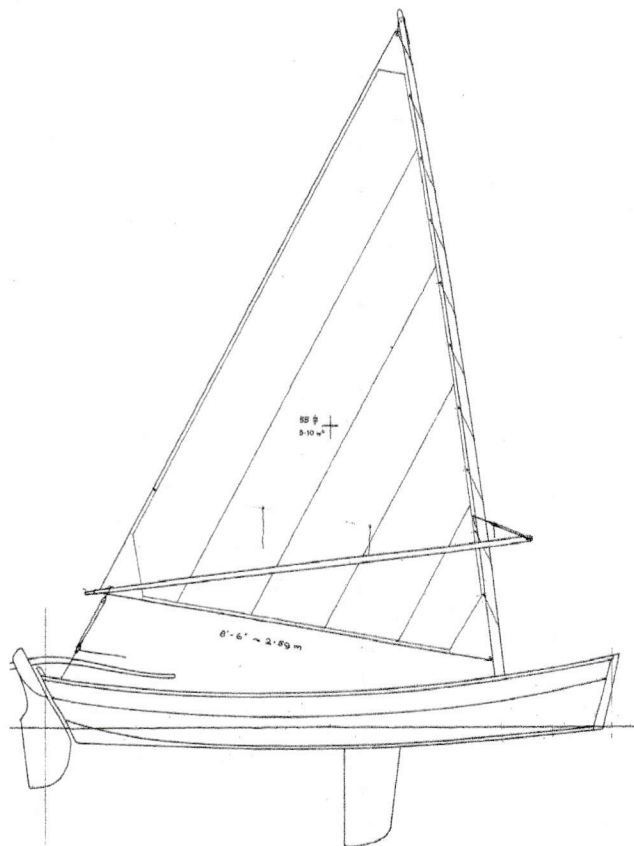
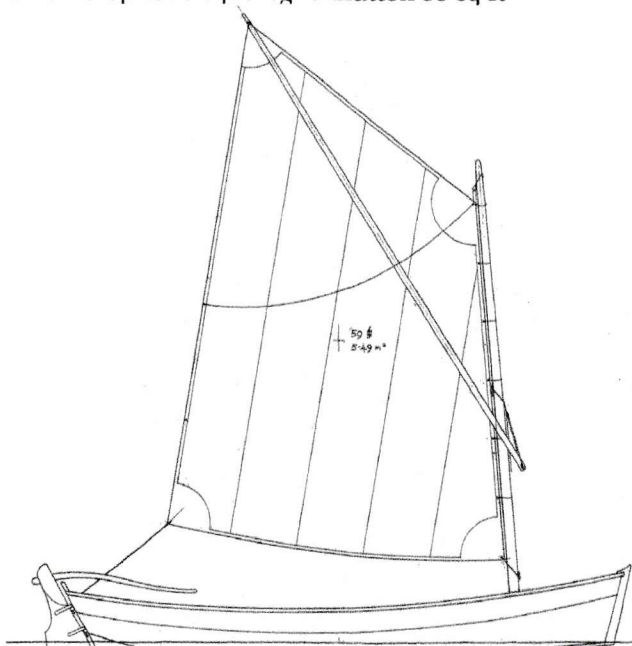


# 12'3" Spike Skiff

by Iain Oughtred

## PARTICULARS

LOA	12'3"
Beam	4'2"
Draft (db up)	6"
(db down)	2'6"
Weight	about 130 lbs
Sail area	Sprit 59 sq ft leg-'o-mutton 55 sq ft



Here's a classic flat-bottomed skiff updated for modern trouble-free materials. Spike has all the hallmarks of American sharpie-skiffs from a couple of centuries ago—the straight, slightly raking stem; the two wide lapstrake side planks; the bottom's quick sweep up to the transom, the jaunty sheer.

In the past this skiff would feature solid cedar or pine planks on the topsides, clench-nailed together, and a cross-planked bottom—sturdy and economical, but heavy and prone to drying out if left ashore for any amount of time. Oughtred's Spike uses marine plywood for a lighter-weight, more dimensionally stable solution. For the weekend builder and boater, the advantages are great—the materials are easily sourced and the boat is much more trailer-friendly.

With her single lap joining the two topside planks on each side, Spike is an excellent entry-level project. She's not much more complex to build than a box, but she gives her creator the opportunity to learn lapstrake techniques on a simple level. And the end result is far more attractive than a box—shapely enough for a real sense of accomplishment.

Spike's shape reflects a time before the invention of the internal-combustion engine—the rocker of her bottom will make her easy and rewarding to row, but she'll resist planing under power. If your plans include using an outboard motor, you'll find the best results with low power—say, a lightweight, 2-hp gasoline motor or a small electric motor. Just don't expect her to zoom around like a hard-bottomed inflatable tender. At 12' in length she is big to serve as a tender, but empty, with a bow eye low on the stem to keep her forefoot up, she will tow effortlessly.

Oughtred has drawn a nice leg-'o-mutton rig for Spike—simple and in keeping with her sharpie heritage. Her relatively narrow bottom and considerably flared topsides make her easy to row and well-balanced under sail, but her initial stability will be relatively low—you will want to keep the mainsheet in hand in a breeze. Her daggerboard is a simple and effective choice for a boat in which the space taken up by a pivoting centerboard would be better appreciated for cargo or passengers.

Oughtred's plans include full-sized patterns so lofting is unnecessary. The reward versus effort quotient is quite high for this one.