

# Flicka Friends

Summer 2002



Vol. 7, No. 2



s/y PUNKER DOODLE



## Contents

Contents ..... 2

Isthmus Cove—Catalina..... 2

Blake Island State Park ..... 3

About Flicka Friends ..... 3

Flicka Trailers and ..... 4  
the Decision to Buy One  
Lee Crockett

Lacing A Gaff Main ..... 6  
Tom Davison

Packing A Flicka ..... 8  
Charlie Dewell

PUNKER DOODLE's..... 10  
Maiden Road Trip  
Lee Crockett

PUNKER DOODLE Photos ..... 12  
Lee Crockett

## Isthmus Cove—Catalina



Flickas at the Rendezvous at Isthmus Cove on Santa Catalina Island.  
Photos: Hal DeVaney

## Next Issue...

- BUC Prices and the Flicka
- s/v TIFFANY ANN

## Cover Photo

s/v PUNKER DOODLE in the slings ready for launching.  
*Photo: Lee Crockett*

If you have a high quality photo of your Flicka and would like to see it on the cover, please let me know.





# Blake Island State Park



Four Flickas and an Orion rafted together at Blake Island State Park. A Crea 36 is on the opposite side of the dock. Seattle, Washington in the background.

*Photo: Gary Kries*



Four Flickas docked at Blake Island State Park.

*Photo: Gary Kries*

# About Flicka Friends

**Flicka Friends** is a newsletter written for the people who own, crew aboard or are interested in the Flicka, a 20 foot sailing vessel designed by Bruce P. Bingham.

Based on the Newport boats of Block Island Sound, this little ship has been built from various materials from the 1970's until 2002. This includes Flickas constructed from plans obtained directly from Bruce's California office. About 400 sets of plans were sold. According to Bruce Bingham, many Flickas can be found in New Zealand Australia and Sweden.

A number of hulls were built by Nor'star and some were completed by Westerly Marine. The manufacturer of the bulk of the class is Pacific Seacraft Corporation who built 434 hulls in California.

**Flicka Friends** is published on a quarterly basis, with issues being mailed in March, June, September and December. Articles, letters, comments and photos relating to the Flicka are welcomed and encouraged.

© Copyright 2002  
Dennis Pratt/Flicka Friends

Dennis Pratt - Publisher  
685 Spring Street, #191  
Friday Harbor, WA 98250  
(360) 370-5133  
scamper@rockisland.com

Tom Davison - Editor  
P.O. Box 462  
Empire, MI 49682-0462  
(231) 334-7458  
flickafriends@coslink.net

<http://www.coslink.net/personal/flickafriends/mainpage/index.html>





# Flicka Trailers and the Decision to Buy Used

*By Lee Crockett*

There are many reasons why people buy Flickas. They are seaworthy, they are small yet offer a remarkable amount of interior space, and they are certainly cute. My decision to purchase a Flicka was driven by the complexity of using my other boat, a Cheoy Lee Offshore 44 that is berthed in Annapolis, Maryland. While my wife and I had talked about cruising Maine this summer, the reality was that by the time we took the time (three plus weeks) and money to get the boat there, we would have little of either left to actually enjoy what Maine has to offer.

That reality led me to search for a trailerable boat that could be more easily moved from cruising area to cruising area. After giving consideration to a number of manufacturers and models I decided on a Flicka. One of the primary considerations was the ability to trailer the boat.

An important part of the decision, however, was an analysis of how I thought I would use the boat. At the time I started my Flicka search I also owned a Capri 22. The Capri was easy to trailer, easy to rig, easy to launch, and fun to sail. The Capri, however, offered little in the way of cruising amenities or accommodations. The Capri was a great weekend boat because of its ease of trailering and launching. I would not, however, feel particularly comfortable or secure in a Capri 22 if 100 miles offshore in the Pacific.

