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**TARTAN 5300** • I have to admit that I have a soft spot for Tartans. In 1963 or so, my parents and our neighbors in partnership bought an early Tartan 27—the classic S&S design that launched the company. For years, we cruised and raced the boat all over the Northeast as a family of five and thought nothing of staying aboard for a week at a time.

When my folks decided to move up in size, they sold the boat to another neighbor, who kept it for 30 years and cruised it all over New England.

When he decided to sell, who should step up to buy the then-40-year-old boat but my nephew, who keeps it near Boston and sails it whenever he can...now with a new engine and new sails, but still the same 47-year-old cruiser. So the boat is still in the family. That says a lot about Tartan's place in the American sailing scene. The boat building company, founded by Ohio native Charlie Britton in 1960, has always been focused primarily on solid, honest boats that appeal to families, whether they are cruising in a Tartan 37 or beating around the buoys in a Tartan Ten. While times change and designs evolve, that fundamental Tartan quality remains the same. In July, I had the chance to test sail the center-cockpit Tartan 5300 Luora, which belongs to Jeff and Linda Lennox. The boat is based in Mystic, CT, and I joined the Lennoxes, their two sons and the family dog for the first leg to Newport, RI of their summer cruise to Maine and back. Once again, I was aboard a Tartan heading off on a classic family cruise. Luora is hull number one of the Tim Jackett-designed 5300 line and built with a lot of Jeff and Linda's input. This is only right since their previous boat was a Tartan 4100, on which they had cruised extensively. The standard 5300 is spec'd with a full battened main, the Tartan "pocket boom" and lazy jacks. Jeff and Linda had success with a Forespar Leisure Furl in-boom furling system on their 4100, so they opted for the same arrangement on the 5300. We set off from Mystic in a near flat calm with some coastal fog hanging over Long Island Sound. So we motored until we got past The Race, the mouth of the sound, where the wind began to build. Or at least we thought it was going to build, so we rolled out the mainsail and then rolled out the reacher to see what we could do. The 5300 has the Tartan Cruise Control Rig (CCR) that is now being used on all of the Tartan line. The standard rig has a fully battened main that furls in and out of the pocket boom and two headsails, the self-tacking jib that fits on an inner forestay, and the full reacher that flies from the masthead. This arrangement, which is called the Solent Rig in Europe, allows you to adjust your sail configuration easily, no matter what direction the winds blow. The reacher can be used for angles from close reaching to running, while the jib is great for very close reaching and beating to



windward. With the reacher drawing nicely, Luora was able to sail at about half the speed of the wind or 4 knots in 8 knots of breeze. This is not bad for a large moderate displacement cruising boat. That morning, on the website [sailflow.com](http://sailflow.com), the forecast had been for the sea breeze to come up at 2p.m. Lo and behold, at 2:10, the 6 to 8 knots of breeze was suddenly 10 and then 12. We trimmed for reaching speed along our eastward course and the 5300 really began to move. In 12 knots, we were easily making 6.5 through the water. Nice. While the breeze held, we rolled in the reacher and rolled out the jib so we could see how she handled upwind. The

5300 settled in at 45 degrees from the true wind and tacked effortlessly through 90 degrees. Finally, the breeze died, so we rolled up the headsail and cranked up the engine. Under power on a flat sea, the 5300 cruised easily at

8 knots and was capable of powering at more than 9 knots if asked. The 5300 is a big boat that feels nimble underfoot and slippery through the water. The hull has a narrow entry that enhances upwind performance and broad after sections that provide a lot of interior volume and will make the boat stiff and powerful when reaching. With the Cruise Control Rig, the 5300 is a cinch for a couple to handle from the cockpit. TARTAN AT 50 This year, Tartan celebrates the 50th anniversary of the company's founding. The first Tartan 27 rolled off the production line in 1961, so next year will also be a 50th anniversary. Five decades of continuous sailboat production is no small feat in America, so the company and its core of boat builders is to be congratulated. 2010 marks another milestone for Tartan and C&C, too. On July 30th, Steve Malbasa and his wife Stephanie purchased the company from the previous owner and immediately set out to position it for a successful future. Tim Jackett, who is the company's president and chief designer, is also a partner in the new business and will stay on to run the day-to-day



operations. In early August, I was able to spend a day in Ohio with Steve, Stephanie and Tim at their new factory in Painesville and out on the water sailing the Malbasas' 4300. The plant is a huge step forward for the company. It is large, modern, clean and set up for highly efficient semi-custom boat building. As Tim noted, the move has allowed the company to shed some of its old habits and practices and given every individual in the company the chance to rethink and improve the way they do their jobs. This change in company culture is already having a positive effect throughout the industry as Tim and Steve set out to build the dealer network and

expand the brands' visibility in key sailing regions around the country. The Tartan and C&C brands are two of the most venerable in the country. In addition, the company owns Legacy Yachts, which has a line of premium motor yachts and cruisers, and Novis Composites, the in-house builder of carbon fiber spars, booms, poles and other parts for the boats. After a tour of the new factory with Tim and a visit to the old facility, which is in the process of a major face lift and where the hulls, decks and spars will be built, we met up with Steve and Stephanie aboard their 4300 for a late afternoon sail on Lake Erie. It was a lovely, warm day, so we hoisted the main, rolled out the



