



This article is provided by FMES for your interest thanks to the kindness of the original publishers. FMES makes no representations or warranties of any kind, express or implied about the completeness, accuracy or reliability with respect to this document and any sentiments expressed are not necessarily supported by FMES. Any reliance you place on this document is therefore strictly at your own risk

Painting the Hull

This document was written by Paul Naylor and is published here for FMES online viewing, and was written during 2025.

Sundowner – 11

Yes, well painting comes next and that means getting colours right and also painting the waterline in the right place. From photos, the antifouling paint below the waterline appears to be a sort of dark red like oxide primer, and I considered buying yet more paint for this, but then realised that some of the wife's artists acrylic paint could be mixed up well and then protected with a couple of coats of satin varnish.

Marking where on the hull the waterline is quite difficult, but solved by firstly getting the hull on its stand at the right angle (the boat sits on the water with the central section more or less horizontal) and then using a block of wood the right height to mark off the position of the waterline around the hull, joining the dots resulting and then masking tape. Fortunately, there is quite a wide band of blue paint between the



antifouling paint and the upperworks white to fill any gaps. The photo shows the red 'antifouling' applied to the hull, now mounted upside down on a cradle that engages with the keel through hatch openings: I made this to hold the hull there without challenging the eventual upper works paint. The ragged look on some of the portholes is caused by the internal epoxy coat



building up in the hole. I stopped it spilling over the outside with masking tape when I did it and the result is some build up in the hole that I will file off when I fit the portholes later. You can also see more masking tape applied over the portholes inside, this time to stop the outside paint spilling into the inside!

This 'antifouling' was then varnished with satin oil-based yacht varnish (Rustins) to protect it whilst I add another primer coat to the upper works and some gloss white paint (from Craftsmaster paints, to use 'good stuff') leaving a small gap for a blue wide line between the two. The plan is to apply this blue line (probably with some dark blue oil-based paint I have from another project) with masking tape to define it and keep it straight after a couple of coats of white paint then rub the whole lot down for another coat of satin varnish. I should be able to remove the masking tape without dragging any finish off (I hope).

Why satin finish paint? Well, gloss paint is very unforgiving by showing up every imperfection in reflected light and can look 'plasticky' on its own. I am expecting that my ability to produce a wooden

hull that has no imperfections is not going to be adequate and it is definitely harder to do than a flat or curved metal panel like boiler cladding. I like the finish that I have used on locos, which is oil-based gloss BUT rubbed down with 600 grit wet and dry (maybe a couple of coats/rubbed down to get a good depth) when well hard to eliminate the gloss, and then polished with a car compound like 'T-cut' or similar. The finish has a pleasing sheen that is quite robust and realistic.

I have now painted the hull and deck with the colours in question: the deck in all the photos of the real thing is a grubby greyish blue. I elected to paint it light blue and let normal weathering do the rest, although this will take longer than the real thing as I don't intend to stand on the deck. I used masking tape to get the blue waterline stripe more or less level and straight, although the use of a rigger paint brush and breath holding exercises were required after taking the masking off to improve the line here and there. I am getting a little reluctant to start flattening it all down, remembering the ease of rubbing through colour coats at edges with my locos, so it might just stay like this, the gloss white is not too glossy – watch this space!



I also added some soft neoprene pads to the stand to protect the paint - available as sticky back strips of various thicknesses – and dyed and varnished the stand too.

The next step is to fix the dark wood trim pieces I made earlier and that should finish the hull apart from the fixtures and fittings (these include the portholes and the setting up of a mini-production line to make 24 of them). I managed to find some very small brass wood screws for a reasonable price (www.screwline.co.uk) and I intend to use some gauge 1 or 2 countersunk screws for the trim to support the epoxy glue.