In considering a Flicka I realized that a Flicka is **not** a boat that lends itself to launching and retrieving for a weekend. Stepping the mast, rigging, bending on the sails, and getting the boat from the trailer to the water are fairly involved and time consuming processes. My intent was to put the boat in the water at a location (like



**PUNKER DOODLE** on the way to a new home.

Seattle or Maine) and leave it there all season. Then, at seasons end, I would move the boat to another cruising destination or into storage.

During the process of purchasing Flicka hull # 311, now named **Punker Doodle**, I began a search for a trailer. Like with everything, persistence and thoroughness pays off.

I started the search on the Internet via the various search engines, classifieds, and electronic yellow pages. This search netted four companies who would talk about a trailer for a Flicka:

Trail Rite Trailers, Santa Ana, CA  
Triad Trailers, New Millford, CT  
Quality Trailers, Bellingham, WA  
KS Inc., Sarasota, FL

These manufacturers offered a number of configurations, options, and materials with prices ranging from around \$3,000 to \$7,000. The trailer search process allowed me to further define how I would use the boat and trailer. For example, if you plan on putting the trailer in the water by ramp launching, you will be buying surge

brakes, not electric brakes. If you plan on putting the trailer in salt water you probably need to have a galvanized trailer instead of painted steel. One of the big decisions is whether to go with bunks or pads. That decision significantly affects the ease of using a Travel Lift at a boatyard. Additional pads, stainless steel brakes, etc, all add to the final cost.

One of the biggest problems from my perspective was that the boat was in Santa Cruz, California and I was in St. Louis, Missouri. Two of the manufacturers told me that I didn't want to even look at the delivery cost, i.e. that having it delivered to either St. Louis or Santa Cruz would be prohibitive. I looked at a number of variations of driving to the manufacturer but ultimately became very frustrated.

So I went back to the yellow pages. I called every boat dealer and "trailer" dealer in Northern California. I found two dealers within 100 miles of Santa Cruz that would order a Trail Rite trailer for me. The cost was \$5,200 - \$5,400 delivered to their locations. A





**Lee Crockett and his Flicka — s/y PUNKER DOODLE .**

little more than I had anticipated spending but workable.

In the process I talked with a marine salvage company. The guy had a friend who had an old dual axle trailer he was trying to get rid of. He didn't have "Bill's" number but he was going to see him soon and would pass along my telephone number. Bill called a couple of days later to tell me about the trailer. It was in Sacramento and I bought it sight unseen for \$800. That, of course was just the beginning.

The first week of May I flew to Santa Cruz to do the sea trial. The purchase of **Punker Doodle** went off without a hitch. I drove over to Sacramento to actually see the trailer I had bought. It was old, rusty, and tired looking; just as Bill had described it to me. It had four bunk boards running fore and aft and three large rollers for the keel. He told me on the phone that it would probably need new tires, bearings, and breaks so its appearance was no surprise.

I visited a trailer shop and described what I thought needed to be done and the owner told me to figure around \$800 in repairs. I arranged to have Bill deliver the trailer to the shop and have the work done since I was headed back to St. Louis.

When the repair shop's service manager called me to give me the estimate (now that they could actually look at it) I was sitting down, which was a good thing.

The estimate was \$1,550 and by the time I was done it totaled \$1,650. This included new tires, brake drums, backing plates, brake pads, master cylinder, slave cylinders, bearings, lights, wiring, hydraulic lines, and the most expensive piece; a new heavy duty accentuator. I also had them weld a structural piece to further support the keel shoe. By the time I got the trailer to Santa Cruz I had spent an additional \$150 on lumber, bolts, paint, and additional steel.

I spent a full day in Santa Cruz getting the trailer ready, which included cutting the old rollers off, removing the bunk boards, soaking the rusty bolts in WD-40, cutting new pads, carpeting, sanding, and painting. I replaced the bunk boards and rollers with 10 pads and a full length keel shoe. While bunk boards are great for ramp launching, they cause numerous problems when trying to lift the boat with a Travel Lift.

