

MAGAZINE OF THE INTERNATIONAL DN ICE YACHT RACING ASSOCIATION

RUNNER TRACKS

SEPTEMBER 2023



TRAVELING RUNNER TROPHY BY JULIE JANKOWSKI

THE PERFECT DN TRAILER BY ROBERT CUMMINS

DN QUICK-BUILD BY DEB WHITEHORSE

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COMMODORE'S REPORT

VIEW FROM THE STOOP

DAVID FROST US5358, CHARLOTTE, MICHIGAN, USA

Well, here is it, my first official act as Commodore, the Runner Tracks Commodore Report, or as Deb suggested, "View from the Stoop." I like it! And for those who don't know the back story, when Covid hit, and home suddenly became our favorite spot, I started posting on Facebook coffee cup pictures from my front steps or the Stoop as a way to keep a little positivity and humor in my life. I had a few cups; I have more now. And the Stoop has a tendency to roam.

And with every first report, I would be remiss if I didn't thank those who came before me, especially the one who got desperate for a replacement and rolled the die and asked if I wanted to follow his lead. Thanks, Jody, for your work at the helm and for trusting it to me (and all those around me!).

I started penning this while on vacation on Prince Edward Island. A beautiful spot in this world with a deep history, including iceboating. Check it out and be thankful we are not racing their historic iceboats; I doubt I have what it took to man one of them.

But it got me thinking of how I got to where I am and where we are going as a class. It was really quite simple; twenty-some years ago, two friends asked me if I wanted to give it a whirl.

That simple.

Now if you haven't heard the whole story, ask me sometime when we're waiting for wind. But if you need a real quick synopsis, it goes like this:

- George (the future US5250) and Jim asked me to go sailing.
- Dave (US3400) loaned me a boat and then another.
- Bookie (US4266) invited me, George, Evert (US4),

and Bruce (US3283) to spend the night after my second day of sailing, which got me hooked up with both GTIYC and GLIYC.

- Bruce took me to Green Bay.... Yeah, that's a story I might find a copy of and share with the world someday.

But it was that simple. People asked and then helped get me set up and on the ice.

So with all the challenges inherent in our sport, least of all the weather, one thing we can control is how we help get that new sailor into the sport. So go out and ask someone and then give them a hand in finding the passion that we all have found and get them on the ice and hopefully racing, be it scrub, club, regional, or the big show. Share your passion.

See you on the ice and likely the Stoop

IDNIYRA Commodore David Frost US5358



Photo: gretchendorian.com

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THE PERFECT DN TRAILER

EXAMINING WHAT WORKS AND WHAT DOESN'T WORK FOR DN TRAILERS
BY ROBERT CUMMINS US3433

The title of this article is intentionally misleading. There isn't a perfect DN trailer because different things will work for different people. Some people never want a trailer and put the whole works on top of the car or in the back of their truck. This approach will work well if you have a two-piece mast.

Conversely, some people don't want to face taking the boat off the car or out of the truck after they get home from sailing on Sunday night. They also figure it will look pretty funny on top of the car in the company parking lot on Monday morning, not to mention some tall klutz absentmindedly walking into the mast.

Worse, the roads we travel are often filthy with salt-laden slush. Trying to keep road salt off your boat can be a unique challenge. Skip Dieball US5 said that even the best covers would not keep the boat from getting road grit and salt. Lastly, some people need a summer iceboat project, and along with physical conditioning, building a trailer can be one of them. People often ask about what works and what doesn't for DN trailers, and this article attempts to examine some of those factors.

First, there will be little or no discussion about large walk-in trailers with built-in heads and other non-essential amenities. Those trailers are in another league, although the two-wheeled variety does offer a middle ground between huge and lightweight efficiency. Most DN sailors travel with one or two friends or alone. These people are the target audience here, but if you want to know about large trailers, talk to somebody who owns one. Ron Sherry will happily share his thoughts on these beasts as with all aspects of our sport. The aim is to talk about

more economical means of transporting boats, emphasizing ease of use with a nod to cost.

