

Plug Nickel Shoestring Boat Restoration; How I Turned an Old Fiberglass Boat Mold into a Beautiful Wooden Sailboat, and What I Learned Along the Way

Joel Howard Thurtell

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Plug Nickel is a collection of columns written by author Joel Thurtell about the trials and tribulations of restoring a wooden Lightning sailboat. The "boat" was actually a mold used to make fiberglass boats in the 1960s through 1980s, but it just happened that the mold was the last wooden Lightning sailboat made by boat builder Nickels & Holman, hence the name. It was a male mold, and male molds are nicknamed "plugs." Hence the name, "Plug Nickel." The columns were originally published in the Lightning "Flashes," a publication of the International Lightning Class Association. The essays deal with the how-to of restoring wooden boats, the psychology and philosophy of collecting and fixing antique and the problem of time spent away from family because of an obsession. The book emphasizes trying to restore a boat economically, or "on a shoestring.' It's important to note that the author, Joel Thurtell, was a newspaper reporter and not a trained woodworker. Much of his how-to information is spiced with his own take on how to make things work on a sailboat when the fixer is a layman with no special boatbuilding training.



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