

The first time I saw a Saturday Night Special live in the wild was on the 2016 TX200.

My daughters, Kaitlyn, Hannah, and I were sailing our 1974 Wayfarer, and had just rounded the corner from the ICW into the Port Mansfield Cut going out to the jetties, which was to be our first camp for the event. We had been sailing all day with rising winds and increasing waves, and so we had put in a reef to make the upwind beat more manageable.

If you are not familiar with the Wayfarer, it was designed in 1957 by Ian Proctor as a camper-cruising dinghy that could also serve as a club racer. At 16' long with a 6' 1" beam, she is a beamy boat that can stand up to its 125 square foot of sail plan and make good speed to windward. The TX200 is a haven for interesting sailboat designs, many of which sport balanced lug rigs and are chosen not for their windward capabilities, but rather their shallow water bone fides. Therefore, when I saw a blue-hulled boat ahead of us with a single balanced lug main (which I was sure couldn't possibly out point a sloop), I was confident that I would be able to at least keep up if not pass her.

Now, most participants of the TX200 will tell you that the event is not a race. But I know better. Anytime there are two sailboats together, one will always be trying to pass the other. At least that is my mentality. Unless, of course, you have a faster boat than mine. Then it's not a race

Well, it turns out that going to the Port Mansfield Jetties with the blue-hulled, lug-rigged sailboat in front of me was not a race. I watched in disbelief as, what I believed to be, an unweatherly rig outpointed me and left me in the dust as she screamed her way out to the jetties.

At the time, I didn't know what boat was in front of me but I later learned that it was a John Welsford designed Saturday Night Special. Turns out that John had designed her specifically for the TX200. At 14.8ft LWL and a beam of 5ft 5in, John designed the bow section with extra flare and buoyancy to create extra stability and resist broaching during the many hours of downwind sailing with strong winds off the starboard quarter. (Scroll to the bottom to get my overall impression of the SNS).

Fast forward to May 2018 when I was preparing for my third TX200, this time to be sailed solo. Bobby Chilek posted on Facebook that he would not be able to participate in this year's TX200 and would offer his SNS for someone to borrow. After waiting a couple hours to see if someone else would take Bobby up on the offer, I said I would love to borrow his SNS. A fan of John's designs, I have plans for the Pilgrim, Pelegrin, and am currently building a Scamp from plans. I thought that this would be a great opportunity to try sailing a sister to the boat that had kicked my backside a couple of years earlier. The added bonus would be to learn about the balanced lug rig which is a rig I had never sailed, even though this is what the Scamp is designed with.

On the day that I picked up Bobby's SNS, he showed me around the boat and demonstrated how to rig her. Having always sailed Marconi rigged boats, I was impressed with how quickly the SNS was to rig. Remove the main from its bag, unstrap the mast, rove the halyard, step the mast, rove the mainsheet, attach the downhaul and boomvang, and drop in the rudder. Maybe 15 minutes? At a leisurely pace.



Parking Lot of White Sands Motel



Tent fits nicely into forward storage compartment

So when I got the boat down to Port Isabel, it was a simple matter of storing my gear, rigging the boat and I was ready for my first test sail on the SNS. The winds were light but a little gusty as I headed out from the boat ramp at the White Sands Motel. All was going well sailing downwind away from the boat ramp, but when I started to harden up and attempt to sail upwind, I couldn't get the boat to point. Bobby had told me that the boat sometimes picks up some lee helm, but going sideways with the helm all the way over was a bit extreme in my opinion. Try as I might, I just couldn't point the boat. After returning to the dock, with the help of the outboard, I dejectedly stowed everything and went to the dinner scheduled for those attending the TX200.



First sail on SNS

Photo by Steve Romeis

That night and during the bus ride the next day to drop off our rigs, I was able to get some great advice from Bobby, Chuck Pierce, John Welsford (online), and others. Several mistakes that I was making seemed to be working against me. First, the downhaul was too loose. According to the collective wisdom, this needs to be beastly tight. Since it adjusts the luff of the sail which forms the leading edge, any sagging will adversely affect pointing ability. Second, I had the outhaul a little too tight. The sail needed a bit more belly to create draft. And third, I had been over sheeting the main. John suggested that on this boat, the aft end of the boom should be sheeted in to about the edge of the deck. With all this in mind, I went out for another test sail on Sunday night. Low and behold, I was able to point much better. I still had some learning but I believed that I would be able to sail where I needed to go, regardless of the wind direction.

