

March Blog

At last, after quality time with family and post IBTC, my placement begins. I arrived in the Hamble where *Jolie Brise* was laid up for the winter, and straight away put into practise what I learnt at IBTC.



I began the placement by mixing red lead putty and filling some old caulking seams. The red lead we used was a mix of red lead powder (until the mix is a rich red/orange), some grey putty used in building sites and raw linseed oil (amount appropriate to the consistency required). Which is different to the mix we used at IBTC but just as good.

After a fun session mixing lots of putty I filled in the empty seams with a putty knife and painted the topsides of the hull with primer, at first just doing patches where the paintwork is damaged, giving it 3 coats.

Below is a picture of the putty filled seams and a picture of the primer patches.



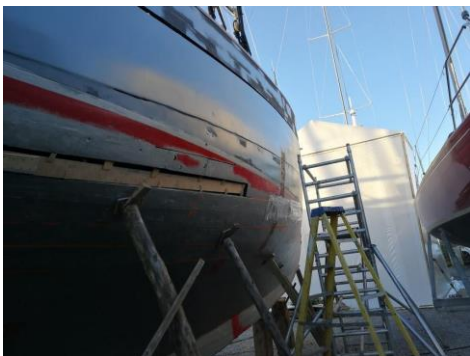
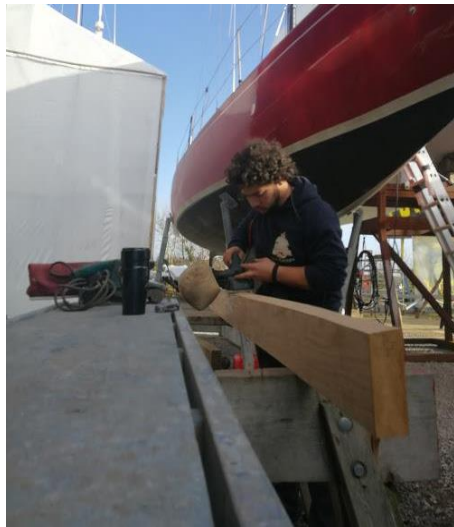
The weather wasn't very pleasant for the next week so I did some indoors work: cutting and shaping new leather for blocks; resewing older leather blocks; sanding/prepping blocks for varnishing; and making a box for the engine and generator panels to slot into.



Once the weather had cleared a bit, we started to prepare two new planks to be steamed and bolted in place and more paintwork on the topsides and antifoul primer under the waterline.

For the new plank we ordered some oak to match the already oak planks on the hull. Since wood types behaves differently under stress and load, especially underwater, it's always good to match hull planks. Most of the *Jolie Brise* is oak with some iroko planks due to availability and simply different people putting them in over the many years she has been around.

First step was ripping out the old plank then measuring and marking up the new plank, shaping the plank, which we did with a machine plane and belt sander. Then we spent most of a whole day just offering up the plank shaving bits off and trying to fit it inside the gap with help from a variable pressure applicator (large hammer). One of our planks needs steaming because of the length and amount of twist/bend it has. Once we were happy that the longer plank was shaped right, we put one bolt into it to hold it in place, put a bag over it and attached a wallpaper stripper to it to steam it for a few hours, holding it in place with a few bolts. The next day we took the plank out, painted primer on it then bolted it back in place and put the rest of the bolts through the planks. The shorter plank was very much the same process just without the steaming. Now that the planks were in we just planed/sanded them flush and painted antifoul primer on them. Below you can find a few pictures of the process.





Now that the planks were in it was time to caulk them. I'll be honest, when we did caulking in IBTC I didn't enjoy it all that much, but I wasn't dreading to do it again, rather I saw it as a challenge to practice and do it well.

It took me two days to do the two planks which I think is a long time but I definitely got the hang of it by the end and did enjoy doing it - although my hand suffered a bit, but it's all a learning process and I'm now comfortable with preparing and caulking seams.

To the left is a picture of some oakham before it's ready to roll and use.

Another project I had during this month was to laminate and fit part of a frame. Firstly, before applying epoxy to the wood I scored the glue surfaces with a Stanley knife and gave them a wipe with thinners. Then mixed up the epoxy applied it to the surfaces and clamped the oak together. I left it to glue up for a few days and in the meantime I measured the area I was going to fit the laminate into. Then when I was happy that the epoxy had cured I sanded the surfaces of the wood to get rid of excess epoxy and make it even all over. Then I marked up how much and which areas I needed to take off the wood, taking off what I needed using a belt sander and a machine plane then proceeded to dry fit the laminate, taking bits off and fitting it again and again until I was happy. Once happy with the fit I marked where I was going to put the bolts then started to drill the holes, starting with an 8mm, 10mm then 12mm drill bit doing a clearance hole as well. I then prepped the area and applied Revlac a type of mastic and bolted the laminate into place.



Now that the planks were in we gave the hull three coats of antifoul and managed to find some nice days to gloss up the topsides of the hull and rigged up most of the standing rigging. Once all dry we lifted her up and got her into the water and now she rests awaiting the COVID-19 pandemic to subside and sailing can commence.

