

## **These were some questions I answered by e-mail on building the Swift:**

*I hope you don't mind my emailing you.*

*I noticed that you have made the same kit I have just started and was hoping you could answer some questions.*

\*\*\*I bought my kit in 1984. It didn't have sails, and the holes in the deck for the holds were much smaller. The kit had been "beefed up" by Model Expo to include two cannon and some cheap tools, and they had die cut rails. I assembled the false deck/ false keel/ bulwarks; carved the blocks in the bow and started planking the first layer of the hull with my deck planking. Opps. For various reasons, since forgotten, I packed everything away and settled down to read issues of Ships in Scale and daydream. After several years, I stopped my subscription to even that, though I saved the magazines.

\*\*\*Then the summer of 2004, I discovered the kit and the magazines (also packed away) and decided to begin again. I had to replace some of the tools; and I used Ebay to get some more tools that have been quite helpful such as a Mantua plank bender, a bunch of plastic clips, and a Shipway's wooden stand for planking that holds the keel. (R&K Hobbies has a lot of useful stuff on Ebay).

I finished the Swift early in 2005.

See my pictures of building the Swift. <http://www.eldrbarry.net/hatr/wdshp/swift.htm>

### **First some basic "mental ground rules" for keeping your sanity:**

1. Keep reminding yourself that this is a "learning model." It doesn't need to be perfect and what you learn from doing this one will enable you to do the next. (You saw my daydreams on my web site.)
2. Take your time. Spend a lot of time just reading the instructions that you do have (which are probably sparse - I had some blue sheets and two white sheets of plans); studying the plans and playing with the parts. The numbered list of parts and their descriptions will help you sort these out. A part of the fun is the "problem solving" you will do step by step in the construction.
3. There will be moments when you will be very frustrated, glue all over your fingers, things slipping around, etc. It is also part of the fun. Even if your wife thinks it is time you take up Golf or something else less strenuous on your blood pressure instead.

### **Here are some more questions and responses .....**

*Do I need glue?*

Yes you need glue. I use Elmer's Carpenter's Wood Glue primarily (See if you can get the Glue pen); and Crazy glue; and have also used some hobby epoxy. Use of the nails is confusing. They will hold the false deck in place; and play a key role in the first hull planking holding it in place

till the glue dries. I had some Model Railroad experience building wooden buildings, etc and it has been helpful at times. You will also need to become clever at find ways for clamping or holding pieces together till the glue dries.

*It's my first wooden boat kit (as it was yours, it seems!) and I'm already stuck.*

*I started planking the inner hull and have been using the brass nails just to hold down the plank as I glue it on other bulkheads, then I remove the nails as they raise above the level of the wood and seem like they will get in the way of sanding the inner hull smooth.*

\*\*\* Remove the nails, or file and sand them down flush. I did the latter on the Botter I am now working on (<http://www.eldrbarry.net/hatr/wdshp/botter.htm>) and found they file and sand down readily. I use Elmer's Carpenter's wood glue. Some recommend a bit of both, but not together - the super glue at the ends to hold the plank down till the other sets.

*Also, I think I picked a bad arc for the planks. They rise a lot at the front of the boat, like on a Viking ship. I can cut them down so the side plates fit evenly and sand everything smooth, but I am wondering if this may be a problem later?*

\*\*\* This is the first planking - what you want is a good smooth hull - no one will see the inner planking. It's best to lay a plank partway down that follows the curve fairly naturally, the plank up and down from it. I tapered down the ends of the planks as I worked down. I hope you followed instructions and left the bit above unplanked where the bulwark pieces go. Shape and fill in pieces if necessary.

*When and where do we plank the deck? I cannot tell in the instructions.  
And do we use the same wood as for planking the inner hull? The thick blonde wood?*

\*\*\* Deck planking uses the thinner blond wood. I planked the deck before the second planking on the hull. I started in the middle and worked out to both sides. Be sure and mark where to drill for the masts.

Also, how on earth is one to bend those thick side plates that rise above the hull and keep the sailors from falling out? Put them in boiling water for a while?

\*\*\* I got a Mantua Plank Bender. You soak the ends for a minute or so each (hot water is not necessary) and pass them through these rollers and you get curves in the wood which you then can fit around your bow and stern. It is worth the investment!!

The Amati Plank Bender can also be used - I have used it some on Botter - it is not nearly as quick and easy however.

Do searches for these on Ebay to see what they look like.

*When do we apply sanding sealer? And varnish?*

\*\*\* I didn't do any sealing. Varnishing I used Painter's Touch Multi-purpose 1902 Matte Clear - but Deft Satin Clear Wood Finish is also good. I did not varnish until I had the hull, furniture, and masts and spars finished and ready for final assembly. I did the cabins, masts and spars, etc before installing them on the deck. You will want to wait on the hull and deck until you are finished with them, as glue doesn't adhere very well to varnished wood.

\*\*\* I used some square wood scrap for corner posts inside the cabins, gluing the sides and ends to them, before adding the roof, and after placing them correctly on the deck drilled vertical straight pin sized holes down through them into the deck. I put pins in these and once the roof was on used the pins to place the deck furniture in place. You will have a lot of holes to drill for eye bolts etc as well. I also put pins in the cat head posts.

*Sorry to ask so many questions. I'm just eager for this, my first model, to turn out well.*

\*\*\* I am glad you asked!

\*\*\* Go slow and spend time thinking ahead and playing with the parts. Spend a lot of time studying the plans. Expect some difficulties - some of the fun is problem solving as you go. There is an awful lot they don't tell you . . .

\*\*\* I found my brass strips were rather brittle - maybe because I got the kit in 1984. I got some strips at the hobby shop that were much more malleable.

\*\*\* Get back to me when you get to shaping and drilling for the masts and feel free to ask more questions at any time.

\*\*\* I have placed on my web site scans of the 1984 written instructions and of some Very helpful Ships in Scale articles that I found helpful in pdf form.

The URLs are:

Instructions part 1 <http://www.eldrbarry.net/hatr/wdshp/swift01.pdf>

Instructions part 2 <http://www.eldrbarry.net/hatr/wdshp/swift02.pdf>

Instructions part 3 <http://www.eldrbarry.net/hatr/wdshp/swift03.pdf>

The Articles <http://www.eldrbarry.net/hatr/wdshp/swiftart.pdf>

*Ships in Scale changed publishers about a year or so after I dropped my subscription. The new publisher (Seaways) has the old issues available on CD's for your computer.*

<http://www.seaways.com/> 1983-1991 for \$45 bucks isn't bad. A similar CD has newer issues.