When I was done I had spent a total \$2,600 on the trailer, about half of the cost of the Trail Rite but pretty close to

the cost of a new KS trailer from Florida. Was it a good deal? Yes, but...

The next day the boat was lifted out of the water at 11:00 am via Harbor Marine's Travel Lift. It didn't come out of the sling until about 2:30 pm. It took four tries to get the boat correctly positioned on the trailer. It is a very long, drawn out, meticulous process of getting the boat and pads just right. It requires setting the boat on the trailer so the full weight is resting on the keel, then lifting the boat about an inch, adjusting the pads, tightening the bolts, then fully lowering the boat again. This process is repeated until you think everything is correct, i.e. tongue weight, support for the keel, hull, etc. I was very nervous at this point since after the initial lift, the yard charges \$250 per hour for use of the Travel Lift. The final cost was \$270 for the haul out. Pretty good considering the amount of time it took.

After the boat was resting on the trailer I had to do further modifications, namely adding the two pads supporting the stern. This required running around Santa Cruz looking for structural steel that could be cut and drilled to fit. While the boatyard employees were very helpful, the owner would not do any welding on the trailer due to liability reasons. Now that it is all said and done I am very satisfied with the outcome. While the trailer is 25 years old, every mechanical, electric, and hydraulic part is new, including paint and tires (trailer tires, not car tires). The boat is well supported since eliminating the bunk boards provided supports for ten pads (most trailers use four or six). If I could have found the trailer locally I would have done most of the work on it myself saving roughly \$600 in labor costs that I paid the trailer shop. The trailer has just completed its maiden voyage, the 1,000 mile trip from Santa Cruz to Seattle where the Punker Doodle will spend the summer and fall. When I arrived at the boat yard in Seattle I found that the boat had not moved or shifted on the trailer at all...a very comforting thought.





# Installing the Gaff Main



Dick Shepherd brings the sail bag containing the gaff mainsail up from the cabin of sly BEN MAIN, Jr. (PSC Flicka # 315).



Dick's son unfolds the mainsail and prepares it for lacing to the boom, gaff and mast.



The sail is secured to the forward end of the boom. Next, the out-haul is attached at the aft end.



The mainsail is laced forward to aft using three-eighths inch twisted rope.

*All Photos: Tom Davison*



This line is laced fairly tight. Unlike on the mast, there will be little sail movement.



The same lacing process is repeated on the gaff. Like the line on the boom, it is laced tight and secured.



# on s/y BEN MAIN, Jr.



Dick and Ashley secure the aft end of the line on the gaff. Like the boom, this line is tight.



Initially fairly tight to thread the grommets, the mast lacing will be loosened as the sail is



The lacing tension is adjusted to allow the gaff to move to the top of the mast.



Once the gaff is at the top of the mast, the lacing can be correctly adjusted and secured.



After a few final adjustments, the mainsail installation is nearly complete.



Battens are inserted as the sail is lowered and the sail cover is put into place. BEN MAIN, JR. is ready for a day of sailing.



# Loading A Flicka

By *Charlie Dewell*

Packing a Flicka 20 for an extended offshore voyage is like trying to stuff Dolly Parton's bosoms into Twiggy's bikini top – the essentials are covered, but a lot of precious equipment is left exposed.

When Margaret and I set out to pack *Kawabunga* for our cruise to the South Pacific we had no idea what we were getting ourselves into. We soon learned that the major problem we faced was that we, in twenty foot *Kawabunga*, would need to take the same safety gear and essential equipment as our more conventional cruising friends aboard their forty footers.

Finding a place for a liferaft, inflatable dinghy, outboard motor, abandon ship bag, tools, extra ground tackle, extra sails, awnings, dive equipment, not to mention water and fuel is challenging enough on a forty footer – on a twenty footer you have to use some creative imagination. It soon became apparent that there would not be a place for everything and everything in its place.