Numerous people have contributed to this article, and they will be accused as this discussion progresses. They will also be able to provide more information if you ask them. Beer may elicit more detailed information.

What is the ideal? Perhaps it's a combination of low cost, ease of construction, ease of use, ease of handling both on the road and on the ice, and ease of storage. Another consideration might be for the trailer chassis to have multiple uses, both summer and winter. You probably can't have it all unless you are clever, but what follows might get you close.

The frame and running gear are the first consideration. An aluminum frame is ideal because the weight savings is substantial, particularly important when pushing the trailer on thinner ice by hand. It will also make some difference in the face of ever-increasing gas prices. A cheap, used galvanized frame will do the job, but aluminum is better. The downside of aluminum is the connection point between the running gear and the frame, which may decay due to chemical reactions between different metals over long periods. Sort of like rust (see electrolysis). This phenomenon may take thirty years, but it can happen. Furthermore, the use of stainless steel fasteners is suggested wherever feasible.

Next is the running gear itself. Larger tires are easier to push around in snow and over sand. Conversely, this adds weight, but if there are choices, larger tires are better, and the extra weight is generally compensated for by ease in pushing. Larger automobile-size tires may be too large. Don't buy



Dave Glick US4249

running gear that is wider than your tow vehicle, and don't make the trailer wider than the tow vehicle unless it is necessary. A pneumatic wheel on the tongue jack is nice but more expensive. Additionally, it is better to have LED lights on the frame and wherever else you might put them because they are sealed. Matt Meyer US5646, who builds trailers commercially, suggests coating the entire undercarriage with Fluid Film, a product made for the underside of cars that stays greasy. When considering running gear, it is also worth considering the total weight you will be hauling. The trailer will bounce down the highway if the springs are too stiff.

The box will make your trailer more efficient in several ways if well thought out. The first choice is whether the masts are going on the inside or are going to be on a rack on the side or top. Carrying masts inside the trailer is nice and avoids having to deal with mast bags and clinging crud, but also means your trailer is going to be nearly 18 feet long, considering a small amount of extra length for 16-foot masts, and about an 18 inches for trailer tongue and jack.

The first possibility is a box for hull, planks, and sails. Dave Glick US4249 created an excellent example of this type of trailer, pictured above. As you can see, Dave has hit all the minimum criteria. He used an aluminum personal watercraft trailer, mast holders on the side, and doors that open both on the top and from the back end. He can hoist the box into the rafters of his garage for summer storage.

The boat slides into the trailer from the rear on a track that the front runner chalk bolt runs on, and two pins match the runner plank stud holes, and the

hull is strapped in.

Removable PVC tubes suspend the plank and boom over the boat. The sails fit beside the narrower forward part of the boat in the front of the box. The box is made from 2x4s and 1/4-inch sheeting. The top doors rest on an interior ledge. The front of the box is held onto the trailer with old Sarns stud plates, and the back fits nicely on the watercraft bunks and is held down with the watercraft straps. The finish is glossy polyurethane, as unsealed plywood won't last very long.

By keeping the box forward on the trailer, Dave hasn't needed to add extra lighting, and keeping the weight forward provides adequate tongue weight while towing. This arrangement rides fairly low, allowing good rear visibility while driving.

For two-boat trailers, the same basic characteristics are popular. Low profile, as narrow as possible, masts inside or out, and lightweight enough to be managed by one person. Construction techniques are about the same, with the addition of the possibility of composite construction utilizing 1/8 inch plywood over 3/8 foam for rigidity without adding much weight. In either case, joints must be smoothed and glassed over internally and externally.





Mike Bloom US321

Mike Bloom's US321 trailer is pictured above. Again we see an aluminum frame, a low profile box, with external mast carriers on top of the box. It is also noteworthy that the box is back far enough on the frame so that the tailgate of an SUV will open while attached to the car. The forward third of the box is tapered downward and inward since that area holds nothing other than the front third of the hulls. The interior layout is simple and functional. The boats are on the bottom, not on a track, planks in the center compartment, and booms and sails on the top shelf. The boats slide in and out easily without a track, and the fit is close enough that they don't move around while traveling.

