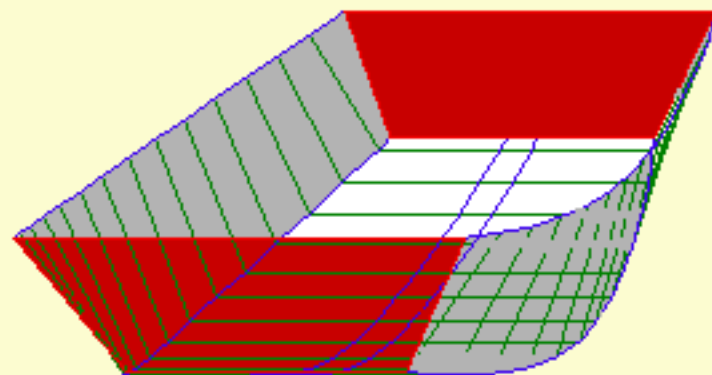


Apple Pie - A 7'0" Yacht Tender



SLOGGING TO WINDWARD

By Chuck Merrell – chuck@boatdesign.com

December 2000

The Mystery of the Christmas Dinghy is solved!

There are certain questions that seem to pop up now and then that just scream out for an answer—questions like: Is Diet Coke a good substitute for orange juice at breakfast? Will Barbara Streisand ever get a nose job? Why does every garage sale seem to have a plywood pram dinghy of indeterminate origin in it, and more to the point what happened to the yacht the pram was supposed to tend? Did that get sold at the last garage sale or what?

REWIND to Marin County California on a Saturday morning in the fall of 1970 something:

Having not much better to do, I find myself following a series of small “Garage Sale!” signs down a private road near Stinson Beach. When I get to the end of the trail, I’m at a beautiful house with a “Dynamite (Marin County Real Estate Rat talk) view” of the ocean. And, sure enough, here’s the owner trying to get rid of some of his unwanted consumer items probably to make room for future unwanted consumer items.

Long story short, I check out the table full of faux Tiffany lamps, old boom-boxes, pre-dawn of history K2 skis and finding nothing I can’t live without, am about to go when at the back of the garage under a pile of newspapers, I see a little blue boat. I ask him about it. And he says, “Oh that—that’s not much good. My dad built it back in Depression times for something to do because he didn’t have enough money to go to the movies, I guess. He probably got the wood for nothing and for some reason we’ve kept it, but it’s been in the way and I’ve been thinking about just dumping it. I don’t care much about boats, and neither does the wife. Besides, if you look, you’ll see that it leaks because the boards across the bottom don’t come together in a couple places. Typical of something the old man woulda built; a boat that don’t float.”

I look a little closer and see a nicely shaped, small, flat-bottomed boat that has been built with a modicum of loving care. It was put together in the old fashioned way—all out of solid wood with lots of knees and cleats and inwales and outwales on the gunwales. The pièce de résistance was the bottom which was cross-planked with ¾” thick boards. To me, the wood looked a lot like piss-oak robbed from forklift pallets. By now, I’ve got the newspapers stacked to one side and experimentally try to lift it and find that although only about seven feet long, it weighs about two ounces less than a pachyderm.

Anyway, thinking that maybe I can use gumpucky of some kind to plug up the leaks and have something to play with, I offer the guy twenty bucks. Well, twenty bucks in 1972 was like fifty today, so about ten nanoseconds later it was in the bed of my pickup and I was on the way to my slip at Sausalito.

Risking a hernia, I dock carted it down the ramp and put the boat right side up on the end of my finger-pier. I figured that if left there for a while the coming rains might swell up the planks and fill up the boat (obviating the need for gumpucky) and at least then I could try it out to see what it was like.

It turned out to be a busy fall and I didn't get back to the marina until Christmas day. Seems that I was always waking up alone those days and Christmas wasn't any exception because my wife (I was married then) was on one of her usual "visit-her-family-in-England-over-the-holidays-and-buy-everything-in-sight" trips.

As I lay there waking up, it occurred to me that maybe I should go down to the marina and check to see if I still had a boat or boats, being particularly interested to see what was going on with the little dinghy.

When I got to Sausalito, that day a Christmas ghost town, and parked and looked out at the marina I could see that my boat "Pennywhistle" (Peterson Quarter-tonner) and the dinghy appeared to be as I left them. As I stood there I heard a sound behind me and turned around to see my ninety something friend, Ralph Flowers, riding up on his bicycle.

Yes, I said ninety something on a bicycle, and specifically, more like about 93 and still working part time for Herb at Sausalito Yacht Sales. A couple times a month in the summer he'd sail his Bear Boat out to the Gate, round Angel Island, through Raccoon Straits and back to the marina. Sometimes he'd go alone, sometimes with one of his old cronies. Occasionally he'd come along with me for a sail on Penny and tell me stories about the 1906 San Francisco Earthquake, or the time in 92' when he and his father, a trading schooner skipper, had sailed to Tahiti and back to San Francisco in record time, and (according to Ralph) the record still stood.