Day 1: The best of times and the worst of times

Monday, the first day of the TX200. I got up at 5:15 and got out on the water by about 6:30. Winds started out light and built throughout the day. Knowing that the winds were going to build and still learning the boat, I decided to start with one reef, which still allowed me to make about 4 ½ knots in the lighter winds. By late morning, the winds had increased to about 20-25 with gusts up to 30 knots. All morning long, the boat was well-behaved, and I was making between 6-8 knots consistently: this on a boat under 15' LWL with a theoretical hull speed of 5.1 knots. Must have been planning and surfing all day. Throughout this time, I never felt out of control, even as the waves built to about 2-3 ft.

At about 11:30, I was at marker 87 thinking about making the cut across to the Mansfield Jetties channel, and decided that with the building wind and waves, it would be prudent to put in another reef before attempting the upwind beat to the jetties. Watching the wave trains in order to pick the time to head up, I saw my opportunity and headed the boat up into the wind where she came to a nice rest, bobbing up and down in the waves. She was beam on to the wind and waves with the main let all the way out. "Right!," I thought, "now to put the reef in." Up to the mast I went and released the halyard. As I was lowering the sail, the boat was hit by a bit of a larger wave and I promptly lost control of the halyard. Down came the sail, and up went the halyard. "Crap! That's not good!" said I. Captain Obvious, taking charge.

After a bit of pondering, I gathered up the sail into the boat, and came to the conclusion that attempting to lower the mast in order to re-rove the halyard would not be a prudent course of action. This was still a new boat to me, the waves would make the attempt hazardous, and I was a bit tired and not thinking as clearly as I would want. Therefore, I fired up the outboard, grateful that I had put aside the notion of attempting this year without it.

Going slightly with the waves was not too difficult, but when I had to head up and take the waves of the starboard bow, the spray got obnoxious. Every wave I hit sent spray out into the wind, which would promptly send it right back into my face. Cursing the salt water (I'm a freshwater sailor), I made my way up the channel until I found a place where I could beach the boat and attempt to put things right.

Having lowered the mast, re-roved the halyard, and re-stepped the mast, I put in the second reef in the main and set about raising the main. When I got the main up, it started flailing about, wildly oscillating with the wind, causing the boat to pitch back and forth from rail to rail. I was afraid that I would capsize right there next to the island even though I was anchored. So, I lowered the main and decided that I would admit defeat for the day and simply motor to the campsite. This was fairly humiliating to me because I pride myself in being able to sail well upwind and had been looking forward to the challenge of tacking up the channel. I have to admit, I even looked around to make sure no one saw me motoring in shame

At camp that night I again conferred with Chuck Pierce, and made some adjustments to how I was setting up the second reef. A quick test sail in the channel let me know that all was well again, and that I could proceed.



Port Mansfield Jetties

Day 2: Downwind sleigh ride

Tuesday, Day 2. As usual, the winds were light as we all set out back down the channel towards the ICW. Still with a single reef in the sail, I made good time with Cathy in Hello Kitty right behind me. By the time we got to the junction to the ICW the winds had picked up to around 15 knots and the waves were running at about 1-2 feet. On a port tack I readied myself to jibe the boat, thinking through what needed to happen. After jibing, I took a quick look back to see how Hello Kitty was doing but didn't see her. Not thinking too much about it, as it is quite easy to miss a boat when taking a quick look, I refocused on making sure everything on my boat was where it should be and that we were ship shape.

Looking around again for Hello Kitty, this time being more thorough in my search, I still didn't see her. Where was she? Was she continuing on towards Port Mansfield? After a few moments of consideration, I hardened up and started the slog back to windward. Soon I spotted a small hump that was either an island or a hull low in the water. As I continued to windward, I saw a fishing boat heading towards the hump and assumed it would be Hello Kitty. On my way windward, I came up to Chuck Pierce in his Mayfly 14 and informed him of the situation, so we both made our way to the scene.

By the time we arrived, Cathy was on the fishing boat and some of the other crew were on her boat bailing water. Chuck called Chris, who was serving as her chase boat, and informed him of the situation. Chuck then tied off to Hello Kitty to provide additional assistance.

Soon enough, Chris arrived and joined in. When all seemed to be set up with Hello Kitty tied off to Skiff America, Cathy got in the water to make the short swim of 6-10 feet to Skiff America. Amazingly enough, Skiff America was being blown downwind slowly, but too fast for Cathy to make the short swim. Cathy had a PFD on, which assisted with buoyancy but also slowed her progress. Fortunately, Chuck and I were still on station to provide assistance if necessary, and Chris was able to get back up to Cathy. What I learned from this is that the notion that I would be able to swim back to a boat if I ever fell overboard is pure fantasy.



