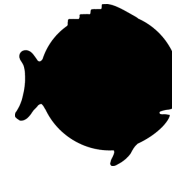


Evolution of the Sunfish

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/sunfish_sailor



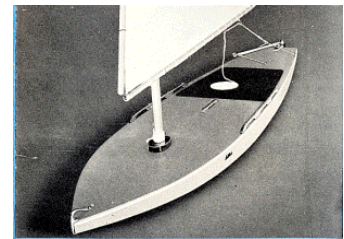
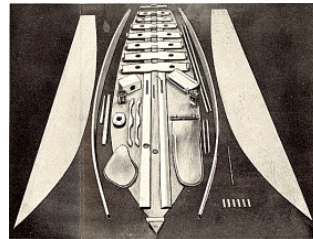
Year **Sunfish
Serial Numbers**

Changes and Events
(other boats in the immediate Sunfish family also noted)

1945

- Alex Bryan and Cortland Heyniger create **Alcort Inc.**
- **Sailfish**, wood surfboard type boat, introduced.
- LOA 11' 7½", Beam 31½", 82 lbs., Sail area 65 sq ft

Sailfish
Serial Numbers
Unavailable



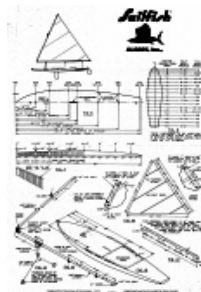
1949

- LIFE Magazine publishes article that brings Alcort and the Sailfish national noteriety.

"World's Wettest,
Sportiest Boat"
.... LIFE



- Sailfish wood boats available in two models, Standard Sailfish (11'7½") and "Super" Sailfish (13'7"). Exact date the Super was added not known at this time. (see the Sailfish Timeline for more info)

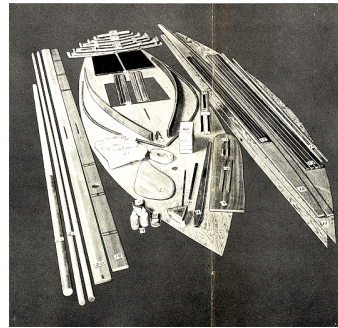


1951

- Alex Bryan's pregnant wife found the Sailfish flat deck somewhat uncomfortable. The idea of adding a foot-well and widening the hull to accommodate creates the Sunfish concept.

1952

- **SUNFISH** introduced.
- Boat is plywood construction and offered as a kit or finished boat.
- LOA 13' 7½", Beam 47½", Weight 142 lbs., 75 sq ft, 10 panel cotton sail



Sunfish kits!

Deck, bottom, stem block, inner keel and deck beams are pre-cut. Frames, daggerboard trunk and mast block are complete sub-assemblies. Rudder, daggerboard, sides, coaming, tiller, etc. are pre-shaped. Sail is included as standard equipment. Tailored from high-quality pre-shrunk white cotton especially for Alcort. Hardware and fittings are supplied with each kit. Finishing kit—with paints and varnishes in proper proportions—is available at slight extra cost.



1955

500 - 800

- First record of Sunfish serial numbers.

1956

800 - 1200

1957

1200 - 1600

- Nylon sails in solid colors: red, blue, or white, offered as an option for \$18 additional.



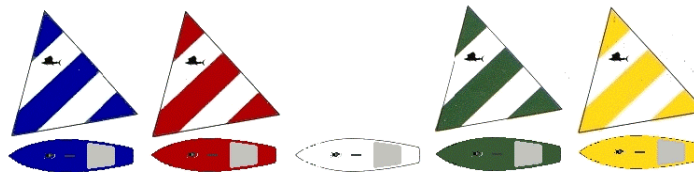
1958

1600 - 2000

- Fiberglass **Super Sailfish MK II** introduced - LOA 13' 7", Beam 35½", sail 75 sq ft
- Tapered aluminum mast, aluminum spars.

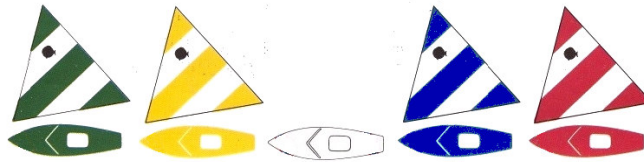
1959

2000 - 2500



- **Fiberglass Sunfish** introduced -
- LOA 13'-10", Beam 48½", Weight 139 lbs. Sail 75 sq ft.