Ralph's voice was sort of an aged, parchment-brittle whisper. He talked fast, like he was running out of time and sometimes said things twice and often put more vowels in a word than there were supposed to be. So on this Christmas day it was: "Merry Christmas Chu-uck, whatcha gonna do with that nice little bo-oat, fulla water there on your dock?"

"Ah, full of water is it? Great that's just what I wanted to happen—swell the planks and all that. Well, Ralph I'm gonna siphon the water out and try a little row and see if it's worth while."

Ralph (who was also a boatbuilder for part of his life) said, "Yes, yes, nice boat, nice boat. Looks like she has some sort of pedigree, but built too heavy. I can see that, a

shame that, a real shame. Whoever built her shoulda made it lighter, much lighter, you know what I mean, you know?”

By now, I've got a pair of five-foot oars out of the car and we're standing on the dock and I'm using the dock hose to siphon the water out of the dinghy. When it's drained, I tie on a painter and push it over the side into the water. It floats. I jump in, set the oars and row away, which now that I think, that was probably an act of faith because who knows what the condition of the fasteners holding on the bottom planks were.

Amazingly, the dinghy rows beautifully and because of the weight and the extra pounds it's soaked up in water, it carries it's way like an Ingrid—as Ralph would say, “A pleasure, a pleasure.”

So when I get back to the dock he asks, “What're you gonna do with that bo-boat? You don't need it--don't need it all. Why doncha sell it to me, I gotta buyer for it. He'll take it right off our hands all right. How much do you want for it?”

I think for a minute and say, “Really you're right Ralph. It'll just rot if it sits here on the dock. I don't know I paid twenty bucks, so I guess you can have her for that.”

“Nope, nope, charge me thirty. That'll do it and I'll sell it to him for forty. Yeah, forty, he'll pay. Then we'll all make some beer money.”

I ask, “Who'll you sell the boat to?”

He points to a brown and white Tahiti Ketch moored outside the breakwater. “That Tahiti boat there. He needs a tender boat that'll fit on deck and one to go back and forth in so he'll stop borrowing my dinghy all the time, day in day out, day in day out, you know, huh? Banged it up last week he did, damn it!”

So, that was what happened to the little dinghy, but before I gave it up, I took off all the dimensions, did a quick sketch of the boat, thinking that maybe I'd draw the design and build a better one if I ever needed a tender. For sure I'd make it a lot lighter.

Amazingly, for some reason that note and sketch survived all these years in my “miscellaneous stuff” notebook.

I've lost track of where Pennywhistle wound up, and who knows if the little dinghy is still in one piece or even exists? Ralph, sweet man that he was, of course has been gone to Fiddler's Green for a long time, a long time now doncha know? Almost lost to memory the whole incident was, and for years I hadn't thought of the little boat or that Christmas day more than a quarter of a century past.

FAST FORWARD to last week:

So I'm talking on the phone with Bill McKibben, plywood boat builder extraordinaire' and long-time close friend who lives in Victoria. He called up to see if I received a

packet of boat pictures he sent me. (I'm going to do a McKibben page on the net showing pictures of all the plywood boats he's built over the last thirty years.) Then he talks about the next boat that'll probably come out of his shop in the spring. He pauses mid-sentence and says, "You know, I need a new dinghy. Strictly a tender that rows well, and that'll carry its oars inside. I don't want one of those sometime row boat, sometime motorboat, sometime sailboat with a dagger or centerboard, but a little seven-foot thingy thing that's real light and cheap and will carry a decent sized payload, which usually would be defined as me and Beth and a grand-kid and the beer."

The little Christmas dinghy pops into my mind and before conversation moves to other things, I say, "I got an idea that would be just perfect. Been thinking about drawing the boat for years, more or less copying a little boat I bought at a Garage Sale back in mid-last century. I'll quick like a bunny draw up a set of lines and email em' to you."

I run a set of lines from my notes and name the design Apple Pie (for as easy as) and send it out. Later, he gets back to me and says he likes it and to go ahead.

I also sent a copy of the lines to Bill Samson in Dundee. He likes it, has been thinking of building a boat to replace his June bug, which he's using as a tender. His June Bug is wearing out and falling apart and won't last another season, but the little boat is too small. He asks if I can stretch Apple Pie to 9 Feet? No problem. I do that. He likes the stretched version, which I name Peach Pie (for no good reason other than at the time I was probably hungry).

Now I have two dinghy designs to detail and I finish Apple Pie first, complete with instructions, dimensions and material list. At this point, the idea strikes me that a complete downloadable set of plans of Apple Pie would be a nice Christmas gift for readers of my column at Duckworks.

