

Cricket Mark 2 by **Keith Davidson**

My Dad taught woodwork at a secondary modern school in North Tyneside and one of the perks of the job was that whenever the school was refurbished, he managed to salvage bits of wood, some of which I have duly inherited. I decided to make another cricket from an old mahogany shelf:

A few years ago, I made Mark 1 as a prototype from a cheap pine plank and I used a router to produce long dovetail joints which held the whole thing together without nails, screws or even glue! Some of you may recall seeing the video I made before I eventually glued it up. The first job in preparing the timber for Mk 2 was to chisel off from the underside of the “shelf” that which the pleasant pupils had kindly deposited; several mouthfuls of presumably well spent chewing gum which over the decades had dried and seriously hardened.



Although initially it looked like I might get two crickets out of this, on closer inspection it was riddled with screw holes resulting in unforeseen waste and I copied one of my wife’s dressmaking techniques and cut paper patterns to arrange the required shapes around the defects.



For Mark 2, I simply housed the legs into the sides and butted them against the underside of the top, but maintained the long dovetails of Mark 1 between the top and sides.



And about 7 coats of Chestnut finishing oil later...



Given the provenance of the wood, the cracket will be appropriately bound for Zurich, for our latest 5-week-old grandson, Val Barrington Davidson, whose middle name is after my Dad.

The following story, just drivel really, would be far better told over either a coffee at an NWA meeting or a pint in the pub, but as neither are going to happen for the foreseeable....

I remember, as a lad living at home with my parents, the plastic toilet seat gave up and Dad thought it would be a challenge, and also save a few bob, to make a wooden replacement. He trotted off to his garage cum workshop at the bottom of the garden only to return a few minutes later, beaming. "I have found a suitable piece of wood." From his stash of reclaimed wood, he produced an old desk top of 7/8" thick beech. The top was covered in several generations of school graffiti, and near the centre was, coarsely carved, presumably by one of the more academically challenged pupils; I SAT HERE AND PASSED NOTHING. You couldn't make it up.