Chuck Pierce: one of the Good Samaritans working on Hello Kitty



Chris and Cathy in Skiff America towing Hello Kitty

With all set right, Chuck and I bore off and restarted the sleigh ride. Wind was probably 15-20 and I had a great time. Continually sailing 6-7 knots with bursts to 8 and even once or twice over 9 knots! Being a bit overloaded in the bow, compounded by me just heading straight downwind with no attempt to take the waves at an angle, I would often stuff the bow in the wave in front. Still, it was great fun!

Waves on Laguna Madre were probably 2-3 feet and not too difficult to navigate. When we got into the Land Cut, however, the waves all but disappeared, and it was like taking a magic carpet ride. As a Great Lakes sailor, it is amazing to have 15-20 knots of wind and no waves. As a matter of fact, it is amazing to have that wind with only 2-3 foot waves. So for me, this type of sailing is a rare treat. Just point your boat and go.

As I was sailing down the long straight stretch of the Land Cut, I thought that this would be a great location to have sailing drag race . . . but just look out for those large ships coming at you!

Camp that night was at Haps Cut – not a favorite for me, as it is a mud pit filled with stinking, oozing mud that swallows small children and just makes a mess of everything. Getting out of the boat, I sunk up to my knees and almost could not move my feet, there was so much suction. With visions of the African Queen, I slowly made my way toward shore. It took me forever to move, as it required that I

apply only just enough upward pulling on my leg to extract my foot without pulling too hard so as to lose my boot in the process. Once ashore on terra firma, I just wanted to collapse in my chair under my umbrella drinking a cold beer. Gathering up my gear, I did just that, but not until everything was covered in stinky black goo.

After rehydrating myself with the excellent offerings I had brought from the folks at Good City Brewing (<https://www.goodcitybrewing.com/beer/>), I roused myself to make camp and find something to combat the mud monster. In the weeds, I found a couple of large PVC pipes and planks that had washed up ashore. Laying these next to my boat allowed me to get aboard without getting too muddy. In the picture below you can see them next to the SNS. Still, I managed to get black, stinking mud everywhere.



SNS and other boats at Haps Cut



Looney Tunes at Haps Cut

Day 3: Padre Island Yacht Club and Civilization

After cleaning out the boat as best I could, I set sail from Haps Cut and continued down the Lands Cut to the Padre Island Yacht Club. The day's sail was another great day of downwind fun. Arriving at the entrance to the Yacht Club, I found that it would be a narrow channel with a dog leg in the middle and most of the channel pretty much into the wind. A good time to see if I had learned anything about the upwind performance capabilities of the balanced lug rig.

I am pleased to report that the SNS performed beautifully. Tacking up the channel was a breeze. With attention to good technique, I was able to tack easily and continue making good progress. Sometimes I would come about and let the main out a bit to ensure good drawing before hardening up.

When it came time to do dock, I was preparing the boat for pulling up to the concrete wall when Gordo called out and offered to have me raft up next to his Dovekie, "Quetzal." I am proud to say that it only took me 5 passes to safely bring SNS alongside Gordo with no injuries, boat damage, or loss of life. Dignity and pride, however, was bruised as I went round and round before bringing everything in for a safe landing. The challenge was the wind direction off the starboard quarter, requiring that I have the boom out attempting to dump wind. Unfortunately, this meant that the boom would hit the other

boats, and I could not stop the boat. I did attempt coming in the other direction, but the wind was swirling around in all different directions. In the end, Gordo just grabbed a hold of my boom and hauled me in. Inglorious but effective.



Rafted up next to Quetzal at Padre Island Yacht Club

The folks at the yacht club were awesome. They cooked burgers and hotdogs, and had cold drinks available for a nominal charge. Added to that, there was a shower available. Bye-Bye, Haps Cut mud! That night, I slept in air-conditioned splendor on the floor of the yacht club.

Day 4: Sailing in Company

Gordo, Mike, and I decided to sail in company to our next camp at Blind Pass. As per usual, the day began with low winds, so I began with a full main sail. The sail down Laguna Madre and into Corpus Christi Bay was a sweet, easy sail with quite a few other boats around.