However, I'm curious as to where or who designed the original boat. I've never seen a dinghy like this. I ask Bill Samson who has a pretty good library of boat designs. He says it looks like a boat that Atkin designed named Schatze, but Schatze was almost eight feet long. Bill sends me a scan and sure enough the two boats look very close, except in size.

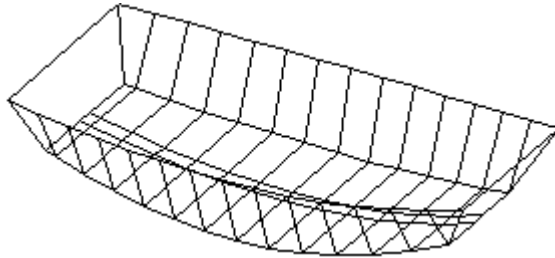
Now, I REALLY want to know. So yesterday I went down to the Seattle Library and searched their marvelous archive of boat plans (arranged by size) going back a hundred years and sure enough there it was. The boat that I drew Apple Pie after was called Rinky-Dink and designed over 65 years ago for MotorBoating and Sailing Magazine by William Atkin for his monthly column. So, yeah, I guess the boat does have a pedigree all right.

I didn't at any time start out to copy Rinky-Dink. First, I didn't know about the design until yesterday, but even if I had, knowing that it performed as well as it did, I probably would have drawn it up for stitch and glue assembly anyway. The reason I say that is because I feel that it would be a shame for the design to be generally unavailable in its year 2000 incarnation. Besides other than being the same shape and roughly the same

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HOW TO BUILD APPLE PIE - A 7' X 3'6" YACHT TENDER



This is going to be a pretty short document because I'll be referring you to other documents, books or the drawings in the set.

A word about materials:

Most of the wood requirements are shown in the Materials and Construction Details Sheet.

The way I'd build this boat (for my own use) would be this:

PLYWOOD:

The more expensive the better, but let your conscience and pocketbook be your guide.

Bottom and Sides: 1/4" Plywood.

Bow and Stern Transoms: 1/2" Plywood.

Seats: 3/4" Plywood.

Thwart Supports: 3/4" Plywood Glued and Screwed to the sides.

Forward Seat Support: 3/4" Plywood.

If you go with these recommendations you'll need two 4 x 8 ft. sheets of 1/4", half a sheet of 1/2", and half a sheet of 3/4". You'll have some scrap, but save it for future projects. If you decide to make the seats from 1/2" plywood, buy a whole sheet of 1/2" and forget the 3/4" (other than needing a couple 3/4" scraps for the Thwart Supports and Front Seat Support).

As far as buying half sheets (4 x 4 ft.), some lumber yards and home stores sell or will cut half sheets.

SOLID WOOD:

The solid wood can be Douglas Fir, and you can take off your requirements from the Materials and Construction Details Sheets.

EPOXY RESIN:

Get a copy of System III's Epoxy Book *free online* at: <http://www.systemthree.com/> and use the data in there to figure your requirements which includes amount of resin needed to sheath the bottom, ends and sides of this boat, plus the amount required for filleting and gluing and any additional coating you need or want to do.

SHEATHING FABRICS:

I designed this boat to be sheathed. Don't build the boat without sheathing it. Sheathing is part of the Stitch and Glue Process!

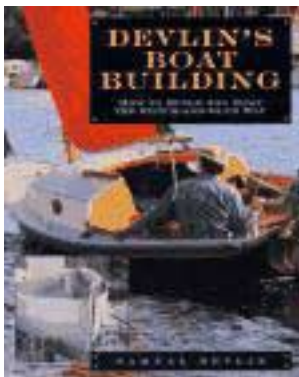
My favorite sheathing cloth is one of the various Polypropylene fabrics (available from Defender Industries, for one). Of the Polypropylenes, I like Olefin a lot. The specifications and ordering information is available at their web site, which is: <http://www.defenderus.com/> you can also request a copy of their catalog from that page too.

I once sheathed a Bolger ShoeBox dinghy made from 1/8" Doorskins with 4 oz. Olefin Polypropylene and after five years of use including dragging over rocks, sand, gravel and the side of the boat, the sheathed surfaces showed no damage and no deep scratches.

STITCH AND GLUE PROCEDURE:

The following book will not only help you with Apple Pie, but will also give you a great foundation and knowledge of modern wooden yacht construction.

This book is probably available at your library, or can be purchased on line from Amazon.com or at a local book store.



