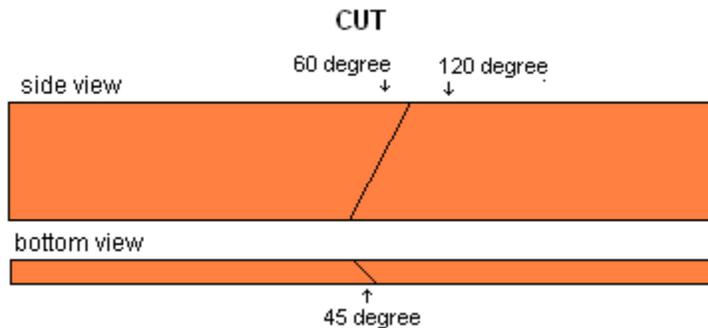


PLANER BOARDS

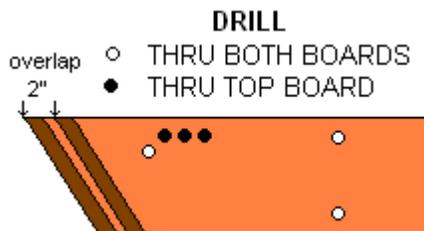
Planer boards help you keep more line near the surface. I have caught more Trophy Striper off my planer boards up high than deep in the water column. You can also use them effectively in the late fall season in the Bay if the large stripers return. They do not work well on Stripers that are less than thirty inches in length. The problem is that the release used to keep your fishing line on the planer line will not release for the smaller fish's weight. Also, when the smaller fish are present, they are located deeper in the water column which requires more weight to reach them and creates the need for a tighter hold on your release mechanism.

To construct a pair of planer boards that can carry up to four fishing lines, follow the instructions that follow. First cut a 1" or 2" x 6" x 8' board in half. Using the directions below, create one planer board that is used on the starboard (right) side of a boat. When finished with the first planer, reverse the instructions to create a port (left) side planer.

Locate the center of the board length and place a mark with a pencil. Using a compass and a pencil, draw a 90 degree cut line across the entire center of the width of the board. Check the saw blade position, it should be vertical (90 degrees) to the table top for this cut. Cut the board across at the center line mark. On both of the smaller boards draw a vertical and a horizontal line at the center of both boards. Draw a 60 degree cut line across the width of the board, crossing the middle mark. Tilt the saw blade 45 degrees and cut the board along the marked cut line, with the 60 degree tip to the left of the saw blade. Mark the other board with the 60 degree line across the board in the other direction. Cut the board with the 120 degree line to the left of the blade. If you follow the instructions above, you have the boards cut to make a left and right running planer board. If not, talk to someone how wants to make a pair and make both cuts the opposite of the way you made yours. That way you both will have a "matched pair."



Next, place the two boards together as shown below. The top board is placed with two inches extending beyond the bottom board. Clamp the boards together before drilling the three holes shown. The hole to the front is drilled about three inches from the top and about 24 inches from the back of the board. The two rear holes are drilled about 2" from the back and from the top and bottom edges. Unclamp the planer boards. On the board that was in top position mark and then drill the series of three holes. Place a mark for the center hole 21 one inches from the back of the board and two and one half inches from the top of the board. Place the other two holes centers the same distance from the top and about inch between the centers from the center of the first mark. These holes allow you to adjust the running of the planer, if needed. Drill all the holes five sixteenths of an inch wide.

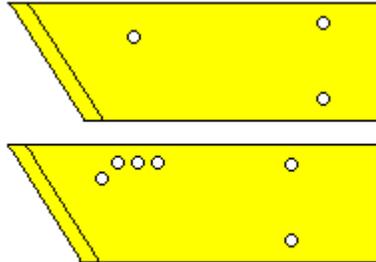


Reverse the ends of the other planer board and drill the holes using the same instructions.

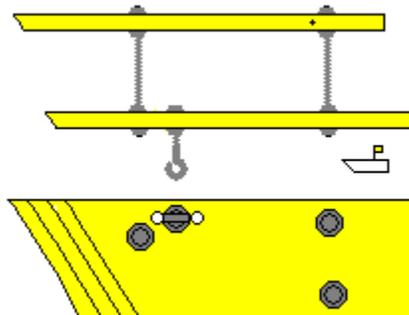
To help preserve the wood and, more important, you should paint you boards with a bright and highly visible color. Use of a flag on each board will also help other fishing boats avoid your boards. If you do not make

your boards highly visible, you are fooling your self by thinking others can always see them. Maryland may be issuing use restrictions requiring these two conditions, as well as, limiting the maximum length of the tow lines.

