

# The Egyptian Cup Regatta

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In these times, Egypt is a tumultuous place in the midst of chaos, strikes, and confrontation. Its ancient mystery is just a memory. But in southern Illinois an event still exists that lures sailors to that ancient name. If you Google the Egyptian Cup, you will learn that it's a famous trophy in the football league of that country. But you would miss the fact that an Egyptian Cup Regatta of sailing fame is now hosted annually by Flying Scot Fleet 83 on Carlyle Lake in Hazlet State Park (site of the 2012 NAC) in Carlyle, Illinois. This 50-year-old regatta has a storied past. It was begun by the Crab Orchard Lake Sailing Club on Crab Orchard Lake near Carbondale, Illinois. But why the name?

The area south of St. Louis in southern Illinois is bordered on three sides by the Mississippi, the Ohio, and the Wabash rivers. This area became known as "Egypt" or "Little Egypt." Some have attributed the origin to pioneer families familiar with their Bibles who drew comparisons to the book of Genesis when famine struck Canaan and all the families had to go to Egypt to buy food. During the winter of the Deep Snow in 1830, grain, feed, and crop seed were destroyed. Yet wagon trains of pioneers traveled to the breadbasket of southern Illinois like ancient caravans of Israelites traveling to Egypt to buy grain. A common greeting on the road became, "We are the sons of Jacob, going into Egypt to buy corn." Southern Illinois became known as the granary of the state, and the identity with Egypt was accepted proudly.

Another story attributes the moniker to a biblical reference in 1799 by a Baptist missionary who, while traveling along the bluffs of the Mississippi, called the fertile bottom lands the "Land of Goshen," which was the best land in Egypt given by the Pharaoh to Joseph's family when they came to Egypt. Other similarities between the Mississippi River valley and the Nile were drawn from large ancient Indian burial mounds somewhat like the pyramids, the largest of which is in Cahokia, Illinois.

The Egyptian identity was memorialized in the names of many Illinois towns named after places in Egypt, such as Cairo (located near the junction of the Mississippi and the Ohio), Thebes, Karnak, and Dongola. Today many businesses still use the reference in their identity. Even the mascot of Southern Illinois University was named after the Egyptian dog "Saluki." So what is the connection to the regatta?

Crab Orchard Lake is four miles east of Carbondale, Illinois. It is a 7,000-acre lake built in 1936 and is now part of the Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge in southern Illinois. In 1958 the Crab Orchard Lake Sailing Club (COLSC) was formed, with a 25-year lease from the Refuge. Most of its members came from the town of Carbondale. It was the most active club in the lower Midwest, and it grew to 171 members at its zenith. Since it was located in "Little Egypt," it was natural to borrow from that identity. Its burgee, shown above, was modeled after the Egyptian flag.

The Egyptian Cup Regatta was the



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*The Cup was donated by COLSC member James "Pops" Brigham*

idea of Dr. Wilson R. Scott, who was the club commodore and one-time president of the International Lightning Class Association. Originally the Egyptian

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Cup was a multi-class regatta and, in the '70s, nationally ranked competitors came from all over Middle America. In 1966, 79 boats were registered and 15 were Scots. The classes included the Rebel, Flying Scot, C Scow, Lightning, Y-Flyer, and Sunfish. An early Scot sailor, Paul McRoy, actually broadcast the regatta on the local radio station, WCIL. Harry Carpenter remembers his first Cup at COLSC (he stayed with Paul McRoy), when Eric Ammann (then president of Gordon Douglass Boat Co.) sailed as his crew. He beat Jerry Hartman by half a boat length to win the regatta! The very first commercially delivered Flying Scot participated for over 40 years in the Egyptian Cup. It was boat #4 (1957), purchased by Jack and Lois Brown of Benton, Illinois. Clark Ashby of Carbondale, Illinois, became its owner, and last year he donated it to the Oakland Transportation Museum near the Scot factory in Deer Park, Maryland.

The Cup shown here is still in use and was donated by COLSC member James

“Pops” Brigham, Sr., who was an old-time A Scow sailor from Lake Geneva, Wisconsin. Ralph Darling won the first trophy in 1959. Paul Moore later added a new base for more names. Early and significant names on the trophy include Sandy Douglass (Harry reports it was one of Sandy’s favorite regattas), Buddy Melges, Jerry and Mike Hartman, Dale Vogel, and Ken Tempelmeyer.

Unfortunately management of the Crab Orchard Refuge became increasingly restrictive and the club lease was not renewed. Club facilities were turned over to a mismanaged private marina in 1985, and club activity slowed to almost nothing in the late '80s. Fleets at the COLSC dwindled until there were only the Flying Scot and Hobie fleets. The club continued regional regattas for those classes. By 1991 all COLSC activity ceased. When the lights of Flying Scot Fleet 30 dimmed, Scot sailor Clark Ashby turned to the Carlyle Sailing Association (CSA) and Scot Fleet 83 in 1993 to continue the Egyptian Cup. The

trophy was transferred to Fleet 83 and the Egyptian Cup Regatta was revived.

The Cup is alive and well today. Each year, Scot Fleet 83 hosts the Egyptian Cup at Carlyle Lake in Carlyle, Illinois. It's not unusual to find Harry Carpenter at this regatta, and the competitors have included some of the top sailors in the Midwest, such as Ted & Florence Glass, Bernie Knight, Ryan Malmgren & Carrie Carpenter, Bill Vogler & Jill Rendleman, Jim Harris & Betty Struckhoff, Frank Gerry & Marianne Gerry, Ben Williams & Deb Aronson, and others. Past winners include Gordon Douglass, Harry Carpenter, Tom Pinkel, Paul Moore, Bill Vogler, Larry Klick, Susie Stombaugh, and Ryan Malmgren.

This year the regatta will be held on August 31 through September 1, 2013 (Labor Day weekend). Come out and be part of a wonderful tradition and add your name to a long list of distinguished winners. Check out the registration form under the “Fleets” button and then click Flying Scot at [www.csa-sailing.org](http://www.csa-sailing.org). 🚩