Another two-boat trailer with interior mast storage built by Joe Norton US781 is also shown in photos below. This trailer has both top and rear access. The boats and masts are put in through the rear, while planks, booms, and sails are placed inside via the top access doors. The hulls are pushed forward on a track. The planks fit in a manner that allows two planks for each boat. The planks are on pedestals that have one plank with the chocks facing up and the top one with the chocks facing downward. The center section will hold four masts. This trailer was built with foam sides sandwiched between two

layers of 1/8 plywood. The frame is aluminum. There is also a well in the bottom of the box directly over the axle for runners. The runner well is braced externally to the frame, where the bottom of the main compartment opens into the well. The track for the front chock spans the runner well. Sails and booms are held in the forward section, where the taper of the hull allows space. When the top access doors are closed, a third boat can be carried via three small pedestals on the top of the box. This trailer is not overly spacious, but its light weight makes it reasonably easy for one person to manage. Notably, this low-profile trailer is over thirty years old.

A similar trailer with masts stowed internally, built by Mark Isabell US5014, is also shown at the top of page opposite. This trailer will hold three complete programs internally, with three hulls on the middle shelf, two facing forward, and one facing aft. This trailer acknowledges the amount of available space created by the tapered bow of the boats by having an access door on the front of the trailer. The front doors are used to load runners for tongue weight. Runners are also placed in the back to balance tongue weight. Again we see a low profile on a fairly light steel frame, with rear access for the hulls and masts. Masts are on the bottom center, with planks



Joe Norton US781



Mark Isabell US5014

and runners in the bottom side compartments. The top shelf holds booms and sails, thus keeping the center of gravity as low as possible for better towing characteristics.

A final consideration is where to put runners. They can balance the trailer in terms of creating tongue weight. However, runners add substantial weight to the trailer and may create a situation where the tail wags the dog on slippery roads if your tow vehicle isn't heavy.

If the runners are in the tow vehicle, they should be in front of the rear axle if possible. Numerous sets of runners behind the rear axle may, combined with extra tongue weight, lighten the front of the tow vehicle enough to cause steering abnormalities.

There are certainly other considerations in DN trailer building, but hopefully, this has provided some insight into some basic ideas on what has worked for other sailors who frequently travel in the never-ending hunt for black ice. See you there!



Designed by Zakrzewski P-55



Continued next page

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DN QUICK BUILD

WOULD THE QUICK-BUILD CONCEPT WORK FOR THE DN CLASS?