DEVLIN'S BOAT BUILDING
(How to build and boat the Stitch-And-Glue Way)

By Samuel Devlin

International Marine Publishing Company

Camden, Maine

Sam Devlin is a personal friend of mine and has been for the past twenty years. In this book, he gives up all his secrets, telling in detail just how he does it, and why he's the premier plywood boatbuilder in the country. In addition to building boats of exceptional quality, he also is a good designer and most of the boats he builds come out of his own computer or off his drawing board. Learn the essence of this book and not only will you do a great job on Apple Pie, but also have the basic tools in knowledge and technique to build almost any size boat of this type construction.

dimensions, Apple Pie is a whole new design, and a definite improvement over the old one (in my opinion).

Thinking about it a little more, maybe it would be “a good thing” as Martha Stewart says, to prudently search out and redesign and up-grade in this same way, some of the older but really good boat designs of the past. I doubt if Howard Chapelle would agree, but he’d have a hard time arguing that the resultant boats circa 2000 technology weren’t a lot better, nicer to use, lighter, longer lasting, more durable, safer and easier to build—which is what Apple Pie offers as a relative of Rinky-Dink.

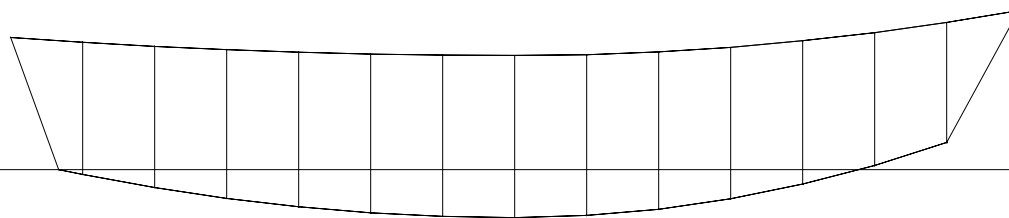
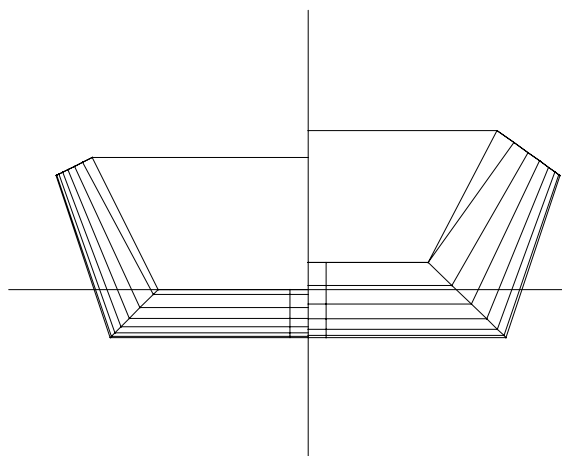
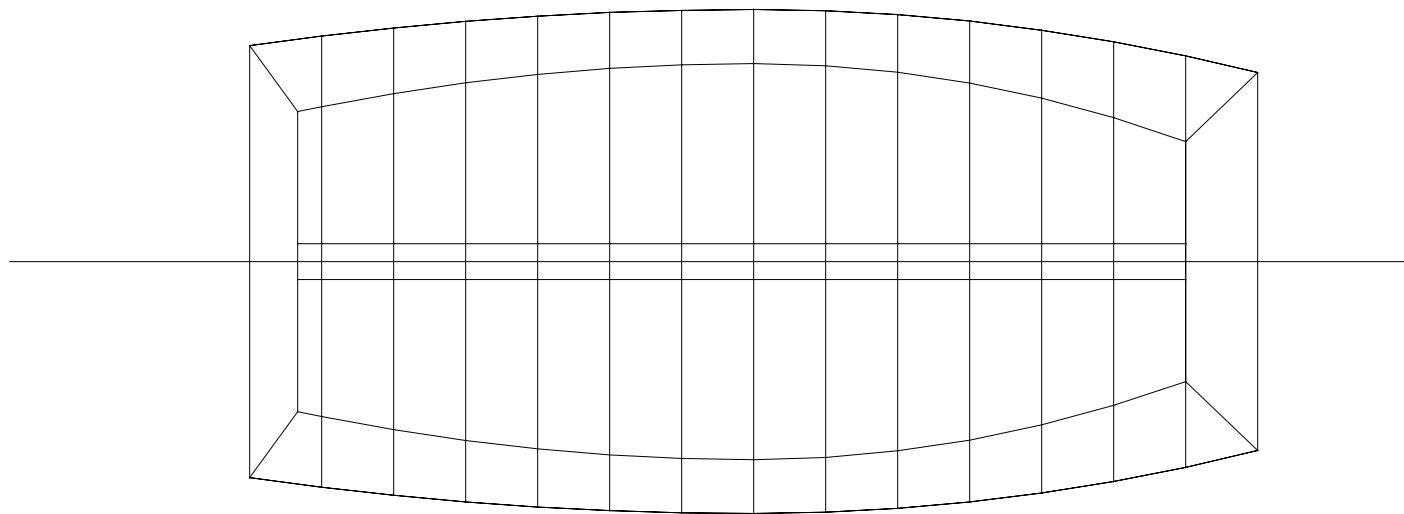
So, Apple Pie will be my Christmas Gift to you. You can get your own copy of all the drawings and assembly instructions bundled up in a zip file by clicking on the link below, which takes you to a page at boatdesign.com. There you click on another link to download. To those of you who do build Apple Pie, I’d greatly appreciate it if you’d take a picture or two during building and using and send it my way for inclusion on the web page.

