

# *Club Magazine*



**AUTUMN EDITION 2019**

# **Luton & District MBC**

*.... a club NOT just for boats ....*

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# **EDITORIAL**

Well hello again model making enthusiasts and friends, trust you have all had a good summer. We at the Luton Club have certainly had a busy one and some good weather (between the rain), well you cannot have everything.

At the time of writing this editorial the next local main event looming on the horizon is the Brambleton Model Railway Club Open Day, Ambrose Lane, Harpenden on November 7<sup>th</sup>. The last meeting we attended I found very enjoyable and I am certain that all those that attended, will be looking forward to the next event which I hope you will all manage to attend. A report on the event will be published in the Winter Edition of this Magazine.

At the end of September (28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>) we have the St. Albans Model Engineering Show which is held at the Townsend Church of England School St. Albans, setting up taking place on the Friday, late afternoon. Always a good exhibition of Trains, Boats, Planes and Lorries, so do not miss it.

For a full list of up and coming events please check the Club Web-Site.

**Ed.**

## **THE CLUB HUT**

We decided a few years ago, to try and change the racking in the hut. This was put up 14 years ago, and although it was good, we needed more racking. In the hut we had the old scaffold tower that we had previously used as racking. Mike Skuse and I had measured it up one morning earlier this year and it just fitted. So, a date was set one Sunday to do the racking and sort some rubbish out. Brian came over with his trailer, we set some tables up outside and emptied the hut. There were 16 people who ended up either helping or watching (my fault, not enough jobs for all, I will change that!) We sorted all the wood outside into piles, while a couple of people tore the old wooden racking out carefully to reuse what could be salvaged. With that completed, we put up the scaffold racking, it was a tight fit, millimeters to spare. The John Allen came to the fore; measuring and getting the sheeting cut to size and dry fitting it. We had peeps outside sorting a bucket of various screws out so we had the correct size one available. With the lower shelving sorted, Aggie and I went along screwing the shelving down into place. At the same time Brian and his work crew were sorting out all the stuff outside, throwing rubbish and what had not been used in years. We carefully restacked all the wood up top, cut unusable lengths up to go in the trailer and generally had a good tidy. Tents were checked and put away, seats cleaned down and the floor swept. It looks much neater now, but we still need another work party, just to clear the top shelf and get that squared away. Look out for the text message.....it's coming to a phone near you soon!

**Pete Carmen**

# ***NORTHAMPTON MBC OPEN DAY***

At the Wicksteed weekend in May, we were sounded out by the Northampton Club about attending their open day. After a couple of questions about when and where, we decided to go up. I've known of Dennis, their club chairman for a couple of years, and although we speak at shows, we have never really spoken about the clubs. It turned out that this would be their first open day!

The water is in a farmer's field attached to a nursery, pictures looked good of the water, and we were assured there would be little weed. Approaching the date, I was asked by Dennis if we required anything, as they had spare tables, we agreed to have a couple of tables supplied as well taking our own, with our gazebo. Upon arriving at the nursery, we could not find the pond! We were told we would be met by a PIRATE. We didn't see him, although we found the Sealed Knot, Vikings, medieval re-enactors etc. who were in the field next to the pond. We were pointed in the right direction and duly arrived at the pond. To our big surprise, they had also supplied us with a 3m x 3m Gazebo. We duly selected our spot, parked the cars and put our own Gazebo up, with all the tables. We had a large selection of boats on display, and more to the point were even more surprised when we saw Bob Vaughan arrive!!! Some of the other faces were Graham Rumble, Barry and Val, Mark, Brian and Anne, Mike Skuse, Dave Seath, Rob Seath, John "kit car" Lamkin and Myself.

The water was a nice blue, down to the fact that to stop the weed growing, they had put industrial food dye in the water. The blue colouring stopped a lot of the light getting to the bottom of the pond, thus eliminating the weed. Sounds silly but it worked!

We had a really good selection of boats, from Dave's Landing craft, to Robs Sea Queen to my refurbished PT50 Hydrofoil. This last boat, I had taken to Stoke with me a couple of weeks earlier after a refurb. It had failed to get on the plane then. Back home and a few adjustments it was ready to go. I potted the boat out from the harbor getting the feel of her before attempting to open her up. Once in open water, away from everyone, I open the throttle and out she popped from the water up onto her foils. This was a huge relief, as I had lost a lot of confidence in the boat as she never really performed, then disaster..... She dropped into the water, had a huge swing to the right, and could not drive in a straight line. I limped her into the side and recovered her. At this time Bob was putting his fast Lesro Arrow out, I heard him zoom off!

Upon inspection of the PT50, I found the whole propeller bent at 30 degrees from the prop shaft. I had obviously hit something in the water. The boat was put on the table out of use. I noticed Bob coming back with his boat, glum was not the word. He had hit something in the same area of water I had been in and totally sheared his rudder off! Never seen that before! Some Photos Follow.

