



Bluewater for Scott Quaintance

More than a Name

BY MONICA YOUNG
PHOTOGRAPHY BY SCOTT TAYLOR

Life tends to be a multiple choice question for Scott Quaintance of Ocean Isle Beach. Will it be the 47-foot Cabo Sportsfisher today? Or the custom 34-foot Clemson orange Yellowfin with three four-stroke 275 horsepower Mercury Verado engines? Maybe it's a day to stay closer in. In that case, the 240 LTS Triton is perfect for running in the shallow inlets and creeks.

For the 32-year-old owner of Carolina Bluewater Construction, life couldn't be more sublime on Ocean Isle Beach. Scott moved to Ocean Isle Beach when he was eight. He was born in Salisbury, near Charlotte, when his father started traveling to the coast to build houses.

Around Salisbury, the early 1980s were not kind to custom home builders like Bruce Quaintance which is why he began looking for work along the coast. For eight months, he drove back and forth from Ocean Isle to Salisbury before packing up his family and moving to the beach full-time. In a mass exodus of family, uncles, grandparents, aunts and cousins migrated as well.

"We just located everybody," remembers Scott.

As a child growing up on and around the island, Scott's childhood memories are the stuff most 30-somethings recall with nostalgia – riding bikes without helmets, roaming unfettered and unafraid of strangers, staying out until dark or the call to summer. Scott, however, has those memories woven in with the sound of the tides, with surfboards and golf carts as part of the picture.

He worked as a cart attendant at Sea Trail Golf Resort in Sunset Beach, a move that matched up with his avid golf game. He earned a partial golf scholarship to the University of Tennessee in Knoxville and planned to study architecture, a natural progression for the family business. A gifted natural, Scott started drawing house plans for his father when he was in the eighth grade on a CAD system his father had bought.

However, when Scott arrived on the UT campus for freshman orientation, something didn't click for the coastal kid. He asked his father how committed he was to attending UT and ended up applying to Clemson at the last minute.

The decision to switch schools changed everything. There was no room in the architectural program for him. The golf team didn't need another player. There wasn't any more room in housing. Instead, all of the negatives shaped his future in a very positive way.

He studied civil engineering at Clemson, discovering that he could add more to the construction business with the engineering that he could have with the degree in architecture.

As for golf, when asked if he still played, Scott said he usually tells friends that he'd rather be fishing.

"If it's hot outside and the wind's not blowing, I'm going to go fishing somewhere," says Scott.



His big boat, the Cabo, is named after his business, the *Carolina Bluewater*. He fishes three of four marlin tournaments a year where he needs the Cabo. He relies on this boat to get him out to the Gulf Stream and typically

uses in February through June. He keeps it at Mariner's Point in Little River.

He bought the *Carolina Bluewater* down in Florida, where he has a house in Palm Beach Gardens, a good place to base out of when



fishing for Wahoo off of the Bahamas. Next winter he plans to leave the Cabo down there for more time out in the big blue.

Ironically, Scott preferred surfing to fishing when his dad was getting into fishing in the early 1980s. Bruce took a boat on trade for a house he had built, ready to capitalize on living on the coast instead of inland. Although Scott surfed more than fished in those days, his dad's boats ignited a passion for fishing and boating that has carried into adulthood.

He started with a 24-foot single engine Fish Hawk in 1995 and had a 16-foot McKee Craft he used to fish for flounder.

"I fished the mess out of that boat. My father-in-law has it now out in Tubbs Inlet," says Scott.

His 34-foot Yellowfin, custom-built in Sarasota, Florida is named *Casual Water*. He likes it so much that he plans to order another one that will be coming with three even more powerful motors that Mercury plans to introduce based on their inline supercharged V6 Verados already in play. Scott's orange-hued hull of his Yellowfin nods to his Clemson days; he graduated in 1995. He typically fishes off of Casual Water May through October. In mid-April he took it the national Southern Kingfish Association (SKA) tournament in

Fort Pierce, Florida.

Last year Scott's team stayed consistent with their angling, putting them near the top of the leader board.

Fishing is a family-affair for the Quaintances, too. Scott and his wife Heather have two-year-old MacKenzie and five-year-old Noah. Heather enjoys flounder fishing in the Triton, an activity that she started with her own family long ago. When summer days stretch long into the evening, Scott heads home so that they can spend the last lingering hours of daylight on the marsh fishing.

Last summer, Heather, Scott and Noah competed against Heather's father, sister and nephew Alex and a team of her brother, nephew Brandon and her mother for a family flounder tournament.

"I don't want to brag, but we won!" admits Heather with a laugh. "I like to fish the old-timey way and hold onto the rod. Scott puts it in the pole holder and watches for the rod go down. When the kids are with us, I try to let them reel it in; but I'm scared that the fish will get away. I hate to admit it, but I usually jump in and reel it in myself!"



MacKenzie isn't much of a fisher at two, but Noah is at home on the boat. Heather says that he's a handful, always wanting to reach over and skim his hand over the water while riding on the boat.

The Quaintances attended high school together and have watched drastic growth in their area. It's still a small town to them, though. Many of their friends from school have remained, and their children are growing up together in turn.

"The best thing about living here is my mama's here!" says Heather. "Material things don't mean a lot to me. Family does. Don't get me wrong; I like having nice

things, but it's all about family for me."

She notes that they don't hang out on the beach like they did in their youth. Instead, they spend their time on the ICW these days.

The family business specializes in custom homes and usually oversees 20-30 a year ranging from 1,700 to 5,000-plus square feet.

"We still build the stick by stick. The last three years (real estate) prices have jumped so much. Activity breeds activity," says Scott, speculating on the boom he's witnessed in his area.

The self-processed neat freak, who lived in 27 houses growing up as a child of a builder, has learned to keep things organized and orderly. He has lived in nine houses since getting out of college in 1995.

However, he and Heather are in the middle of a major redo of their home on the Intracoastal Waterway (ICW), an unbeatable lot in gated Bent Tree Plantation that is a suburban subdivision complete with lots of neighborhood kids, a community swimming pool and clubhouse and all of the amenities for daily living. By living on an ICW lot, Scott and Heather realized that they could give their young family the best of every world.

They tore down their old house and began from scratch, saving the verandas and foundation to begin anew. When they finish, they will have a custom Low Country look with views through the draping live oaks to the water outside. Noah and MacKenzie and their faithful lab Bingo, named by Noah, will have plenty of room to run and play.

Inside, the house has a floor plan that gives the family privacy while still maintaining an open flow. The killer, though, as in all of Scott's houses, is his fishing room in the garage.

"The joke is that my friends say they don't need to go to the Bass Pro Shop. 'We'll just go to Scott's.' they say," laughs Scott about the incredible fishing supply inventory he keeps handy.

Which boat today? It's a question with any answer guaranteed to put a smile on Scott Quaintance's countenance. Carolina blue water, here he comes, one boat at a time.