



FLYING fifteen

By the Editor of "Seacraft" who sailed with the Designer, Uffa Fox, when the prototype was on trials in England.

"BUT, look at the fin," I interjected; "where do you get lateral resistance in a cut-away shape like that—surely she must make a lot of leeway?"

"We'll soon find out," said Uffa casually.

My Dainty Duck didn't take long to rig, after she had been lowered by a hand-operated crane from the pier at Torquay to the water below.

Soon we were weaving our way out of the harbour, and, sailing for'ard, I immediately sensed the boat's easy motion.

A strong gust just abaft the beam immediately shot her into an effortless plane and I thrilled to it, swinging out over the surging bow wave. I could see that Uffa was getting a kick out of it too. He nicknamed me "Australia."

I was anxious to see if she made any appreciable leeway, but as far as I could estimate, she made not a degree more than any racing boat. This was borne out later when we paced the Olympic "*Swallows*," "*Dragons*" and "*Stars*" on the wind, leaving them completely when the wind came on or abaft the beam.

Although the lateral area of the keel is considerably less than that of a centreboard, it seems to be no less effective.

The queer designed cast-iron fin and bulb keel weighs 380 lbs., and the entire displacement of the craft is less than 1,000 lbs. Most of the ballast is concentrated over the maximum draft of 2ft. 6in.

"Now let's see what she can do in rough water, 'Australia,'" he said, as we headed out of Torquay into the Channel and right into the path of a wicked-looking black rain squall. Uffa appeared a little concerned as it hit us with "its boots on," but quickly summing up the situation, he said decisively, "we won't bother to reef, 'Australia,' just swing her in the squalls and give her a bit o' sheet when she needs it."

The rain fell in bucketfuls and *My Dainty Duck* raced through the murk like "a bat out of hell." The

seas were now making up quite a bit, and more than one green wave smacked me full in the chest as I swung right out, but only spray came aboard. I noticed that in the event of a complete knock-down the wide side decks kept the water out and the keel gave her a quick recovery.

A vee-shaped breakwater across the foredeck keeps out everything but spray.

That morning we sailed in all kinds of airs and I was able to gain a first-hand observation of the "*Fifteen's*" capabilities.

I was duly impressed.

The *Flying Fifteens* have given an excellent performance when racing in strong winds with a crew of three. In light weather the *Fifteen* has all the life and feeling of an open boat rather than a yacht, and her small area of wetted surface makes her very speedy and easily driven. Although the considerable righting moment of the keel gives her good stability, it is necessary to sit her up in a hard breeze; pushing her to windward involves nothing like the hard work of keeping an open boat afloat and sailing with "live ballast."

The boat incorporates many new features of special interest to Australian and New Zealand yachtsmen.

The mast sits on the fore end of the fin keel, which forms the girder to take the thrust of the mast. There is a jack in the heel of the mast to tighten up the shrouds and so rigging screws are eliminated.

The sections and waterline are practically identical to those of the latest International fourteen footers, also designed by Uffa Fox, but a trifle larger all round. The sail plan is only slightly larger than that of the International fourteen. The total area of mainsail and largest jib being only 151 square feet.

The cockpit floor is square and unobstructed by centreboard thwart, giving a surprising amount of room to move about in and could provide tolerable