***Pete Carmen***









## **STEVENAGE MBC OPEN DAY**

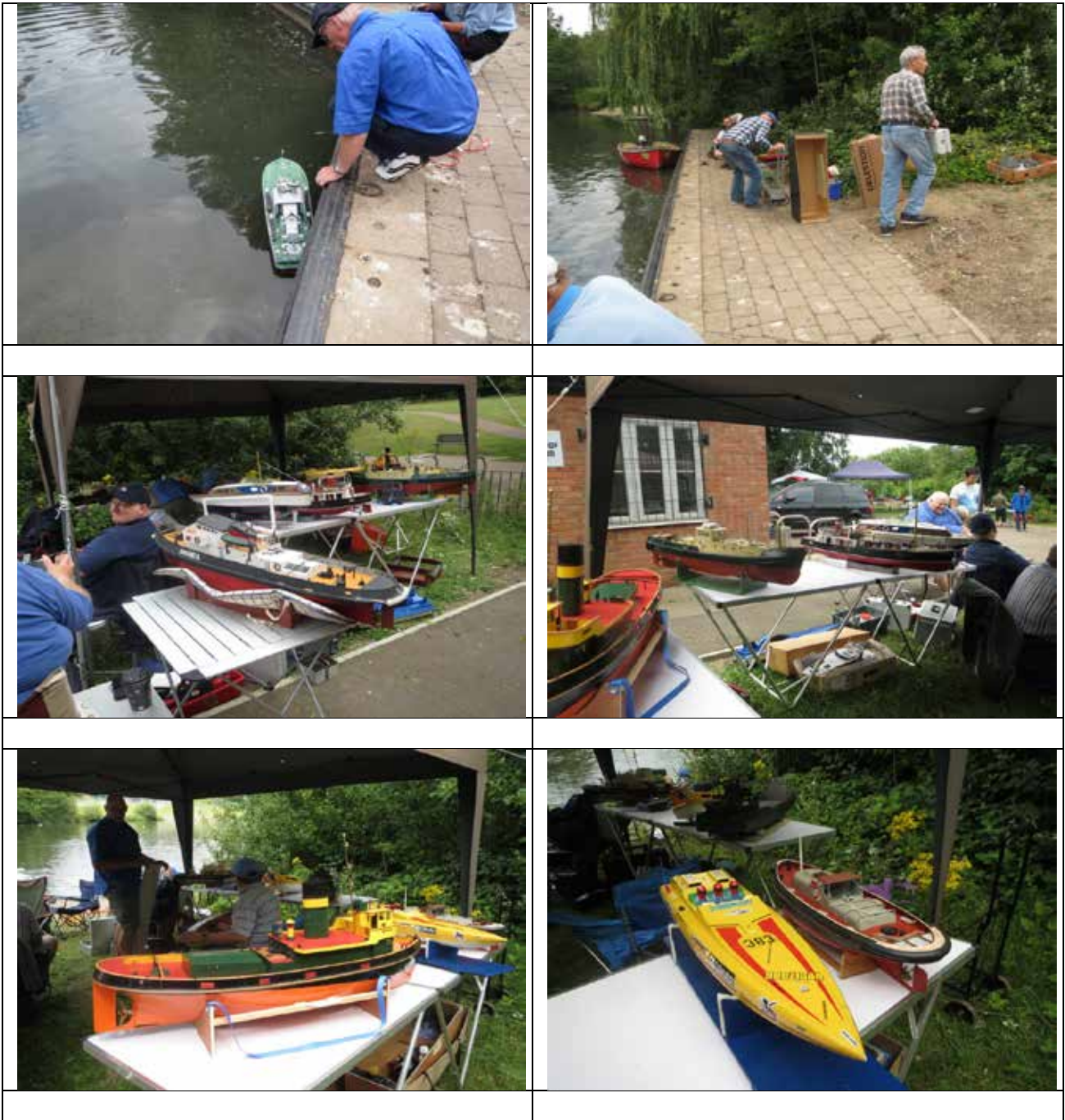
Again, we were invited to Stevenage open day, in aid of the RNLI. This year a few of us turned up, and we were in for comedy gold!! We did our usual set up in our little corner. Stevenage had a good turnout, and we watched the IC boats going around. Indeed, even Nixon had a run with his fast electric. Joe was pootling about with his destroyer and Nixon had his usual amount of boats on the water, and the rest of us joined in when we could be bothered, as it was such a nice day.

There were a lot of public around again, asking questions and the kids going on the have a go boats, they did a club 500 race as well which was fun to watch. There were quite a few dogs around which made me happy, nice little fluffy pooches!!! One of the downsides was watching a swan nearly kill a duck as it had wandered into its territory. There were a few bits and bobs for sale, to which I bought a model kit and a storage tray for my desk. Can never get enough storage trays, PS it's already full of equipment to be tested to see if it works! Tony D has taken some pictures, so I will let them talk..... but to the comedy gold item.....

