

## PROFILE: SCULLEY BOATBUILDERS

If there is a better balance of luxury and reliability in a Carolina sports fishing yacht than a Sculley yacht, Donald Blount, former chief architect for the U.S. Navy, says he wants to see it.

Blount, whose Chesapeake, Vir.-based company Donald Blount & Associates, Inc. designed the hull on the first *Sculley 58 Sportsfisherman*, spent 39 years creating high-performance military watercraft, as well as recreational vessels for companies like Buddy Davis and Rybovich. Obviously, Blount has ridden some of the finest vessels to ever cut through the sea, and fully endorses Sculley boats as some of the finest high-speed, rough-water crafts available in the market today.

“We don't do design work for just anybody who walks through our door,” Blount says. “If it's somebody who hasn't built a boat before we are generally very reluctant to work with them because it takes years of experience to build a high-end product. But because of the engineering background of (Sculley's Chief Operating Officer) Jim Polatty, and the years of experience the Sculley's have had with sports fishing we knew they would be a reliable source of business.”

Sculley Boatbuilders was launched in 1999 when Polatty, former vice president and 15-year veteran of Buddy Davis, and Jim Sculley decided to combine their passion for high-end, custom-built, Carolina sport-fishing yachts with a South Florida-style finish, blasting away the stereotype of Carolina-built boats as charter vessels with minimal interiors in the process. Sculley and Polatty wanted to design a reliable, sturdy boat with the serious tournament sport fisherman in mind, and so they went out and assembled what Blount believes is one of the most talented, personable boat building teams in the industry.

Polatty is a third-generation seaman behind David Polatty, his grandfather – a 52-year veteran of the U.S. Navy and former Rear Admiral – and his father, who also spent time in the Navy. Polatty brings to Sculley customers his experience as founder of Buddy Davis' engineering department, where he oversaw production facilities that cranked out an average of one boat every eight days. Polatty personally walks each client through the engineering phase to ensure they Sculley Boatbuilders is constructing the individual boat of his or her dreams.

Sculley says he has owned a number of Carolina-built boats in the past, including two previously designed by Polatty, but he was never able to find a boat that was designed from a users' perspective; they all seemed built from the builder's point of view. Sculley, a second-generation Carolina sport fisherman, recalls that in previous Carolina-built boats he has owned some sort of modification was required in order to meet his needs as a serious sport fisherman, both inside and outside the boat, and aficionado of Carolina-quality boats.

“There are more than 15 builders in and around Wanchese, N.C., which is our base of operations, but the fit and finish on our boats -- the quality both inside and outside each hand-crafted vessel -- is above and beyond anyone else,” Polatty says. “For instance, most people subcontract out a lot of the construction of the interior, but all of our fairing, finishing and painting is done on site. Carolina boats have long been known for being strong and durable, but they have never been known for their interiors, which is how we stand out from the pack.”

The younger Jim Sculley is the third member of team, and his gregarious personality is, arguably, the key to Sculley Boatbuilders capacity to maintain personal relationships with clients well after the boat has hit the water – from conception to launch, one Carolina boat at a time.

“Once you launch the boat its not like you never personally see a member of the Sculley team again,” he says. “Sculley yacht owners are ensured that they will always have one of our professionals at their side and at their fingertips.”

Sculley says he will not limit the artful touch of his craftsmen with pre-developed designs or molds. Sculley Boatbuilders allows each client to explore his or her imagination and use to Polatty’s innovative engineering techniques to design his or her boat in the classic fashion, yet with modern techniques and technologies – right down to the smallest detail of each individual boat. That’s how Sculley Boatbuilders is able to manifest each client’s personal image of what constitutes the perfect, durable, luxurious sportfishing yacht

The Sculley’s have personally logged more than 1,000 hours onto the first completed hull, including dozens of fishing tournaments and marathon trips up and down the eastern seaboard, made by the father and son team in order to push the boat’s endurance far beyond the testing standards employed by other boat manufacturers.

“Among those 1,000 hours there were plenty of times we couldn’t choose what day to go out,” the younger Sculley says. “I mean, no one wants to take their prize boat out in 12-foot seas – at least not on purpose – and the boat’s ride and durability far exceeded our expectations. It tracks very well in a following sea and it takes a head sea on the nose with its flair providing a soft float off the waves. It’s a very soft ride comparable to slicing through butter with a hot knife, and it also provides enough interior room for a group of people to comfortably stay sea-bound for several days.”

Walter Busch, chief executive officer of the Palm Beach Image Factory, which is now aiding in the national promotion of the Sculley Boatbuilding company, says it was a fishing trip he took with the younger Sculley to the Bahamas that convinced him all the talk about Sculley sportfishing yachts was not hype.

“My family has worked in and around the marine industry for more than 35 years and quite simply put the Sculley is the smoothest ride I’ve ever had,” Busch says. “This boat is going to become the next Mercedes-Benz of the world once people realize the quality and fine attention to detail that goes into building each boat.”

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