

## Shortboard with a soul: The GFHurley Pug!

Contributed by  
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"Hey, we're longboarders!" That was the first reaction when we had this skateboard show up, it was shorter than the space between the axles of any self-respecting longboard typically ridden by the Longboard Consortium. But, retro-lines and inlaid teak veneers do tend to find a soft spot in our hearts. Plus, Garrett Hurley just kept grinning about his new mini-board whenever the subject came up. So we took a break from the daily drudgery of riding new longboards to try out a mini. For this review, the Longboard Consortium reached out to skaters on both coasts to suss out the GFHurley 24" Pug complete. By the time we were done, this well-traveled little board had impressed us, generated grins on every rider that dared step foot on it and left us asking for more.

Over the last several months, custom builders and even some traditionally "longboard only" manufacturers have been busting-out "mini-boards". The GFHurley Pug is the first of these we've ridden, and it's been designed by longboarders with a sense of nostalgia for 70's-style shortboards and a sense of humor, too. It gets its shape and design from "fish" surfboards, its inlaid teak and clear-grip from GFHurley's bag of tricks and is named after one of the inventors of the CarveBoards...these guys all surf and skate together. Garrett told us, "The Pug comes out of soul sessions with friends and is our way to jump into the roots of the old style of riding."

GFHurley Longboards: "The Pug"  
MSRP: \$106.99  
Contact: GFHurley.com  
Length: 23.75"; Width at Widest: 6, 7/8"; at F. Axle: 5, 3/8"; at R. Axle: 4, 1/8"; Thickness: 1/2";  
Flat/Camber/Concave: Flat  
Wheelbase: 17.125"; axle-to axle Construction: Baltic Birch, plus top-ply of Teak with inlaid black stripes.  
Static Flex: None  
Wheel Wells: Yes Cutouts: No Wheel bite: No  
Deck Height: 3.875"; (unloaded)  
Trucks: GFHurley 75mm, drilled Old School, stock barrel bushings & blue Khiro top bushings  
Wheels: GFHurley 65mm, 78a durometer.  
Width: 35mm; Contact Patch: 33mm; Core: side-set, 8mm bearing spacing;  
Shape: Flat back.  
Bearings: GFHurley, "abec 7"; sealed bearings, removable seals with "speed rings" included.  
Hardware: 1/2"; hard risers, switched to 1/4";, black Allen head bolts with nylock nuts.  
Grip: medium grit, clear sand system

The Skeptical Eye Opens. Our first rider on the Pug wasn't a lover of short decks, at all. He's got a 34" inch plug pool deck that never gets ridden, a brand-new 36" sliding deck that generates no love and recently dropped off the tail of a double-kicked shortboard during a garage session with the NoVa bombers. More than one of us reached for a helmet before taking the Pug out on the streets, and some riders simply declined to try it out, at first. "That's too short for me, I'll kill myself on that thing" was a common refrain from skaters accustomed to big boards. Confront your fears, brothers and sisters! We did, and were rewarded with solid fun, smooth riding and the incredible utility of the mini board.

"In no time I was whipping around the sidewalks near the beach in my 'hood," reported one rider. "This deck found a home in the trunk of my car and became my second-deck at garage sessions." This came from a Consortium rider that first proclaimed a deck this small would have no place in his personal quiver. This board wins you over, though. The Pug's short wheelbase gives it a fast-radius turn and the genuine feel of a 1970's deck, but with a significant improvement: the wheels are large enough to tame cracks in the sidewalk and soft enough to handle carving. On a board like the Pug, your feet are not in much of a position to correct when things go wacky; boards this short and narrow are as likely to tumble as to slide. Good wheels and smooth-turning trucks that minimize such issues are key features of the littlest GFHurley. The compact size is, too: it easily fits behind the seat in cars and pickups, will set next to grocery bags without angering your Mom about bruised tomatoes and can be stashed in a school locker...if your school still has lockers. Small curb cuts become a place for a session with buddies, sloped driveways offer miniature slalom courses and, next thing you know, this deck is making you grin like Garrett does.

Setting up the Pug. Ours came set up with 1/2" hard risers, the highly-polished GFHurley 3" trucks and their "Abec-7" bearing kit stuffed into the 65mm, GFH wheels. This is a great kit at this price-point, but we

couldn't help but tinker with it, using our big box of widgets. We've found that we were able to ride the Pug using ¼" risers, and that the reduction in ride height adds a lot to the stability of this teeny little board. As we've mentioned previously, we've also found the stock bushings in the GFH trucks to be a little hard for our tastes. After trying several combinations, we've found that the regular Khirō blue top bushing, used with the GFH barrel bushing on the bottom, is exactly the ticket: it's turny enough for lighter riders that were tipping the board, and yet stable enough for our heavier or more aggressive riders to carve hills with the Pug!

**Big Fun, Little Package.** With surfboards, a "fish" has a distinct shape and is outside the mainstream, somewhat like longboards (wheeled or not). Great for kicking around in the mushy stuff, the fish surfboards are usually around a 5'7". Just under 24", and with an axle-to-axle wheelbase under a foot and half, the GFHurley Pug is definitely a niche board and it makes for killer sessions on even the smallest of concrete swells. Our riders grew to love the Pug.

"The old-school roots of longboarding were media and hype to me in the past, "reported one skater with the Ninja Bomb Squad, "however, that changed when I got my first taste of what our forerunners encountered with their first rides. I was just perched on the deck, toes and heels hanging over, cutting thin slices of stoke off the face of my concrete wave." Older riders reported that this little board certainly evokes the thrill and feel of super-old school skating, but that no Chicago truck or Roller Derby wheel ever handled like this. There's a justified fear you can get when pushing this board to its limits, but it's the fear that fuels stoke and boosts spirits to soar with the wind whipping in your face.

New, compressed stances are the order of the day on the Pug, and it rides like its own board, requiring its own style from the rider. It handles like a giant roller skate, and one of our large riders took it around his entire neighborhood without ever putting his second foot on the deck. "I couldn't," he reported, "there's no room!" Then, he took it out again. We spied him later, using just a toe on the tail and tic-tac-ing the board for some kids. Smaller riders treated the Pug differently. The NoVa bombers tested out the board, loving its silence, smoothness and ease in turning. They ripped carves in a slick, sealed garage in Reston, Virginia, and dropped some soulful compressed drop-knee pumps on the flats. Being smaller riders it was easy for them to control the deck and they were really stoked about the ride.

**Time For A New Pet?** The boys at GFHurley have infused this little retro board with the style of a fish surfboard, the personality of a 1970's plank board and the soul of their longboard ethos. It's got the finish and attention to detail we're finding in all the GFHurley completes and the performance to back it all up. This is no "longboard", but you might just find a place for The Pug in your school locker or that one spot behind the seats in your car that's not full of sand and wet surf trunks. We think GFHurley's Pug is one you'll definitely remember to take out every evening! Walk the dog, baby!

Check out some footage of the Nova Bomb Squad getting some garage action in on the pug. The video is a bit rough but worth a look [Pug Video](#)