Enjoy building Apple Pie, and Happy Holidays to you and yours!

Apple Pie - 7' x 3'-6" Yacht Tender

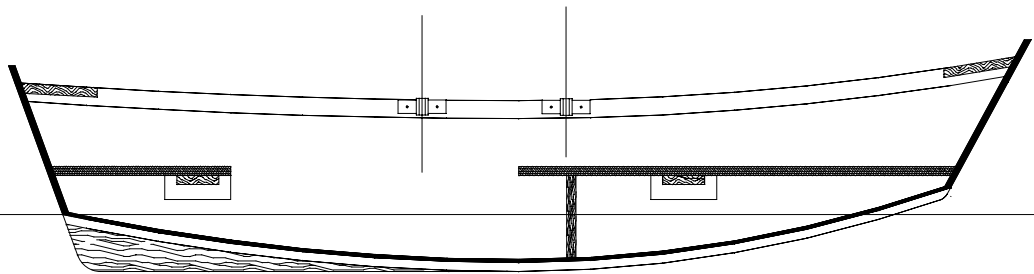
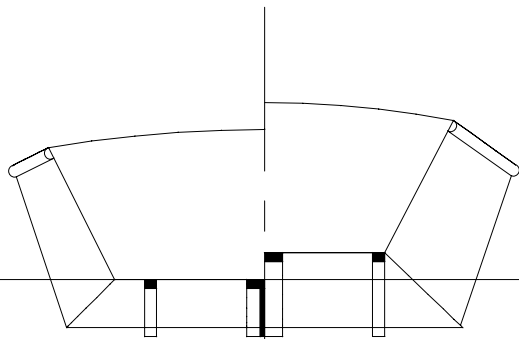
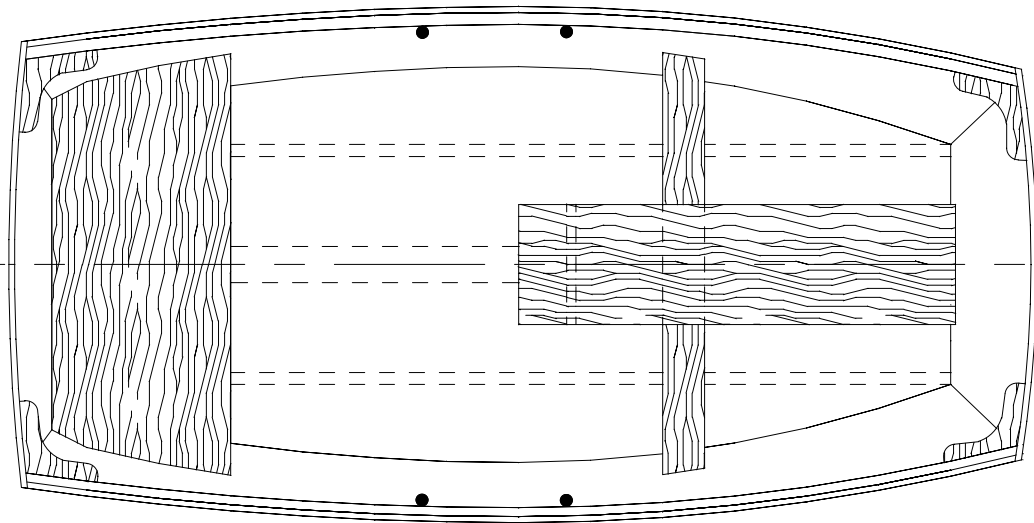
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Original Lines Drawing



Apple Pie - A 7ft. Yacht Tender

LOA: 7'-0"
Beam: 3'-6"
Draft: 4 Inches (On Lines)
Displacement: 205 Lbs
Capacity: 2-3
Material: Plywood
Assembly: Stitch and Glue