Obviously, the heavy objects like water and canned goods had to be packed away in the lowest possible position. In order to supplement the 14 gallon water tank, we carried two 6 gallon jerry jugs secured underneath the center insert in the v-berth by bungee cords. We put another 6 gallon jug in the ice box, along with two 3 gallon jugs and several water bottles. We kept two 3 gallon jugs in the cockpit. We left with a total of 45 gallons of fresh water.

Canned food was first packed into double plastic bags, sealed and then stored in the lockers under the starboard settee. The hanging locker was converted to the ship's library. Stove alcohol and lamp oil was stored under the stove. Cleaning products were stored under the sink. The quarterberth was jam-packed with sails, two awnings, poles, mosquito netting and an inflatable dinghy and duffel bags. The



Honest—it will really fit.....

*Photo: Margaret Dewell*



How To Load A Flicka?

How to load a Flicka in fifteen hundred easy steps.

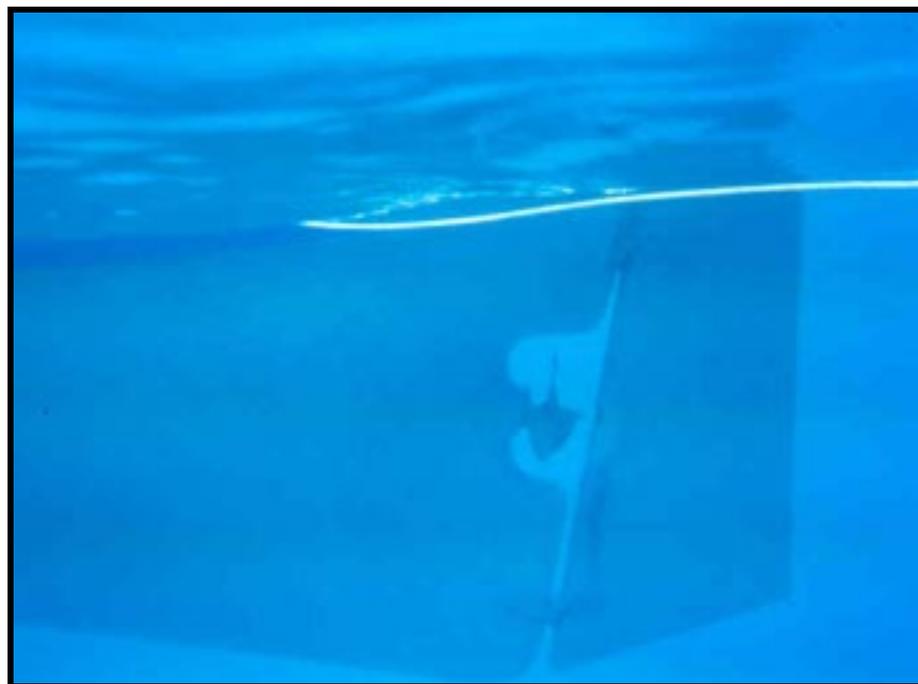
*Photo: Charlie Dewell*





s/y KAWABUNGA at Bora Bora in the South Pacific

Photo: Charlie Dewell



Inspecting the rudder and hull of KAWABUNGA after a long passage.

Photo: Charlie Dewell

liferaft (stored in a valise) and the abandon ship bag were stored in the v-berth. The remainder of the v-berth was filled with dry food packed in collapsible plastic boxes. This worked out fine as the more you ate, the more room you had. The shelves contained duffel bags and the forward cabinet housed several Pelican cases with cameras, radios and a computer. Nets, laden with fruit, hung from the ceiling.

We packed the lazarette with a spare anchor and rode, dive equipment and odds and ends. We were able to stow away sails and line in two West Marine cargo bags at the bow. The 2 hp outboard was secured to the port side of the aft pulpit. A few diesel and gasoline jugs were placed on the side decks and lashed to the stays. Every square inch of the vessel was put to use for storage.

Once we were fully loaded there was just enough room for one person to stretch out on the starboard settee. When Margaret and I were together, she had the settee while I lived outside in the cockpit like a dog.

