

GOLDEN FLEECE



Sail No: GBR2000L

Launch Date: 1974

Type: S & S 41 Bermudan Masthead Sloop

Owner: Michael Wheeler

Designer:	<i>Sparkman & Stephens</i>	Builder:	<i>Gordon Neill, Durban</i>
Construction:	<i>Cold moulded</i>	Sail Plan:	<i>Sloop</i>
LOA/LWL:	<i>12.56m / 9.69m</i>	Beam:	<i>3.65m</i>
Draft:	<i>2m</i>	Displacement:	<i>10.106 Tonnes</i>

History

GOLDEN FLEECE was built in Durban, South Africa in 1974 by Gordon Neill, then Commodore of the Royal Natal Y.C. She represented South Africa in the Admiral's Cup and Fastnet races in Cowes in 1975 and went on to win Rothman's Week in Cape Town the same year, followed by many other ocean races around the South African coast. Michael Wheeler, the current owner, found her in Durban in 1999 in a sorry state – his surveyor said: "There are other boats here Michael"! He bought her! - and after a hurried refit sailed her to Cape Town and then Rio de Janeiro in the 2000 Cape to Rio Race. In Rio she broke away from her mooring, went aground filled with water and was threatened with arrest by the Brazilian authorities for overstaying her permitted time in Brazil. She was then raised, made seaworthy and sailed back to the UK over a 14 month period. Upon arrival in Falmouth in 2002 Michael sailed her to West Mersea where she was surveyed and subsequently shipped by road to the Elephant Boatyard in Bursledon in 2004 which was to become her home for a five-year complete restoration.

GOLDEN FLEECE is now based in West Mersea and in recent years has competed successfully in BCYC regattas and EAORA offshore races, accumulating a well-stocked trophy cabinet. In 2019 she completed her second Fastnet.