

NEW BUILD PROJECT REPORT MARCH 2009

On the 5th January a small team of enthusiastic retired class sailors began work on building a boat with the intention of investigating whether an XOD can be built cost effectively using a modern building method and timbers that are both affordable and not likely to be declared an endangered species in the future. This build has been made possible by nearly 40 members taking a £250 share or supplying significant parts for the new boat. A few shares are available for anyone interested in the class future. The reason for building the boat is that the prospect of a new X being built using the existing building rules and timbers has become very unlikely.

The build team feel that it is important to demonstrate that a new build method offers a range of options, allowing a selection of approved builders and the real possibility of keen DIY sailors being able to finish a boat accurately to the class rules. GRP was rejected based on 4 major points - 1. Very high setup costs. 2. One builder option. 3. Classic boat status. 4. Majority of owner views. With limited resources of about £10,000 we hope that we can complete this demonstration boat and get her campaigned throughout the 2009 season at as many of the class's divisional events as possible, so that she can be seen and sailed by a maximum number of class members.

We are aiming to produce a good 'average' boat that will stand the class in good stead for the next century. We are building her down the middle of the class design rules and lines, which cannot be said about many of our existing boats. The boat will be based at Lymington and looked after by David Harris who was a British Olympic Team member in 1964. David will co-ordinate her sailing programme, his email address will be published on the website.

We have been lucky to find two keen X sailors prepared to offer their professional help free to the class, David Alan-Williams has updated and digitalised the class drawings and produced them full size to enable us to mark and cut out the building frames. Whilst Steve Etheridge has given us the rear area of his building shed and a huge amount of technical advice as we have progressed. We have employed one of Steve's boatbuilders, Terry, to make the laminated stem and Iroko keel and he has done a magnificent job. In addition we are being sponsored by West Systems with the supply of Resin and Glass and technical support.

At present the boat, which is being built upside down, is fully planked using 'Fast Strip' [a tongue and groove system], with the stem, keel and deadwood laminated fitted and faired and the outside epoxy and glass work started. Our aim is to produce an almost maintenance free boat, a requirement for many these days. We intend now to complete the painting and varnishing of the hull before we turn her over to start the interior and deck work. We have weighed several boats in various states, from hull only to complete without a keel, to establish some average weight distributions which will be built into this boat. We think that boatbuilders will be able to build a strip planked boat at approximately half of the currently estimated cost of building in the traditional way. She is looking magnificent, please come and have a look if you are passing anywhere near Sway, you are all most welcome.