I'm not sure how this happened but..... Nixon's yacht which he was not watching had drifted to the island and got caught in overhanging branches. Somehow, one of the Stevenage members had asked him to get in the row boat with him and row out to the island canoe style. Now, watching from the bank, we decided in 10 seconds flat that Nixon had never been in a boat before, let alone a rowing boat with the use of an oar! The boat went out 5 ft from the bank then promptly went in circles for 10 minutes. Nixon had no coordination about rowing, they eventually retrieved the yacht, and one of the Stevenage club members said there was another boat stuck up the far end of the lake, a big grey one. Now I wear glasses for close in reading etc, so took them off, mainly

because I was crying with laughter at this point, went up to the Member who had said about the other boat and pointed out that it was the base of the fountain, He said “I Know” and promptly fell about laughing as the two people in the boat proceeded to row in circles towards the fountain base looking for a non-existent boat! They got about half way there before they realised they had been duped!!!! Pictures attached.

**Pete Carmen**













## ***HEMEL HEMSTEAD MBC***

On 31 September we had another visit to the Hemel club. There were about a dozen of us this time. We set the tables up at 8am, as we were doing 9 till 2. The familiar faces turned up from Luton plus a few from Hemel. I had arranged for the Water Gardens manager to turn up for a quick chat about some bits at 10am, Anne and Val kindly went and got us tea while we set up. I had taken several boats along to sail, one of which was a club trainer. Several members of the public came along and chatted, and we let them have a go on the club trainer, both kids and adults, although sometimes it's hard to tell them apart. No sinking's this time, but a couple of us lost our boats when we didn't pay attention to them, and they drifted off into the weed area.

My meeting with the WG manager was about the geese problem they are having. I was contacted to discuss various options to help with geese control. I was sent a link of some stuff they did in America, but that was not really an option here. I took Mike Dowsett along to a formal meeting during the week to discuss the use of various RC vehicles in the area, as they were not aware of the rules of operating them. We then decided on the type of vehicle to use, which was a buggy. Graham Rumble kindly bought 2WD and 4WD Vehicles along, and I demonstrated the agility of them to him and let him have a go. He now appreciates how difficult it is to control them when coming towards you, and the amount of training and practice that will be required from his team. We will be doing a full demo in the Water Gardens in a couple of weeks, with his team to see if the idea works! I will endeavour to get some actions shots of what goes on!

## ***LUTON MBC OPEN DAY with STEAK***

Well of course that was my idea, and what a stupid one it was!!!! I think not! As always, it's a bit scary putting anything like this on. What's the weather like, will anyone turn up, how much food do you do?

With all this going on in his head, your intrepid Secretary started on Friday with the shopping. We had a budget of £60, to feed how many...that's the variable! I catered for 30. The food would be simple and quick. Homemade potato salad and coleslaw thin minute steaks, loin pork chops, chicken drumsticks, rice and vegetables, sausages and French stick. Total cost £54 approx. the Sunday started early at 8am for me, loading the



car, getting down Wardown and setting up, ably helped by club members. BBQ on to sterilize it etc. Tables out, chairs out. Then more members turning up. I believe we had 42 people down the compound, with lots of boats..... some even went on the water! Unusually for me I actually stayed cooking. The food went down well with not a lot left over (thankfully).

We had a best boat of the day, with the 3 best boats picked by Mike Dowsett and Myself, then the winner picked by a neutral Carol Lamkin. This was the fairest way, the winner being James Heselwood from the Hemel club for his Deans Marine HMS Solebay. There were a lot of excellent boats on display again, as usual. I noted a lot more people are now coming down and sailing. To this extent, you will see a committee member sometimes taking names in a book; this is just so we can see ebbs and flows of what is going on. On this day I counted 17 boats on the water at one time, ok, a lot were not moving as the operators were gassing or drinking tea! But they are on the water. John and Kay had put the harbour out for us to play with, and a lot of new members loved it! We are seeing a lot of yachts within the club, especially the 1 meter class. It was nice to see an appearance by the club boat Sun XXI, now looked after by Tony Martin. He also bought his Lowgarth along, so his back has gone! Bob Vaughan bought his Bruma and Le Sphinx along and there was a nice little early German E boat.

***Pete Carmen***



Early Morning Setup



Early Morning Setup



Harbour Being Assembled



What No Boats



Phone Stuck to Grahams Ear



Grand Dad and Grand Son



Boxes and Boats



The Phones still stuck to Grahams Ear



Woodies being Kidnapped



Food Glorious Food





The Younger Generation



The Older Generation



Two Nice Boats I Think They are Petes



Master Chef



Fiddling About with Boats



Some Nice Vessels by Bob Vaughan



Joe's Missile Cruiser - no Superstructure



Bob getting all steamed up  
Anyone spot the banana?





Still Getting the Harbour Ready



A Gaggle of Boats?



The Inner Workings of a Steam Launch  
Still see the banana?



Boats on the Water



Robbs Cabin Cruiser at Speed



Lonely Boat on the Water



An Array of Club Members Boats





Another Steam Boat Being Prepared



The Chef at Work



Nice Warship



MTB and a Fishing Boat











Banana has gone!



