

Great Flying Scot

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“There is nothing —
absolutely nothing —
half so much worth
doing as simply messing
about in boats.”

— Spoken by the Water Rat,
The Wind in the Willows
by Kenneth Grahame





IF THE WATER RAT

were to decide that a sailboat would be the best choice for “messaging about,” it’s a good bet that he would find The Flying Scot to be more than satisfactory. According to a recent article in *Northeast Boating Magazine*, these classic daysailers are “one of the most successful and beloved boats in the world of sailing.” The sturdy, yet speedy Flying Scot has earned a solid reputation as an all-around boat equally amenable to family cruises, solo sails and racing competitions. Thanks to its distinctive design features, The Flying Scot earned distinction in 1998 as the first centerboard dinghy inducted into the Sailing Hall of Fame.

“It’s an ideal beginner’s boat,” says Harry Carpenter, president of Flying Scot, Inc., located in Deer Park, just south of Deep Creek Lake. “It’s easy to learn how to sail, yet it’s a boat you can grow into. You can spend a lifetime learning to sail better.”

Sailors with a penchant for speed will appreciate the Flying Scot’s design. The boat’s low displacement and flat, tapered profile in the stern (rear) allow the boat to “plane” – a nautical term that conjures up images of flying as the boat swiftly skims the water’s surface.



Flying Scots on Deep Creek Lake, Maryland

The company web site, www.flyingscot.com, offers several videos that are both informative and entertaining. One reveals footage of a Scot planing along the water at a good clip, while another demonstrates a capsize and recovery operation.

“You can get the adrenaline going on the Flying Scot, but it’s much safer than, say, a motorcycle,” Harry says, noting that the top speed of a planing Scot runs from 10 to 15 mph. Its wide “beam” – i.e. width – and weighted centerboard give the boat its distinctive stability, yet it has enough sail area to plane with impressive speed, especially when the spinnaker is deployed along with the jib and mainsails. The Scot is designed with the skipper and crew’s comfort in mind, providing ample

seating and deep cockpit for up to eight and a high boom that easily clears all heads. Tacking is nimble, thanks to a responsive tiller. A shallow draft allows for gunkholing (cruising in shallow waters). And, with 600 pounds of positive flotation installed, it’s unsinkable. Should the boat capsize, it’s possible to right the boat without getting the sail wet.



Harry and Karen Carpenter, owners of Flying Scot, Inc. since 1991, pose in front of another new Scot ready for delivery.

It's a winning combination of factors especially attractive to families looking for exciting, yet safe activities they can do together. As Harry notes, "Sailing is one of the few sports that a family can do as a unit. There are jobs to do, and you're all in the same boat." A relatively simple setup, or "rig" in nautical terms, makes the boat easier to learn for those new to sailing. The web site also includes a "How to..." link with an illustrated guide to rigging the Flying Scot, and a glossary for those who want to immerse themselves in nautical culture by learning the lingo of sailing.

Flying Scot sailors who love the challenge and thrill of racing will find plenty of company and opportunities. The Flying Scot Sailing Association (FSSA) sponsors more than 100 organized fleets in the U.S. FSSA is known for fostering a camaraderie among Flying Scot owners that has become legendary. According to its Constitution, the object of FSSA is "to promote Flying Scot class racing under uniform rules, governed by this Association and to maintain rigidly the one-design features of Flying Scot sloops, as originally designed by Gordon K. Douglass."

Those strict, one-class rules ensure that all boats in a race sail as equals, so that the combined skills of the skipper and crew are the only factors that determine which boat wins. So, as the expression goes, all boats are "on an even keel."

It's no accident that The Flying Scot is now considered a leading one-design class in the U.S. Its designer, Gordon K. "Sandy" Douglass, had designed sailboats, notably the popular Thistle and Highlander racing dinghies, for more than 40 years when he built the Flying Scot prototype in 1956. His goal: to incorporate the speed and handling of his previous two dinghies into a more durable boat made

of a newfangled material called fiberglass that a family could enjoy sailing.

According to the FSSA web site, Sandy found that naming the new boat and creating a suitable emblem presented greater challenges than its physical design. He explains his choice of name as follows: "'Flying Scot' has been the name of the famous London, England to Edinburgh, Scotland express train. There was also a famous yacht of the (18)90s by that name. It seemed to be a good choice to go with the names Douglass, Thistle, and Highlander." The squiggle in the logo has prompted much speculation. Sandy's original logo design included an area in which the word "flying" was written. The word could not be effectively reproduced in the sails, and so the area was filled in with a solid color and thus transformed into the famous squiggle.

