

HIRD ISLAND ELECTRIC SKIFF STUDY PLANS

I developed this boat for my own use in the coastal Georgia marshes. In this area there are miles and miles of narrow winding tidal creeks surrounded by tall marsh grasses. Birds and other animals abound, and quietly sneaking up on wildlife was one of the primary reasons for this design.

The water in these creeks is surprisingly deep, but they are so narrow and winding that, much of the time, sailing is hopeless. You just get the sail up and drawing, and the creek will turn, changing your beautiful reach into a fruitless beat. There are pretty strong tidal currents as well, so rowing your way out of this situation can be exhausting. Therefore the design of this skiff was driven by the search for easy electric powering, with sailing and rowing secondary.

Easy powering means a narrow hull, and speeds at or below hull speed, in this case, about 5 knots. These same features favor rowing, and the HIRD ISLAND SKIFF makes a pretty nice rowing boat, particularly if the heavy batteries are left ashore. Narrow hulls are not so good for sailing, however, particularly so if there is no external ballast keel. Stability is what is needed for really good sailing, and narrowing the hull for easy propulsion takes away from stability. That said, this skiff will sail well on all points, but may need some hiking out in order to stay on her feet when going to windward. Her rig is rather small, and designed for very easy hoisting, the theory being that I would power when the wind was foul and quickly hoist the sail when it turned fair for a bit.

The other features of this design include a plywood chine hull for simple construction and easier dry sailing. There are two generous flotation compartments, in case you go over with those heavy batteries aboard. A rope steering system that I picked up from N. G Herreshoff's Coquina design allows steering from anywhere in the boat and lets two people sit facing forward without having to fight with the tiller. There is a removable slip thwart, which will put a rowers weight in the proper place and then gets out of the way when sailing or powering. There are a couple of little back rests that attach to the aft thwart for comfortable seating.

While I first envisioned this skiff as doing a fair amount of sailing, in fact our usage of

her has evolved towards electric powered wine-and-cheese sunset cruises or wonderful moonlight jaunts. Sailing has receded in our usage partly from my own laziness, but also because the range under batteries has turned out to be far more than I expected.

As with most of my designs, after spending a little time with the boat, I found a few things I would like to change. For this reason, the boat you see being built in the photos may not be the same in all respects as the one shown on the plans. Most of these changes won't even be noticed, but one, the setup method, most certainly will.

When I began on this design, I thought I had better get out of my rut and try some variation of stitch & glue construction. In this method, the boat's shape is defined by bending accurately shaped panels together and fastening them with epoxy glue and fiberglass tape. By the time I was done, I decided to get back into my rut again and show a regular ladder-frame-with-molds-set-up-on-it method of defining the hull shape. Epoxy/fiberglass chines may look easy and are unimposing to the amateur builder, but they are far more time consuming than traditional wooden ones, and don't look nearly as nice. There are still places where epoxy fillets provide an easy and clean method of joining two pieces of plywood together (for instance in the motor well and battery compartments) but I think that for setup, my usual method will make a better, nicer looking, and faster to build boat. And 15 minutes with a sharp plane is much more fun than hours of sanding epoxy in a dust mask.

SPECIFICATIONS

LOA - 15' 3"

BEAM - 4' 0"

DRAFT, approx. 9" board up, 2'6" board down

WEIGHT - approx. 125lb light (without batteries/motor/etc.)

HULL TYPE - flat bottom forward, V bottom aft

CONSTRUCTION - glued plywood

SUITABLE FOR - protected waters

TRAILERABLE - yes

SKILL REQUIRED - beginner

LOFTING REQUIRED - No, full size patterns included

PLANS SHEETS - 6

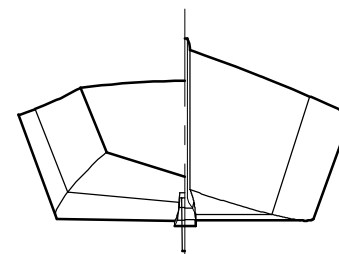
PLANS DETAIL - Above average

INCLUDED WITH PLANS - Photo CD showing construction and detailing

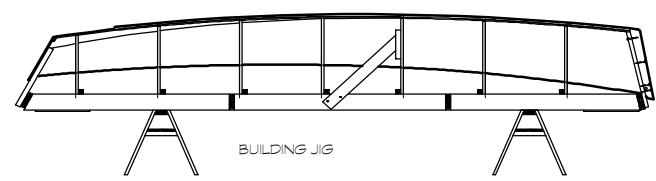
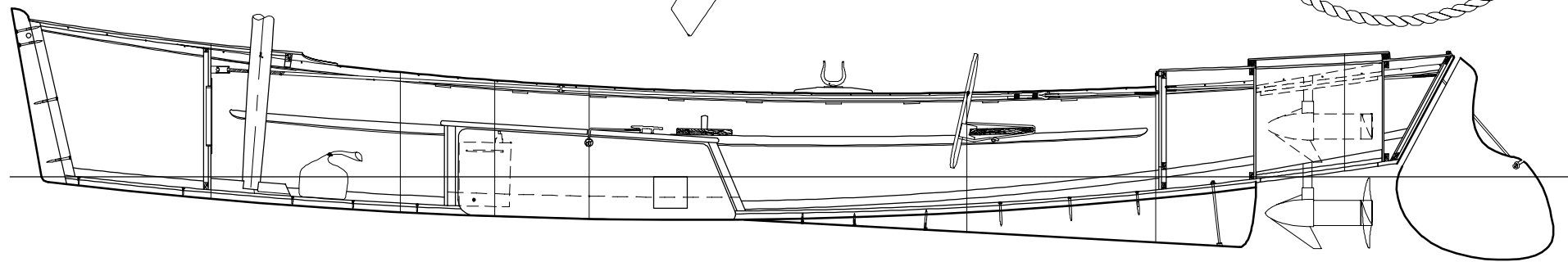
PLANS COST - \$200.00 plus shipping and handling (check for current rates)

TO PURCHASE PLANS - visit www.DHylanBoats.com to order online, or mail a check to: Hylan & Brown BOATBUILDERS, 10 Frank Day Lane, Brooklin, ME 04616





PARTICULARS	
LOA	15' 3"
LWL	13' 4"
BEAM	48 3/4"
SAIL AREA	58 SQ. FT.
DRAFT:	
BOARD UP	9"
" DOWN	2' 6"



BUILDING JIG

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HIRD ISLAND
ELECTRIC SKIFF
STUDY PLAN
BROOKLIN MAINE 04816-0088

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