Folding Schooner



Pathfinder and Dovekies Passing Snoopy's



Gordo in Quetzal



Butthead with Hello Kitty's Main (note the dolphin off the starboard bow)



Sailing in company

Gordo, Mike, and I decided to drop down to Shamrock Cove and then make our way over to Stingray Hole where we stopped for lunch.

From Stingray Hole, we chose to beat up Ship Channel to Port Aransas. It was mainly a long starboard close haul with a couple of tacks to get back to the other side of the channel. On my way up the channel, a large ray jumped straight out of the water about 30 yards directly in front of me! I had no idea they did such a thing! It's times like those that I wish I had several GoPros set up to catch all the nonstop action.

Past Port Aransas, we turned back north up Lydia Ann Channel and then on to Blind Pass. The wind was about 10-15, so before we started the beat up behind Mud Island to Blind Pass, we decided to throw in a reef. The beat up was fun. Our three boats were well matched to sail in company. Throughout the day, we were always near each other. Sometimes one would be leading, and at others the someone else would be leading.

When we were getting close to Blind Pass, I cut the corner too close and ended up on a sandbar that required I get out and drag the boat across for about 20-30 yards. The water was about 10 inches, so the SNS still had enough buoyancy that it wasn't too difficult.

We had planned on stopping at Blind Pass but Hurricane Harvey had wiped out the beach. Therefore, we continued on to Paul's Mott, which turned out to be a great choice. When we got there, several other boats were already there. The wind was blowing cool (relatively speaking), and the beach was beautiful.



Pauls Mott



Pauls Mott

Day 5: Through the back bays to Army Hole

Gordo, Mike, and I decided to sail in company again and take the back bay route through Carlos Dugout, Carlos Bay, Cedar Dugout, Mesquite Bay, Ayres Dugout, Panther Reef and South Pass. As we set out, there was quite a bit of discussion about if and how Hurricane Harvey might have affected the route. As it turns out, the route was clear with no real discernable changes noted except possibly at Ayres Dugout with some of the oyster reefs moving in a bit.

For this route, I used the Navionics App on my iPhone. With cellular connection, this app works very well, giving me real time updates to my location. My GPS is not a chart plotting GPS, which, for my typical navigation requirements, is just fine. I usually only need relative position, as I can use sightings of the land to identify where I am, and water depth is almost always adequate for sailing.

On the back bays of the TX200, however, where a difference of 10 feet might be the difference of staying in a navigable channel and ending up on an oyster reef, accuracy is especially important. I just can't read the water to know where the shallow vs. deep water is. Sometimes, there is some land poking up out of the water, such as with the oyster reefs, or there may be birds walking, which according to an old adage of the TX200, is a clear indication of shallow water: "remember, birds do not walk on water."

The downside of the Navionics app on my iPhone is that it uses a lot of battery power, requires cellular coverage, and my iPhone is not waterproof. With that being said, however, it worked very well, and I

touched bottom only a few times. When I did, I was able to quickly determine my actual position and know which direction I should go.



Carlos Dugout



Shallow water



Entering into Ayres Dugout



Break time at Ayres Dugout



Chuck Pierce leaving Ayres Dugout



Precision sailing through Ayres Dugout



Heading into San Antonio Bay towards Panther Reef Cut

Passing South Pass Island, the wind started to become more on the nose, necessitating beating on a close haul into a short chop. At one point, we decided to stop and add a second reef. The wind was not too strong, and the single reef still worked fine without overpowering the boat, but I thought that the second reef would just make sailing a little calmer.

Unfortunately, I had difficulty adding the second reef. This was due to the need to work on both sides of the boom (something that I later suggested to Bobby that he change) and because I had foolishly used Dyneema for the outhaul for the second reef. This line was simply too thin and too slippery for me to get adequate purchase on the line to haul the tack in adequately. After faffing about for some time trying in vain to get the second reef set, I decided to just leave the first reef in and proceed as before.

The wind and wave direction was such that when on the starboard tack, being close-hauled meant bashing straight into the waves. Therefore, I chose to bear off a bit to get more power in the sails but still be healed. Typically, I will sail the boat flatter, but I found that sailing with more healing presented a smaller hull profile to the waves and thus meant less bashing about. Every so often, when I found that I had moved further into the bay, I would tack in order to get closer to the land and be under its lee.

Army Hole is perennial favorite of the TX200 and it did not disappoint this year. Lots of grassy area to spread out and an amazing old airfield sure to please all but the most jaded of travelers.