We learned to load and properly trim the vessel by trial and error. After the first attempt, *Kawabunga* looked like she was sailing away on a starboard tack right there at the dock as she was listing 10 degrees to port.

We off-loaded and repacked twice more before the tiny vessel was balanced. We had raised the boot 4 inches and she was squatting on those lines when we left. Ah, but rest assured, Bingham designed the little ship to carry cargo and she performed admirably.

I learned a few things during our cruise and if I ever sail over the horizon again I intend to make a few changes. First, I would consider installing a water maker. Second, I would stow the liferaft in a canister and secure it to the deck. Last, and certainly not least, I would bring fewer clothes – especially if Dolly Parton showed an interest in crewing for us. Clothes take up a lot of room and all you really need are your foul weather gear, some swim suits, a few shirts and some shorts. As you can see, I'm not planning to sail in the high latitudes.





# PUNKER DOODLE'S Maiden Road Trip

*By Lee Crockett*

After a fairly comprehensive, nationwide search for a Flicka I purchased hull #311 in Santa Cruz, California. The original plan, hatched with my father in San Diego, was to sail the **PUNKER DOODLE** from Santa Cruz to San Diego in the late spring or early summer. Then in the late fall, we would sail to Mexico and the Sea of Cortez where the boat would spend the winter. Next spring I would then drive to San Carlos Mexico and tow the boat back to the Midwest on a trailer.

As it turned out, I found a trailer in Sacramento that looked too good to pass on so I purchased it. That purchase opened a number of options as far as where the Punker Doodle would spend the summer. I could bring the boat back to the Midwest, tow it to San Diego, or take it North to Seattle where I have two sisters, three nieces and nephews, and where my nomadic father spends about half his time.

Part of the equation was how I would tow the boat since in the original plan I didn't need to worry about trailers and trucks until next year.

I own two late model Isuzu Troopers, both leased. In analyzing the final projected route for the Punker Doodle, i.e. Santa Cruz to Seattle, Seattle to San Diego, sailing the boat from San Diego to Mexico then driving down to San Carlos, Mexico and towing the boat back to the Midwest, I concluded that that extra 10,000 miles or so on a leased vehicle would be impractical and expensive. Also, I would be pushing it using a Trooper anyway.

I also looked into renting trucks to do each leg. The bottom line, not counting the San Carlos to Tucson leg, was almost \$3,000 to rent trucks to move the boat the first year! So, I started looking for an older truck to



**Prepping for the first day of sailing aboard s/y PUNKER DOODLE.**

*Photo: Lee Crockett*

use to move the boat. I got lucky. For those of you who have looked, an older truck in reasonable condition is almost impossible to find. Most of them have been beat to death, or close to it.

At a dealer here in St. Louis I found a 1993 Dodge D150 that had been traded on a new purchase. Since it had no rust, was in excellent mechanical condition, and generally was clean, the dealer put it on its lot instead of wholesaling it out to the auctions. An added plus was that it already had the tow package. It also had a 360 V-8 that could climb a tree (for most of my life I have owned 4 cylinder cars and trucks).

So for not too much more than renting trucks I bought what my nine year old dubbed "The Big Kahuna." Let the adventure begin. I drove the Kahuna from St. Louis to Sacramento where I picked up my newly purchased and reconditioned trailer. From there, I drove to Santa Cruz to pick up the boat. This was the worse part of the whole 3,500 mile trip since the boat-less

trailer was a very lively animal to tow. It had a tendency to bounce, shake, and cause the truck to bounce up and down.

While getting the trailer ready for the boat and the boat ready for the trailer was a major effort, all came together and I finally left Santa Cruz on Thursday April 25 at about 6:00 pm.

