The International Topper
An Investment in Quality

It has been said that quality never goes out of fashion. And after almost 40 years in continuous production, it is the outstanding build quality and unique design features that keep Topper the most popular boat in Britain. With Full International Recognition from the INTERNATIONAL SAILING FEDERATION (ISAF) the Topper phenomenon continues to spread throughout the world at a quickening pace.

The Topper is already part of sailing history. More newcomers to the addictive sport of sailing have learned their skills in a Topper than any other sailboat.

Thousands have also discovered that once their skills have improved, Topper goes on providing the excitement, performance and competitive opportunities you would expect from a pedigree racing sailboat.

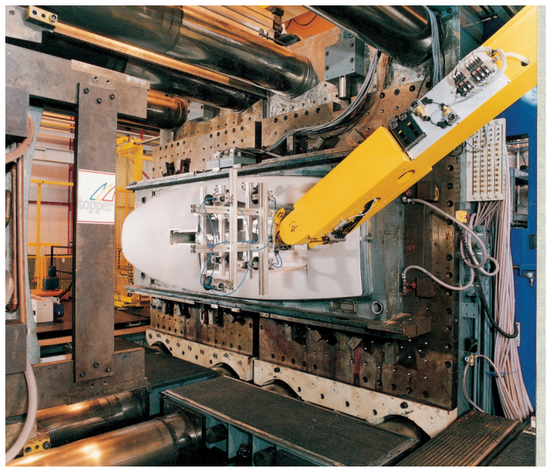
One of the key factors in the success and longevity of the Topper lies in the remarkable sophistication and ruggedness of the manufacturing process.

The Topper hull is injection moulded. Hulls vary in weight by a maximum of 28 g - a tolerance of only 0.065% and a level of uniformity quite outside the scope of any other production system - whether hand built or mass produced.

The material is polypropylene, an advanced polymer which combines strength and resistance to cracking with lightness and a virtually everlasting life.

The Topper has been awarded The Design Council Award and The Horner Award for outstanding achievements in thermoplastics.

The Topper is used by The Open University to illustrate the principles of craft, design and technology, the development of injection moulding techniques and the handling and use of plastics in industry.



The colossal presses that produce Topper's hull and deck mouldings are roughly the size of a diesel locomotive. Polypropylene granules are injected into the precision steel mould tools at a pressure of 1600 tonnes to create the beautifully matched components.

The Price of Excellence
Over a million pounds was invested in the original tooling for the Topper sailboat and it is this investment in quality that has underwritten the ongoing success.

The two main mouldings of the Topper are fuse welded together to produce a robust single unit. Specially shaped polystyrene blocks are fitted at this stage to provide extra stiffness and provide enormous reserves of positive buoyancy in the unlikely event of Topper's tough skin being holed. The hull has integral buoyancy ensuring positive buoyancy even when flooded. When the Topper is inverted it has an air-pocket ensuring that it is an incredibly safe boat.

Designed without compromise
The fittings and equipment have all been designed to match the high moulding standards. Innovative solutions were developed to achieve a boat that was exceptionally easy to rig and sail.

Clever design features include a swivelling mastgate that enables you to erect the mast single-handed.

The daggerboard and rudder blade are moulded in polypropylene which is extremely tough and hard wearing. The brilliant rudder system allows the blade to be set and locked in any position at the flick of a wrist. The vertical nature of the rudder ensures a positive but light control.

And the hull plate can survive the boat coming ashore at high speed with the daggerboard still down!

The rig is an un-stayed Bermudan rig. The aluminium mast is in two sections allowing the spars to be stored within the length of the boat. The sail has a luff tube which makes rigging really easy.

The sail can be reefed around the mast when the wind increases - or to reduce the sail area for teaching young children to sail in confidence.

The introduction of the 4.2m2 sail allows eight and nine year old Topper sailors and the smaller older ones to compete alongside the bigger sailors. The small sail is really inexpensive and it's pretty quick in the hands of a 30-40 kg sailor. It also doesn't require a new mast or a change of controls.

A single sail manufacturer makes sail measurement unnecessary.

Sail controls are through a single mainsheet ending in the centre of the cockpit. The Race Topper rig comprises a 6:1 downhaul, 4:1 outhaul and 3:1 kicker or vang. These controls are similar to that found in a Laser.