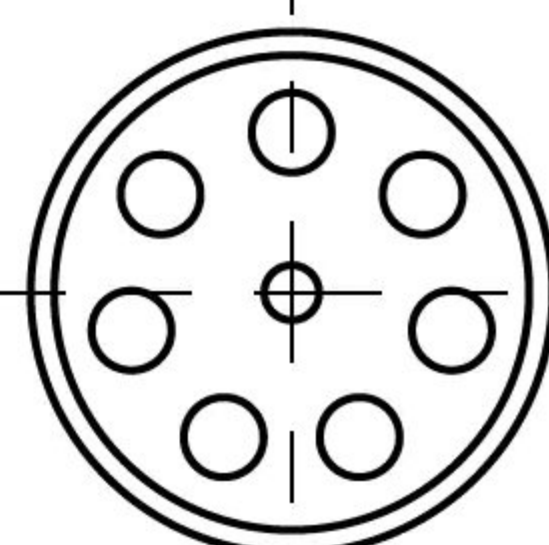
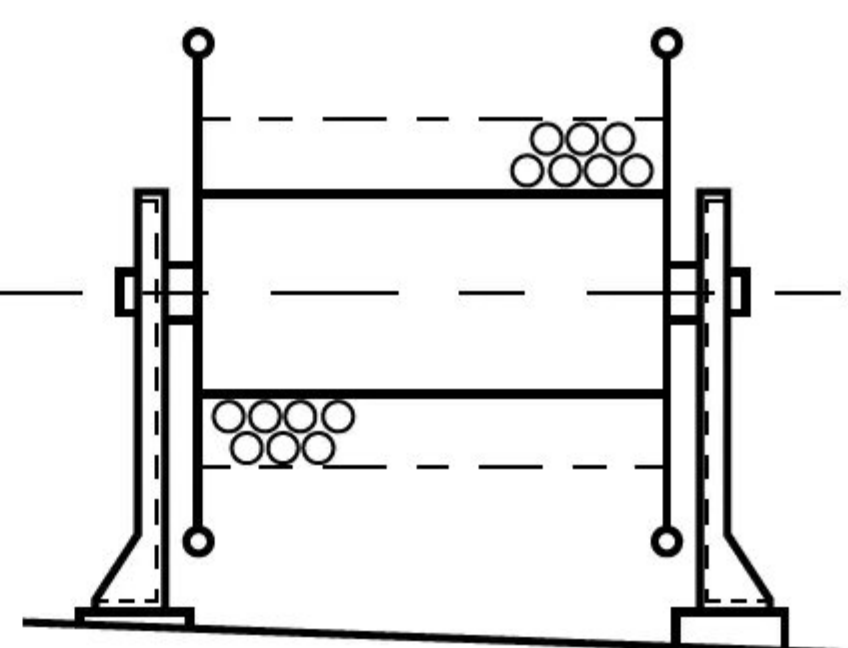
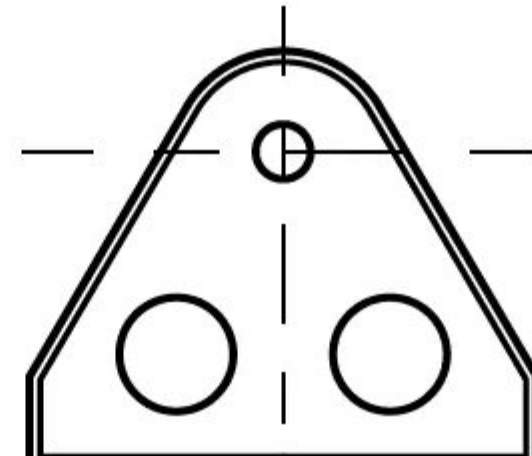
DECK WINCH