Day 6: Magnolia Beach

Because of my travel schedule, I needed to leave as soon as possible from Army Hole on Saturday. I had to get up to Texarkana that night and then on to Milwaukee the next day.

Up early and packed, I headed north towards Sand Island then out to Big Bayou. From there it was north again up to Magnolia Beach. Pretty easy sail with no surprises.



Approaching the Finish Line



Welcoming Committee: Bobby is the first to welcome his boat back and John Goodman is ready with a beer!



The drive back was long but uneventful. On the way, I was able to reflect on what an awesome sail this had been, the amazing people I had the privilege of sailing with, the amazing generosity of Bobby Chilek to loan me his boat, the great design of John Welsford's Saturday Night Special, and, most importantly, the fantastic family waiting for me at home.



Finally home: My daughter, Hannah, presents me with the TX200 Pennant and a Medal of Completion

My Impressions of the Saturday Night Special

Before I get into my impressions of the Saturday Night Special, I think it worthwhile to spend some time talking about my sailing background and preferences, as I believe this will allow you to have some perspective regarding some of my biases.

As a child, my family did quite a bit of sailing, mainly on 25-30 foot racing/cruising designs that were plentiful in the 1970s. As an adult, I got back into sailing around 1995. Since that time, I have owned an O'Day 20 (hated it), Montgomery 15, Wayfarer, and a Laser. Currently, I am building a Scamp.

Living in Milwaukee, my primary sailing grounds are on Lake Michigan and Lake Superior. My preference is for multi-day cruises. Sailing solo or with my two daughters, my cruises have included cruises around Isle Royale (Lake Superior), Apostle Islands (Lake Superior), San Juan Islands (Puget Sound), Thunder Bay to Marathon (Lake Superior), and the TX200.

Sailing in areas with unpredictable weather and large seas, I prefer a boat that is weatherly, forgiving, and can carry plenty of gear.

So, how does the Saturday Night Special stack up? Awesome!

Weatherliness and Speed

In spite of my initial difficulties with the rig (this was my first sail ever with a balanced lug rig), with the advice from others, I soon found out how to get her to point well. In the right conditions, I was able to easily tack in 90 degrees. During the course of the 6 days that I sailed the SNS on the TX200, I encountered a wide variety of conditions from light winds to sustained higher 20s with gusts to 30+ knots. Flat water to 2-3 foot chop. Throughout the entire week, I always felt that the boat was well-mannered and under control.

During the downwind stretches, even when we were surfing down waves at 7-8 knots, I never felt that I was anywhere near losing control or broaching. John designed the bow section with extra flare and buoyancy to create extra stability and resist broaching. The helm was always responsive, and the boat tracked well. Of course, like all boats, larger waves coming at the stern quarter would tend to cause some desire by the boat to round up, but corrective action at the tiller easily compensated this action and kept us moving along well. There is a video of me sailing in these conditions, and you can see how well-behaved the boat is. You will also see that I am not working hard to surf the waves for longer periods, which resulted in my stuffing the bow into the wave in front

In light air, she moved easily, and quickly responded to gusts. For me, going up wind in light air was doable but still a point of learning. I am sure that this is a result of my inexperience with the rig. As the week progressed, I continually increased in my skill and ability to get more out of the rig.

On several days, I was sailing in company with two Dovekies sailed by Gordo and Mike. At 21 feet, the Dovekie has a theoretical hull speed of 6.1 knots compared with the 5.1 knots of the 15 foot SNS. Even so, throughout the several days, regardless of wind or waves, we always sailed in close proximity to one another. When one would reef, we would all reef so we were always sailing with the same number of reefs. Sometimes one would lead and at others, another would lead. I was impressed that even though I gave up a knot of theoretical speed, the SNS was always right there and would often lead.

As I learned, one of the key components of making the balanced lug rig point well is tension on the luff. As Michael Storer wrote, you need to be brutal with the downhaul. In everything except light air, it needs to be bar taught. With a 4:1 system, I was able to get enough tension on the luff.

The boat also was set up with a 4:1 boom vang which helps with keeping the leach taught enough. One challenge that I found was that with the balanced lug rig, the boom is off to one side of the mast. What this means is that the boom vang does not move through a symmetrical circle. If I hardened up the boom vang when the boom was closer in board, it would prevent the boom from moving out, even with the main sheet eased. This necessitated that I adjust the boom vang when I changed the angle of attack on the main. I am sure that there is a solution to this.

