

For power I opted to buy a Honda 150hp motor and use a Yamaha High Thrust Kicker. I am very happy with this combination. The Honda cruises the boat to low 20kts at mid 4,500s and that is the perfect speed for economy and comfort for a loaded up skiff. The top speed is 30-31kts depending on the load but honestly, 30kts is too fast for most ocean conditions on a light planning skiff of moderate deadrise. Here is my data recorded on two runs in the Chesapeake Bay. One day had screaming winds but we were in protected waters so could still turn the motor speed up. Best speed is 4,400-4,500. The motor isn't working hard and we cruise in the low 20kt range.



Matt Hoverman holds a double header of small yellowfin tuna from the Washington Canyon.

This year we used the boat about seven or eight times with offshore trips for codfish, sharks and tuna. We overnighted three times in the Washington Canyon, Poormans and Wilmington Canyon and caught a lot of yellowfin tuna, both mako and blue sharks, two marlin, tilefish and mahi mahi. We averaged about 3.25-3.40 nautical miles per gallon on the combined ride out and sustained trolling through the day. The 69gal tank is enough to go the Washington Canyon (60 miles), troll all, day, sit out at night and troll in the morning before coming home. We paid about \$3.50/gallon for gas at the road this year, (cheaper than dockside by far) and so a 70gal trip cost us about \$240. With another \$150 for ballyhoo, a couple flats of sardines and some food, we ended up taking 30 hour tuna trips for about \$100 a man.



Gary Schetlick and I hold a white marlin caught south of the Poormans Canyon in September.

For safety we have a six man raft, EPIRB, redundant VHF radios and backup for everything. We take a small generator offshore, as many boats do. We actually do carry enough anchor rope to anchor in the deep. Instead of using coolers, which are a pain, we built a big 140gal ice box. It weighs about 70lbs, less than even three 150 quart coolers would weigh, but holds more ice, bait and fish than coolers and it's a nice platform to work off and sit on.

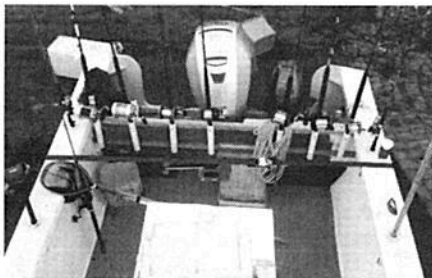


A poor quality picture another boat took of us in the Wilmington Canyon in September.

Towing the boat is easy. It is a big boat, but it is still light, I calculated the hull weight about 1,950lbs dry and so as configured for fishing, it is about 4,800 lbs out the inlet.

This is important. We can keep the boat mostly loaded up with gear on the trailer. We do not have to pay dock fees. In New Jersey that worked even better as we towed to a sand beach and could launch and retrieve our boat with a 2WD truck off a free dirt ramp. In Maryland we do have to tow to Ocean City from Cecil County which is about 120 miles. But it tows fine and we typically fuel up right prior to the ramp to avoid carrying the 430 pounds of gasoline in the boat.

Rigging the boat was very simple. We put close to 18 rod holders on the aft pilot house wall, four over the hardtop edge and six gunwale holders. Inside there isn't very much except a big flip top seat box with two tops. The flip top seat is so the port side passenger can stand and hang on, yet at sea it folds down to make a third bunk. We have two bunks below. We did use LED lights for pilot house, cuddy cabin lights and cockpit flood lights. They are bright and yet don't drain the battery very much at all.

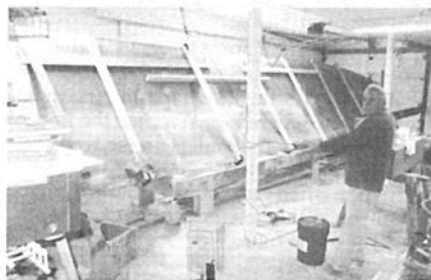


The aft rod holders and rigging just prior to an offshore trip, also the 140gal fish box and both motors. Overall I am very happy with this boat. It is perfect for us in performance and budget and ease of towing, and safety.

Madison on Mothers Day launch. We cruised to the CD canal to Chesapeake City and had Mothers Day Supper. My eight year old daughter can easily steer this 27' skiff with simple and cheap mechanical steering. A \$1,500 Sea Star hydraulic system is not needed on a Tolman skiff unless you want an autopilot. I have an autopilot, His name is Gary. He works cheap.



Basic hull framing before hanging the side panels. Gary Schetlick is in the picture.



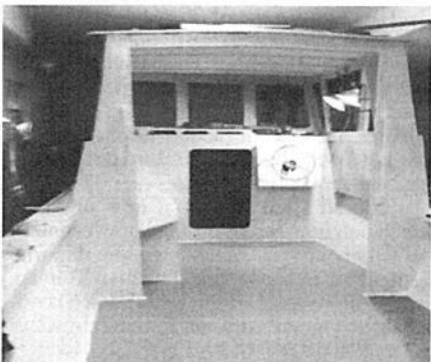
Using two deer hoists to lift the bottom up out of the way for boat frame up. Keith Cooperstein is holding the bottom up.



We built right through the winter months in an unheated garage. At times, I used spot heat to preheat the wood prior to glassing. I kept my epoxy in a small heater box with a 60w bulb.



First launch at Elk Neck State Park in the upper Chesapeake Bay.



Restore non skid on the deck. \$25 a gallon. Works great. Water based. Tough. Large open deck area and a simple bunk with flip top for storage and 2/3-1/3 layout. That way the man up front to port can hold onto the rails. Open cockpit. We have a 3.5' anchor deck, 7' cuddy, 6' pilot house and 8.5' of fishing deck, and 2' full height drywell.