



Ben Hodder, Apprentice Boatbuilder

Honnor Marine, Swanage, Dorset

<https://www.honnormarine.co.uk/>



What a year this has been, I can hardly believe all of the incredible experiences I have been a part of and the progression I have achieved throughout the year. The opportunity you have given me has opened up another world and I have thrust myself fully into it.

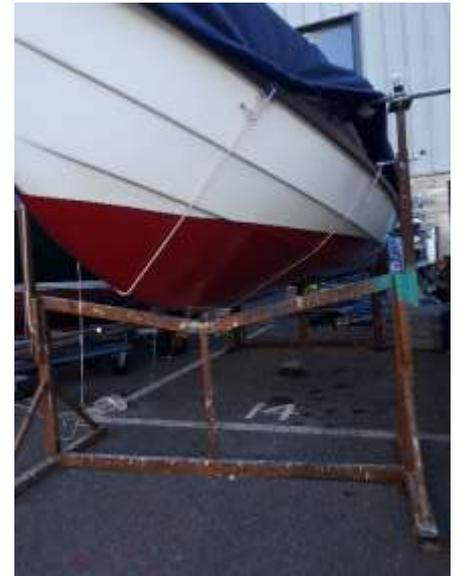
Since my last report, I have started College at Bournemouth and Poole, and it was great to see you there a month or so ago. You could probably get a good impression of why I am enjoying this experience so much from your day up there. Steve and Dan provide a fantastic environment and showcase their skill and knowledge onto us fantastically, progressing us through the course with ease. I have attached a couple of pictures below, one of the floor of a boat in which we glued two pieces of wood together and then shaped with multiple skills we have learned including chiselling, using a bandsaw and other machinery. The other was a group project and it was to laminate the hull



of a small RC boat. Our group chose a design more complex than we initially thought, but the experience building up layers from the ground up to produce the final article was fantastic.

Our projects have by no means been limited to this though. Within woodwork alone we have learned about scarf joints, maintaining equipment, laminating wood, planing wood, mortise and tenon joint and more. In composite studies we have began laminating more and more complex items as the year progresses, from a flat A4 sheet, to more intricate designs, a few can be seen dotting around the room in the picture above. These have increased our skills in using the correct tools for the job and what key things to look out for, such as air bubbles and resin build up under the CSM, stress in the fabric and over soaking areas.

Back at Honnor Marine, there have been many projects on the go, with the season drawing ever nearer. Tim has been fantastic and patient with me, teaching me skills and ever increasing my responsibility. I have worked on polishing boats, repairing damaged woodwork, repainting boat hulls and recently adding a waterline and antifouling a boat (see picture to right). Twinned with work at Honnor Marine, I now have a day at Rondar Racing in Westbury, working with their laminators and getting to help build our new boats. This is an incredible opportunity as I have not seen the process of building our particular boats from scratch so I can now understand better why certain components are placed in a certain way or the boats design is the way it is. The Laminating process at Rondar is a steep learning curve coming from little experience and it has taken a lot of effort to get my standards and speed up but I am thoroughly enjoying the challenge.



I believe that this apprenticeship has taken a lot of strain out of the company as there are more hands on deck. All projects are being completed on schedule, and all customers are satisfied which are the two big pluses. Tim and I do sit down and swap knowledge, he is keen to understand what I am learning from college and at Rondar, in he will impart his knowledge then back onto me about our range, specs and continue off the job training. In my opinion, it has been a highly successful mutual benefit for the company. I am so grateful to the opportunity that you have provided me and I hope to grow from strength to strength. I am aiming to stay with Honnor Marine and help build the company back up and would like to manage to the floor within the company someday. I hope that our paths will cross again soon and would be fantastic to catch up again.

Kind Regards,

Ben Hodder