James Heselwood (Hemel Club) being presented with a trophy for the best model of the day, by Mike Dowsett Club Chairman for his Deans Marine model of HMS Solebay

## ***LAST EVENING SAIL 2019***

Monday August 12<sup>th</sup> 2019 was the last of our CLUB evening sailings for this year and as it was a nice sunny evening and we had about 20 members and friends in attendance. This appears to have been the norm for most of our evening meetings this year, as our membership numbers are beginning to swell again.

I attended the evening and took a number of pictures as shown below. There was also a fair in the park and I assumed that it was part the Luton 'Mela', however checking on the

Web-Site it is listed as taking part on August 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> perhaps the organisers decided to extend the festivities? Some photos of the evening event are attached.



Which person is under tuition



Nixon's Fishing Boat, what can go Wrong?



One of Bob Vaughan's Many Wooden Boats



Pete Giving some Advice?





Good Few boats on Table – All in the Water



Derek Thompson's MTB Bold Ranger



Fair and Entertainment in the Park



Restaurant Manager talking to a couple of Trouble Makers

## ***RE-STORING A PERKASA MTB***

Sometime during 2018 Derek Thompson gave me a 1/72 Scale Perkasa MTB, a present to me from his brother Brian with the message 'See what you can do with this'. It was already built with a single motor installed complete with a single propeller shaft, however it was not Radio Controlled, the rudders being fitted into rubber rings in the hull to allow them to be preset. A few of the deck fittings were loose but in general it had promise.

First job was to see how far I could strip the model down without causing any catastrophic damage. I removed both the cabin assemblies (unclipped from the deck) all of the guard rails were removed as some of them were broken and to my amazement I managed to remove the deck from the hull. I removed the motor, propeller shaft and rudders and then proceeded to relieve the inside of the hull of all its moulded fittings

**Photo 01** (Thank you Mr Dremmel).



Photo 01

Next job was to make a pair of rudders that could be controller by a servo. I cut two 20mm lengths of 3mm diameter brass tube, for the down tubes and two 45mm lengths of 2mm diameter brass bar for the rudder shafts. These were threaded M2 at one end and a flat machined on one side at the other to allow the rudder blades to be soldered to the shafts. Using one of the discarded plastic rudder blades as a template I cut two brass rudder blades from 0.5mm thick brass sheet and trimmed them to the required shape. Two tiller arms were made from 1mm thick brass sheet and a coupling rod made from 1mm diameter brass wire. The completed rudder assembly and associated parts may be seen in **Photo 02**.

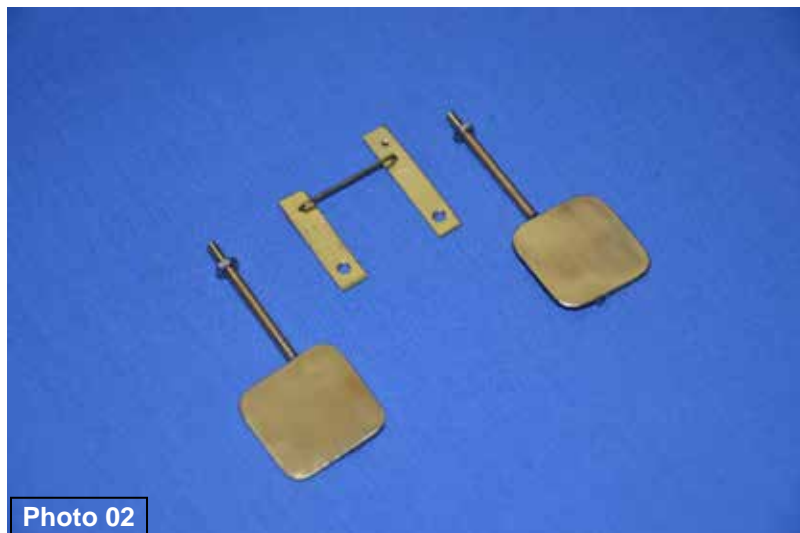


Photo 02

The existing hole in the hull for the propeller shaft running tube was re-drilled at a shallower angle and was opened out to 3mm diameter to accommodate a brass running tube of the same size. The propeller shaft was made from 2mm diameter stainless steel 90mm long and threaded M2 at one end for the new 19mm diameter brass propeller. A solid coupling was made from 5mm diameter brass bar. The completed assembly may be



seen in **Photo 03**, the propeller fitted is temporary (12mm Stainless), currently awaiting delivery of the 19mm brass propeller.



Photo 03

I selected a motor from my sizeable spare motor collection. and tested it at 6 volts and it performed favourably. It was then mounted on a plasticard plinth as shown in **Photo 04**.

