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Fairey Huntsman 31

by StuartE



4th Mar 2019

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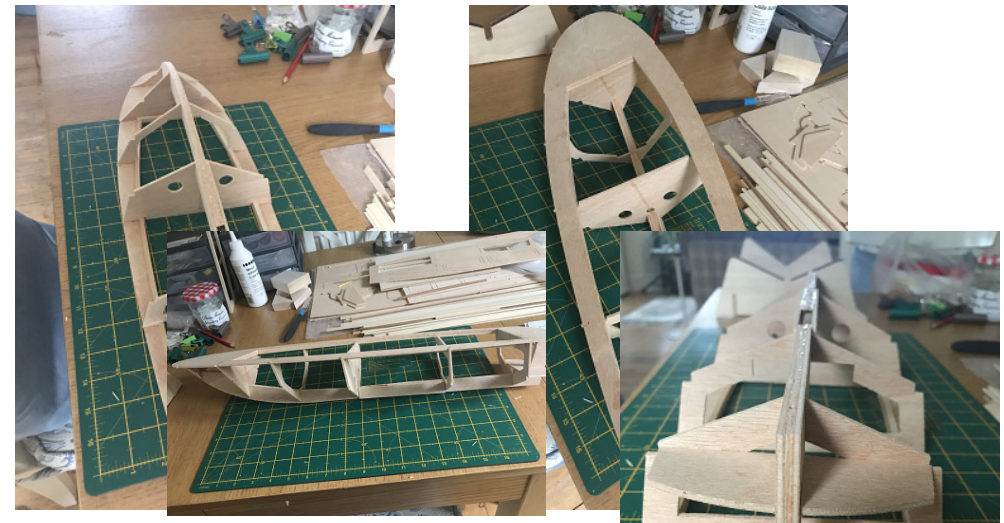
Just purchased a new "Kit" from SLEC to build a Fairey Huntsman 31. This is only the second boat I'm building, the first being a Mowe 2 from an Aeronauts kit. ?



4th Mar 2019

Fist eager steps...easy!

I opened the box, eager to start and quickly assembled the keel and base deck following the excellent and easy to read instructions and picture manuals....easy...I'll finish this in a week or two with a following wind and the wife and daughter being away on half term holidays!



4th Mar 2019

First problem.....

OK..... so after the first week and the excitement of getting the skeleton of the hull and keel in place I hit the first problem.....this is not a kit where everything is cut to the exact size, length, dimensions of the model. You have to do some cutting, sanding and getting out a modelling plane to get the parts supplied fitted. This now requires some skill and careful fitting of the stringers. Basically they are 2 pieces of hardwood 1/8" x 1/4" cut to length and glued together and need to be shaped and held in place while the glue sets overnight.....not a simple task. Next, to start fitting the hull skins, the stringers need to be shaped to 2 angles. One for the bottom skins and a different angle for the side skins. Taking too much of the stringers off by using a plane will mean the skins don't lie at the correct angles for gluing....gently does it!! I take my time and check angles after each pass of the plane over the stringers...WOW stressful, but all's well with the first 2 bottom skins! In addition the Keel needs to be trimmed to the exact angles of the bottom skins so they overlap or butt up against each other. My advice here is to follow the instructions to the letter or you'll probably be using far more P38 in the later stages filling holes and gaps!! NOTE: The bottom and side skins are cut oversize, so they don't fit exactly to the stringers.



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6th Jun 2019

Maiden Voyage

With battery fully charged and with great anticipation, Rosalie had her first voyage on the Bushy Park Boating lake a couple of weekends ago. It went very well, but not as fast as I was expecting and at full speed, the battery started to run down and affect the speed after about 20 mins running. It looked good though and there were plenty of onlookers, the turns looked spectacular and mirrored exactly what would happen on the real thing!. Next thing is to reduce the weight a bit to see if it can go faster or play with the prop size..... what fun!! I'll upload a video once done on youtube....I thought you could upload directly here via pictures, but seems not



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24th May 2019

Finished at last.....(but might change or add some things later!)

At last the boat is finished to a point where I can take it out for its maiden voyage. It passed leak and floatation tests in the bath and all electric function as they should. Now to show it off in open water on the Boating Lake in Bushy Park, Kingston upon Thames. I'm hoping for a bit of sun and not too much wind to create too many waves at first, until I get used to handling it. I'll upload pictures of Rosalie in action in my next post! I will probably do some tinkering and some detail additions later on, but for now ITS FINISHED! Still not happy with the pulpit rail and I will most likely remove it and do it again taking into consideration all the great advice received from the fellow members of this site. Thank you for following the build.....now what's next!!!



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4th Mar 2019

Hull progressing nicely!