My biggest concern was not whether the trailer would support the boat or whether the truck would tow the trailer. It was going over the "hill" on Highway 17 from Santa Cruz to San Jose and then through San Jose and the lower Bay area to reach I-5. Highway 17 is a 4 lane highway, although it is definitely a mountain road for much of the 30 miles. Also, my experience with Californians in general, and those who drive on Hwy 17 specifically, is that they can be somewhat aggressive compared to the relatively relaxed drivers of the Midwest. In other words, I was worried that this might not be the best stretch to learn how to drive the truck/trailer rig for the first time.





Sailing s/y PUNKER DOODLE in Puget Sound, Washington.

Photo: Lee Crockett

My neighbor at the marina I was leaving suggested that I go south to Watsonville instead of north to San Jose. This turned out to be about 100 miles longer, however, it was much easier route. It gave me around 100 miles of relatively flat or rolling hills to get used to driving the whole package. I still had to go over the hill to get from the coast to the relatively flat landscape. The road was a two lane mountain road, however, there was little traffic and it could be taken at a much slower pace. I have towed boats before but I have never pulled 7,000 pounds.

By the time I met I-5, it was already dark with high winds, and it was clearly time for me to stop for the night since it had been quite an eventful and stress filled day. Ended up in Patterson California where I pulled into a Days Inn. Apparently the day had been stressful for someone else too because as I pulled into the motel parking lot, a U-haul was wedged in between the carport overhang, emergency sprinklers running, and the motel owner and his family were generally frantic.

I departed early the next morning for the long, mountainous drive through Northern California and Oregon. I

have been to both Northern California and Oregon before but I didn't realize that the drive would be essentially all mountains.

I stopped frequently to check on the boat and trailer. I also stopped frequently to get gas. From St. Louis to Santa Cruz the Big Kahuna averaged 17-18 miles per gallon. Pulling the boat it got around 10. The 6% upgrades and downgrades had a lot to do with that. It is amazing that at every stop, whether at a rest area or gas station, someone would offer some comment on the boat or just walk around it and look at it.

That night was spent in Eugene Oregon. The next morning I departed relatively late so I could stop in Portland to meet with some friends. Of course that entailed driving the Kahuna and the Punker Doodle through the relatively narrow and busy streets of downtown Portland. I ended up, more or less, parallel parking the whole package so I could visit with my friends at one of the millions of coffee shops.

Then at around noon I was off to Seattle where I arrived at my sister's at around 4:00 pm on Saturday afternoon.

I had hoped to get to Seattle on Friday so I could launch the boat and have the weekend to fool around on it but I had spent an extra day between Sacramento and Santa Cruz getting the trailer in shape. Unfortunately the boatyards don't work on weekends.

On Sunday we did take the boat over to Lake Union Yacht Center so we wouldn't have to deal with Monday morning traffic. One of the yard employees was working on a personal project so he let us in. We asked him if it would be all right if we cleaned up the boat there in the boatyard. He not only said it would be alright to work on the boat, he loaned me his buffer and polishing compound since I had not been able to find a pad to fit my buffer. So we spent Sunday afternoon buffing the hull. Incidentally, the Lake Union Yacht Center is the cleanest, most well organized boat yard I've ever been in.

Monday morning at 9:00 am the Punker Doodle was lifted off the trailer and gently placed in Lake Union. We motored around the corner to the Northlake Marina where her new slip was waiting and by noon had the mast stepped.

I had a business meeting (I'm still a working slob) on Tuesday morning but my dad and I did get out sailing on Tuesday afternoon. Lake sailing, where the wind changes every five minutes.

In addition we had the added fun of dodging seaplanes as they took off and landed on the lake (or maybe they were dodging us). This was a great maiden voyage for the Punker Doodle because it allowed us to sail in a variety of conditions, from five knots to 25 knot gusts. According to the knotmeter we even hit a boat speed of 5.8 knots. Not bad.

So now that the Punker Doodle is safely tucked away in her new home, I can't wait to get back out to Seattle this summer with my wife and kids. The first adventure was great. The grand adventure will be this fall when she sails to Mexico.





# s/y PUNKER DOODLE Photos



Various photos of Lee Crockett's "new" Flicka s/y PUNKER DOO-

