

Touring Pirogue

By: "Hairy Mick"



PRODUCT DESCRIPTION:

<u>Design</u>	Touring Pirogue
<u>Overall Size</u>	15' x 29" (4.6 x .74 m)
<u>Estimated Hull Weight</u>	35-45 pounds (16k - 21K)
<u>Capacity</u>	125 - 340 lbs on board. (57k - 154 k)
<u>Intended Use</u>	Touring and recreational paddling & fishing in calm flat waters, creeks, smallish rivers, and swamps.
<u>Stability</u>	Comfortable for a novice paddler to relax and stroke with ease. Intended for low seating position.
<u>Cost</u>	Cost to build range from about \$200 for a basic hull to \$500 for an ultra tough, very lightweight version.
<u>Time to build</u>	25-40 hours
<u>Required builder skill level</u>	Beginner

ABOUT THE BUILDER

Mick, alias "Hairy Mick" has built 3 JEM Watercraft boats, starting with a Swamp Girl, moving to a high performance fishing sit-on-top kayak (Wadefish). His most recent boat this pirogue. He lives in Australia and has been heavily involved in paddle craft all of his life, from surf skis, to canoes & kayaks. Until recently, most of his paddling experience has been in open ocean and surf conditions.

REVIEW OF BUILDING THE BOAT

This boat was remarkably easy to build. It requires only two 8' X 4' sheets of ply to complete the hull and there are no complex or difficult shapes to measure or cut, no difficult bends or twists to form in the panels.



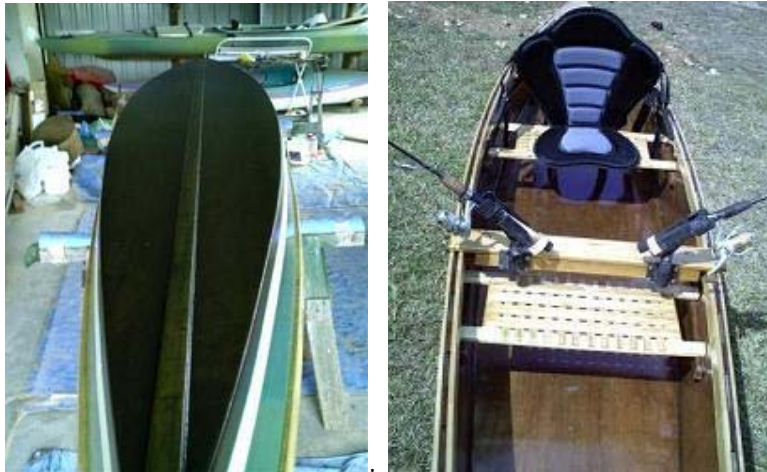
Stitching and filleting was quick and easy. There are only three panels to stitch together.

Installations of the rub rails or gunwales & mini-decks are likewise quick & easy and are only limited by the builder's imagination. There are no difficult edge bends in the gunwales.



I intended to fish from this boat and to this end installed a keel along the length of the hull. The boat in no way needs this for paddling ease. My installation was only to reduce wind drift while fishing.

The bottom is layers of resin are graphite enriched to reduce scratches and to make it a little more slippery to paddle.



My seats are 7.5" above the bottom of this boat and make her feel a little tippy. I would recommend the seats be no higher than 5" above the bottom. (even lower if planning to use this for two people paddling.) Having said that, my high seat works fine for me because I like to sit high in a canoe and am used to boats that are a bit tippy. Sit on or just above the floor and she is rock solid stable.

PERFORMANCE REVIEW

I had never paddled a pirogue before so I wasn't sure exactly what to expect. I initially put the boat in at a local weir, mainly to work out seating positions but had that much fun paddling her I didn't want to go home to make the seats!



This boat is remarkably fast for such a simple design. Using a single blade, canoe paddle, it slips along effortlessly at a very nice cruising pace that just eats up the miles. A Kayak paddle is even better. Tracking is excellent and weathercocking is almost nonexistent. My long keel has somewhat reduced maneuverability, but this can be easily remedied by installing a shorter keel or, not installing a keel at all.

Since being completed, this boat has been paddled in semi-open waters, over exposed shallow flats in 15 knots of wind. Chops were 6' to 12" in height and the only water to come on board was what dripped from the paddle. However, I am used to paddling open waters and take all safety precautions so please use good judgment as to where you paddle yours.

As I said earlier, I built this boat primarily to fish from and to cover miles while doing so. I target serious Australian sport fish like barramundi, king salmon mangrove jack and bass. All of these fish are hard, dirty fighters, capable of blistering runs on any tackle. The asymmetrical pirogue is now my preferred fishing and paddling platform and the one that I choose to use more than all of my other boats combined.



In summary, there is nothing not to like about this boat. It is easy to build, a hoot to paddle and a delight to own. If I could only ever build one boat, this would be the one.



The grin on the littlun says it all. Cool.