OK, so the last 2 posts on the blog were from work undertaken three weeks ago. I am now up to the present day and have spent the whole week and weekend in getting the bottom and side skins on the skeleton of the hull and putting on the transom. Because the curves of the hull are quite specific on the Huntsman, only one piece of skin can be fitted at a time, and then trimmed into place before the next piece of skin will fit. In the previous post I mentioned all the laser cut pieces are cut oversize.....fitting the skins was a real challenge! Following the instructions at this stage went out the window and I fitted the skins in the reverse order, but feel it was the best option. The instructions say built from the bow first and work back to the transom, but impossible to fit the pieces in this order, so I started with the aft and worked forwards. It also mentions to overlap the side skins with the bottom skins, but all I could manage was to butt the pieces together with a tight fit and fill with P38 afterwards. The pictures show the completed skins, trimmed, sanded and gaps filled with P38 and then sanded again. It now takes on a good shape, however the difficult pieces on the bow are still to be completed. These are formed of 4 pieces of solid balsa wood that need to be cut and sanded to multiple curves..... next weeks job! Once this is done then its on to filling again and re-sanding and finishing. Hopefully it would look more like a Huntsman Hull rather than a hammer head shark!

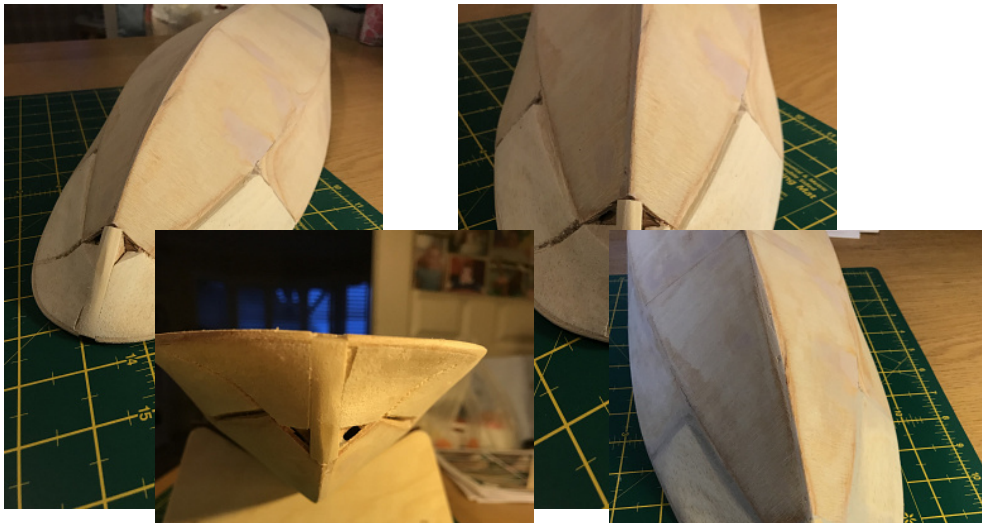


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8th Mar 2019

Basic hull construction completed

This week has been about getting the basic hull construction completed and especially the tricky bow. This was done in three stages; the first group of pictures shows the four balsa blocks being roughly sanded to shape. The instructions were good here as they recommended the required curves be shaped using sandpaper wrapped around an aerosol can....This being achieved, the next stage was to fill all the gaps around the balsa blocks with P38 and sand back to smooth out the curves. The 3rd stage was to fully coat the entire hull with Balsa Lite fine surface filler and sand back to wood so that all the fine grain imperfections are filled. I'm very happy with the results, but now concerned that too much has been sanded off the bow to get those curves...What do you think? ? Next stage is to apply a couple of thin coats of sanding sealer and then onto covering with 35gsm lightweight glassfibre fabric and Eze-Kote to give the hull more strength and durability.



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19th May 2019

Almost finished

Almost there..... Handrails and seats and cabin almost completed. Things are however, not going well with the pulpit rail.....All pieces are cut and bent to shape as per the instructions to the correct lengths, but using a jig made from ply I cant get the brass rail to hold with solder...its a real mess, so decided to try and use epoxy glue to hold the rail and connecting pieces together...It doesn't look good and I'm really upset that it will spoil the look of the boat.



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19th May 2019

A look under the hood....

While Superstructure is moving on in leaps and bounds thought I'd let you look under the hood of the Huntsman - Rosalie. There is lots of space here so you can put things where you like, but the limitations is that the Superstructure has a deep cabin which means in this part of the mid-ships, everything must be mounted low and off the sides and bulkheads. I was also limited by cable length so although I build a "heath robinson" bridge over the battery to put the receiver, this had to be mounted on the side as the superstructure would'nt sit down on the deck! I also bought far too big a servo so this is mounted upside down to fit!!



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14th Mar 2019

Hull finishing touches

The Huntsman Hull has now had the finishing touches applied...Sanding Sealer, Eze-Kote, glassfibre sheet and hull chine bars added. The inside of the hull has been given a good dollop of Eze-Kote to seal it and waterproof it so next job is to fit the prop tube and motor before the whole hull gets a coat of primer... I've only just realised, but the kit from SLEC does not contain any decking, so I need to sort out whether to just go for plain mahogany veneer or try to find teak decking which is laser cut to fit with plank marks....any help or advice here welcome for a novice! (I can't find anything suitable on the internet). ?



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18th Mar 2019

Ready for the Paint job!