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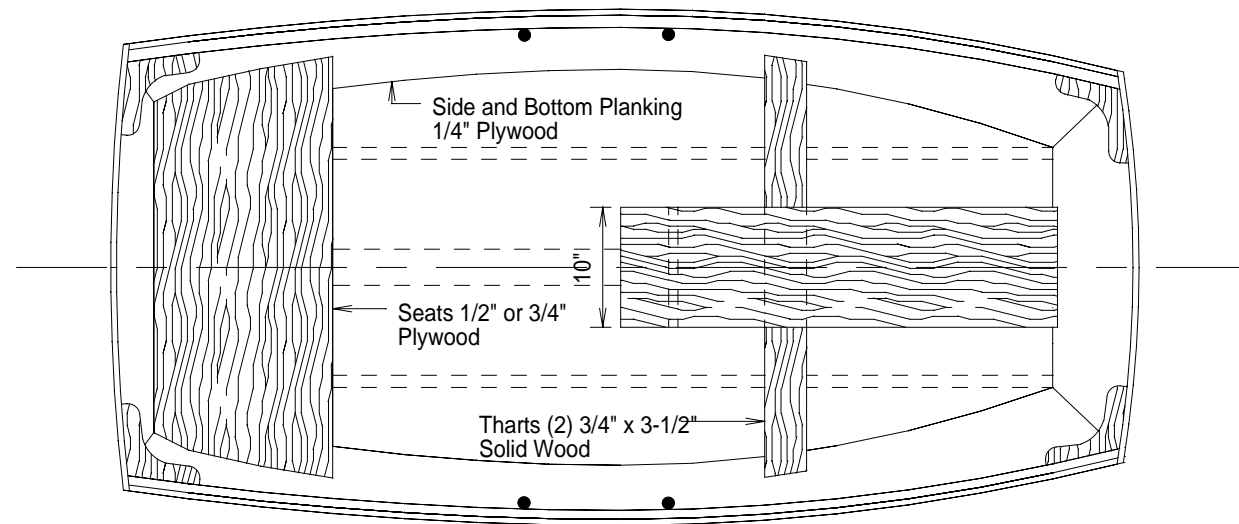


Apple Pie - 7' x 3'-6" Yacht Tender

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Materials and Construction Details