On the boat I was sailing, I did have some difficulty with reefing. This was due to two reasons. First was the fact that I am not familiar with the balanced lug rig. I am used to heaving to in order to reef. With the balanced lug one cannot heave to. At least I don't know how. The second challenge was how the reefing was set up. The cleats for the downhauls were positioned further back on the boom than what I would want. This meant that I had to move away from the mast and pull the main in to the boat in

order to put in the reef. The cleats were also on both sides of the boom. Easy fixes that I discussed with the owner, Bobby.

Hull Shape

Inevitably on the TX200, there is much discussion regarding draft and how shallow of water one can sail in. The SNS has a draft of 6" with the centerboard up and 3' 1" with the centerboard down. The hull has a relatively narrow flat bottom with a skeg running most of the way back towards the stern and two chines. What I liked about this hull shape is that it provides shallow draft for getting into skinny water, but also nice shape for working through the waves and chop on encounters in the bays. While the SNS may not be able to sail in quite as shallow of water as a flat bottomed skiff like the Mayfly 14, for my needs, a 6" draft is very respectable. There was only one time during the week that I ended up on a sandbar that required that I get out and walk the boat. For me, I will happily add a few inches of draft in order to have a more kindly action in waves and chop. Most of the week, when going upwind, I would allow the boat to heel to the first chine, and we would make great progress to windward, usually tacking through 90 degrees.

During one stretch on San Antonio Bay, the wind had shifted so that close hauled on the starboard tack required going almost directly into the wave train. In this case, I fell off to more of a close reach in order to keep up power to punch through the waves. I also allowed the boat to heel more up to the second chine with the side deck just touching the water. In this state, the hull presented a smaller profile to the waves, which resulted in an easier and dryer motion.

The hull form is very forgiving. In gusts, the SNS will easily heel over to the first chine and then quickly harden up. Pushed harder, she will go over to the second chine with the side just about into the water, but I never felt that I would ever go so far over so as to take water into the boat. With side decks of about 8", I only ever took just a few dollops of green water over the sides.

Stowing Gear

When cruising, one is always interested in storing lots of gear. Ground tackle, tent, sleeping bag, food, foul weather gear, cooler, etc. all need an easily accessible place to be stored. The SNS has tons of storage available. The aft lazarette has loads of storage accessible through a hatch in the bulkhead. On my Wayfarer, the hatch is on the deck, which makes it awkward to retrieve items while sailing. With the hatch on the bulkhead, it made it very easy to open the hatch and get whatever I needed while sailing.

The bow area also has lots of storage accessible through two hatches in the bulkhead and one on the starboard deck. These easily swallowed up my tent, sleeping bag, food and other assorted odds and ends. During the trip, I carried my Yeti 45 cooler, which fit neatly between the centerboard case and the forward bulkhead. The centerboard line limited how far I could open the lid, but I was still able to get in to retrieve my drinks.

Anchors and extra gear bags too large to fit into the storage compartments sat on either side of the centerboard case.

Cockpit

The cockpit is large and uncluttered. Seating is on the sole, side decks, or aft deck. When off the wind, I tend to like to sit on the floor inside the boat facing forward. The SNS does not have floors, so one sits

on the sole between bulkheads. Some sort of cushioning is beneficial. I tend to use drybags and cushions. Someone suggested tossing in a bean bag!

Though I was solo this year, I know that if I had my two daughters with me, we would have had plenty of space for us and our gear.

Rigging

I typically sail a Wayfarer and have always sailed sloops. So with the unstayed balanced lug rig, I was astounded at how quickly I could rig and launch. Take the main out of the travel bag, rove the halyard, step the mast, rove the main, attach downhaul and boomvang, and finally attach the rudder and tiller. What could be simpler? 15 easily paced minutes later, and I am ready to launch.

Overall

In my opinion, the Saturday Night Special is a great all-round boat. It is fast, stable, forgiving, and carries loads of gear. It is quick and easy to rig, and will go anywhere I want to go. I think that it is an outstanding design for the TX200, which is what it was designed for, and would be great fun on inland lakes.

On my Wayfarer, I have done coastal cruising on Lake Superior, Lake Michigan, and the San Juan Islands. Watching wind and weather, as I do on the Wayfarer, I would be more than happy doing the same trips in the SNS once I learned how to safely reef on the water with the balanced lug rig. Maybe a yawl rig?

SNS Specs

Length, 14.ft 8in

Beam 1.66m - 5ft 5in

Draft (CB up) 0.152m - 6in

Draft (CB dn) 0.94m - 3ft 1in

Sail Area: 103 sq ft