

# **LOFT LINES**

*\*\*Now Reaching Over 2000 Sailors\*\**

A NEWSLETTER FROM HAARSTICK SAILMAKERS

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## **AMERICA 'S CUP**

For those that don't know, New Zealand beat the Italians in the Louis Vuitton Cup with a 5-0 sweep. It got pretty repetitive and boring to watch as team NZL consistently stayed in front. So there will be a re-match for the America 's Cup. The Swiss will be defending and races start in 2 weeks, June 23<sup>rd</sup>.

America 's Cup Home – <http://www.americacup.com/en>

TV – “Versus” Home Page - <http://www.versus.com/>

Find your channel here: <http://www.versus.com/findversus/>

TV Schedule- [http://www.versus.com/nw/article/view/32595/?tf=ACup\\_ArticleView.tpl](http://www.versus.com/nw/article/view/32595/?tf=ACup_ArticleView.tpl)

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## ARE HAARSTICK SAILS YOUR BEST VALUE?

-By Steve Haarstick

Over the years, and many recent customer comments, I have often been asked to justify the reasons why our sails are more expensive than sails made overseas. I have always responded that the real value of any sail is not solely based on price. I think everyone would agree that it is not cheaper to buy a sail at half price that lasts less than half of the typical service life of a high quality sail. Will a high quality sail last twice as long? What creates a more durable sail?

The most important ingredient of a quality, durable sail begins with the cloth. Many people assume that most cloth commercially made is pretty much the same from one manufacturer to another. However, this could not be further from reality. The variation in stretch as cloth ages with use can not only vary dramatically from one type of cloth to another, but also from batch of the same cloth type from the same manufacturer. This variation is only discovered if these batches of cloth are subjected to much more abuse than the standard industry "flutter" tests. Our unique Impact Flutter testing makes the standard testing look like a "slap on the wrist". When our Impact Flutter testing is over, the cloth has been thoroughly beaten to a "pulp". When we retest these cloth strips, a "bad" batch of cloth can show an increase in stretch of over 600% versus the original stretch at the same load. How much change of shape do you think will occur with a fabric that loses so much of its original strength with use? It is not a pretty sight.

Is the time and expense it takes to Impact Flutter testing every batch of upwind cloth before purchase worth this extra effort? After 35 years of testing, I am convinced that our testing is the only way to eliminate bad cloth from your sail. A high quality, durable sail can not be made from inferior cloth.

Testing every batch of upwind cloth this way is not cheap. It takes time, and time is money. It also takes the co-operation of our cloth suppliers to cut and send us a sample of the cloth and hold this batch for us until we test and approve the cloth for shipment. Or, if not approved, cut another sample and send it for approval. This can go on until we find an acceptable batch of cloth that meets our durability and strength requirements. As far as I know, no one else requires this for virtually every purchase of their upwind cloth. This added service on their part would be assumed to be reflected in the price we pay for the cloth.

As the cloth is a major component of the costs in a sail. There are many opportunities available if reducing the cost of sail cloth is a priority:

For example, it is easy to buy all kinds of sailcloth for 30% to 50% of the cloth manufactures' catalogue list price! Lists of discontinued fabrics, "cosmetic" seconds, short roll leftovers, and the worst of all, "End Roll 2nd's" are offered for big, BIG discounts. This is not limited to just "high tech" fabrics like Pentex, Kevlar, or Carbon, but is available throughout their sailcloth lines.

If you don't test any cloth, but merely rely on the manufactures' tests, these offerings look pretty attractive, because you just don't know (or care) how much difference there is between a really good batch of cloth and a really dreadful batch! However, we really do know the difference, and it's just not worth building your new sail out of inferior cloth, no matter how much the savings! When you've spent as much time, energy, and not least of all, man-hours testing as we do, when you've committed to use only the type of fabrics that work properly in your sails, and you've seen what these "odd-lots" are really like, you are just not tempted to build your customers' sails with this "stuff". Will the other guy be able to beat your price if all else is equal? Yes, no doubt about it!!

There are many other components to a quality sail:

If you are willing to follow, and not innovate, you wouldn't need to develop your own technology for designing and cutting sails. It is always much cheaper to buy "off the shelf". But if you are driven to be the best, you often can't wait for this to happen.

When we first got our design program on the Cornell Main frame in the late sixties, it meant that we could grind ALL the calculations it takes to define the curves in the seams, and edges for EVERY sail we made, not just the "important" sails. I don't have any way to know if we were the first to do this, but I'm sure there were very few, if any other sailmakers running their design programs for every sail they made. To this day, I don't think that other programs calculate the stretch corrections to the cut of their sails based on their cloth strip tests. Entering the strip test data is necessary for every sail we design. The program will not run without it. Did this program cost more than buying something that became available 20 years later? You bet, and it's not cheap to keep improving it over the past 39 years.

