

Tabbing Plywood

While I was inspecting the partially built 31-footer (9.4m) in Zimmerman Marine's shop, one member of the crew asked, "Why am I having such a hard time getting the tabbing attaching plywood frames to the hull to stay wet out to my satisfaction?"

"I keep brushing on more resin, and bubblebusting the fabric until the laminate looks saturated. But when I

return a few minutes later, the laminate appears to be drying out, even though there's no sign of resin sag or drainout. This continues right up until the resin gels, and then I don't like the way the tabbing looks. What's going on?"

Well, a test panel made then and there helped demonstrate what happens in the different ways that tabbing is customarily applied to plywood:

- We coated the left half of the test panel with catalyzed resin, and let it cure to the point of being just barely tacky.
- We divided the right half of the panel, top and bottom. On the upper



On a test panel, three sections of the plywood surface were prepared differently. Then tabbing was applied and wet out. The resulting bonds were compared after curing.

section we laid dry fabric on wood, and then wet it out top only.

- On the lower section fabric on plywood that we'd with catalyzed resin just laminating.

When the left-hand pre-co of the panel was tacky, a layer of typical tabbing mate knit biaxial with chopped-st to serve as the reinforcer brushed resin on the tack and on the bottom half of plywood on the right side of panel. Next, we applied t wet it out, and bubblebus shop's standard practice.

The contrast in underlying treatments was immediately. The fabric applied to the of the panel, where the ply been pre-coated, wet out fi either dry plywood section



the engineroom compa could also have been pla the hull, with folded o wet-out material passec sheer to the laminator Demers had pre-cut 17 tapes, and pre-measured resin. After measuring t amount of catalyst from bottle, he added it to the and took a minute or more catalyst with the resin poured the bucket into the

As we commenced the j was surprised to see me three pairs of Nitrile glove he saw how sloppy it was new length of dry tabbing crossbars and through th

Far left—Output of uniform 12" (305mm) tape is about (3.6m to 4.5m) per minute.

Left—Two plies of tabbing wet-on-wet; the first pass of bubblebuster showed that t content, controlled by the s rolls, was just right. The lan were easy to consolidate, a excess resin ran out.

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