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Stern

Bow

Rub Rails
1" Half Round
Trim

Rubbing Strakes
3/4" x 1" Solid Wood

Keel 3/4" x 3"
Solid Wood

Bottom and Sides
1/4" Plywood

Layout

1/2" Plywood for Bow and
Stern Transoms

Knees from 3/4" Solid Wood

Standard Side Mount Oarlocks

Seats 1/2" or 3/4" Plywood

3/4" Thwart
Support Blocks

Inwales 3/4 x 1-1/2" Solid Wood

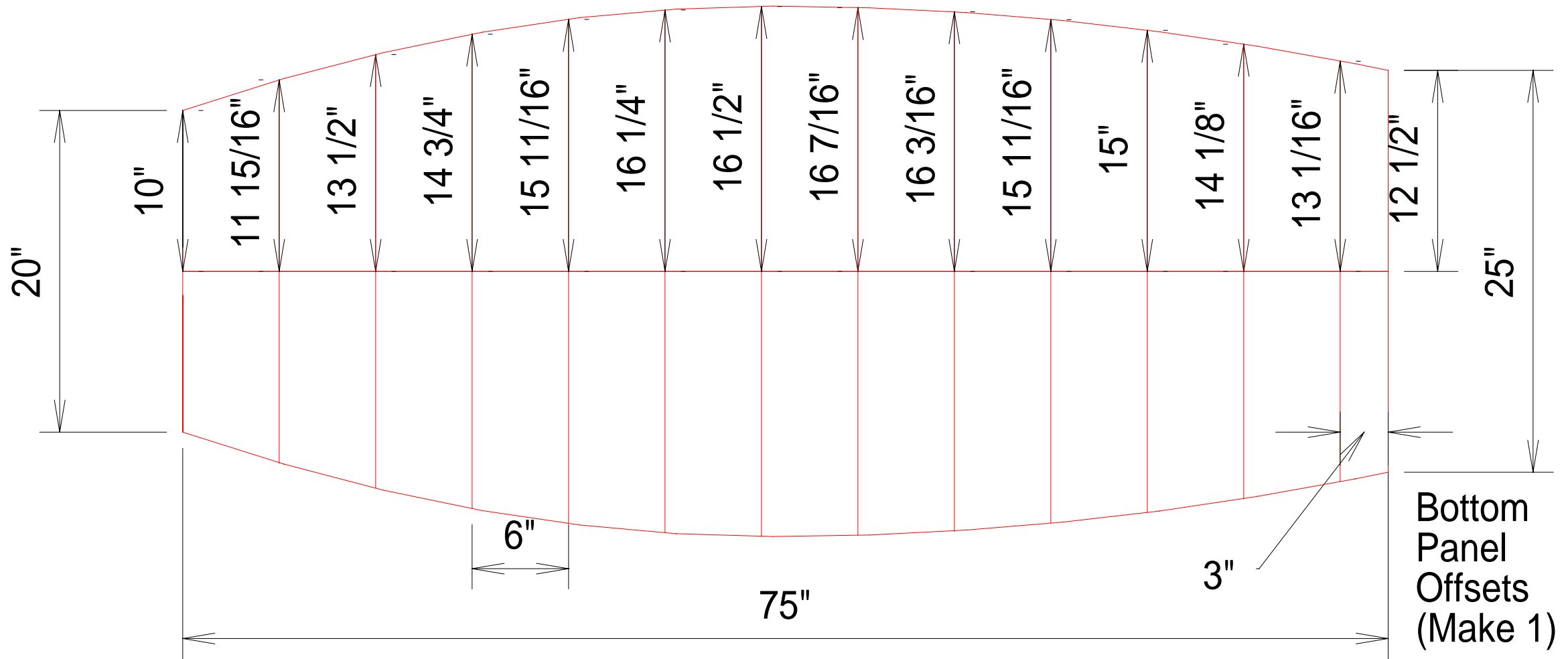
6 7/8"
3/4" Plywood