When we were the first sailmaker in the world to develop the technology to computer cut sails (yes, that is correct), it was many years before the international lofts could follow. In the meantime, we could cut our custom spinnakers to such a high degree of accuracy, it supercharged our spinnaker development process in the early seventies.

When we brought this machine to Rochester in 1985, we began an intensive project to develop our own CAD program to cut every sail we made. If we were satisfied with cut-panels that have to be trimmed off and faired by hand, or seam curves that are "cleansed" as one sailmaker proudly stated several years ago, we probably shouldn't have spent so much money on a CAD-CAM system that was so accurate that when combined with the unmatched precision of our Gerber cutter, it produces panels that are perfect! There is no "cleansing" of seam curves, or fairing luff and foot curves after assembly in our sails! Not even our spinnakers!! This past year, we installed a newer version of our original Gerber cutter. This was not a "plug in" operation, but took months of hard work and expertise of our most experienced sailmakers: Tony Peelle, and Paul Seymour. Thanks to their efforts our "newer" Gerber has been on line since last fall!

Last, but certainly not least is our commitment to Customer Service. Our Service personnel made a super effort to help virtually everyone who asked, and many that didn't. What is even more unique

about our program is how our service representatives are compensated for the service they provide. To insure that our primary interest is in helping our customers AFTER the sale, all our service work is paid for directly, not indirectly by a commission on the sale. If we wanted to save, big bucks, in the quest to have the lowest price, we could easily drop this program and pay solely on commission. Of course, the emphasis would then be on merely selling you the sail, not on making sure you have the help you deserve after the sale. In fact, this would make us just like the rest of the industry.

When I began sailmaking so many years ago, I really had only one goal, and that was to make every sail our best effort, the best sail possible at that time. It doesn't matter to me if the sail is small or large, race or cruise. It became apparent long ago that striving to be the best sailmaker in the business may not necessarily lead you to become the biggest, or the richest, but the quest has been most rewarding.

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**For Sale : 1957 Chris -Craft 23' Continental # CL-23-120.**

This boat is in excellent condition. I bought it in the spring of 1999, and soon afterwards discovered that it needed: a new bottom. That fall I took it to a boat builder in Wolcott and over the winter had the entire bottom replaced with 100% new wood. Used new African Mahogany to replace all the old bottom frames, keel plank, and transom frames, and all the bottom planking. The new chines were made from oak. The bottom 2-ply planking was also 100% replaced to the chines, as well as the transom planking, and one set of topside planks above the waterline. The original topsides planks were in excellent shape, and were not replaced. All planking and frames were bonded together with 5200 and bronze screws. The bottom was sealed with two coats of epoxy barrier coat and painted red.

I made and installed new deck frames, a new Mahogany dashboard and Mahogany cockpit edging, plus some new wood on deck. I also rebuilt the engine box. I cut the old bottom boards into 2" strips and glued them to the existing plywood floorboards, leaving a 1/8" gap which I filled with white 4200. (Looks like decking - see photo). Over 6 kits (12 gallons) of Smith's Epoxy sealer were used to seal all surfaces of the wood, throughout the boat.

I built new seat frames and made new dark red pleated upholstery. Finally, I varnished all wood surfaces with 12+ coats of varnish

This boat has always been stored inside a heated garage during the winters, and with a waterline cover, on a lift (out of the water) in the summers. The bottom is completely waterproof, with NO gaps between planks. Does NOT need to be "soaked up" at launch time. Boat also comes with a folding top with side curtains, and cockpit cover.

The original "M" motor was professionally cleaned and rewired and converted to 12 volt, with dual batteries and battery switch, and a rebuilt generator. I change the oil at the beginning and end of each season. The motor starts right up and runs great! No problems in 5 years!

The hardware is original, including an Iva-light (rotating spotlight). The fuel gauge doesn't work, I use a stick. Comes with excellent dual axle trailer.

This is a big 23 foot open cockpit runabout that can go out on Lake Ontario . Great for cruising, fishing, and water skiing (just not at competition speeds). Asking \$38,500.

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**Pictures at:** <http://www.haarsticksailmakers.com/haarstick/Stevepics.html>

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### **Haarstick Powered Ensign's**

After winning the national's the past two years in a row, Haarstick sails have proved themselves in the Ensign Class. This winning has sparked the interest of many Ensign Sailors who have never heard of the "little-big" loft in Western NY . We are very pleased to report that over this past winter we built more Ensign sails than we have over the last 10 years combined.

We have many happy customers this spring and the results are starting to pour in from the fleet level. To name a few.

#### **Fleet 23 Canandaigua NY**

Neal Burtner 5 first out of 8 races (way to go Dad)

#### **Fleet 7 Long Island Sound NY**

Bob Carballal 4 firsts out of 5 races

With sons Matthew and Dean

"First time with the sails and the boat is going great"

#### **Fleet 29 Cleveland OH**

Nick Lubar 2 Firsts out of 4 races

Wes Kroeze 1 first

Good luck to all our Ensign Customers. Please call me with any questions or comments. We always like good news and we need to hear about any bad news.

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