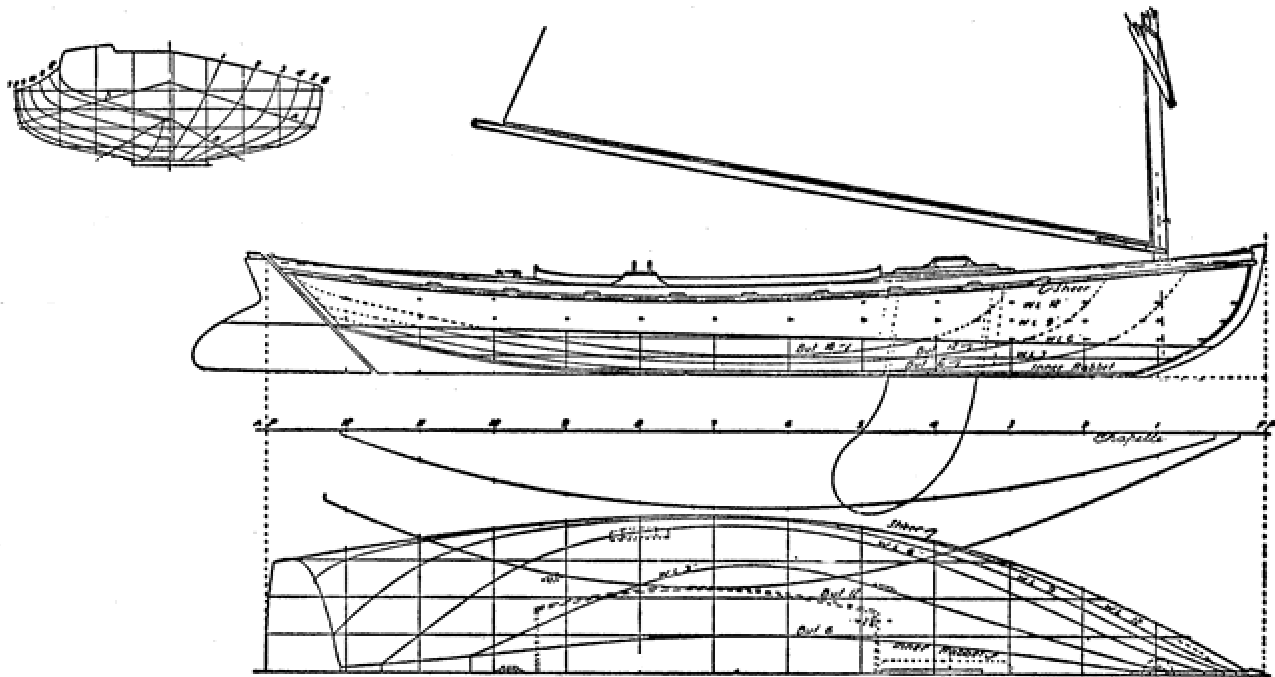


A-Building the Strip Planked *Melonseed* "Goat"

Photos and Text by: Fred Plouffe



Howard I. Chapelle -- the noted boat historian -- first documented the particularly fast sailing and excellent rowing New Jersey Gunning Skiff called the "Melon Seed" and illustrated the design in his book "American Small Sailing Craft" published by W. W. Norton & Co., Inc. Vessel particulars: LOA 13' 6&1/2", Beam 4' 8&1/4", Depth Amidships 12".

The finished *Melonseed* "Goat". Perched on her bilge boards and rudder. After studying the Chapelle plans from the Smithsonian, I felt that changes could be made to gain more space in the cockpit. The end result was a strip planked version 13' 8" L x 4' 10" B with the dagger board removed in favor of twin bilge boards shock cord loaded and angled out 12 degrees, the trunks being under the side decks. With the dagger board removed, a cockpit 6' 9" x 2' 10" was achieved with 12' side decks. The original rudder, flush with the keel, was extended then hinged and also shock loaded for depth of 2', to be used in either position.





Start of the stations. Good alignment here helps the rest of the job.



All stations, with inner stem, in place. Note the saw horses elevate the plywood box beam, a 10" x10" x16" strongback, to which the stations are spaced and attached. The 'sticks' on the stern haunches and along the sheer (which is upside down at this point) are Battens used to give 3D shape and check alignment on the growing boat.

Transom in place along with Mahogany keel board. Inwales clamped and epoxied stem to stern.



The start of the 5/16" x 3/4 " cedar strips ripped from a flat grain board on the bandsaw. They become vertical grain strips when place on edge, held by Titebond II glue (easier and cleaner to work with) and Arrow T-50 gun shooting staples. To keep a fair shape, the strips run past the transom to be sawed off later.