After a successful launch of the prototype and construction of the first Flying Scot, Sandy successfully launched the Gordon Douglass Boat Co., Inc. in 1957 to meet public demand for his new daysailer. That year, Eric Ammann joined the company, then located in Mentor, Ohio, and soon became indispensable in production and marketing the Scot. The following year, events transpired that precipitated the company's move to an empty car dealership in Oakland, Maryland. It proved to be more favorable for boats than cars; from this location, Sandy and Eric built the Flying Scot's reputation as a strong, national one-class design and the company's reputation for one-on-one customer service, including personal delivery of boats from coast to coast. Their efforts paid off when the Scot was selected as the official club boat of the Detroit River Yachting Association and the Gulf Yachting Association. Sales subsequently took off.

By 1971, Sandy was ready to retire. He sold the business to Eric who, with his wife Mary, continued the company tradition of quality and personal service. By 1975, enough boats had been sold – 2,500 – that a new market developed for replacement parts. By providing customers with 24-hour processing of orders and open 30-day accounts, Eric and Mary were rewarded with increasing demand for parts and almost no bad debts.

They soon realized that teaching people how to sail could boost sales by creating a new potential customer base. So they rented property on Deep Creek Lake at a place called Hickory Ridge and hired a college student named Harry Carpenter to manage a new sailing school and boat rental. It turned out to be a good decision. Hickory Ridge

Building a FLYING SCOT



Dave Kitzmiller, Roger Timmerman and Don Sharpless work to place the deck on the hull. Note the centerboard trunk installed in the hull.

Inset: Bolting the deck and hull together.





Background photo: Dave Kitzmiller attaches deck to hull on another new Flying Scot.



Workers quickly apply resin to the first layer of mat and roving on the deck — the liquid will be solid in less than 20 minutes.



The centerboard trunk is made in two halves, assembled and put into the boat as a whole unit. It houses the centerboard and provides fore & aft structural stiffness to the boat.

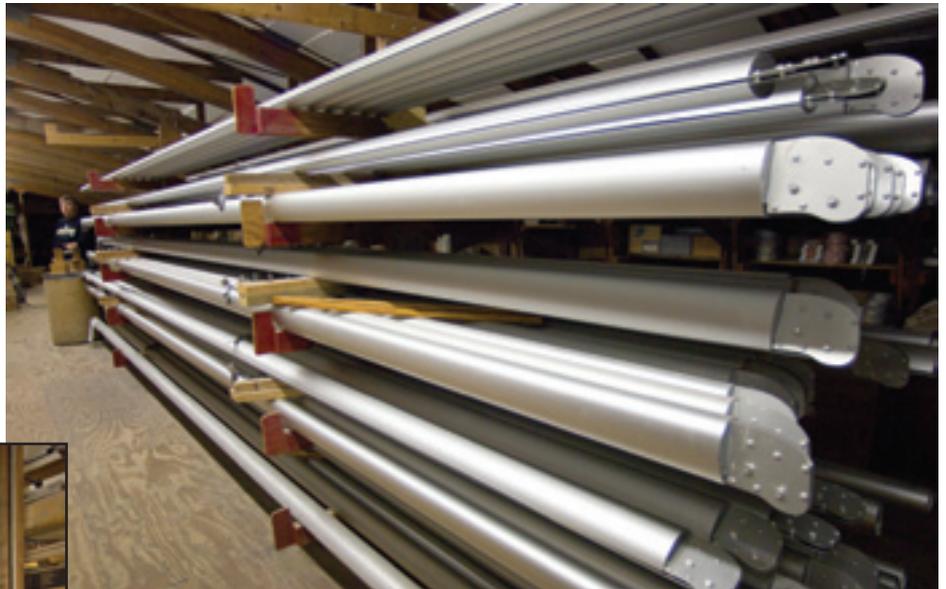


Harry Carpenter, owner inspects a centerboard before it goes into the boat.

Right: Completed masts ready for assembly.

Below: Jim Otto assembling booms in the rig shop.

Below Right: Production manager, Don Sharpless with another new Flying Scot ready for delivery.



provided mooring rentals to those who didn't own lake property, sailing instruction to new and prospective Flying Scot owners, and boat rentals to potential customers.

