

Flying Scot Pathway to Racing

The prerequisite to race and train with Fleet 135 on Wednesdays at the Clinton Lake Marina is to be able to [single hand a Compaq 16](#) and land it at the dock comfortably in moderate wind conditions without any outside assistance. Associate Members who do not meet this prerequisite can take advantage of complimentary instruction and coaching every Saturday to help you get there.

Once you've developed your sea legs, the next step is to schedule an introduction to the jib and spinnaker with one of our racing coaches. You'll then be invited to join the fun on Wednesdays. From there, all you have to do is RSVP and show up and our Wednesday racing coordinator will assign you to a sailboat. Continued instruction and coaching is complimentary for Associate Members of the Commodore Decatur Yacht Club (only \$100/year).

There is no additional cost to participate in our racing program and boat ownership is not required.

Have Fun and Get Better

The Midwest District of the Flying Scot Sailing Association is very active with host fleets offering regattas every month during the sailing season. [Click here](#) to view the FSSA regatta calendar. Commodore Decatur Yacht Club and its auxiliary Clinton Marina Sailing Club offer a unique pathway to racing for non boat owners for only \$100/year that includes complimentary education and coaching at both lakes. Our coordinators, instructors, and coaches will help beginner and intermediate sailors every step of the way. We can take you wherever you want and get you there as fast as you want to get there, but we don't want to push new sailors too hard. You can learn and develop at your own pace and just try to have fun and get better every time you go sailing. Before we get too far ahead of ourselves, we want new racers to develop their sea legs and learn some basics before we throw you in a racing boat. It may look like a lot, but once you get the hang of sailing the compaq, it only takes a session or two to get oriented with the jib and spinnaker.

Here are the detailed steps to take if you are interested in sailboat racing on a Flying Scot.

Step 1: Develop Your Sea Legs

1. [Register for Sea Leg Saturdays](#) and complete the [Learn to Sail Part 1](#) online course. Bob Reible will follow up and confirm a day and time slot that works best for you.
2. Attend Sea Leg Saturday at Commodore Decatur Yacht Club and enjoy a free, no-strings-attached introductory sailboat ride on a Flying Scot with an instructor.
3. Join Commodore Decatur Yacht Club as an Associate Member (only \$100/yr) and continue to attend Sea Leg Saturdays. Work with Bob Reible and team and become proficient on the Compaq 16 or other club boats and get to the point where you can rig

and single-hand the sailboat from the slip, sail in moderate wind conditions, and land safely on the dock without outside assistance.

4. Request an assessment sail with Eric Bussell.
5. During the sail, demonstrate that you are proficient in these most basic skills; (1) wind awareness (2) knowing the points of sail and adjusting the sail to the correct point of sail based on the wind direction (3) understanding the importance and avoiding the no-go zone when pushing off the dock (4) able to step off the dock and onto the boat when pushing off and catching the boat during landings (5) understand and demonstrate how to get out of irons by backwinding the jib.

Step 2: Conquer the Jib

1. Continue to attend Sea Legs Saturdays and/or schedule private sessions with Flying Scot racing coaches aboard a Flying Scot.
2. Complete Conquer the Jib online course at sailboatinstructor.com. (Coming Soon)
3. Demonstrate that you can rig the jib correctly and flake the jib, and hoist the jib to the correct halyard tension.
4. Demonstrate you understand and can use your body weight to keep the boat at 7 degrees of heel at all times and during maneuvers.
5. Demonstrate that you can tack the jib with the appropriate amount of backwind and minimal luffing and shift gears as you come out of the tack.
6. Demonstrate you can trim your jib correctly throughout the starting process and shift gears as we accelerate.
7. Demonstrate you can correctly trim your jib when rounding the windward mark and sailing to the offset mark.
8. Demonstrate you can correctly trim your jib when rounding the leeward mark or gate.
9. Demonstrate can bring the jib through while helping to jibe the boom through the boat during a jibe.
10. Demonstrate that you can backwind the jib on the dock when departing to prevent the boat from going into irons.
11. Demonstrate that you can shift gears (power, regular, point) after a tack.

Step 3: Master Spinnaker Basics

1. Continue to attend Sea Legs Saturdays and/or schedule private sessions with a Flying Scot racing coach aboard a Flying Scot.
2. Hoist the spinnaker - YouTube Video - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dyKs2ehZM28>
3. Jibe the spinnaker (as crew)
4. Douse the spinnaker (as crew)- YouTube Video -
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UEdSAu0CNPw>

Step 4: Race on Wednesdays

1. Receive an invite to the Fleet 135 Group.Me group

2. Respond to Wednesday Night Racing events on Group.Me and let us know if you are coming, or not
3. Report to Dan Leach at the Clinton Marina sailboat dock between 5:30 and 5:45pm so we can start racing promptly at 6:00pm.
4. We generally have the best skipper on the boat skipper the first race and then switch after each race. We also incorporate some short boat handling drills in addition to the racing.

Optional: Adult Sail Camp

Coming Soon

Step 5: Race at Regattas

Racers are encouraged to participate in the Commodore Cup Regatta on Lake Decatur, the Glow in the Dark Regatta on Clinton Lake, and other Midwest District regattas and even FSSA championship races. Skippers are always looking for good crew and crew are always looking for good skippers. Connections and relationships are made and developed Wednesday nights and at regatta events. CDYC members are welcome to travel to regattas with club-owned Flying Scots with the Fleet Captain's permission. Up-and-coming racers who want to experience regatta fun and support the team can volunteer to be on the race committee. This is a fun way to experience a regatta, learn, and forge relationships with other racers.

First, Learn How to Sail

In our experience building fleets and developing sailboat racers, we have learned that it is more fun and enjoyable for everyone if we first help new sailors build a good sailing foundation and not throw brand-new sailors onto a race boat. We've also noticed that having our best racers coach up-and-coming racers every week greatly improves the quality of sailing, which makes everyone better. Every Wednesday we assign our coaches to different sailors for maximum learning and fun. We let our coaches race and compete in the first race of the night and then we let the crew skipper and our coaches coach the next race. It's a fun format for all! When you race with Fleet 135, you'll have an entire fleet willing to help and mentor you every step of the way, whether it's traveling to your first regatta or helping you buy a boat, should you decide to buy one of your own.

If you have any questions, please contact Eric Bussell at fleet135racing@gmail.com.