Paint all of the boards with a bright yellow or international orange paint. You want your planer boards to be recognized by other boats to avoid fishing line tangles. You can add a flag by simply drilling a three thirty second inch hole in the back outside board of each planer. Using a eighteen inch stainless steel welding bar as a pole and attaching a piece of yellow material (plastic or cloth) on the pole.

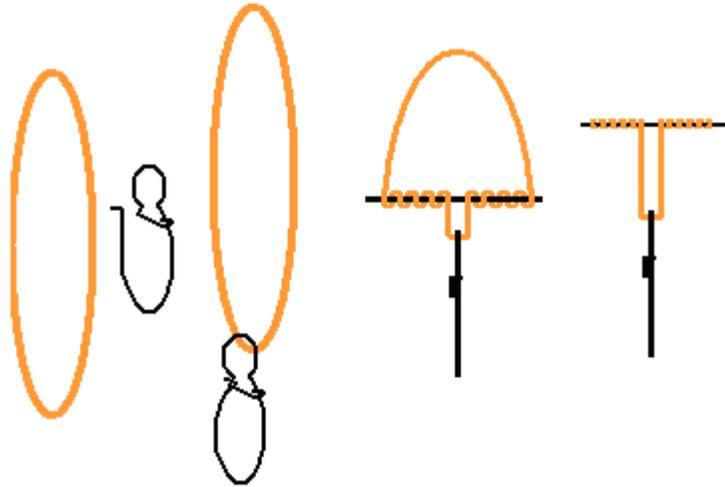


You now can assemble your planer boards. Place a 5/16" nut and washer about one inch and a half from one of the ends of a 12" threaded rod. Place the rod in the front hole of a painted board. Place another washer and nut on the same end. Do not have the rod extending out of the outside nut. Repeat the process with the other board. Place the two back rods the same way in the back of the boards. Now tighten the inside nuts of all the bars. Then place a 5/16" eye bolt in the second hole from the front of the series of three holes with nuts and bolts as on the long rod ends. Add one additional nut on the end of the eye bolt. This serves to lock the eye bolt from coming loose. Carry wrenches with you when you try out your planer boards. You can adjust the performance of your boards by moving the eye bolt.



I've pulled in a few floating planer boards that were missing the eye bolt because a single nut vibrated loose. If you loose a planer board when fishing, you have to pull in all of your fishing lines. And also, the other planer board must be taken in. And, to make matter worse, a fish might bite and delay your returning to the area where you lost the planer. It will also be a rough day with wave action that shook the planer loose adding to the possibility that you will not find the planer board. That's why I advocate a locking nut on the eye bolt. Also, one of the boards recovered had a short piece of a line that indicated someone failed to check the condition of the tow line. Do check your tow line's condition for nicks and abrasions when retrieving your boards.

You can attach your fishing line to the planer board with number 32 rubber bands, as shown below. A Douloc snap is placed on the rubber band. The snap is pushed through the rubber band at least four times and then pull the snap closing the loop in the rubber band. The snap is opened and placed on the planer line. By letting your fishing line out, the snap slides on the planer line. You determine the amount of fishing line to let out visually. This practice works well and is simple to use.



Storage of the planer tow line has been made easy by the introduction of a device called a “wheel.” Actually, it looks like a small tire turned inside out. It is about ten inches in diameter and made with black plastic. Drill a hole 3/8” in the high side near the edge. Cut a short piece of 3/8” poly tubing and place it in the hole. Tie a knot about one foot from the end of the tow line. Place the rope through the poly tubing. Slip a snap swivel on the end and whip the rope enclosing the snap swivel. Then whip another snap on the other end of your tow rope. Wrap the tow rope on the wheel. Finish the other tow line. Plan to attach your tow lines to high and sturdy metal rails or such other metal posts you have on your boat. The higher up is better to help keep your tow rope from dragging in the water. Simply take the snap swivel on the loose end and attached it to the eye bolt on your planer. The line will feed off the wheel and the planer will run out until the tow line is fully extended. Assign one person the task of wrapping the tow line back on the wheel while another pulls in the planer. Bass Pro Shop carries “wheels” in the Baltimore store.

