

## An Oval Bowl?

Article by Lowell Converse

Those of you who have read Malcolm Tibbett's exceptional book *The Art of Segmented Woodturning* already have seen how to make an oval bowl. When I saw it I knew I had to try it, and last year's 2 X 4 contest motivated me to give it a go. It is a challenge to get everything to work out just right, but the result is a unique piece that begs the question, "How'd you do that?"

The concept is not difficult: make a bowl, cut it in half and glue the 2 rim sides together. The process will work with solid bowls as well as with segmented.

Without going into how to make a segmented bowl, you have to make a segmented bowl first. If you want the resulting bowl to be oval, you'll need the sides of your bowl to be nearly vertical at the rim so when you glue the two half bowls there is a smooth transition at the joint.



Here are the assembled segmented rings ready to turn. If you haven't turned segmented pieces before, you'll be amazed

at how nicely the shavings come off when it's all side grain.



The ring around this bowl will be partially carved away to leave four feet to support the oval bowl. You will need to make sure the top edge of the bowl is absolutely flat so when cut the mating surfaces give a good glue joint.

The best way is to flatten the edge on the lathe using a piece of 100 or 120 grit sandpaper mounted on a flat board or MDF and applied to the edge. You could also flatten the rim on a sanding disk. Once the edge is flat, the bowl needs to be cut in half through the center. This is best done on the bandsaw either freehand, or mounted on a thin piece of plywood or MDF which can provide a straightedge to follow the fence. The bandsawn edges can be trued up on a disk



sander before gluing the two halves together.

After carving the feet, the two sides are glued together. Don't clamp too hard or something might break! (Don't ask me how I know this.) Take care to match the surfaces as accurately as possible which will reduce the amount of sanding needed to clean up the glue joint. Then sand the glue joint until it "disappears", and apply whatever edge treatment works for you to the new rim of the oval bowl.



There can be quite a bit of hand sanding to get everything to blend nicely, but the result is worth the effort.



**"This bowl Rocks!"  
by Lowell Converse**