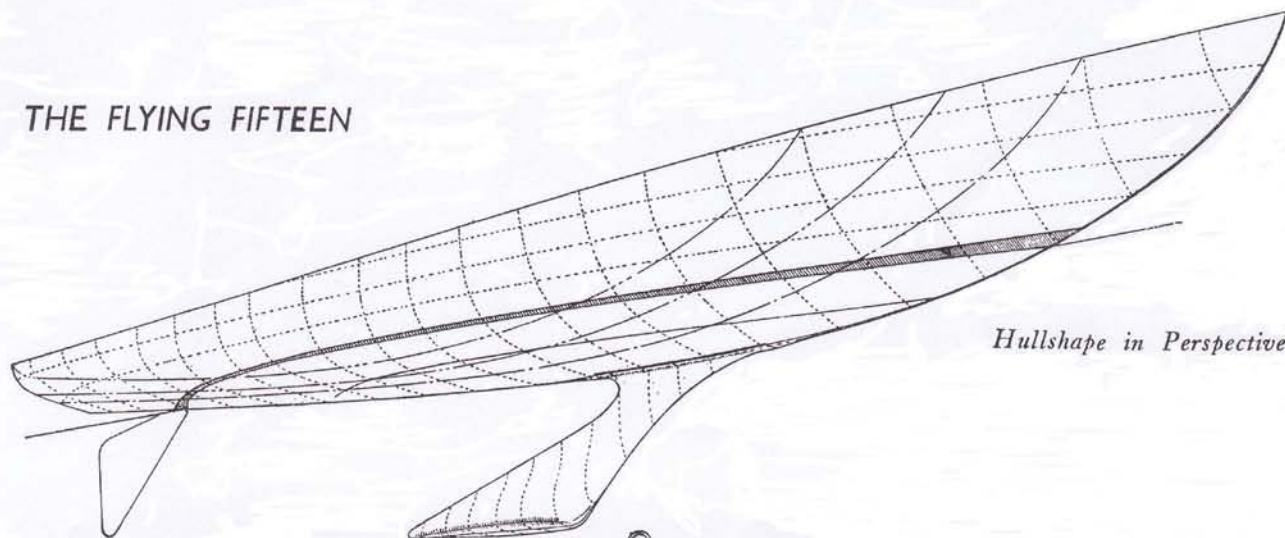


Bermudan Sail Plan

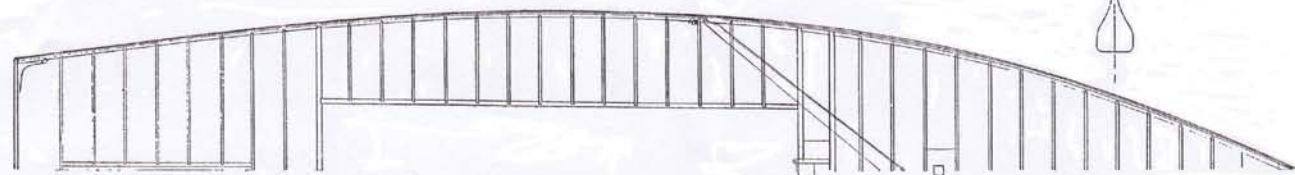
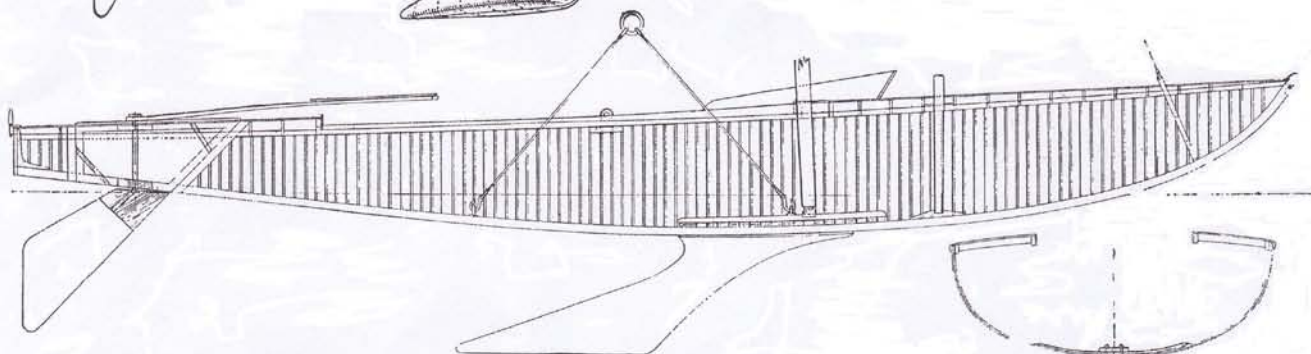


Gunter Sail Plan

THE FLYING FIFTEEN



Hullshape in Perspective



sleeping accommodation with an awning thrown over the boom.

The fixed-type gunter rig version is of very simple construction, requiring only one halliard, a claw ring is permanently pivoted on top of the mast and the yard slides through it, being hoisted by the halliard to its heel. The rudder is hung aft in a specially designed watertight cavity.

Because of her lightness, when the fin is unbolted the *Flying Fifteen* can be trailed behind a medium powered car, just about as easily as a dinghy, the bulb keel can be stowed in the luggage boot of a car.

Drawers on either side of the mast, slide under the foredeck, providing neat stowage for jib and nylon spinnaker.

Performance of the *Fifteen* was proved even more remarkable in the latter part of the season when *My Dainty Duck*, sailed by Uffa Fox, had to give away time allowances of five minutes in the hour to *Swallows* and *Dragons*, which was all the more amazing, as both classes have five and six feet more waterline.

The *Flying Fifteen* was developed from the *Pensive Temptress*, which proved too unorthodox for the Y.R.A. when they were looking for a suitable 200 sq. ft. One Design National keel boat and accepted the *Swallow*. *Pensive Temptress* was rejected because she had a cast-iron keel instead of the specified wood and lead. The *Flying Fifteen* is 20ft. overall, 15ft. on the water and has a 5ft. beam. The boat was primarily designed for racing, to be handled by a crew of two. The estimated building cost is not much greater than that of a 16ft. sailing skiff.

Top right: Flying Fifteen "My Dainty Duck" on trials.

Right: Uffa built this detachable framework on his car for transport to regattas.

Below: The hull of the "Flying Fifteen" timbered and ready for diagonal and fore-and-aft planking. The two thicknesses of planking total $\frac{1}{4}$ " and give adequate strength. Carvel construction can be used.

