



Joey's Passion

By Jerry Field

Painting a boat like Joe Buttafucio's race boat is a cross between fine art and autobody work. This 36-foot B-class race boat was painted and cleared within 4 day's time. The final product came out great and generated a lot of new business. In this article, I describe exactly how it was done so that you can do a similar job without mistakes.

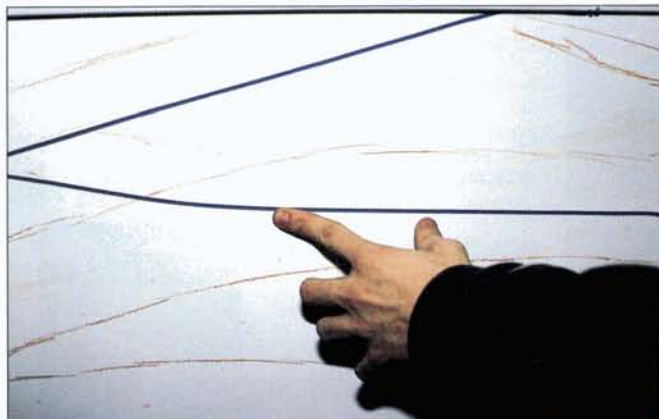
Joe contacted me and my partner, Darren Boerckel, about painting the boat a month ago. Joe was involved with the artwork from start to finish. He has a good artistic sense and used to do a lot of custom paint work. We knew we worked well together because we had painted his prior boat, the "Double Trouble" and had done artwork for some of his brother's bands. Joe wanted the flames on his boat to have a unique custom airbrush look.

He specified long, thin flame ends that overlapped. He wanted the boat to look fast even when it was standing still.

Darren and our assistant, Mike "Speed" Richford, feel that on a job like this one, you will have no problem if you follow the basic rules. Use the same brand of paint from start to finish. Follow all the mixing instructions. Do not mix automotive paints by eye, or you will be in trouble.

We used Sikkens brand on the boat because we feel Sikkens paint is easier to use than other brands of automotive paint for custom airbrush work on cars, motorcycles, and boats. The paint has a long "pot life" and doesn't clog a gun like a Paasche VL at all.

We sanded the boat with a 600-grit wet sandpaper, washed it with soapy water, and then cleaned it with Sikkens M600 degreaser.



1. First we took a medium-colored grease pencil and started drawing the flames on the boat hull. We did not use a black grease pencil because black has a tendency to stain the paint. Then using 1/4-inch 3M blue plastic tape, we taped over the grease pencil lines.

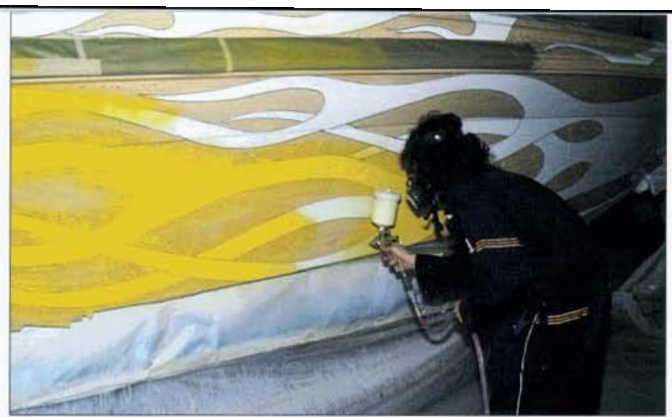


2. Next, we taped out the first side of the boat with 3M tape, and then cleaned the grease pencil off from the inside of the taped flames.





3. We then used painter's masking tape to tape up the areas we didn't want sprayed.



7. We then added the orange and red and finally highlighted with a very light yellow.



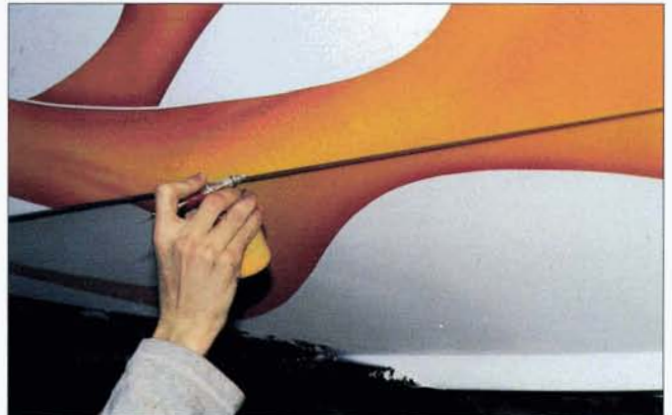
4. We then traced one side of the hull onto tracing paper. Flipping it to the other side, we copied the trace onto the hull.



8. We unmasked and added some final highlights. The lines that we left with the 1/4-inch 3M tape disappeared when we pinstriped the flames. Flames generally need to be pinstriped in order to give a finished look.



5. After we taped up the big areas with paper, we then cleaned the boat again with the degreaser.



9. The flames are finished.



6. This is when we started spraying. We sprayed the lightest color first. In this case, it was yellow.



10. We painted the radar arch with screaming skulls. These were sprayed using both Frisk film and freehand technique.



For the flames and skulls, we used Sikkens Autocryl with MS fast hardener and 889 accelerator. Before we unmasked the flames and added our last highlights, we sprayed one coat of intercoat clear to protect the artwork. We then used a Scotch Brite pad to scuff the flames and the boat hull lightly. Then we cleared the whole boat. We used five coats of clear at a room temperature of 85–95 degrees and left the boat to dry in the heat for three hours. We sprayed clear on the whole boat because we had touched up some white on the hull and painted some of the other exterior parts.

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