



Mac 3.6m Setting up for Sport Fishing Pt.2 by Sam Mossman

Having dealt with the structural parts of setting up my Mac 3.6 for fishing, this month we will deal with the add-ons – the extra gear for both fishing and safety.
Lifejacket Stowage



Lifejackets can take up a lot of space in a small boat. To have them stored out of the way protected, yet to hand is tricky. I finally came up with a system that fits all of these requirements. I purchased a cargo net made from light bungee cord (\$20 at the Red Shed), cut some panels from it, and fitted a series of plastic hooks (from North Shore Canvas) under the seats that the cargo nets fit over. These keep the lifejackets out of the way, dry, and up off the deck, but still easy to get in a hurry.



Engine and Fuel System

The KISS principle extends to outboards too. By having a pull start, tiller drive outboard I avoided the hassles of installing and maintaining steering and electrics, and have an outboard that is removable for safe storage, and to keep it out of the weather. I bought a Johnson 15hp model which has performed very well. I also got a trolley and bolted a hardwood bracket to it. This makes life easy and gives the motor an upright storage position. I wanted to position the fuel tank up in the bow, to have some weight up there and keep the bow down when travelling alone. The tank fitted under the forward seat (just) after a few alterations, and I screwed a grab rail to the deck behind the tank to stop it from sliding back as the boat came up onto plane. This forward position meant getting some more fuel hose and making a longer fuel line with the help of some stainless hose clips. To get the fuel line out of the way, I cut a notch in the end of one deck hatch and led the hose under the deck back to the outboard. This keeps it protected, and out of the way.



You can never have enough rod holders!

Mac fitted four plastic through-gunwale holders (two at the bow, two at the stern) as standard. I fished the boat with these a couple of times to get a feel for what else was needed.

I purchased another eight holders from North Shore Canvas in the end. Four were "shorty" angled aluminium flush-mounted types. With the help of a hole-saw I fitted these through the ply seats as shown in the photos. Another four were vertical aluminium models

that fit with brackets to the sides by big stainless self-tapping screws. These are mainly for storage and carrying the rods rather than fishing. Again, I fitted two up in the bows and two in the transom corners.

This final holder is one of those multi-adjustable American designs, this one a 'Roberts', and I set the flush mount base for this in the stern seat where I mostly fish from. I also set the mounting plate for my down rigger on the stern seat where I can operate it easily. That is a total of 13 holders; jut about right for the two fishing fanatics!

The Sounder



Avoiding a permanent electrical system simplifies the boat considerably, but one item I wanted was a sounder. Fortunately there are portable type available. Electronic Navigation supplied me a Lowrance X48 model that does everything I need. It is powered by easily available D-cell torch batteries and the display case. By gluing a strip of Velcro to the bottom of this case, I could position it anywhere on the carpet-covered seats without it going for a skate.

The transducer was a little trouble. The high-performance model I wanted to use was designed to be screwed to the stern, but I wanted it removable. In the end I made up a mounting by bolting two metal plates across the back of the transducer, bolting a length of stainless rod to the plates, then bolting the rod clamp (see photo). Sounds ungainly, but it works very well as I only use it at low speeds. When required I simply reach back and clamp it onto the stern step. When not in use, the sounder (plus things like tools, camera etc.) live in a waterproof snap-top fish bin under the stern seat.

Riding light

I needed a simple system, and found a riding light powered by a D-cell battery at a chandlers. It had a socket in the base, and I used the butt of an old broken rod to mount it on, cutting the blank until it was snug in the socket, drilling a hole, and securing it with a bolt and wing-nut. The butt, with gimbal neck fits easily into any of my vertical rod holders. I place it behind me when travelling so as not to spoil my night vision. It also sheds enough light for fishing after dark without getting too bright and putting the snapper off. The light (with the battery out, and both stored in a zip-lock bag) is unbolted when not required and lives in my waterproof box, while the mounting pole goes under the deck with the oars and gaff.

The only gear I take is a tackle box, net (sits in one of the rod holders when fishing) and a chillybin. The chilly carries the bait and berly bombs out, and has a couple of frozen bottles in to keep the catch fresh. The lid lifts off, and nestles back on upside-down creating a recessed workspace for the bait that stops the goo running everywhere. I have made a bait board that fits inside the lid.

There has been a lot work in getting everything right but the finished product is great little fishing boat, and I have had a lot of fun in it so far. It is simple, low maintenance, easy to handle and clean, comfortable, has everything I need to fish efficiently, but still has room to work in. A big little boat. [Edited Version](#)