Following the completion of the basic hull build, I installed the prop shaft and motor (Mtroniks Hydra 15A) and all lined up nicely. Next, drilled the hole ready for the rudder assembly to be inserted and it all fits perfectly vertical to my great delight. Its now masked up and ready for the hull paint job which will start with a primer filler layer followed by white primer, then brilliant white gloss with an Ink Blue design and black anti-foul keel. I'm just waiting for the shed to warm up a bit and reduce the humidity as the wife wil definitely kick me out if I spray indoors. She just about allows me to do the build in the dining room, but only when she's out!



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18th May 2019

Windows are in (and a few more bits added!)

So, superstructure is really taking shape now the windows are in and the top screen has been added. Next stage is to build and add the Pulpit on the bow and the rest of the handrails and seating. I am not looking forward to the pulpit as have no welding equipment or skills here. Another challenge then to see if solder will hold the brass rails in place. If not it will be constructed with expoxy resin and then painted over. Onwards and upwards.



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8th May 2019

Superstructure takes shape

I'm so sorry to my build blog followers that I haven't updated on my progress for some time, but the build has taken a back seat for a few weeks due to changing jobs, but over the last week or so I've picked the build of the superstructure back up again. Just following the instructions at the moment so as to get to the build level where I can start the paint job before adding all the detailing bits. I have decided not to build the structure roof's with planks as the instructions show, but to use balsa sheet as it looks a lot easier..These were "bent" into shape over the skeleton with a little help from some steam from the kettle. It really does work well in forming the shape....but also burns your fingers if you're not careful. Another lesson learnt... wear some gloves! So with basic build done I started on the paint job following the colours of the hull design. I prepared it the same as the hull with light bals filler first then rubbed down so as to fill most of the wood grain imperfections, then a coat of filler primer, followed by primer, then paint and finally a couple of layers of clear laquer. All with a lot of sanding a smoothing inbetween. Its not bad! Now waiting for the weekend to prepare and install windows, pulpit rails and cabin floors with some left over mahogany. I can't wait!?



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29th Mar 2019

Hull Paint job complete

So.... Patience is not one of my strong points and paint spraying is definately not. I don't have the facilities or the right equipment to create a first class excellent paint job, so this part of the build was always going to be a challeng and it proved to be right. the first primer layer went on great and it looked good, followed by a layer of brilliant appliance white from a large can from my local Halfords.....all looked perfect. Then came the masking and application of the Capri Blue hull and pinstripping at deck level. Well, this didn't go great as I couldn't get the hull line correct as it shows on real life Huntsmans or the instruction sheet. In addition, the Frog tape I used, lifted in places over the hull stringers and was a real mess.....it had to come off! A re-application of primer and white gloss coat followed, and with more patience than I thought I had, managed to mask up again for the Blue Hull. I learnt from the first mistake and made sure that the stirngers were masked on all sides first, then added a solid masking strip all the way down the hull. Although not perfect the results can be see here in the pictures. I decided that I'd add a couple of layers of Halfords clear laquer to finish of the paint job to create a tough, clear, glossy finish, but before this decided to name the boat by using lettraset. Here I learnt a second and third valuable lesson.....make sure the paint is completely dry first and also don't spray too much laquer in one place.....it makes the paint run into the laquer!!! The results can be seen on the bow. Oh well, I tried my best and not going to re-do it now. So, Rosalie hull is now painted and its time to do the decking. For this I am going to use thin sheets of mahogany. They were not provided as part of the kit so had to appeal to SLEC who kindly sent me two sheets of mahogany for this purpose. Thank you SLEC for being understanding that a "Kit" should contain all that's necessary to build it and not have to go and find more pieces to buy. Judge the paint job for yourself and don't be tooo critical as its only my second boat build.?



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10th Apr 2019

Decking added

With the Hull paint job complete, the next stage of the build was to add the decking and rubbing strip. Being a novice at this I decided the best option was not to go for a complicated deck....KISS!! So I opted for solid mahogany. Veneer was not included in the kit, but the nice people at SLEC sent me a 2mm solid sheet to make the decking out of. The instructions said to make the decking out of 6 pieces, 2 for the aft deck, 2 pieces port and starboard and 2 for the bow. I went for just the 2 pieces, one port side and one starboard as I didn't want to see too many joins. Cutting was a little tricky as I didn't want a large piece splitting, but a solid support for the cutting table and a sharp scalpel did the trick. However, as throughout this build I learnt another valuable lesson, don't use a water based glue to attach bare wood to bare wood, especially one so thin....result are it bows and curls and distorts in all the wrong places. Use a two part contact adhesive! I weighed down the two pieces of decking for the entire deck and it eventually laid flat. I finished it off with mahogany 1/8" x 1/4" strip all round the deck for the rubbing strip, sanded and then varnished with 3 coats of satin yacht varnish. I think the results are good, but judge for yourself.... Now its onto the superstructure....??



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16th Apr 2019

Now onto the Superstructure

Now the hull is complete, instead of putting in all the electrics, I decided to start the superstructure build. As per the instructions and to get a good snug fit on the hull, it has to be built on the hull. It's going well at present and no real worries yet! Skeleton is complete, now onto the roofs and cockpit. I have decided to do roof in sheets of balsa 3mm thick rather than the 3/32" planks that the instructions suggest....that seems like a disaster waiting to happen for a novice! ?



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