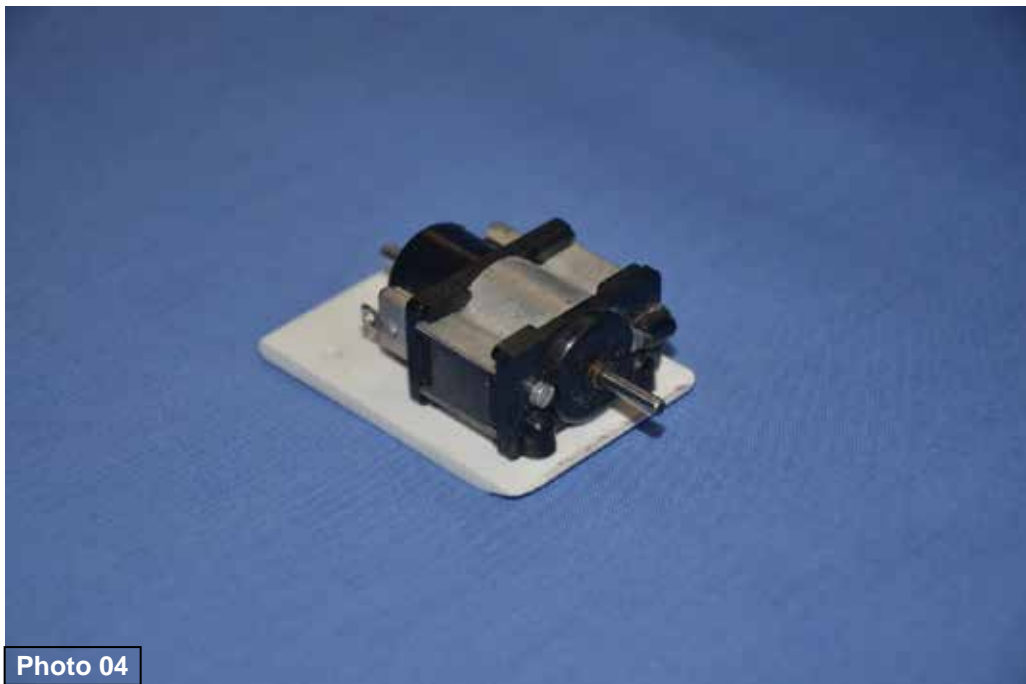


Photo 04

The running tube was fitted complete with its shaft into the hole in the hull. The motor was then coupled to the shaft which then allowed measurements to be taken in order to be able to make a sloped mounting for attaching the motor assembly.

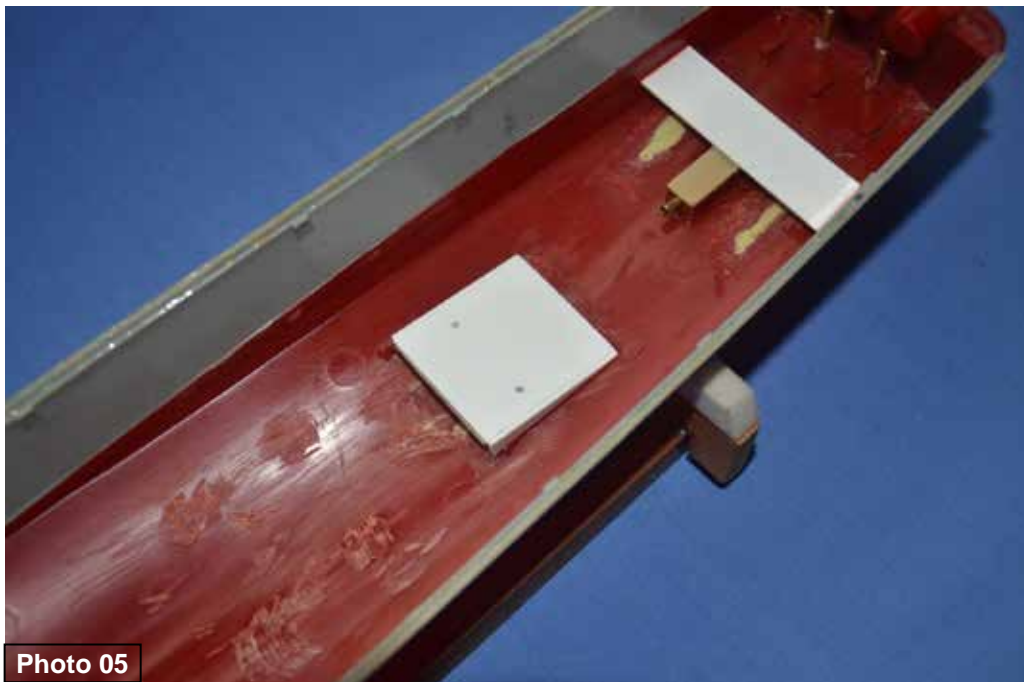


Photo 05

A servo mounting was made to sit across the width of the hull and also resting on the propeller shaft gland. The Motor and Servo mountings may be seen fitted into the hull in **Photo 05**.

The motor and servo were then placed into the hull and secured into position including all the rudder linkage **Photo 06**.

