

LIGHTNING

Flashes

From THE LIGHTNING CLASS ASSOCIATION

Office of the Secretary: 251 West Fayette St., Syracuse, N. Y.

BUFFALO BOAT WINS CHAMPIONSHIP

(Pictures of National Regatta on Pages 2 and 3)

John Stern of Buffalo Canoe Club Tops 25 National Regatta Entries at Skaneateles Sept. 5 and 6

The Lightning Class brought to a grand climax its third and most successful season on September 5th and 6th at Skaneateles Lake, N. Y., when twenty-five boats sailed a National Championship series packed with drama, thrills, exciting competition and skilled seamanship. John M. Stern of the Buffalo Canoe Club sailed Thunderbolt to a series total of 72 points and took the title of Class Champion which John Barnes of Skaneateles had held for the past two years.

Stern's nearest rival, David G. Cluett of Cedarhurst Yacht Club, sailing Linnet, trailed by nine points. Linnet was closely pressed by another Buffalo Canoe Club boat, Slalom, skippered by Baldwin Smith. The Skaneateles entry, George Barnes, with Trident, tied for third in point totals, but Slalom was awarded the official third place on the basis of boats defeated.

PERFECT WEATHER CONDITIONS

For the first time in the history of the Class the National Regatta was favored by near-perfect weather conditions that proved an ideal test of Lightning Class racing skill. The 10 to 12-mile-an-hour southwest breeze on Friday afternoon permitted the use of a triangular 3-mile course, which was sailed twice around. Saturday morning the breeze had freshened and shifted so that officials decided to use a windward-leeward course of one and a half miles length, sailed twice. By starting time in the final race, however, the wind was blowing due west at a 30-mile-an-hour velocity, with occasional puffs up to 35 and 40 miles. Most of the skippers took to reefs and sailed without jibs until the latter part of the race, when the breeze subsided. A triangular course was used Saturday afternoon.

The Buffalo skipper, Stern, unheralded in Class competition, represented a fleet which arose from the ashes of a disastrous boathouse fire last winter to a total of fourteen boats this summer, and he proved his championship mettle beyond a shadow of doubt. Though he was forced to accept a third spot in the opening race, when he trailed both Howard Siddons' Beth and Dave Cluett's Linnet, he handled his boat with finesse to earn first place in the second race and second place in the final.

AN EXCITING THIRD RACE

The Saturday afternoon final proved to be the outstanding race of the series. What had appeared to be a walk-away for Howard Siddons at the close of the second

race was changed, by Beth's disqualification in that race, to a free-for-all with several boats having a good chance for the title. Stern was in the number one spot with 48 points, but he was closely pressed by Cluett, who had 46, George Barnes with 45, and Baldwin Smith with 42.

On the reach to the first buoy Smith set the pace, with Siddons second, Erskine Baker of Portland's Centerboard Club third, Stern fourth, Dick Koehne fifth and Cluett sixth. The same relative positions were held by the leaders as the second buoy was rounded. On the run back to the first mark, Eskil Ringdahl of Lake Delta, Rome, N. Y., showed the greatest advance by moving up from the middle to second spot, while Floyd Reeves of Onondaga Y. C. moved up to fourth. Baker and Siddons dropped back, with Smith holding first and Stern third.

On the first leg of the final lap, Stern sailed into the lead, leaving Ringdahl, Siddons, Reeves and Smith in that order behind him. Back still further, Cluett and Barnes were staging a private battle for sixth, and there were few changes until the final leg to the home mark began. Here again Howard Siddons put on a grand exhibition of his sailing skill by drawing up even with Stern, leaving Ringdahl, Reeves, Smith and Cluett trailing in that order.

Half way home, five boats were definitely out in front, with any one having a chance to cross the line first, though the margin between Siddons and Stern was less than a boatlength. It was a ding-dong battle all the way to the mark, with Siddons crossing first by a 14-second margin. Ringdahl came in 25 seconds behind the new champion, less than a boat length ahead of Reeves, and he, in turn, leading Baldwin Smith by only 33 seconds. The closeness of the finish is illustrated by the fact that the first five boats were less than a minute and a half apart.