LWL

Skeg 3/4" Solid Wood

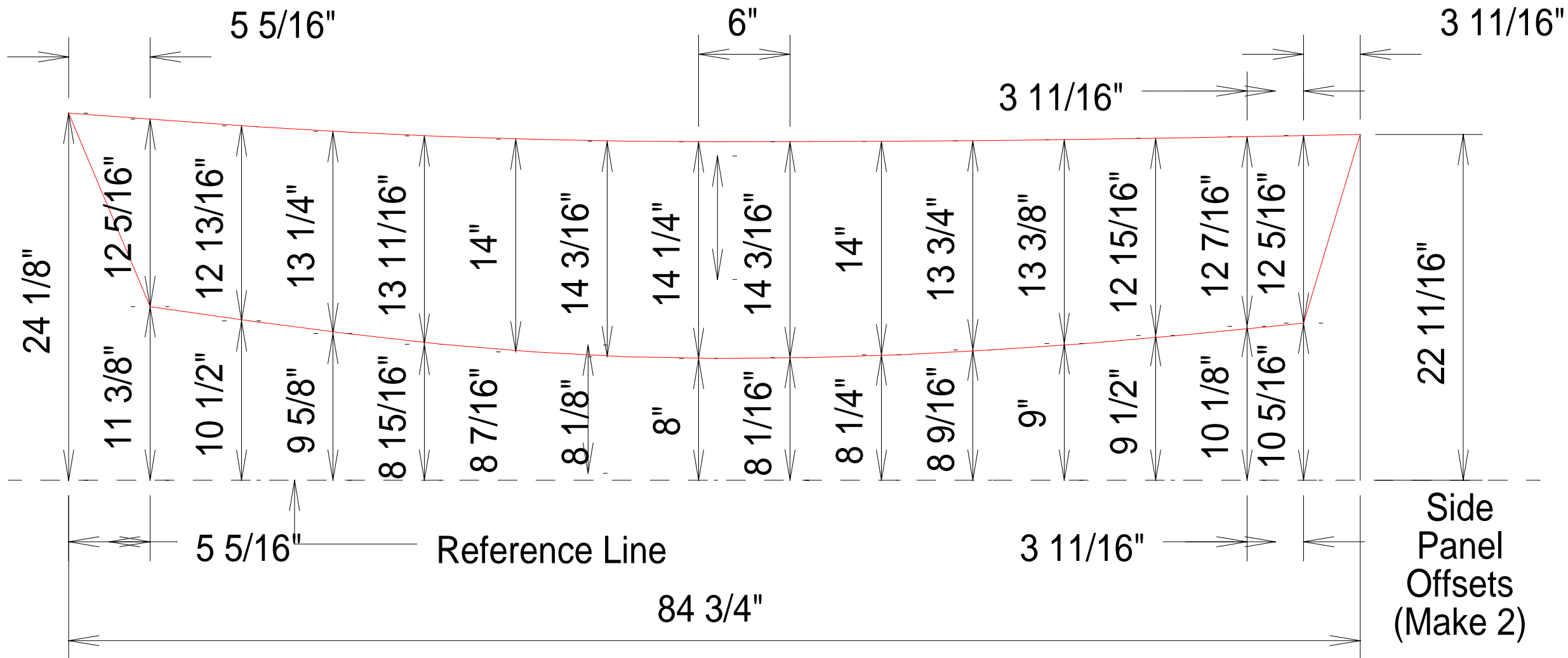
Profile



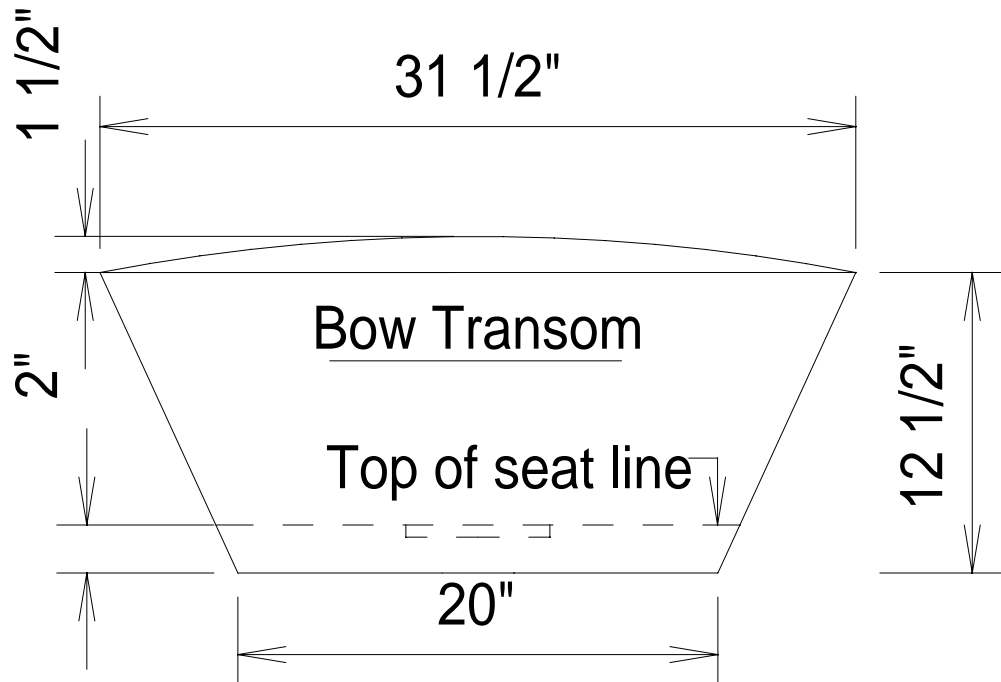


Apple Pie - 7 ft. yacht tender (Use centerline as reference)

Revised Bottom Dimensions 1-6-2001

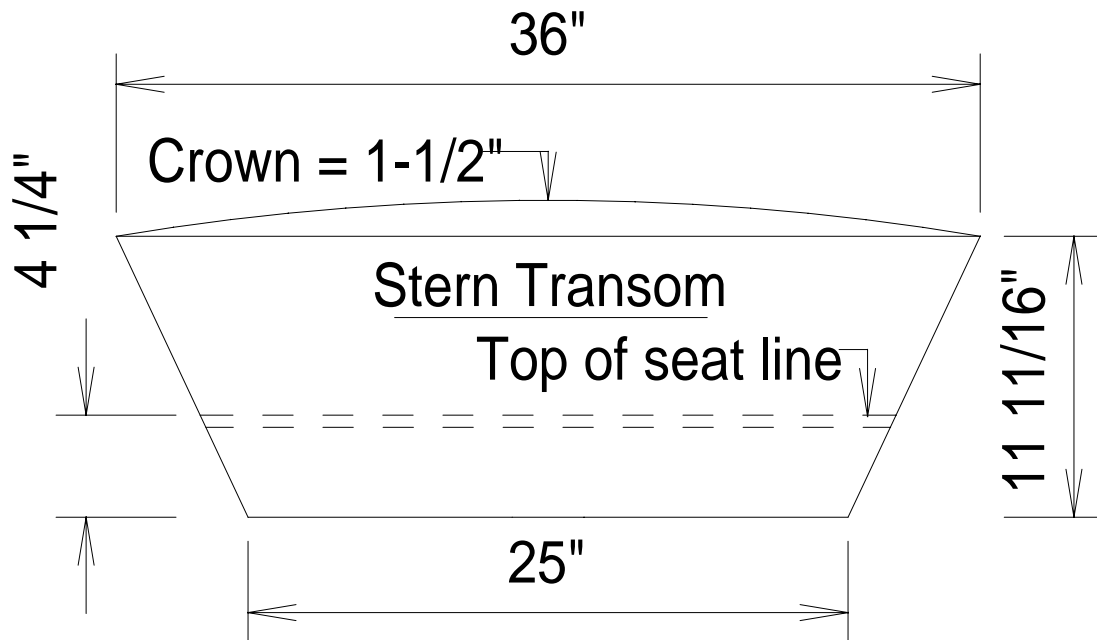


Apple Pie - 7 ft. yacht tender



Apple Pie 7' Yacht Tender

Transoms (Make 1 of Each)



Apple Pie - 7 ft. Yacht Tender - Transoms Make 1 of each

Apple Pie - Thwart Support