Harry, a native of Pittsburgh, had come to know and love Deep Creek Lake after his parents bought a summer home in 1967. In the early 70s, he began to race the Flying Scot as crew for his older brother Jack; the duo won the Labor Day Regatta in their first year of sailing.

"I wasn't much interested in sports until I discovered sailing," Harry says. "Then I was in my niche."

Harry was quite happy to get paid to do something he loved during the summers while attending Grove City College, and after graduating with a degree in accounting in 1978, he started working full time for Eric and Mary. He learned every facet of the Gordon Douglass Boat Company, from production operations in the shop to every sort of office job. He acquired Flying Scot Number 1 and began

to sail at major Flying Scot regattas. It was at one of these events that he met another sailing aficionado; an operating room nurse from Chambersburg, Pa. named Karen. The couple married in 1981.

By 1985, Eric and Mary began discussing retirement with Harry and Karen, who expressed interest in eventually owning the company. In 1991, after more than 30 years of building Flying Scots, Eric and Mary were ready to retire. After buying all assets of the Gordon Douglass Boat Company, the Carpenters decided to create a new company, Flying Scot, Inc.

Despite the new name, Harry and Karen remain committed to the company's original goals: to build the best boat possible and to provide prompt, personal service. They hired Eric and Mary as part-time consultants to help maintain the business philosophy and operations that had proved successful during the previous 34 years. In their free time, they continue to race Number 1 on a regular basis.

In 1994, Dee Burns joined the company. A native of Deer Park, Dee brought experience with the federal government, banking and insurance to the business. At first she knew nothing about sailing. Since then, she has been involved in almost every aspect of the Flying Scot, including sailing after receiving instruction from Eric and Harry. Customers who call to inquire about sales or service will likely speak with Dee.

Not much has changed in the production process since the Sandy Douglass era. Each boat is made individually. While construction materials such as resins and fiberglass materials are updated as needed to remain state of the art, the Flying Scot design remains unchanged. Molds are a key element to this consistency, and balsa has remained the core material since the beginning. Fiberglass and resins are applied by hand for optimal results. Anodized aluminum is used for the mast and spars, and the rigging and fittings are made of stainless steel. The center-board sits in a unique trunk designed to avoid leakage. All boats are sold with galvanized steel or aluminum trailers that include a tie-down rig. Choices include a family package for basic daysailing, a basic racing package and a radical racing package with extra “bells and whistles.”

For those who want to try before they buy, Harry recommends a private sailing lesson at the Deep Creek Sailing School, based at the Deep Creek Yacht Club in the area known as Turkey Neck. During the summer, week-long classes are available during designated times for adult Flying Scot sailors committed to refining their nautical skills.



The cost of each boat includes a payment to the FSSA for certification of the hull and sails. FSSA's efforts to promote the Flying Scot help maintain the boats' popularity and value. Membership in the FSSA includes a subscription to its cleverly named Scots N' Water publication and eligibility to participate in numerous sailing events, including the popular National Wife/Husband Competition.

An oft-noted benefit of FSSA membership is the renowned camaraderie among Flying Scot owners. As Harry says, “If you sail with a Flying Scot fleet, you will make lifelong friends, guaranteed.”

To date, almost 6,000 Flying Scots have been sold. With more aging boats in the water, demand has increased for parts, repairs and refurbishing services. An active market for used boats helps to maintain prices and value. And the sense of family among Flying Scot owners is often mentioned by prospective customers.

The word “stability” comes to mind when describing both the company and the boat itself. Flying Scot, Inc. remains solid as a true family business rooted in the Deep Creek Lake area. Harry and Karen have passed on their passion for sailing to their children, Carrie and Jimmy. And the one-design Flying Scot combines a capacity for speed without sacrificing stability and safety, all in a simple, elegant package. Given these features, it's not hard to see why the Flying Scot has earned a solid reputation for quality and value in the world of sailing.

For more information, contact Flying Scot Inc. at 800-864-7208 or visit the website at: www.flyingscot.com.

PFD Panda Award

is presented to children for voluntarily wearing the appropriate life vest (PFD – personal flotation device) while boating. The certificate is for a **FREE ICE CREAM CONE** at any one of the following McDonald's stores: Deep Creek Lake, Oakland, Keyser's Ridge, Cresaptown and Westernport McDonald's.

The PFD Panda Award is a Natural Resources Police (NRP) program.

Maddi O'Brien receives her Panda Award for wearing her personal flotation device.