BY DEB WHITEHORSE US2366 WITH COMMENTARY BY WARREN NETHERCOTE KC3786

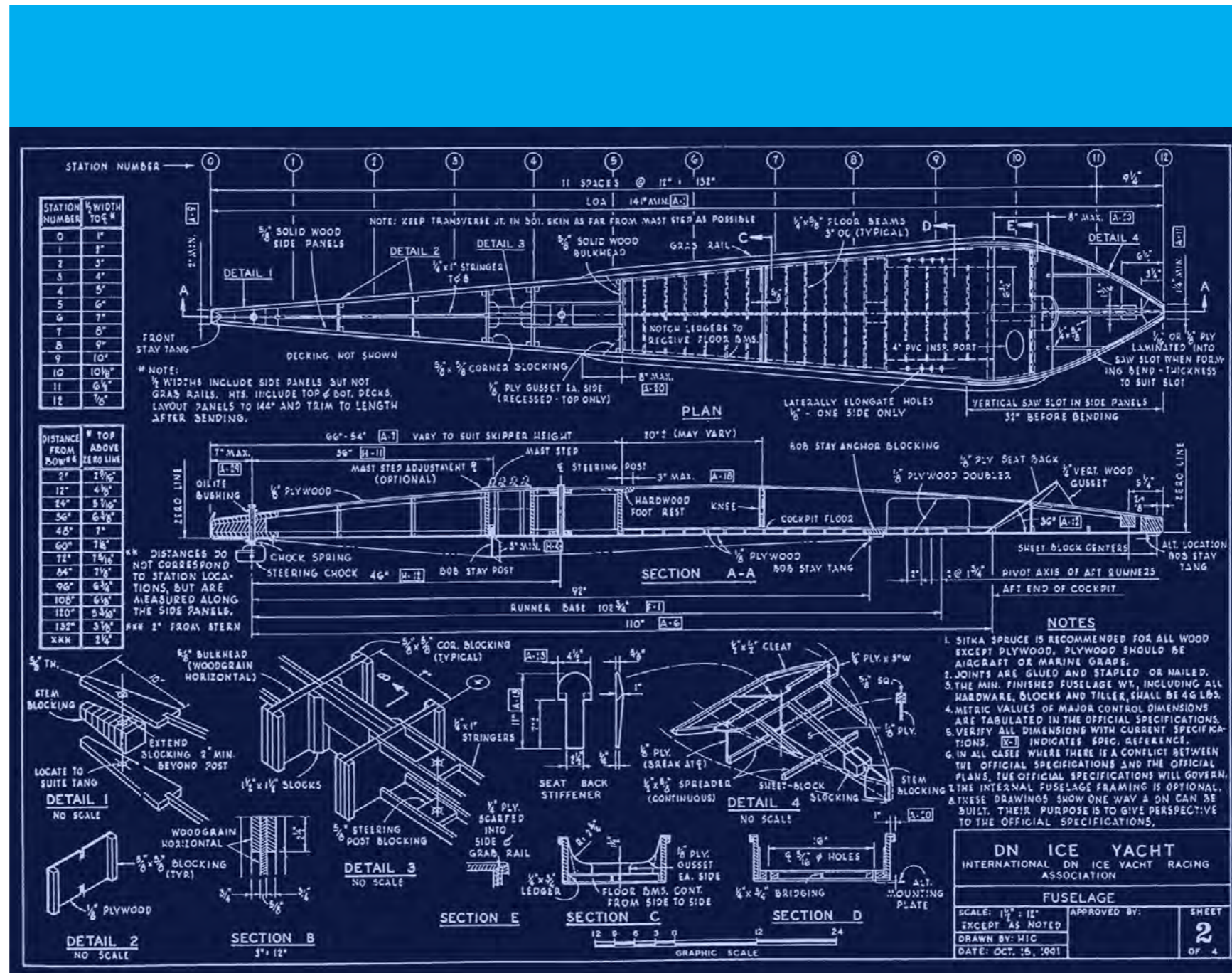
Airplanes and iceboats have shared a relationship since the days of stern-steerers and the Wright Brothers at Kitty Hawk. Both utilize aerodynamic design, wind-powered movement, speed, balancing stability, and a dedicated community of enthusiasts, not to mention Sitka Spruce. The similarities between ice sailing and the DN class have drawn numerous aviators to switch to an iceboat cockpit for fun and racing.

Chris Berger US5166, shared an article his father, an airplane pilot, had sent him. The article by Budd Davisson discussed trends in "narrow niche interest communities" where younger people have "little interest in mechanical stuff or want it served up at an accelerated fashion."

If there is one thing that fits the definition of a "narrow niche interest," it's building iceboats. However, there is some good news: Davisson is encouraged by the fact that sport aviation is gaining popularity among young people, thanks to the availability of "quick-build kits."

Davisson: The majority of today's young people (I'm defining "young" as approximately 45 years and down) either have little interest in mechanical stuff or want it served up in an accelerated fashion. They want the pleasure that is supposedly the result of the process to arrive quickly, with a minimum investment of time. In most cases they are substituting cash for time. That gave birth to the quick-build concept. Today, the quick-build mindset has become universal throughout ALL narrow niche interest communities. That's not a bad thing. It's just a trend to be recognized.

Davisson's article, *There's More to Life Than Airplanes...The Times They are a'Changin'...* DAMMIT, is worth reprinting in this article, but I couldn't track him down to ask permission.



Read the whole article here: <https://buddavisson.substack.com/p/theres-more-to-life-than-airplanesthe-530> or email to me for a copy.

"Quick Build Kits" were once sold by Joe Norton US781 of Norton Boatworks in Green Lake, WI. Norton Boatworks began selling DN kits after three years in business selling complete DNs.



