



Presenting the sixth instalment of F&B's resident DIY (Do-It-Yourself) Tony Ravenscroft's 7 Part Series rebuilding a Mako 20 from little more than scrap..

Rebuilding The GRP Mako 20 - Part 6

Over the last few months as I have spoken to people about the Mako rebuild project there have been two or three people who had a boat that they also were thinking about rebuilding.

Each of them has generously offered to let me write about it, "Well thanks" I say, "But I think we have well and truly covered how to cut up a piece of plywood and fibreglass it into a boat (sarcasm intended), the readers will be sick of it".

Apart from the fact that I would rather kiss Peter Webster's a...e than write about yet another boat rebuild,

the fact is we have covered "How to cut up a piece of plywood and fibreglass it into a boat" in about three issues this year alone. That being said, we are about to do it again.

So is this really "How to cut up a piece of plywood and fibreglass it into a boat" Part Four? Well, yes and no. Bear with me here. For those of you who have been following the series I hope you have realised that regardless of if it was the new transom, the bearers or the floor, all we have really done is use plywood as the structure and secured it to the boat with fibreglass.

The basic technique, materials and process have always been the same. My point being that there is not a lot to master and in spite of that, it is a very strong and relatively inexpensive boat building method. In previous months I have almost step by step covered how to do a particular task, such as putting bearers into a boat. Next job on my construction list was the swim platform and associated lockers. Followed closely by the forward platform.

Now, I could show you step by step how to build them, and to a certain extent I will, but we have probably come to the parting of the ways. If you are reading this because you have a project of your own in mind, then the chances of it having a swim platform like mine are remote. So showing you step by step how to build it, would be a little pointless.

So this month, we are going to use my next projects, the swim and forward platforms, as broad examples of how this construction process can be used by you to build what you want on your boat. I have provided a photo sequence that is almost step by step what I did, however, I hope you will use them as a guide or inspiration for your own particular project.

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Below Right: What's this you ask?

Well if you squint you will see that this is the forward bulkhead we saw above, with the floor of the storage compartment now in place. I include this picture mainly so you can see the bog line already neatly trimmed with a rounded spatula. Remember we fill all void space, such as where two pieces of wood butt together as here. Void space can let water in and will severely affect the strength of the structure where the void occurs. We aren't finished here either - still to go over the bog line is a layer or two of fibreglass. In this case two layers of 450 gsm chop strand matt. Sometimes I leave the bog to cure before I roll the 'glass over the top. This way you are rolling 'glass onto a solid structure and there is no chance of anything moving out of place. You do have to give the now hardened bog a quick clean up with a piece of abrasive paper or a small angle grinder before you can 'glass over the top of it.



This is the bow area that is to become the forward platform, which I intend to use as a casting platform and a double bunk when camping. There will also be a divided storage area underneath. Basically I need three pieces of plywood here to become; 1) The floor of the storage compartment. 2) The dividing wall in the centre of the storage compartment, that will also act as a support for the casting platform. These three pieces have already been cut and dry assembled without any resin or bog to make sure that it all fits and works as intended before things start to get sticky. You may remember last month I showed you how I made templates out of strips of Coreflute, a plastic material used generally as a signboard. Well I did exactly the same thing here to get an exact fit around the curve of the hull. In fact if you look carefully you can see the black line I drew as a guide for the template. What you can see in this picture is the two main bearers that I used to support the floor of the storage compartment. On top of these is a layer of bog that will act as an adhesive to hold the floor down and basically join the floor to the rest of the boat. Again as all these pieces go into the boat overall strength is added to the entire boat as a 'grid' is being constructed as you go.



Exactly the same area as above, but seen from the front of the boat. Here, however, you can see that this forward platform also uses the forward bulkhead in the structure. While the top of the platform uses the bulkhead as a support, the bulkhead uses the platform, not in place yet, as a stiffener. Each piece adds more strength to the entire structure.



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