16-MAN LIFERAFT

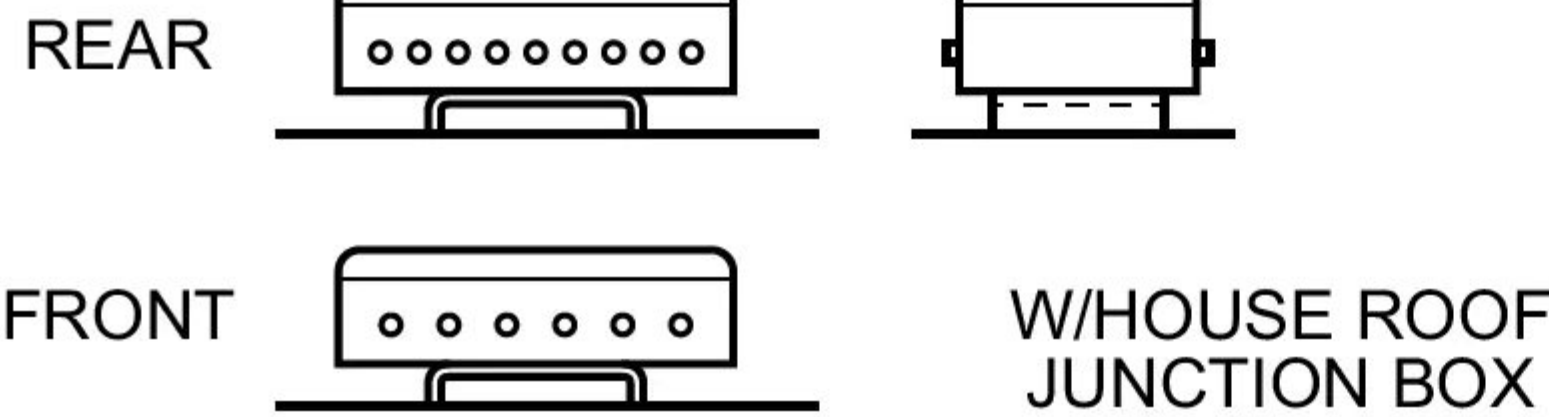


HAWSER REEL



M/L

SECTION THROUGH M/E HATCHES



2

BHD

4

T

O

INNER LONGITUDINAL BULKHEADS
23 ROUND-DOWN TREADS EQUIDISTANTLY SPACED