Norton DN Kit: Bulkhead, floor, nose block, and stern block.

People kept bugging me to offer kits," said Joe. Most kits were sold to the "average person who plays on the ice" and not too serious racers. Joe's not sure how many he sold. He advertised the kits in *Wooden Boat Magazine* and other sailing publications.

Joe continues storing boxes filled

with bulkheads, bow pieces, and other parts. Shipping kits rather than complete programs was more convenient. Each kit was composed of two packages: one measuring 12 feet for the sideboards and plank and the other a smaller box for the bulkheads, chocks, fittings, sheet rope, steering components, and all required parts. The only additional items necessary to purchase were epoxy and a sail.

“Kits would sell again if marketed in the right way.” First-time iceboaters would buy kits, and many would upgrade to a more customized racing boat, selling the kit boat to one of their friends.



RV Aircraft Kit by the Van Company

WHY OFFER A DN KIT?

Warren Nethercote KC3786

“When I got my first DN I made the right choice by buying what was then a state-of-the-art boat, not some old clunker so I could focus on developing my sailing skills, not improving my DN. But I like building things, so over time I built more and more DN parts until one day I had two DNs. But I discovered that my home built DN was notably heavier than

my original one. Not enough for measurable performance loss, but disappointing at roof-rack time.

I think the most satisfying part of a DN to build is the hull. It is a simple, elegant structure, and it offers lots of opportunity for innovation. But it is easy to make a DN hull unnecessarily heavy, or even too weak, despite the excellent guidance offered plans like those from the IDNIYRA or Paul Goodwin. Many a first-time builder, or even a repeat builder, questions the adequacy of plans and substitutes hardwood for softwood or upsizes plywood skins because that’s what the local big box store carries. Discipline is required to build a competitive hull!

In today’s world of big box lumber stores, local sources of clear softwoods and quality 3mm plywood are not always available. The disciplined, experienced builder will search out sources or identify acceptable substitutes to follow the well-established guidance given by plans. Not everyone has the time of inclination for that level of care and many don’t have the expertise to make acceptable materials substitutions.

On the other hand, a kit of parts both simplifies acquisition of the right materials and imposes discipline in their use. The kit builder, presented with a collection of parts, can simply assemble them as directed and given reasonable care during assembly will produce a strong, competitive hull. Of course, one hopes for a knowledgeable kit supplier so that the resulting hull shape is representative of current, competitive hulls.

SNOW RUNNER TRAVELING TROPHY

By Julie Jankowski US4271

At the 50th Anniversary World Championship, an award was introduced that links back to Estonia’s Ain Vilde SR34, winner of the first World Championship. A traveling trophy of Ain’s snow runners was presented by Julie Jankowski US4271 to the “Top North American Junior below the Gold Fleet.” The award was presented on behalf of her family to encourage North American junior racers, 25 and under, to continue racing.

At the 1979 Gold Cup on Lake Champlain, Ain sought out Mike Jankowski US3271 and swapped a boom blank for the runners. Mike used these runners well, winning first at a Northwest regatta and the 1996 Western Regionals. Mike and Julie, now retired from racing DNs, are delighted to create this useful North American traveling trophy to encourage young racers.

The first recipient is Cooper Frost, son of IDNIYRA Commodore David Frost. Cooper received the award just in time as a snowstorm hit the Lake Kegonsa area the night before the North American Championships started. Though the lake was still raceable, the drifts were plentiful and deep.

According to his father, Cooper used this new trophy to “one-up the old man at NAs in the Gold Fleet,” Cooper took 22nd to David’s 23rd. Cooper understands that these are his to use and care for until the next World Cup in North America when they will be passed on to the next junior recipient. Congratulations to Cooper Frost and top Gold Cup Junior, Gold Fleeter Griffin Sherry. They will both graduate out of Junior standing this year.

Julie Jankowski US4271

In today’s world most people want to buy rather than build, but there are still significant numbers of home builders. The greatest challenges to home building are materials supply and structural detailing. A well-designed DN hull kit could address both these challenges.”

Warren Nethercote KC 3786



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