Many staples --
small 1 / 4 inch -- in
between stations
as necessary to
hold the strips flush
to each other while
the glue sets. Use
small brads if
needed.



Starboard side is completed. Note the elliptical section of strips
used to fill the space near the turn of the bilge.

After the hull is all closed up, pull the staples and sand...Sand down the glue lines, sand to fair the hull, and, sand, to prepare the wood for the primer coat of epoxv.



Fiberglass cloth cut and in place for the process of saturation with epoxy. Cloth is 10 oz. weight, 7.5 or 6 oz. could be used. The cloth needs to be laid on 45 degree angle, cross ways to the strips, adding strength to the hull.



Outside of hull now finished with 3 coats of epoxy; turned over and lowered off the saw horses to begin removing the box beam. Note cleats used to align the station molds and to keep them vertical.

Mast partners with wax paper over, will be covered with epoxy later.



Mast step with drainage hole



Slots cut into the stations allow the inner coaming to be constructed as shown on the starboard side. The fore deck, side decks and stern deck are epoxied; sanded then glassed.

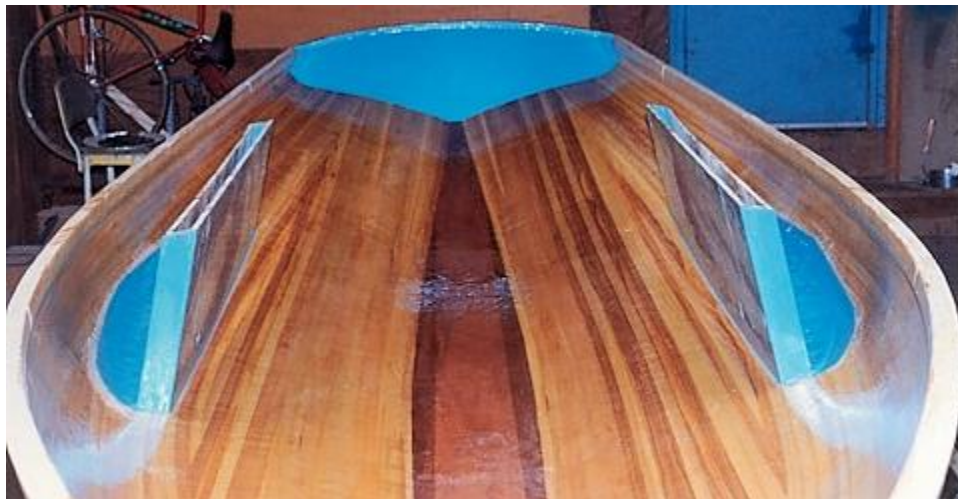


Having placed tape on the all the landing surfaces the deck will touch, it can now be removed to take out station molds. Note the temporary brace added to keep the vessel shape with the stations and deck removed



Scraping glue
and high spots
from the inside
of hull.

After sanding, inside now
exoxied and glassed.



Slots cut in the bottom and pre made trunks epoxied in place. Dark blue sections to the outside of trunks are pieces of foam covered with glass & epoxy. This addition is to build up the flat spot behind the trunks preventing water from being trapped under the side decks.

Bow and Stern rails, along with the oar locks carved by Nancy Plouffe



Above: Installing rails and oar locks above.
The blue hull color is derived by adding pigment to the epoxy mix.

Left: Outer stem installed with hand grab carved by Nancy.



Glued up mast blank between two boards with centers each end, one higher than the other to create taper. Router bit is lowered as needed and slid down the length, then mast rotated a little and repeated as necessary to achieve a round shape



Auxiliary power being carved by Nancy.

The two bilge boards, foiled on one side. Note epoxy bushing with 3/4" pivot hole.





Oar locks with carved goat heads installed and varnished. Note nicely varnished leather collared oars.



Kick up rudder with housing. Using line from cockpit, the rudder extension may be pulled up to 90 degrees leaving it flush with the bottom of the boat.



Making the power plant. More 'engine' particulars: Sprit Sail 82 Sq. Ft., Luff 104", Foot 125", Leach 143", Gaff 76",. Clew to Throat 148", Tack to Peak 163", Mast Diameter at Deck 3 3/8", 10' 6" Long, 1" 6" Bury, Tapered to 1 1/2 " at ends.

Fred sailing "Goat" off in the sun set.

Other Particulars of Fred Plouffe's *Melonseed* "Goat":

- Boat. 205 Lbs.
- Mast & Sail 18Lbs.
- Spars 8 Lbs.
- Rudder 13lbs.
- Floor 10 Lbs.
- Row Seat/ Storage Box 11Lbs.
- Oars 7Lbs.

Total Weight 272 Lbs.



"...Life's a Little Dry without a Small Boat..."