

VALDIVIA BUILD LOG

Dr Ron

The Robbe kit of the two-masted schooner Valdivia was purchased in 2007, along with the fitting set and propulsion accessories, and has been staring me in the face since then while building several other models. The build logs for the Seattle fire boat, Happy Hunter and the Calypso can be found on our website – shipmodelers.com. With a slight shift in interest among our club members from tug boats to sail boats I decided it was appropriate to get this kit started.

Upon opening the box, the major parts – hull, deck, bulwarks, rudder and cabin parts appeared very well done in ABS plastic. There were numerous plastic bags containing nuts, bolts, screws, cleats, pulleys, bollards, vents, ships wheel, anchor parts, mast hoops, lights, etc.. There were lengths of wood, wire, brass rods and tubing, plastic strips, teak planking, die cut wood sheets containing parts for cabin construction and die cut plastic sheets for other items needed for construction. Several tapered tubes were included to form the masts and gaffs. The illustrated instructions were in German. However, there was a text booklet in English. At times it was difficult going from one to another during the build process. A cardboard tube contained the mainsail and I was wondering where the rest of the sails were located, thinking of course that they forgot to include them in the kit. Later, I found them attached under a false bottom of the box



After building the stand to support the hull, I decided to reinforce the hull with fiberglass cloth and epoxy resin for added strength.

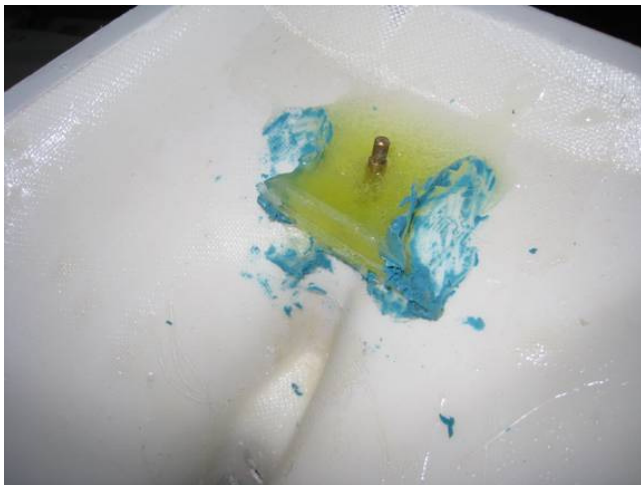


A piece of aluminum replaced the plastic one intended to fix the rudder to the bottom of the hull piece. The tail end of the hull, which was a separate ABS piece, was glued with Weldon Scigrip 16 acrylic cement. The joint edges were faired with epoxy putty.



The excess ABS on the hull, deck and bulwarks was cut near the line with heavy shears and the scraped with a knife blade and sanded.

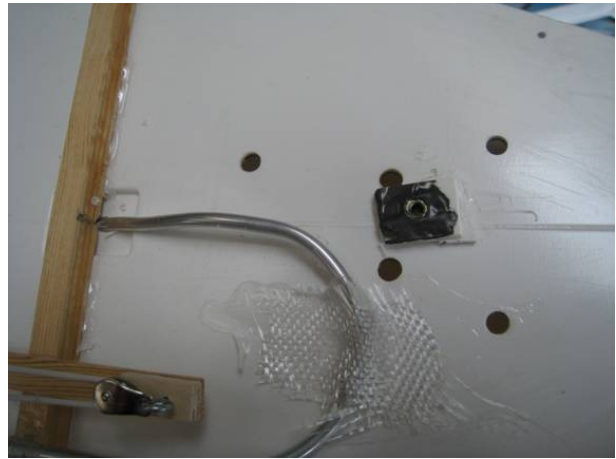
The rudder post and prop shaft were secured using 20 minute epoxy by creating a dam with scrap ABS and blue clay – which was later removed.



Since the ballast kit was not purchased, 11 pounds of lead shot was placed in the keel and secured with Tight Bond 3 glue and then covered several days later with a wood strip, glass cloth and epoxy resin.



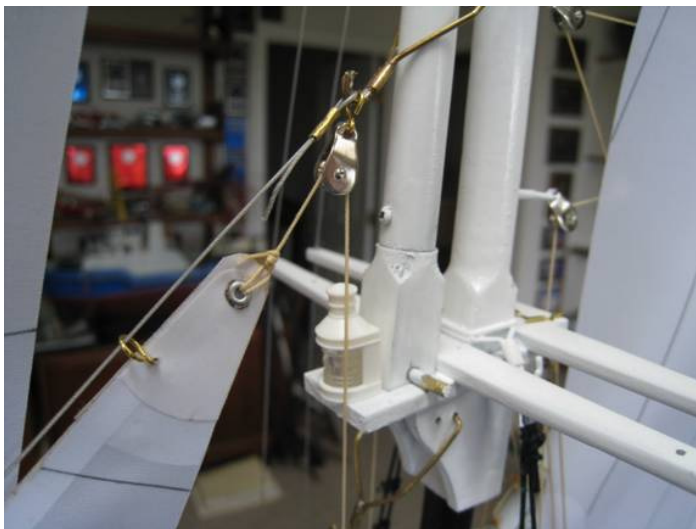
The bowsprit was attached with a brass bolt for added stability and strength.



Brass rings provided for the bowsprit and mast construction were the wrong size, so they were made from brass tubing of the appropriate sizes using a cut off saw.

The teak deck planking was secured with the acrylic cement, sanded and coated with polyester resin – thus filling in any gaps and also strengthening the deck planking. The deck was secured to the hull with Permatex blue RTV silicone gasket sealer. The bulwarks were attached to the deck by acrylic cement. Instead of using the supplied wood for the cap rail, laminated teak strips were employed and attached to the bulwarks with acrylic cement. The wood pieces provided to surround the ABS cabin forms were used as patterns in order sheet the cabins with teak veneer. The teak cap rails and cabins were coated with several coats of clear acrylic lacquer.

Masting and rigging went pretty much according to the plans and instructions. The mast and rigging were made to be disassembled for transport with hooks attached to the standing rigging and springs at the bottom of the masts to release the standing rigging when compressed.



The upper mast can be telescoped by pulling a brass pin as shown in the above figure. Sail battens were precut and easily applied to the sails for reinforcement. Holes were made in sail edges with a soldering iron to which a T pin was attached. This prevented fraying and tearing when attaching hoops, rings and thread to attach the sails to masts, guides and gaffs.

The ratlines were tied and glued instead of threading them through the shrouds as suggested in the instructions.



The model was a fun build and I can hardly wait to see how she performs on the pond. It's really a shame that Robbe has stopped production of this and other fine models. Hopefully someone will take over. Following are pictures of the completed model.