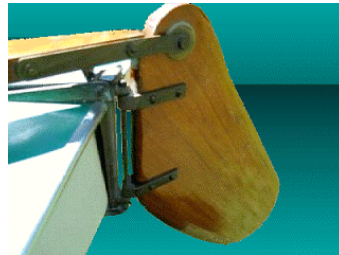
1960 2500 - 2900



1961 2900 - 3400

1962 3419 - 5692

- Factory assembled wood Sunfish and Sailfish phased out of production [approx.] It's not known exactly when production ceased. The 1966-68 brochures still showed prices for the wood kit boats.



Early rudder hardware. Date being sought for transition to the gudgeon head style

1963 8432 - 13000

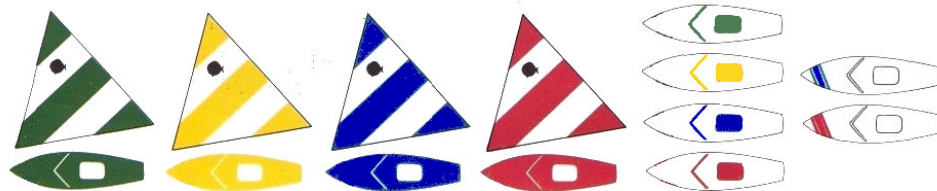
- 1963 brochure lists available sails as:
65 sq ft, striped Red-and-White Nylon or Solid White Dacron
75 sq ft, striped {Red, Blue, Yellow, Green}-and-White Nylon or Solid White Dacron

1964 13000 - 20900

- **Catfish catamaran introduced - designed by George W. Patterson, built by Alcott, Inc.**

- Dacron sailcloth standard

1965 20900 - 29000



- White sail with diagonal stripes at peak to match deck striping offered as an option.

1966 29300 - 38300 • Halyard block replaced by mast end cap with fairlead molded into the design.



1967 38300 - 48000 • Ratsey-Laphorn sail shape improved with increased draft.



1968 48000 - 59000

1969 59000 - 70000 • AMF (American Machine & Foundry) buys Alcott, Inc.
• Sail improved [change unknown]
• Sunfish Class Association established by AMF



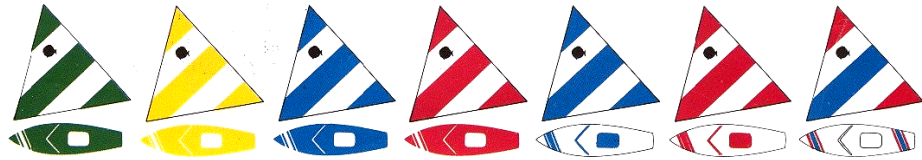
1970 70000 - 79000

1971 80000 - 91000 • Storage compartment added to rear of footwell
• Sail window option added (288 sq in)
• AMF MiniFish added to the AMF/Alcott line



- Plastic Sunfish bailer supercedes DePersia metal bailer
- Shadow style daggerboard introduced
- Cast aluminum rudder cheekplate introduced
- Gudgeon Bracket & Pintle Pin design changed, material now Stainless Steel
- Rudder design changed

1972 92000 - 103000



1973 103001 -
AMF12345M73A

- Diagonal stripe added to the rear deck of all color schemes.
- Split Year for Hull ID number. Factory serial number style used approximately Aug. to Nov.
- Nov. 1, 1972, federal Hull Identification Numbers (HIN) become a requirement.
- Hull ID placement must now be in the upper right of the transom.
- Two formats are acceptable, "Straight" Year and "Model" Year.
- Model Year "M" Format was typically used for Sunfish: AMF12345M73A (10th & 11th digits are year)
- See chart at end of list for a more detailed explanation of federal Hull ID Number formats



1974 AMF28000M74D

- Super Sunfish with a Laser-like, high aspect ratio rig introduced.



1975 AMF12345M75B

- Fiberglass Super Sailfish MK II phased out of production [approx.]

1976 AMF51100M76H

1977 AMF61400M77K

1978 AMF71990M78C

1979 AMF82900M79F • Ratsey Lapthorn sail replaced by one made by Fogh Sails (later to become North Sails - Canada)



1980 AMF54321M80D • Barrington style daggerboard introduced



1981 AMF54321M81J

1982 AMF54321M82C

1983 AMF54321M83L • Minifish dropped from line [aprox.]

1984 AMF54321M84K

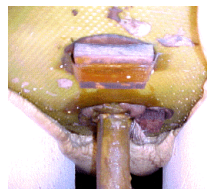
- Sunfish granted International status by International Yacht Racing Union
- Super Sunfish dropped from line
- August 1, 1984 USCG introduces the "New" HID format ([seen on 1985 model year production](#))
- "New" format: AMF00100B784 (last two digits now show model year)

- [See chart at end of page for a more detailed explanation of Hull ID Numbers](#) -

1985 AMF54321B585

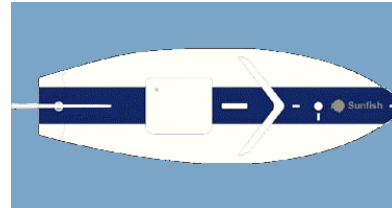
- AMF succumbs to a hostile takeover. Alcott sailboat division put up for sale.
- International Sunfish Class Association formed to run class after manufacturer drops support.