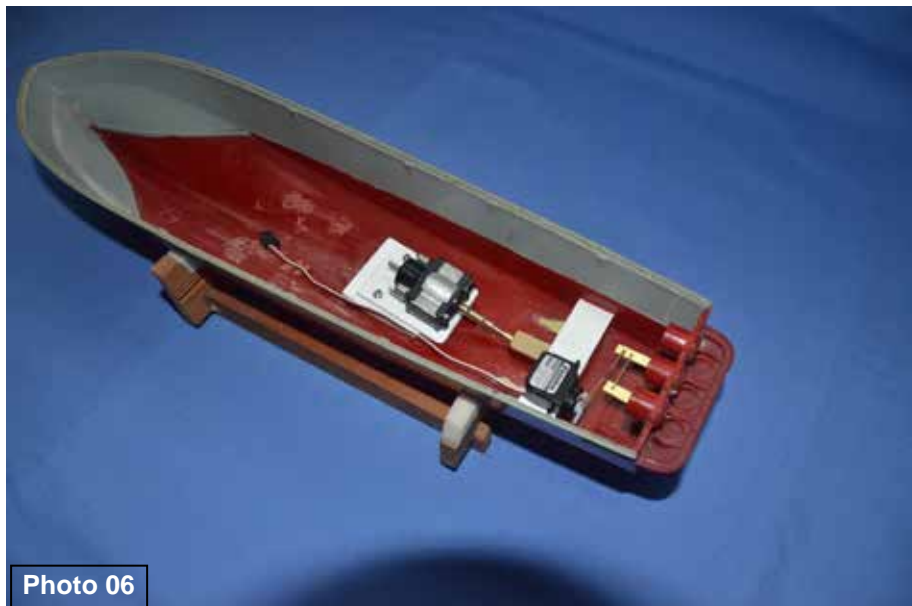


Photo 06

Next was the installation on the control system, the intention was to use an old 27MHz radio but this turned out to be un-reliable. At first I thought it was due the motor not being fully suppressed, thus I added three 0.1Uf capacitors which did improved the situation but not sufficiently to my liking, I therefore reverted to using a 2.4 GHz radio system

The control system was therefore made up of a Hobby King TR6A six channel Radio Receiver (not that I required 6 radio channels), Mtronics Viper 10amp Speed Controller



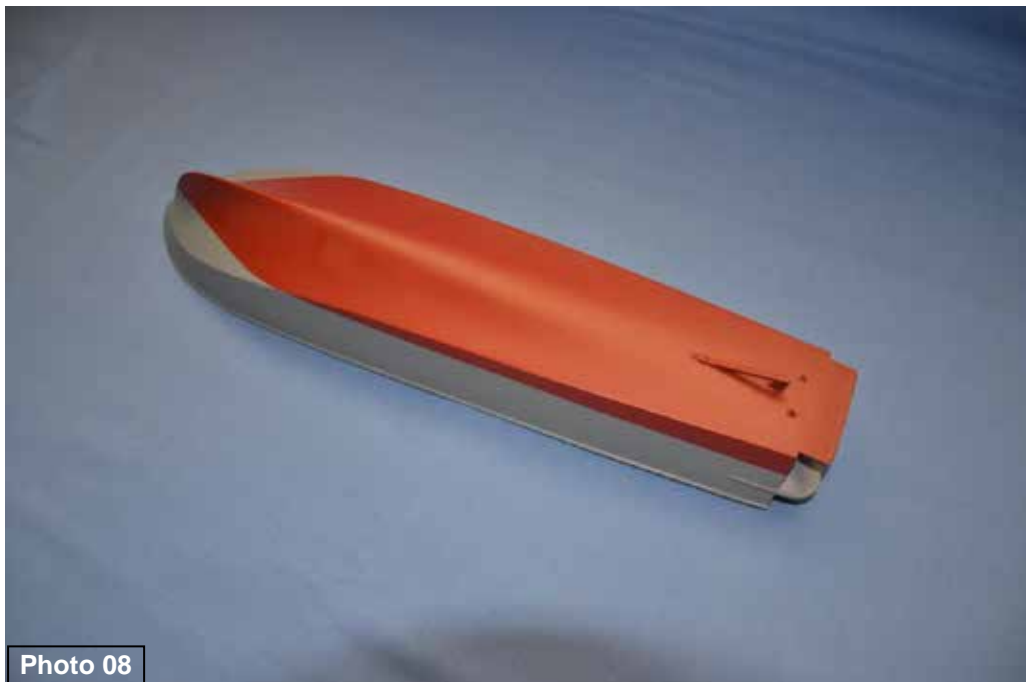
and a Poly-Power two cell Li-Po battery. In order to retain these items in place within the hull I created a housing module which included a power switch. This was made from 20mm wide strips of 1.5mm thick plasticard cut to length and bonded together to form the module housing.



Photo 07

The completed module fitted and bonded into the hull, including the fitted and wired electronic control items is shown in **Photo 07**.

With the basic hull now built and tested it was time to think about painting. The Propeller Shaft, Rudder assembly and battery was removed from the hull. The lip around the top edge of the hull still contained some of the old dried glue so I carefully used a small grinding disc with a Dremmel drill to clear the channel. With this completed the area within the hull was masked as was the upper hull above the water line allowing the area below the water line to be painted with Halfords Red Oxide Primer, any small voids being filled with resin filler and then the lower hull was given a final coat of Red Oxide followed by a coat of Humbrol clear satin varnish.



