Drascombe

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ENGINES ON DRASCOMBES

FUNDAMENTALS

All of the Drascombes are displacement craft. With very little exception, their speed through the water is a mathematical formula:

Speed in Knots = the square root of the waterline length in feet x 1.4.

You will never water ski behind a Drascombe! There is no point in over-powering them. Bigger engines do not fit comfortably in the engine wells & they weigh down the transom, sinking it into the water & degrading the sailing performance.

If I had a £ for every time I have been told, 'But I need a big engine to fight our strong local tides.' I would be a rich man living in the Bahamas. It doesn't work!!

The only justification for fitting a bigger engine is if you are going to carry big loads or tow other boats around.

It is worth fitting a Sailpower/Saildrive/high thrust prop. Most small engines are fitted with standard props to suit being put on the back of a small RIB & whizzing around at 75% throttle (or even more!). What we want on our Drascombes is more grunt at low revs, hence the prop change.

Some manufacturers offer Saildrive options which fit these props as standard & also fit electrics so that you can run navigation lights or charge a battery. These options can be added to most other engine specs at extra cost.

LEG LENGTH

On Luggers & derivatives, a long shaft engine is required. So too does the Gig.

Dabbers & Drifter 22's use a standard shaft engine (sometimes referred to as short).

DABBER

An engine up to 3.5hp is plenty. The engines are relatively small (physically) & light. They will fit the engine well & allow the mechanical tilt lock to function. They usually have Forward & Neutral gearboxes but not reverse. They swing 180 degrees for the occasional reversing.

For some time, we have fitted the Yamaha 2.5hp. It is a lovely little engine & no-one supplied with one has ever come back & complained about it!

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A while ago Mercury/Mariner introduced their 4 stroke small engines which are available as either 2.5 or 3.5hp. We have recommended the 3.5 to people who insist on more power (as they do) but I haven't yet received any feedback about those engines.

There is a Honda 2.3hp which seems like a good little engine but it is air-cooled so a bit noisier than the others. This seems to be amplified by having the engine in a well within the boat rather than hanging in obscurity somewhere beyond the transom.

Some people do fit a 4hp but there are down-sides. I wouldn't be doing that myself. That may require trimming away a bit of the transom board to allow the engine to turn & some introduction of primary wedges between outboard pad & hull or secondary wedges (see below) on the back of the outboard pad. Both will change the angle of the mounting bracket & possibly help get the mechanical tilt lock to function. Steering on the engine will certainly be restricted.

LUGGER & DERIVATIVES

Back in the days of 2-strokes, generally speaking, the 4 & 5hp engines were single cylinder of the same family. The 6 & 8hp were twin cylinder, based on the same engine. 9.9's were usually lower powered versions of a 15 & thus far too heavy.

Now that we are in an exclusively 4-stroke world, things are different.

Right across the board, current 4, 5 & 6hp engines are single cylinder. 8hp are twin cylinder.

We used to recommend 4hp for the Lugger & 5hp for the Longboat & Coaster

Mercury/Mariner/Tohatsu (fundamentally the same engines wearing different coats) are now available as a Saildrive 5, so we recommend that engine for all Luggers & derivatives.

A few people fit the Yamaha 6 or 8 to their Coasters (See below). It is a lovely, smooth engine but steering on engine is restricted & it is too heavy. Pros & cons: decision is yours!

Over the years, the outboard mountings have changed. On our new boats, we fit much larger primary wedges, altering the outboard pad angle &, generally, allowing the mechanical tilt-lock to operate. If this problem is encountered on older boats, it is possible to fit secondary wedges onto the pad to adjust the mounting angle. These are usually Teak or Iroko, about 40mm wide x about 200 long, tapered from 25mm at the top, down to 6mm at the bottom. They can be screwed to the back face of the outboard pad under each leg of the clamping frame. We can supply them, if needed.

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GIG

They need a long shaft engine. The Yamaha 8 is perfect.

The Mariner 8 does not fit!

It is usual to fit an 8hp as it is a heavy boat with huge carrying capacity.

DRIFTER 22

I have always fitted the Yamaha 8hp twin. It is a lovely smooth engine & I have been delighted with them. Until Yamaha introduced their new 4/5/6 range, they produced a 6 twin, based on the 8.

6hp is enough for the Drifter 22 but I always fitted the 8 for marketing purposes! We do not offer an inboard engine option, but people do ask, so my script is, 'Why would you want an inconvenient, smelly diesel in your cabin when you can have a powerful, smooth, twin cylinder 4-stroke outboard in its own well up the other end of the cockpit, be able to tilt it up so the prop is not being dragged through the water when sailing & take it away easily for servicing?' All in one breath & it convinces me!

Some customers have fitted Mariner/Tohatsu engines & like them (though one customer fitted a Tohatsu & complained bitterly about fumes exiting the bypass partway up the leg & filling the cockpit). Some have increased from 8 to 9.9 (basically the same engine) so that they can specify electric start. I have never felt the urge to do this.

REMOTE FUEL TANKS

It is useful to add these to increase the range.

On Lugger & derivatives, it is usual to put the tank in the aft locker. A few Coaster owners dislike this because of the risk of fumes entering the cabin. I have always been happy with the arrangement.

The best way to arrange the fuel line is to fit a fuel line ferrule in the bulkhead between engine well & locker. I prefer a small ferrule, close fitting to the fuel pipe. Remove the hose from pressure bulb, feed it through the ferrule & re-secure the hose. On Coasters, it is tidy & convenient to have the pressure bulb in the locker. On the other boats, it is more convenient out in the engine well. We can supply a kit of ferrule & SS Jubilee clip.

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OUTBOARD MOTOR LOCK

I am not sure if any of them will prevent the determined thief. If he can't undo the engine, he may resort to cutting away your transom with a chainsaw. It has been done!

There are various channel type locks on the market but take care in choosing. Some are a C channel with one end blanked off & a padlock through the other. These need to be slid on from one side & there just isn't room in a Drascombe outboard well to do this!

My favourite is the Fulton lock, which we keep in stock.

Secure your outboard now with this easy to install bracket. Locks into position over the outboard mounting clamp handles. Made of heavy gauge steel for maximum strength. Long-lasting black powder coat finish provides years of protection against rust & corrosion. The foam filler insert reduces noise & vibration.

STORAGE & TRAVEL

4-strokes are demanding little beasts. They prefer to be stored upright. If you lay them down, they have to go on one, specified side. If you lay them down wrongly, oil can get into the cylinder & stop the plug from firing or even completely 'hydraulic' (not allow the engine to turn over). That can usually be resolved by taking the plug out & cleaning it, pulling the engine over a dozen times & putting the plug back in. In another, worst case scenario, if the engine stops with the inlet valve open, the errant oil may even get back down the inlet tract & into the little jets in the carb. That is really bad news, leading to contact with an outboard engineer, much tooth-sucking & a bill that reflects that!

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STARTING 4-STROKE ENGINES

In the old days of 2 strokes, starting just meant grabbing the T handle on the starter cord & pulling. Care is needed with a 4 stroke. As it may not have stopped on a firing stroke, you need to pull the cord gently to take up any slack, then pull with purpose to start the engine. If you just pull hard, you may find no initial resistance, followed by a lot of resistance….. & a sore shoulder! If you have done it, you will know what I mean.

SRH

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