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Scottish enterprise

Ten workers from the Orkney islands have been working at the Halmatic factory at Havant, Hampshire, preparing a mould for a 36 ft. GRP workboat. They have spent three months training in GRP moulding technique, in preparation for the opening of the Halmatic (Scotland) Ltd. new enterprise, a factory at Hatson, opposite Kirkwall. The 36 ft. mould has been sent to Hatson, and while the first hull is being moulded, work will be going on in the preparation of moulds for a 50–54 ft. fishing vessel. These are unusual in that three sections can be interchanged for others of different section and length to produce hulls of 50–75 ft.

The design is based on a successful traditional hull by G. L. Watson, the Glasgow naval architects. The factory of Halmatic (Scotland) Ltd., will produce hull, deck and wheelhouse for fitting out by any UK or foreign shipyard. The standard hull incorporates longitudinal members, GRP framing and floors, fishroom floor, freshwater tanks, bulwarks, main deck, hatch openings, GRP deck beams, reinforcing plates in way of gallows, winch, *etc.*, and moulded-in belting. Alternative deck layouts can be arranged.

The 50–54 ft. hull has a beam of 18 ft. and a draught of 7 ft. 9 in. Speed is around 9 knots with a power range of 150–300 h.p., and displacement is 45–55 tons, while the tonnage is designed to be below 25. A model of this boat was on display at the Dublin World Fishing Exhibition, and the attention it attracted suggests that the new enterprise in Orkney should prosper.

Bright future for Orkney boat firm

BY OUR FISHERIES CORRESPONDENT

A bright future is predicted for Halmatic Ltd., Orkney's first glass fibre boat-building firm who are housed in a former RAF hangar at Hatston, Kirkwall.

They opened in April, and are working on orders for four 36-foot boats for shell-fishing. Halmatic build the hulls, which are then towed to a yard of the owner's choice for the installation of the engine and other equipment. It is claimed that in the long term this method proves faster and cheaper than traditional building in timber or steel.

The first hull will be completed early next month, and the fitting-out done at the yard of James Duncan, Burray, Orkney.

Mr Pierce Webb, Halmatic's manager, has just completed a tour of the Moray Firth ports with a model of the hull, and visits Angus and Fife ports today and tomorrow.

He said in Aberdeen it was arousing a great deal of interest among fishermen, who were particularly impressed with the low maintenance costs, because the hull was not affected by sea water and could not rot, warp or split, like a wooden hull, while in comparison with steel it did not rust or corrode. No painting was required, because the colour was impregnated into the hull when it was made.

STRINGENT TESTS

Mr Webb said the hull had passed the stringent Lloyd's and White Fish Authority standards, for stability and was designed for the extreme weather conditions around the Scottish coasts. He said: "We are also building a 54-foot hull, and hope eventually to go up to 85 feet, as the trend among fishermen is towards bigger boats."

They also had their eye on the luxury-yacht market in America, because their hulls could easily be adapted for this purpose.

Eleven men are working in the Hatston yard, and it is expected that another five or six will be needed next year.

The design of the 50-54 ft. multi-purpose GRP fishing vessel to be produced by Halmatic (Scotland) Ltd., at Hatson in the Orkneys

