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Miss Daytona build – 12

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The next bit is to finish the deck panels along the same lines as before. Securing them whilst the glue set was a bit of an issue as at the front nothing can get a secure grip on the angles, so it was a matter of improvisation. Eventually, I got them all done, including the hatch cover. The photo shows the results, although they are not yet trimmed around the edges (except to allow the hatch to be fitted) and they are not yet sanded smooth: there are some 'edges' where planks of slightly different thicknesses abut.

At this point, I decided I had better add the rubbing strakes around the waterline. These were each made from two 2mm thicknesses of beech 'blind slat' that was convenient and meant that it was easy to bend (and twist) the strakes as the glue dried. How to hold them to the hull



was another problem, and then I had a thought. I am obliged to 'do exercises' using rubber physiotherapy bands and I snapped one a couple of weeks ago (it was a cheap inferior one, that's why!). I cut the remnants into about an inch wide strips (they are around 125mm wide), tied them into bands of appropriate length and used them round the hull. It worked really well and I could use as many as required – I wish I had thought of this earlier. In this photo, I have trimmed the deck edge and around the deck opening.



I used the same method to apply some mahogany strips for the deck edge rubbing strake (that is, two thin strips per strake) as these are varnished and are dark wood on the real thing. That meant eight strakes in total and using the bands this number of times. Unfortunately, the bands each only lasted one or two 'goes' as they snapped easily. I think that this was because they were cheap and susceptible to minute nicks (and why the original one snapped in use: I learned my lesson and got quality ones that do not snap... but for exercises, not the boat). I had enough material though to make enough for this job.

After the strakes were in place, I made up a curved strake to go round the transom/deck edge. I used three thin strips glued together around a former I cut from some 10mm plywood scrap to the right shape: this method retains the grain around the curve rather than cutting out a shaped piece from mahogany sheet. This was then fitted and glued to complete the deck edging. I did not at this stage fit the 'coaming' around the deck opening that I made earlier as it would get in the way of the deck

sanding. I then had a long and dusty sanding session with a flat sand paper holder to smooth the deck all over, more sanding to round over the 'show wood' mahogany strakes as per the real thing, staining the deck and hull planks to hopefully a representative colour as discussed earlier and finally cutting and gluing in the coaming round the opening. The result can be seen in the photos. There were some small gaps between the coaming and the deck especially around the curve that I filled using a mixture of wood dust dyed to the same colour as the deck and mixed with



PVA glue and a bit of



water. I did not use the 'Titebond' for this as it dries brown and would compromise the colour, but 'normal' PVA glue that dries clear... the result was a little darker than I wanted, but it was small impact.

The next task on the hull is to start fitting the brass 'screws' that in the real thing secure all of the planks and these are a feature that can be seen in the first article on the real boat. I was going to use 1mm brass wire in drilled holes, but I found some sharp 0.5mm brass pins with c1.4mm heads that seem to lightly hammer in without holes that look promising, I will try these on the transom first as a trial (although a test on a piece of scrap deck planking seemed to work fine). I



am not going to slot these to mimic screws, there are around a thousand! I need to do these now as the wood planking is now quite vulnerable to marks and dirt: I want to get the hull sealed as soon as possible now to protect the look, even if I

do not yet do the necessary rubbing down to get the high gloss of the real thing. The photo shows the pins in place on the transom (both around trim and less obviously on the transom itself), the next job is the rest I found the best way to add the pins to tap a fine tapered steel spike into wood (at the right place: measure and measure again!) first, then use a fine 2mm spherical burr that I had in my drill to make a depression in the plank finally add the pin using many light



the of it. was the

mini and taps

hammer it home, finishing with a little rivet set to get it deeper into the plank. Deviate from this and the pins bend easily! On the real thing, the countersinks for the screws are obvious in reflected light as dips in the sheen (see photo, left): the use of the burr potentially leaves a little depression and we will see how this replicates the finish. It sounds like a palaver, multiplied by the 1000 odd pins to do: the first row down one full length plank took 45 minutes. The last job is then to cut the pins inside where they protrude: the shortest pins I could find were 10mm long and the inside might end up like a porcupine: as long as I can reach them, small side cutters cut them fine. Maybe I could use a sewing

thimble on a finger to bend others over in places where the eye cannot see but a finger might discover them, they are sharp! The photo also shows a bit of the real boats deck, and this is a slightly darker colour: I have not finished experimenting yet with the dye, I have to remember that the maple veneer will darken with age too, so it is all a little uncertain. The colour on the transom is closer to the real deck, but it is a little too brown and not enough 'golden'!

I noticed an error in the rear piece of coaming while I was hunting through photos for the pin layout in the planks in the deck over the transom: the coaming is the same height as the rest of it, and the bit that sticks up is the seat back, a separate piece, so I sanded down the coaming in the photo above accordingly.

The placing of the pins took quite some time: it is not a job that is totally mindless as getting the holes (especially after application of the burr) in the wrong place leaves an indelible mark (see later...). I ended up doing around 40 at a time then a rest to forget it all. Eventually, I had a deck that had the necessary scattering of 'screws' and it makes a huge difference to the appearance. I learned the hard way that if a pin bent because I was ham fisted (or it had a hard bit of wood or glue to penetrate), to remove it and try again with a new pin. The mortality rate of pins was about 15% from this cause. The pins are made by Folch and I got mine from an Ebay supplier in packs of 800 (it took about one and a half packs) – and they are excellent quality. The photo shows the deck after pin application and a light rub with sandpaper to get rid of wisps of wood from the burr. This has lightened the colour, so I applied another coat of the stain to even it out and see what happened when stain went into the pin depressions, but it is still a little light. There is one error I fear to report, and that is the regular pin pattern went wrong on the left side front deck. When I pluck up the courage, I will show a closer photo: it was caused by a week long break from pinning and re-starting in the wrong place. This was as a result of my 25 year old mini drill on/off switch breaking 'off' necessitating a replacement that wonders over wonders was available for a couple of quid as a standard item: I realised the error after burring out the first 8 holes after the break, so I could not correct it without making it worse. It is not obvious at an overall glance...



I continued with the pins on the sides: the pattern is slightly different as per the photos I have, but the effect is similar. The photo shows this, along with a brass screw at the end of the waterline strake: this is there in case the end gets a knock and the glue breaks, I will fill it when I finish the hull (this bit and below is painted not varnished wood). I also added pins to the hardwood strakes: the pins alone had a high mortality rate here, so I used a 0.5mm drill and much breath holding to make guide holes first.



The next step is to sand the lot (again) and apply some stain to try to get the colour closer. It is important to use finer sandpaper and rub along the grain to stop scratches which become obvious when stained. The stain I have been using is spirit based 'golden pine' colour for the deck and this with

a drop or two of brown water based stain to darken it a little below the deck. I have ordered some 'golden yew' spirit stain, which appears to be slightly darker as the mix of spirit (meths I think) and water based stain seems to leave it a little blotchy. I have also tried some tests on stained scrap deck wood to see if spirit based sanding sealer fills the grain without lightening it (or leaving obvious lighter grain patches) and it seems to be OK. Watch this space in a later article to see what happened!