

Davenport Builder Finds Ready Market For 'El Toro' Sailboats

By Fred McPherson III

Learning to sail can be fun for the whole family, even the youngsters.

William H. Grunwald of Davenport has been building "El Toro" sailboats under the name of Aeolus Boats for two years and claims the younger set can have the time of their lives learning to sail in this small, easy handling boat.

Grunwald, who has been building boats of many types for over 30 years, has made about 35 of these blunt-nosed eight-foot boats since he and a part-time helper built their first El Toro because, "they were selling."

According to Grunwald it takes about three days to complete each of the simple-lined boats. The El Toro weighs about 80 pounds including mast and sail.

It is about 46 inches wide at the middle and will carry up to 600 pounds.

"For competition the lighter the passenger the better. That's why it is such a popular children's boat," says Grunwald. "Children can learn to sail this little boat in a couple of hours," he added.

Children learn the fastest and have the most fun when racing the El Toro. Besides being used for sailing this boat becomes useful for fishing trips for a small out-board motor can be fixed on the back. The El Toro makes an excellent "dinghie" along with a bigger boat, also.

With the mast up the El Toro is about 14 feet high, with the sail about 12 feet high and a little over 8 feet wide at the bottom.

Because the El Toro is light, ocean-sailing is sometimes too

rough. It is most popular in lake areas. Lake Merritt, Oakland, has about the biggest fleet of El Toros in northern California, according to Grunwald.

There are about 50 of these sail boats being built in northern California every month. According to Grunwald, every boat built gets an official number. The number of the El Toro Grunwald is building at the present time is 3195. This is the number of El Toros registered in the state.

"When we started building El Toros we practically had to drop everything else," said Grunwald. "We exhibited a couple of boats in San Francisco at a boat show and ever since then we have been swamped with El Toro orders," he added.

Grunwald feels the Santa Cruz yacht harbor will interest more local people in sailing, including the small boats such as the El Toro.

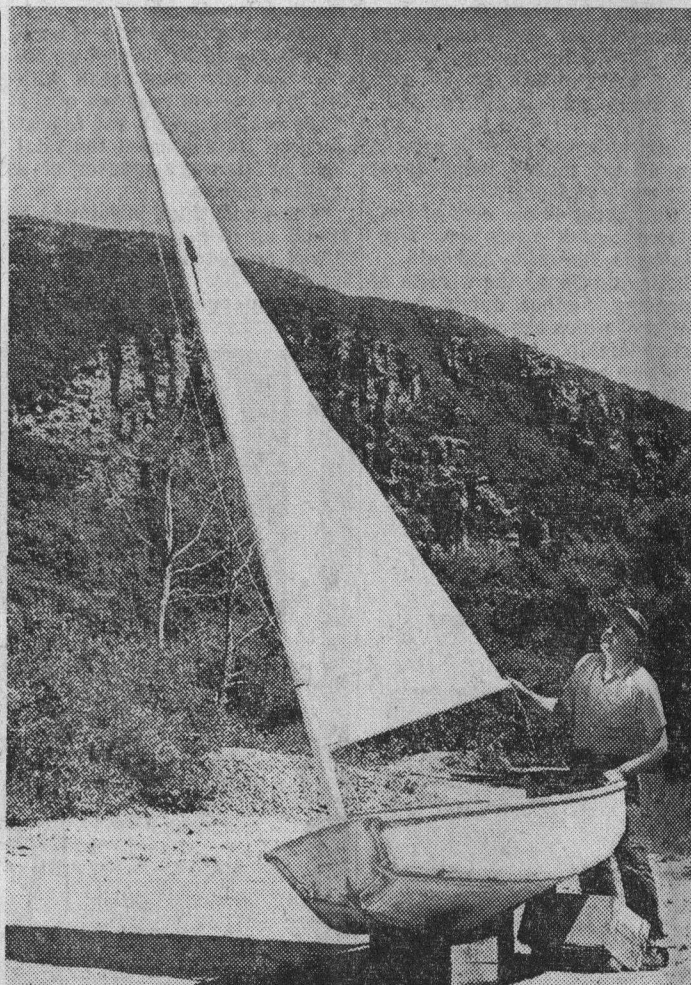
The El Toro is practically unknown outside of northern California, but its popularity is slowly spreading, observed Grunwald.

The veteran boat-builder says about \$35 of material and nearly three days of labor go into making an El Toro.

The El Toro has become very popular in the San Jose area. According to one El Toro skipper, "you can find a race anytime you want one."

Weight distribution is a very important phase of sailing. The sailor normally sits on the bottom of an El Toro to get best results. He changes position in the boat according to the wind and direction of his sail boat.

In the past there have been sailing events from Santa Cruz to Capitola for adventurous sailors. This type of competition is just what the El Toro is made for.



William Grunwald of Davenport Aeolus Boats, checks the fit of the sail on an "El Toro" sailboat which he has just completed. The eight foot rig is becoming very popular with

youngsters because of its easy maneuverability. Grunwald has built about 35 of these inexpensive boats since he took his first El Toro order about two years ago.

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