

Restoring That Colour

By Colin Sadler, Shrimper 235 (1998)

When I first saw 'Lucy' (235), it was love at first sight. Not only was 'Lucy' a hard-to-find inboard, she was, as they say, 'immaculate'. Stored under cover all winter long, her three year old dark blue hull gleamed. Three years later the dream was beginning to fade, not in my heart but in the hull, for Lucy's gleaming gel-coat was becoming dull, dull, dull.

Fellow owners in David Whitehead's Mylor 'Shrimper Sanctuary' looked on sympathetically as I bemoaned Lucy's plight and then the helpful suggestions began to flow. Try this polish, that polish, colour restorer, meths, T-cut, abrasive paste, Owatrol, I tried them all - and they all worked the miracle, Lucy gleamed again, for hours, days or at best, a few weeks!

In desperation, I summoned an expert in GRP. He informed me that dark pigment equalled maxi fading and that Lucy's only hope was a serious heavy-duty buffing by a professional like himself. Six hours later, Lucy was gleaming again, yes, you've guessed, for about three months.

Then, towards the end of the 1998 season, with Lucy fading fast, David Whitehead mentioned that John Ashworth, our [then] esteemed ex-Hon. Sec. had painted his beloved 'Daisy'. Intrigued, I interrogated John. What type of paint was it? Where was it done? How shiny was it? and, now for the big one, How long did the shine last? Epoxy, Mylor Yacht Harbour, brilliant and YEARS were John's replies.

Next day found me in Mylor Yacht Harbour's offices. They recommended the AWLGRIP paint system involving preparing and repairing Lucy's hull above the waterline, spaying with epoxy primer, filling any pin holes and then spraying in premium urethane in a deep, brilliant blue. Lucy looked stunning right through the winter and into the Spring. Her appearance in the first Mylor race brought cries of 'You're blinding us' from fellow competitors.

The cost? Around £1000 in 1998.