When the lower hull paint was dry the masking to the upper hull was removed and the lower hull masked. The upper hull was painted and filled as for the upper hull but using Halfords grey primer followed by a final coat of Humbrol clear satin varnish. When the paint was dry all the masking tape was removed from the hull. The painted hull is shown in **Photo 08**.

The rudder shafts were then masked to allow the blades to be painted with Halfords Red Oxide followed by a final coat of Humbrol clear satin varnish **Photo 09**. The propeller shaft was re-inserted into the hull and coupled to the motor, Rudders inserted into their down tubes and the tillers fitted and coupled to the Servo. Battery inserted into its cell within the hull and all the wiring connected together and a system test carried out which I am glad to report was totally successful. A picture of the completed hull mounted on its rebuilt stand is shown in **Photo 10**.



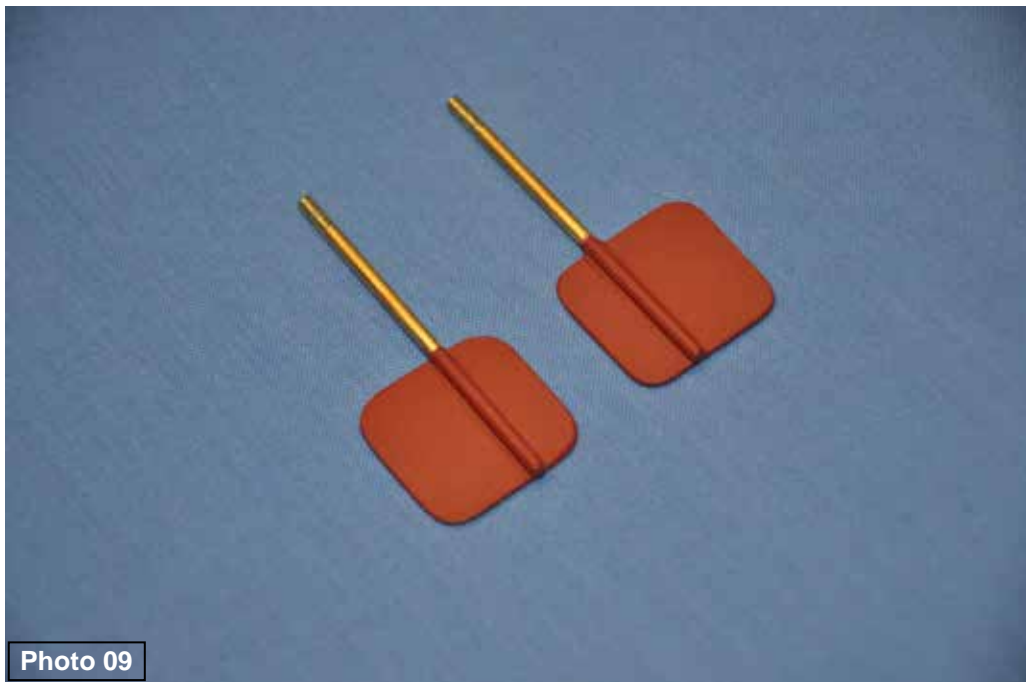


Photo 09



Photo 10

Before turning my attention to the superstructure I decided to carry out a buoyancy test of the hull, with the Deck and Cabins fitted. So off to the Test Tank (Bath) to see just how the hull would float. I am glad to report that the vessel floated in the water as anticipated **Photo 11**. The vessel was then removed from the test tank and the hull dried. It was then placed in position on its stand and I moved on to work on the Superstructure.



Like the mating edges of the Hull, the underside of the deck also had some dried glue left in place. This was removed using a Dremmel drill fitted with a small grinding disc to clear any unwanted adhesive and when this had been completed the deck was trial fitted to the hull to ensure a tight fit.

All loose fittings were identified and the associated locating holes in the deck cleaned and drilled out ready for the parts to be re-attached. The deck and superstructure was then given a good wash in soapy water, using a small paint brush to assist in removing all the surface grime and getting into those tight corners. The Deck and individual parts were then rinsed and dried ready for assembly.

First a Loose Torpedo and its mounting cradle were re-attached and glued back into position together with a small torpedo hoist. The Hand Rail Stanchions were fitted into their respective positions on the deck ensuring that the holes for the guard rails were all aligned. To replace the discarded cotton guard rails I decided to use some 1mm diameter enamel copper wire, stretched into straight lengths and then inserted and glued into the holes of the stanchions.

The anchor chain was replaced with a length of black chain, left over from one of my previous models, The fore deck cleats were moulded into the deck such that it gave open access into the hull. Two small plasticard blanking plates were made and bonded into the underside of the deck to prevent any water ingress. The aft cabin had provision for a slider switch to be fitted, this was blanked off using a small cover made of 0.5mm thick plasticard which was bonded to the inside of the cabin roof.