-
- 1986 AIW54321G686
- AMF/Alcort division sold to Loveless & DeGarmo, DBA Alcort Sailboats Inc. (7/1986)
 - Hull ID prefix: AIW (AIW00100B686)
 - Wood backing blocks replaced by aluminum backing plates for deck fittings.
 - Sail window option increased size to 600 sq. in.
 - Sails made outside North America for a time.
-



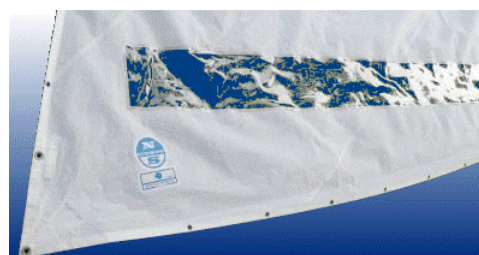
Wood Backing Block at Halyard Cleat

-
- 1987 AIW54321F787
- Aluminum rub rails replaced by rolled gunwales and increased hull to deck attachment surface.
 - Crown of foredeck increased
 - Footwell enlarged
 - Diagonal racing stripes omitted
-



-
- 1988 PSB54321E888
- Pearson Yacht buys Sunfish from Alcort Sailboats, Inc. (12/1988)
 - HID prefix changes to PSB (PSB00100B788)
-

- 1989 PSB54321A989
- Introduction of North Racing Sail
-



-
- 1990 PSB54321B090
- Hiking straps coming on production boats. [exact start date not known]
-

- 1991 SLI54321C191
- Pearson Yacht reorganizes, Sunfish/Laser is spun-off as it's own company (07/1991).
 - HID prefix changes to SLI (SLI00100H791)
 - S-L lists Sunfish hull weight at 129 lb.
-



-
- 1992 SLI54321D292
- S/L sales brochure shows decks sporting pastel colors some with contemporary graphic appliques.
 - Recreational sail made for Sunfish/Laser by Neil Pryde Sails.
-

1993

SLI54321E393

- Composite, resin coated, foam core "racing" daggerboard becomes an option.
 - Mast tube alleged to experience higher failure rate than in previous years (see 2005).
-



1994

SLI54321F494

- Aluminum tiller extension replaces wood one.
-

1995

SLI54321A595

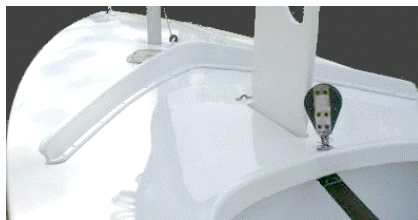
- Molded plastic rudder cheeks replace the cast aluminum.
 - No-loop steel cable bridle introduced.
 - Sunfish inducted into The American Sailboat Hall of Fame, credited with over a quarter million Sunfish built.
-



1996

SLI54321C696

- Main sheet swivel block replaces "the hook"
 - Composite daggerboard becomes standard equipment
-



1997

OQT54321G797

- Vanguard buys Sunfish/Laser (03/1997)
 - HID prefix changes to OQT (OQT00100H794)
-



1998

OQT54321H898

- Recreational and Race sail both made for Vanguard by North Sails.
-

1999

OQT54321A999

2000

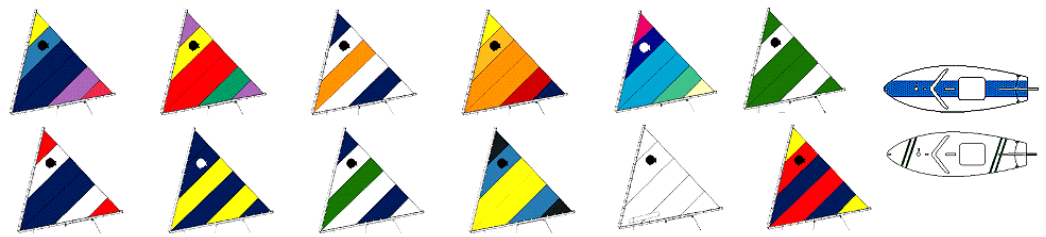
OQT54321L900

2001

OQT54321F101

2002 OQT54321E202

2003 OQT54321A303



2004 OQT54321C404

2005 OQT54321B505

- Fiberglass Rudder blade introduced as an option.
 - Mast reinforcing sleeve retro-fit kit introduced (see 1993)
 - Hull weight listed by Vanguard as 120 Pounds.
-



