

¼ Scale RC Zephyr Prototype “*Blueprint*” hits the water!

A ¼ scale Zephyr, emulating construction of the new 600 series with a GRP hull and Plywood deck, bulkheads and buoyancy tanks, we launched Sunday 7th September and underwent harbour trials.

A little history before results of the trials. The brief for this was along the lines off when on display it needs to look like a Zephyr in and out, and to meet this criteria, the hull is built within a mould, and then wooden deck stringers/bulkheads/tanks are added, followed by a plywood deck and wooden centrecase – all to scale. The RC ability is added by simply dropping a “servo box”, which houses the servo’s, battery and receiver.

Thus, when not sailing, and on display, this little beauty is as realistic and good looking as the real deal! Even the rudder steering mechanism, once disengaged, leaves the tiller and stock unchanged and realistic to what you see out on the water sailing full size Zephyrs.



Blueprint ready for maiden sail

Hobsonville Marina



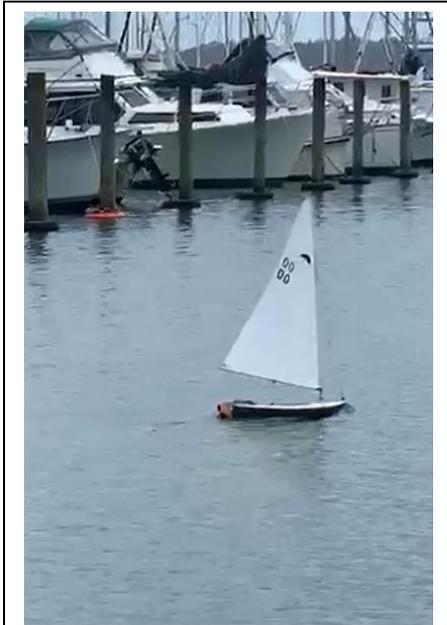
“Drop In” Servo Box



Testing ...testing...Not quite as Stringent as ETNZ's pre-flight checks on Monday last!

Blueprint on the beat





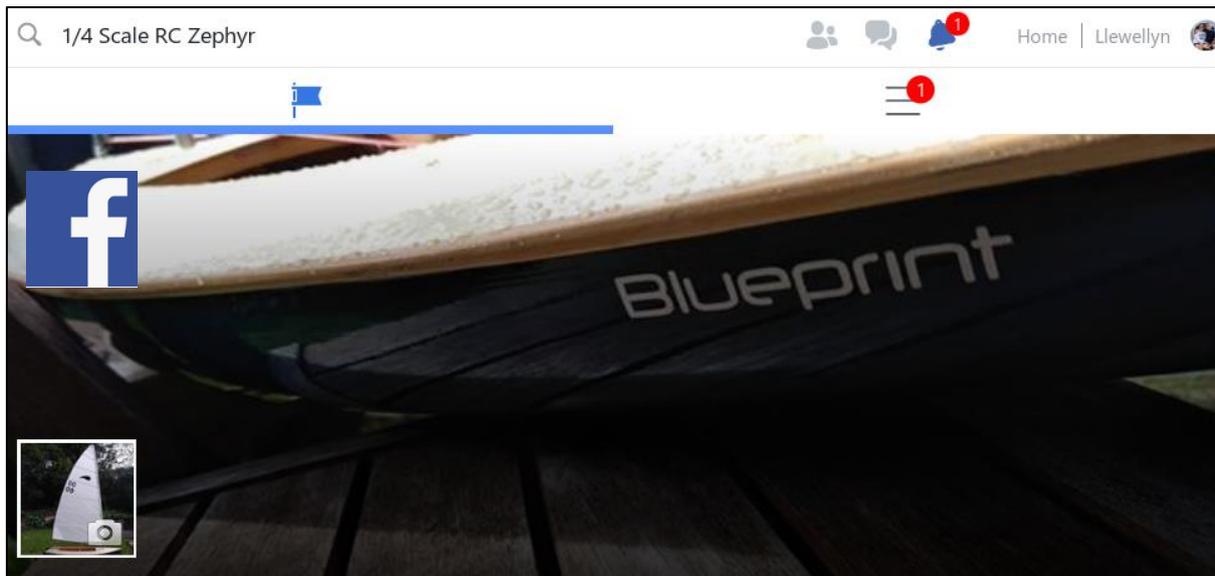
Nose driving down downwind

The mast is stayed, the forestay tension is (at this point) manually adjustable, the mast rake is manually adjustable, and although the Blueprint was sailed with no kicker, this is coming – watch this space for Harold Bennett’s boat soon to hit the water, followed not too far into the distant future hopefully by Paul Pearson’s!

There are also plans to change the rake angle on the keel, which will directly result in trimming the nose up/down. The intention here is simply to prevent nosediving downwind in a blow (something I regularly got with the 1.4 scale laser), and make the ¼ scale sailable in decent wind!

The harbour trials were all in all rather satisfying and it sporting a smile was easy as Blueprint was (rather rustily I might add) pioneered around the safe confines of the marina. I might add that launching a Point Chev with sailing abandoned for the day due to excess winds would probably have resulted in a swim as the wind was offshore and in excess of 20knots!

Follow the Facebook Page, where we will soon be posting vids of the maiden sail as well as some more exiting footage of “open” sea trials!



There is currently a hull for sale. If you’re interested contact Paul Pearson (027 339 6871) or Llewellyn Viljoen (021 769105).



During the harbour trials, I also discovered that the Rudder proportions are going to be critical. Just as on the full size, where you strive for minimum drag (and thus smallest size you can get away with, without ending up in irons just as the gun goes, or worse getting caught in irons on tacking when it blows), it is easy to get into irons on the $\frac{1}{4}$ scale with the rudder sized as pictured alongside! We're going to have to go at least 25% larger and fortunately Harold and Paul have been given the heads up.