A Hand Rail had come loose from the side of the Fore Cabin; this was cleaned and glued back into position. There were a number of unsightly marks on the deck so I mixed up some Tamiya paint (Black/Dark Green) in order to make the deck colour as close as possible and touched up all the marked areas.





Photo 12

With the deck restored, it was time to replace it back into position on the hull. I applied a small bead of adhesive around the joint lines of both the Deck and the Hull before offering them both together and weighting the deck down into position on the hull, Thus completing the rebuild of the Perkasa MTB **Photo's 12 and 13.**



Photo 13

The new larger propeller was received, after having chased the supplier. This turned out to be a bit too large, it cleared the hull but it was the fit between the two rudders that was the problem. I fitted the propeller into the lathe and trimmed it down until it fitted between the two rudders. Tested the function of the radio control system again with the new propeller installed and now it was ready for its sea trials down on Wardown Lake.

Down at the lake all did not go well, initially the boat was a bit slow and after a very short time it stopped all together, luckily it drifted into the bank due to the prevailing breeze and I was able to retrieve it and place it on the table for investigation and yes the battery had no power left in it, however after about ten minutes it recovered to allow Pete Carmen to attach his battery checker and verify that the battery was functioning correctly and that I had not got a dud cell.

On returning home I decided that the problem was there was insufficient power in the battery (only 0.5A capacity) so I decided to up the voltage to 11.1v and increase the power as much as possible depending on the battery size that would fit into the boat after searching the internet and measuring the internal space within the boat I selected a 11.1 volt 1A capacity LiPo battery in the hope that it would go faster and last a bit longer. To be able to insert this new battery into the vessel I had to carry out some modifications namely remove the power switch and rear section of the battery box **Photo 14** shows the modified vessel with the new battery lying alongside the boat.

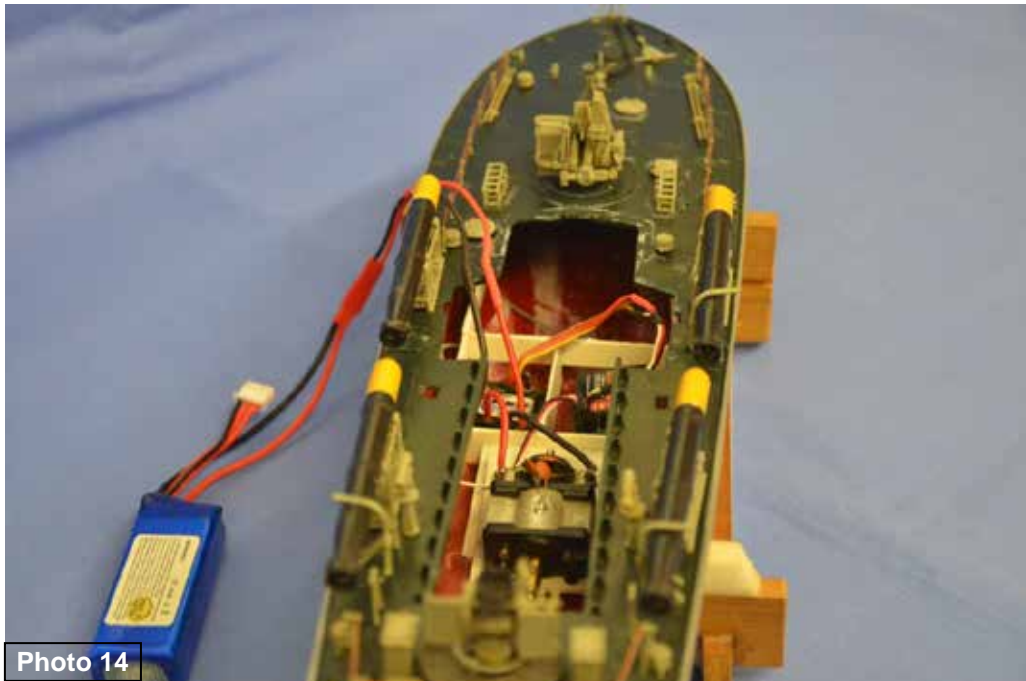


Photo 14

With the new battery installed 'hay presto' all was working again. So back down to the lake again for another sea trial. Initially all went well then the boat slowed down and was very difficult to steer, brought it back to the bank and retrieved it from the water, only to find a twig and a feather wrapped around the propeller (common problem in our lake as we share it with the wild life). With the unwanted bits removed, the model was replaced in the water and I proceeded to enjoy a successful morning's sail. **Photo15.**





To complete the project I needed to make a protection/Storage box. This I did using an old cardboard box and modifying it to accommodate the small vessel, the completed box can be seen in **Photo 16**.



That completes my article on the cleaning up and motorising small plastic model of a Perkasa MTB. As mentioned at the beginning of this article it was given to me by the late Brian Thompson – thank you Brian, it will be something to remember you by in the years to come.

Have you carried out refurbishment on a model or even built one from scratch? Why not put pen to paper and tell us all about it by submitting an article to the Club Magazine.

**ED**