2006 OQT54321K506

2007 OQT54321K507

- Vanguard (Sunfish builder) is acquired by Gavel Securities, Ltd., parent company of Performance Sailcraft Europe, Ltd. and Laser Sailboats, Ltd.
-

2008 OQT54321K508

- Vanguard changes its name to *LaserPerformance*
-



Looking for years of the following changes:

- Sail cloth - Cotton to Nylon, Nylon to Dacron
- Date/hull number range for dual drain plugs
- Date/hull number range for bullet shaped halyard cleat
- Gudgeon plate added to rudder
- Reinforcement step added in mast tube
- Bow handle changes - scalloped to smooth.
- The story behind the addition of "International" to the Alcott, Inc. label
- Boom Blocks - From swivel Racelite to a fixed block back to a Swivel
- Tapered aluminum mast to straight form mast
- Halyard deck block to fairlead ('71-'72 ?)
- Halyard horn cleat changed from metal to plastic
- Introduction of plastic spar endcaps with fairlead
- Stainless steel bow handle introduced

USCG Hull ID Number Formats - Illustrated

Hull Identification Numbers (HIN) first became a federal requirement on Nov. 1, 1972.
From Nov. 1, 1972 to Aug 1, 1984 two formats were used to show the date of production, STRAIGHT YEAR and MODEL YEAR.

STRAIGHT YEAR example

AMF	59484	07	79
Manufacturer Identification Code	Hull Serial Number	Month of Production	Year of Production

MODEL YEAR example (Typical on Sunfish)

AMF	59484	M	84	G
Manufacturer Identification Code	Hull Serial Number	M=Model Year format	Model Year	Month of Production (see table)

A=Aug	B=Sept	C=Oct	D=Nov	E=Dec	F=Jan
G=Feb	H=Mar	I=Apr	J=May	K=Jun	L=Jul

In 1984 an updated format known as the "NEW FORMAT" replaced STRAIGHT YEAR and MODEL YEAR formats.
From January 1, 1984 until August 1, 1984 STRAIGHT YEAR and MODEL YEAR were optional.
On August 1, 1984 the New Format became mandatory.

"NEW" FORMAT example

SLI	99999	B	7	87
Manufacturer Identification Code	Hull Serial Number	Month of Production (see table below)	Year of Production	Model Year

A = Jan	B = Feb	C = Mar	D = Apr	E = May	F = Jun
G = Jul	H = Aug	I = Sep	J = Oct	K = Nov	L = Dec

According to USCG Boating Safety Circular # 70 -

"The ninth and tenth characters in each Hull Identification Number indicate the month and year of the date of certification. In all other cases characters nine and ten must indicate the date of manufacture, which can be no earlier than the date construction or assembly began and no later than the date the boat leaves the place of manufacture or assembly or is imported into the United States for the purposes of sale . . .

A boat is considered certified to comply with safety standards in effect on the first day of the month shown in the ninth character of the HIN. Character ten is the last digit of the year of certification (or manufacture).

Characters 11 and 12 are the model year of the boat and must be indicated using Arabic numerals for the last two numbers of the model year. Selection of the model year of a boat is up to the boat manufacturer."

- Information Resources -

Article, "Determine the age of a Sunfish" by Daniel Feldman and Al Barsa, Jr.

LIFE Magazine Volume 27, Number 7, August 15, 1949

Alcort Sunfish Brochure, "Lets Go Sailing" - 1957

Alcort Sailfish Brochure - 1957

One Design & Offshore Magazine - 1967

Alcort Sailfish/Sunfish Brochures - 1963, 1965, 1968

AMF/Alcort flyer - 1972 and "The Fun of Sailing" catalog - 1977 and 1978

The Sunfish Bible by Will White, Omega³ Press, Sarasota, FL

Sunfish/Laser Brochure - 1992

Neil Pryde Sails web page

Vanguard Brochure - 2003

Sunfish_Sailor Steering Committee - G.Turluck, D.Feldman

Personal boat photographs contributed by the members of the Sunfish_Sailor Owner's Support Group

USCG Manufacturers Identification Code (MIC) Database

United States Coast Guard Boating Safety Circular # 70, "BACK TO THE BASICS - HIN 101"

Code of Federal Regulations Title 33, Volume 2, Sec. 181.25 Hull identification number format (Revised as of July 1, 2002)

This information has been compiled in support of Sunfish owners and enthusiasts. The data is assembled to the best of our knowledge with the resources available at the time. Additional resources, information, and updates are always welcome.

Please contact: Sunfish Sailor

Many Thanks to all the contributors

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