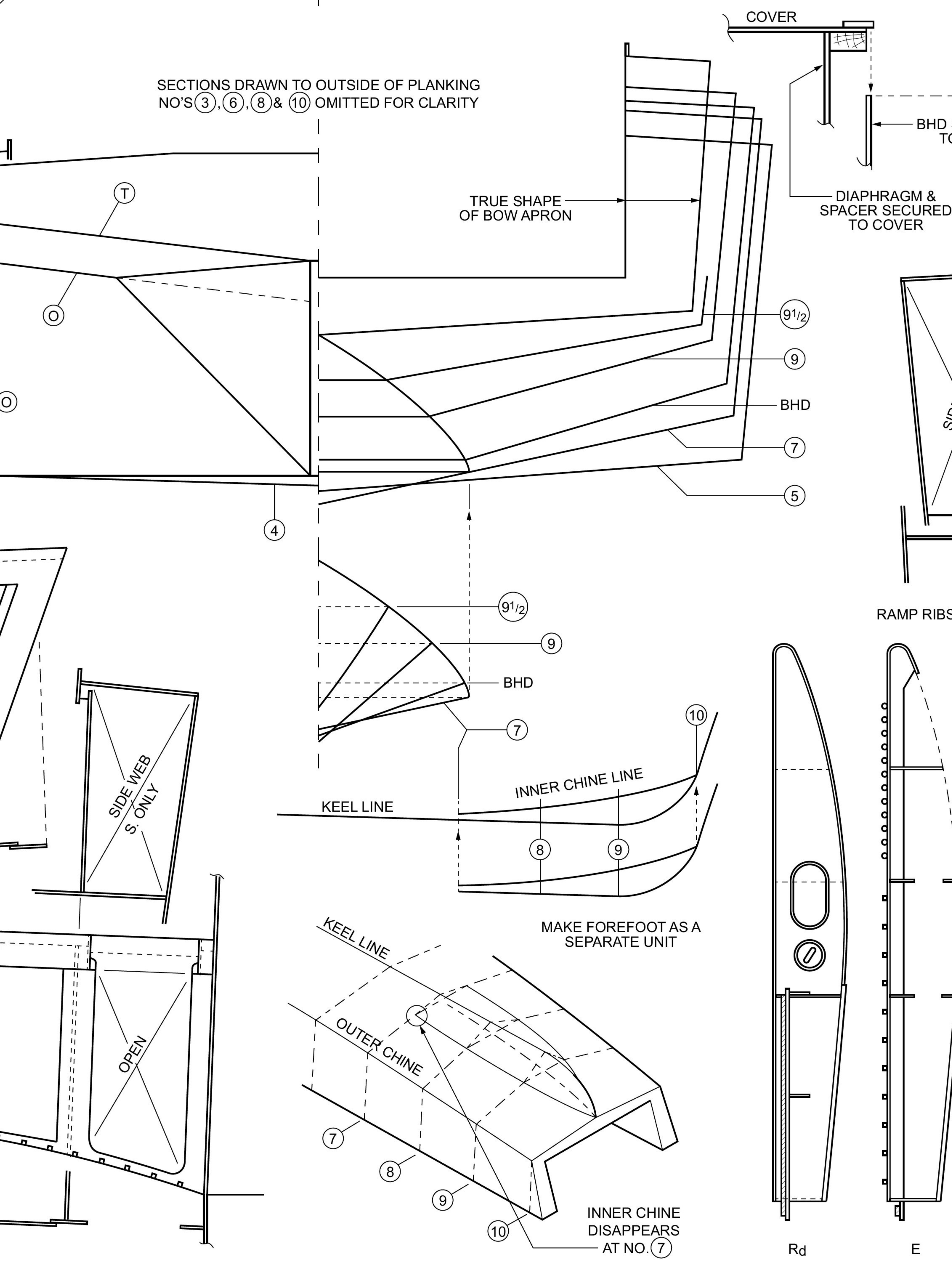
WIRE MESH

SIDE WEB
S. ONLY

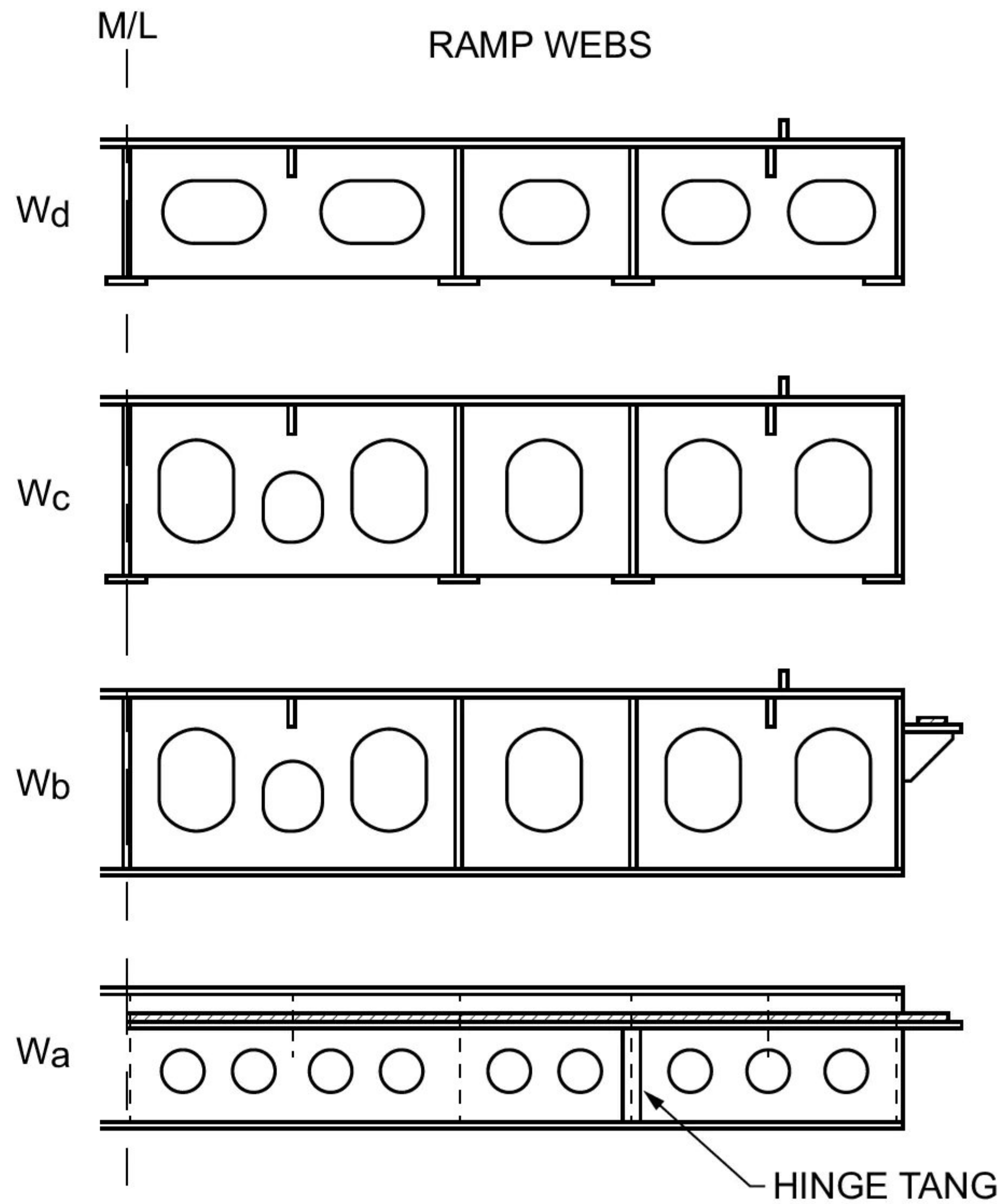
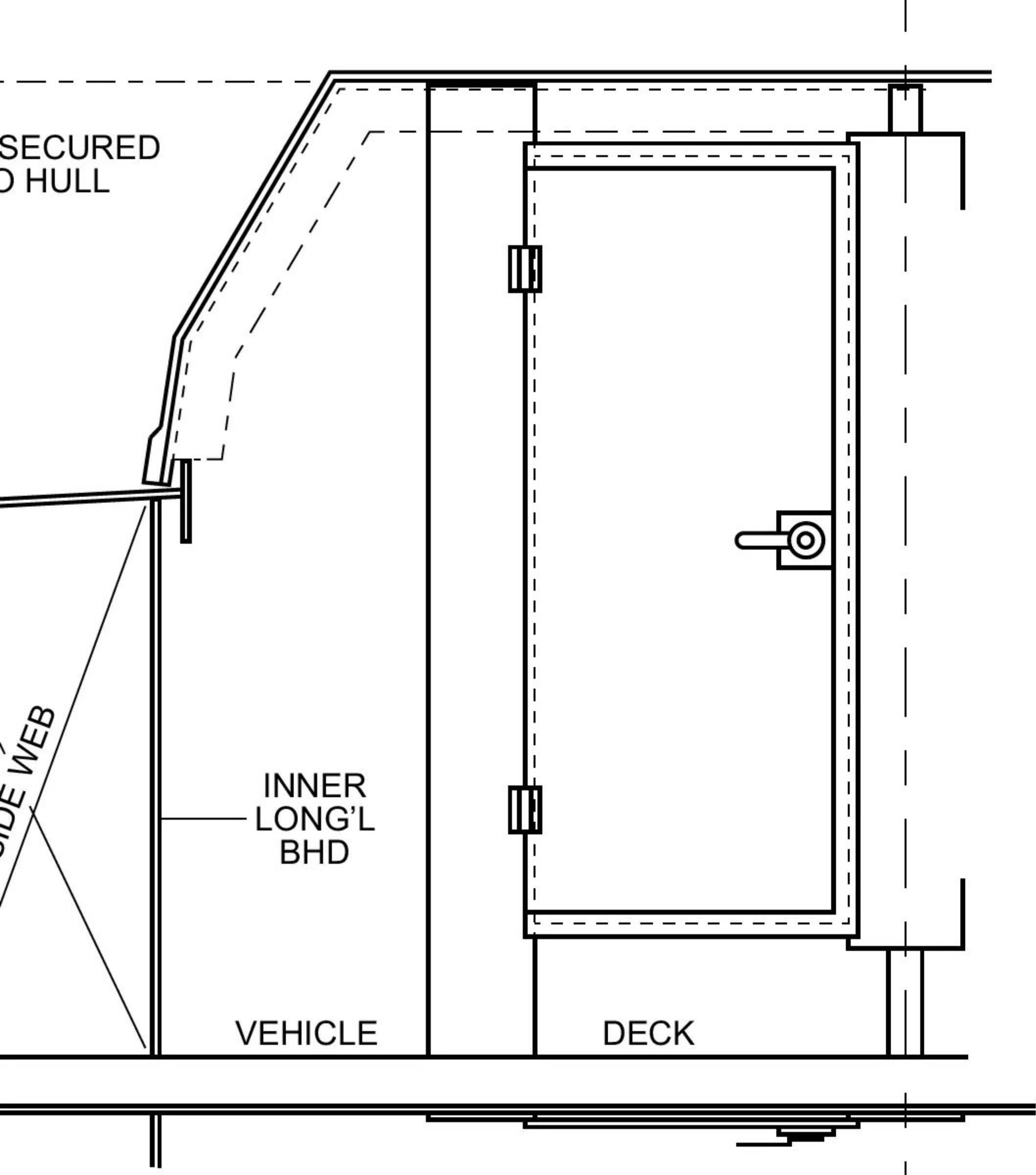
BUMPER RAIL

OPEN

SECTIONS DRAWN TO OUTSIDE OF PLANKING
NO'S ③, ⑥, ⑧ & ⑩ OMITTED FOR CLARITY



ARCTIC COVER FOR'D BULKHEAD
S. SIDE LOOKING AFT, P. SIDE SIMILAR



RAMP FACE

RAMP FLOOR