reacher and flew out into the lake at 8 knots. Steve Malbasa is a retired sales management executive who discovered sailing later in life and has jumped right into the deep end with enormous enthusiasm. He brings a very clear vision to the company that focuses entirely on making the "customer experience" the very best it can be, and better every day. This is a sound formula for success and promises to drive the company forward for another 50 years. THE DIFFERENCE Over the years, Tim Jackett has consistently innovated the design, engineering and construction of Tartan and C&C boats. They are one of only a few companies that

provides carbon fiber masts, booms and poles as standard equipment; the "pocket boom" is also a unique solution to handling large, fully battened mainsails. The Cruise Control Rig takes a sail handling system often found on large custom yachts—particularly in Europe—and adapts it to couples' cruising boats. It makes a huge amount of sense. The hulls and decks of all of the boats are infused, foam-cored, epoxy and e-glass laminations that have superior strength-to-weight ratios and extremely high glass-to-resin ratios. Epoxy is more expensive than vinyl ester or polyester resin but provides a structure that is completely inert and impervious to osmotic blistering. The idea is to build boats that will last generations, like the old Tartan 27 now owned by my nephew. These days, Tartans are



less pure production boats than they are semi-custom yachts for



owners who expect to tailor the interiors spaces a bit to their needs. This is particularly true in the larger boats such as the 5300. The boats are not built on a production line; instead, each is hand crafted by a team that is responsible for the fit out from the bare hull and deck through launching. This personal involvement shows in the final product. THE 5300 DOWN BELOW Jeff and Linda Lennox stepped up to the plate to build hull number one of the 5300 design and, as noted above, brought a wealth of experience and ideas with

them. Luora is very much their boat. The original plans for the 5300 show a raised saloon with the engine room, tanks and batteries under the saloon floor, where they are near the boat's center of gravity. The saloon plans show two curved settees with the port side doubling as the dining table. The Lennoxes opted for a different plan in which the dinette remains to port but the starboard side of the saloon has a raised inside helm with a forward facing bench seat to starboard; this allows you to sail or pilot the boat from inside the saloon with good visibility all around and all of your navigation instruments right in front of you. Just aft of this is a desk and seat, and aft of that is what Tim calls the "Great Chair." Part of this custom interior was to maintain access from the saloon to the after head on the starboard side so it can be used as the "day head" and will double as a wet locker for foul weather gear. The



rest of Luora is more or less the standard interior design. All the way forward, there is a large guest cabin with a centerline double berth and plenty of hanging and locker space for a couple who will be staying aboard for a while. Just aft to port is a double cabin with upper and lower berths. This will be a great kids' cabin and will be comfortable at sea. The forward head, equipped with a full shower stall, is across from the double cabin. The truly huge master cabin all the way aft stretches the boat's full beam. The centerline double is a full queen size—rare on a cruising boat. The cabin has two

large hanging lockers and seats on both sides of the berth. The master head on the starboard side is huge and has a large shower stall. An alternative to the giant aft cabin is to move the head aft, thus reducing the width of the cabin. In the head's place you can have a fourth cabin with upper and lower berths. This fourth cabin will be a wonderful place to sleep at sea and a good cabin for crew on long passages. The 5300's galley lies in the passageway on the port side from the saloon to the aft cabin. The stove, storage lockers and fridges are outboard, while the double sinks are inboard and nearly on the centerline, where they will drain nicely on both tacks. Tartan has been using cherry in their interiors for several years. The bulkheads are cherry veneers over marine plywood while the drawers, doors and cabin faces are solid cherry. The woodwork is finished with a flat varnish that looks elegant. The 5300 feels like a bigger boat down below. The cabins are all large and well appointed, the heads are spacious, and the working spaces at the nav table, galley or inside steering station are all supplied with ample table or counter space. The boat is bright throughout and provided with excellent cross-ventilation through portholes and opening hatches. One could easily move aboard, as the Lennox family does, for extended periods of cruising in real comfort and style. BWS THOUGHTS The 50th anniversary of the Tartan brand is reason enough to celebrate. The company is an American treasure. Now starting its second half-century under the new ownership of Steve and Stephanie Malbasa and Tim Jacket, there is reason to believe that the company will grow and prosper. The 5300 is the perfect flagship for the brand. It is a true family cruising boat in the Tartan tradition that incorporates many well thought out innovations and heirloom quality construction. As the year progresses, you will find new dealers in sailing centers around the country handling the line and a new optimism among Tartan owners that their boats will indeed be around for generations ahead. Tartan 5300 LOA 53'0" LWL 46'6" Beam 16'2" Draft (keel) 6'8" Draft (K/CB)

5'6"/9'6"Displ. (K) 37,225 lbs.Displ. (K/CB) 38,225 lbs.Ballast (K) 13,000 lbs.Ballast (K/CB) 14,000 lbs.Fuel 125 gals.Water 250 gals.Sail Area 1,387 sq. ft.Mast height 80'0"Ballast/Displ. 35Displ./LWL 165Sail area/Displ. 20Tartan and C&C Yachts/Hanover MarinePainesville, OH 44077Ph: 440-392-2628Website: www.tartanyachts.com

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