

Teaching With
Small Boats
Alliance
Conference
2017

April 26-29, 2017

Chesapeake Bay
Maritime Museum
St. Michaels, Md.



23 Years of Build-Your-Own-Boat Classes

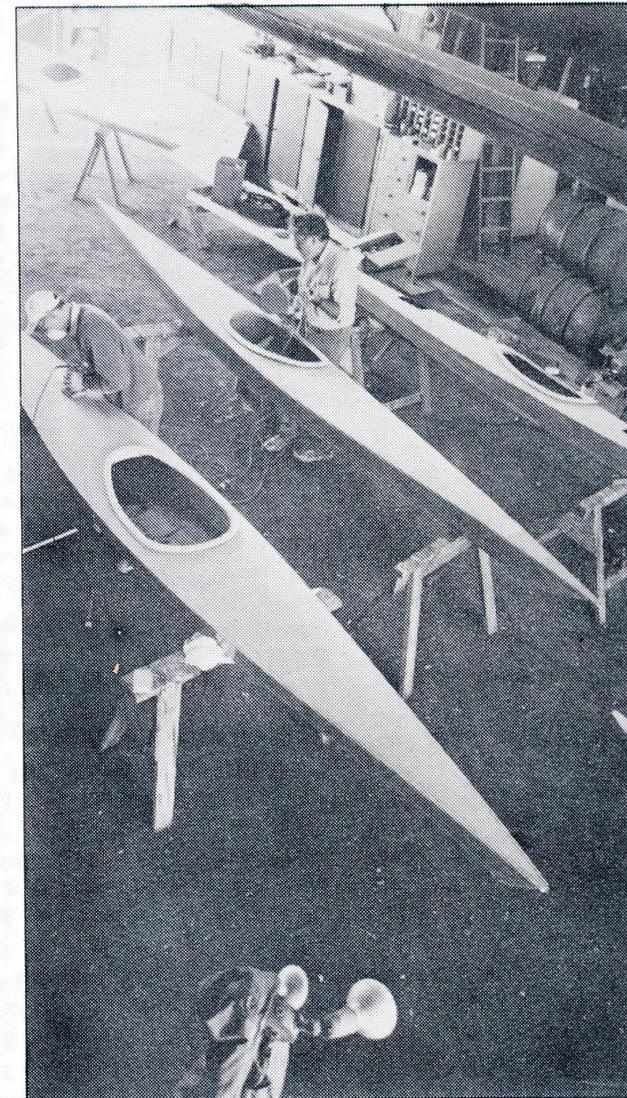
***Learning what not to do,
one course evaluation at a time.***

Chesapeake Light Craft's First Build-Your-Own Class, August 1994

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Since 1994, we've led more than 400 one-week classes, mostly with adults or parent-child teams.



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Build Your Own LapStrake Dinghy



Monday

SAND HULL PANELS
ASSEMBLE BULKHEADS
ASSEMBLE RAILS
ASSEMBLE DB TRUNKS
ASSEMBLE SKEGS
ASSEMBLE TRANSOMS
TAKE-APART BULKHEADS
START HULL ASSEMBLY

Tuesday

INSTALL BULKHEAD BOLTS
INSTALL TEMPORARY BULKHEADS
FINISH HULL ASSEMBLY
FLIP AND TIGHTEN WIRES
GLUE PLANK SEAMS

Wednesday

REMOVE WIRES
SAND INTERIOR
INTERIOR FILLETS
INTERIOR FIBERGLASS
SAND RAIL SCARFS
INSTALL RAILS?

Thursday

TRIM INTERIOR 'GLASS
SAND HULLS
MARK FOR SKEGS
PATCH-AND-FILL EXTERIOR
EXTERIOR FIBERGLASS
INSTALL SKEGS
ASSEMBLE MAST STEPS

Friday

INSTALL DB TRUNKS
INSTALL SEATS
INSTALL RAILS?

Saturday

SAND RAILS
INSTALL MAST STEPS
OPEN UP DB TRUNKS



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- **5 to 8 boats**





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Typical boat kit cost is \$1200 - \$2400



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- **All classes start from pre-cut kits, with at least some pre-assembly**



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- **Balancing the needs of high-quality construction with time constraints and the limitations of beginner boatbuilders requires skill, experience, personality, and patience.**



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- **Parking!**
- **Security to leave tools, etc. on site.**



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- **A bulk epoxy dispensing station saves hours, and will help prevent epoxy-ratio and mixing disasters.**



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These items are part of the essential "larder" for a successful boatbuilding classroom:

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Hosts should have a well-equipped first aid kit and an eye-wash station



Common Complaints:

"There wasn't enough time."

Solution:

Instructors MUST be able to manage the tricky choreography, anticipate bottlenecks, and wrangle the mix of skill (and personality!) in the class. The instructor may have to apply half the epoxy fillets in the class to stay on schedule.

Cultivate a teamwork approach to each major step. Insist that students help each other.



Common Complaints:

"I'm unhappy with my craftsmanship."

Solution:

This student needed more attention from the instructor. The instructor will spend 80% of their time helping 20% of the students. Expect this.



Common Complaints:

"The instructor didn't spend enough time with me."

Solution:

A good instructor will be able to identify student abilities within the first hour of class, if not within the first few minutes. Target the needy students from the start, and help them early and often. And remember, these might or might not be the "quiet" students.



Common Complaints:

"This class was too easy. I brought all my Lie-Nielsen planes and didn't use them once!"

Solution:

Identify the over-qualified students immediately. (There will always be a few.) Have special projects standing by to keep them from getting bored.



Common Complaints:

"I hoped to get further with my boat than I did."

Solution:

Manage expectations before the class begins.

No matter how carefully we word our ad copy for classes, there are always people who believe they will leave the class with a finished boat. Explain EXACTLY how far you will get, and assure them they will leave with the skills to finish the boat.



Common Complaints:

**"You aren't offering a class building the boat that I want.
Can I build a different boat in the class?"**

**Solution:
"No."**

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