



# Resurrecting Flying Scot Fleet 45

Jim Leggette, FS 1518; Fleet Captain, Fleet 45

**D**uring the early days of the Flying Scot class, Fleet 45 was formed by members of the Jackson Yacht Club (JYC) in the 1960s. Its members maintained an active fleet with weekly club races and were proud to host visitors to Jackson, Mississippi, for open regattas. Unfortunately, interest in the Scot waned. Eventually the Flying Scot Sailing Association (FSSA) was required to revoke Fleet 45's charter.

Last Fall, several members of the club were sitting at the club bar lamenting the current state of racing at the club. JYC races had evolved to mostly keelboats sailing under the PHRF handicap system. The complaints ranged from the search for a "fair" handicap system to the ever-growing challenge of fielding a crew of four or five to man the boats, week after week. In addition, the larger boats are expensive to own and operate.

After participating in the Lipton Cup (the premier event of the Gulf Yachting Association, sailed in club-owned Scots), we realized we had what it took to restart the club's Scot program, i.e., three club boats. Most importantly, we had sailors eager to resurrect one-design sailing using the Flying Scot.

One of the club boats, FS 1596, was sitting in the parking lot filled with leaves and dying a long, slow death. A group of members surveyed this boat and determined that, with some effort and a few hundred dollars, the old vessel could be

saved from the chain saw and sail again. After getting her back into the water, the group christened FS 1596 Phoenix.

With three club boats plus a private boat available, the next step was to recruit sailors. Club members were invited to participate in a series of Saturday clinics. These clinics kicked off with coffee and doughnuts, followed by a chalk talk and then a couple of hours on the water sailing short courses or figuring out how to fly the spinnaker. One of the clinics featured perennial Scot champion, North Sails' Allan Terhune, Jr. These sessions had anywhere from ten to twenty sailors attending. The participants generally were beginners, and a good number were women.

Later in the summer, Hal Pleasants noticed—in an empty parking lot next to a U-Haul place—an old yellow Scot, #516, which had been salvaged from a foreclosed home. Hal and Robert Wise were able to purchase it for a rock-bottom price. However, it needed a lot of work, such as repairing a hole below the waterline. Jim Leggette, Hal, and Robert repaired the boat, with the help of our local boat repair guy, Ken Allen. Advice and many parts from Flying Scot Inc. were also crucial to getting this boat sailing again. Flying Scot Inc. helped us to discover the name of the original owner of FS 516, who turned out to have been a JYC member who ordered the boat from the factory in Maryland in March 1964. The original owner's son sent

us pictures of the initial launch at JYC and filled us in on the boat's history at the club. Flying Scot 516 is now sailing every weekend in JYC races and has been rechristened Tweety Bird (for its canary-yellow gel coat).

With a total of five Scots, the next step was to apply to the Flying Scot Sailing Association to be recognized as a fleet. The FSSA approved the application and reinstated Fleet 45 this Fall.

In the past, one of JYC's premier events was the Hospitality Regatta, which, in its heyday, hosted several hundred one-design boats from nearby states and featured a strong Scot class. Over the years, this showcase event has become mostly a locals-only regatta. This Fall, all five of Fleet 45's Scots hit the line, plus three out-of-town boats. One out-of-town team sailed in their first regatta ever. The winner was longtime Scot sailor Nancy Claypool from New Orleans, with Gulf District Governor Larry Taggart crewing.

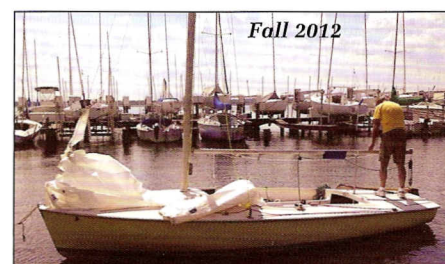
Currently, there is a lot of interest among club members in joining this group. As a result, we expect our fleet to become stronger and bring the joys of sailing the Scot to all ages. JYC had the advantage of owning club boats, which reduced the cost and risk of trying out the Flying Scot. The key factor in getting a fleet going is to gather a handful of interested people, get started, and make sure people enjoy themselves. Otherwise this energy becomes just more grumbling. As the Nike tag line goes—Just Do It. 🚢



Spring 1964



Spring 2011



Fall 2012