John M. Stern, the winner, who is a Buffalo, N. Y., business man, is new this year to the Lightning Class and was competing in his first National Regatta. He carried as his crew Robert Wood, Jr., designer of the famous U. S. pursuit plane, Airacobra, for the Bell Aircraft Company, and Robert Crane, both of Buffalo, N. Y.

YOUTH WELL REPRESENTED

Youth, however, had the largest representation of any Lightning Class regatta to date. Fifteen-year-old David Cluett of Cedarhurst Yacht Club, Lawrence, Long Island, was a contender from the start and proved his skill in the field of more experienced sailors by placing second in the series. His crew of Sam Robins and Bill Chisolm were both under sixteen. An even younger skipper, fourteen-year-old Graham (Bunny) Bourne represented the Chautauqua Lake Y. C. and finished with 20 points for 18th place. Ted Maher, class of the Riverside Y. C. fleet this

(Continued on page 2)

OFFICIAL SUMMARIES

Ser.	Place	Skipper	Club	Hailing Port	Boat Name	No.	Place and Points Won — Each Race					Total	
							1st	2nd	3rd				
1		John M. Stern	Buffalo Canoe Club	Buffalo, N. Y.	Thunderbolt	680	3	23	1	25	2	24	72
2		David G. Cluett	Cedarhurst Yacht Club	Lawrence, L. I.	Linnet	131	2	24	4	22	6	20	66
3		Baldwin Smith	Buffalo Canoe Club	Buffalo, N. Y.	Slalom	471	4	22	6	20	5	21	63
4		George Barnes	Skaneateles C. C.	Skaneateles, N. Y.	Trident	456	5	21	2	24	8	18	63
5		Enoch Sawyer	Syracuse Yacht Club	Oneida Lake, N. Y.	Fancy Pants	87	11	15	3	23	7	19	57
6		Eskil Ringdahl	Lake Delta Y. C.	Rome, N. Y.	Viking II	86	9	17	12	14	3	23	54
7		Theodore Maher	Riverside Y. C.	Riverside, Conn.	Slipper II	252	8	18	8	18	9	17	53
8		Howard Siddons	Island Heights Y. C.	Barnegat Bay, N. J.	Beth	220	1	25	DIS.	0	1	25	50
9		Charles Lewis	Seaside Park Y. C.	Barnegat Bay, N. J.	Totsie	308	12	14	5	21	11	15	50
10		Floyd E. Reeves	Onondaga Yacht Club	Syracuse, N. Y.	Sis IV	400	15	11	13	13	4	22	46
11		Erskine Baker	Centerboard Club	Portland, Maine	Electron	605	7	19	14	12	14	12	43
12		Richard Koehne	Cedarhurst Yacht Club	Lawrence, L. I.	Saucy Sal	16	10	16	10	16	15	11	43
13		Eugene Carpenter	Oneida Lake	Verona Beach, N. Y.	Grand Turk	359	13	13	7	19	16	10	42
14		A. S. Reynolds	Skaneateles C. C.	Skaneateles, N. Y.	Vare	556	17	9	9	17	12	14	40
15		Fred Uhlein	Crescent Y. C.	Chaumont, N. Y.	Shine	32	6	20	DNF	0	10	16	36
16		J. M. Riley	Fair Haven Bay Y. C.	Oswego, N. Y.	Poppy	180	16	10	11	15	21	5	30
17		M. W. Buckborough	South Haven Y. C.	South Haven, Mich.	Scamper	611	20	6	18	8	13	13	27
18		Graham Bourne	Chautauqua Lake Y. C.	Jamestown, N. Y.	Cutty Sark II	520	DNF	0	15	11	17	9	20
19		A. J. Webb	Riverside Y. C.	Riverside, Conn.	Frolic	249	21	5	19	7	19	7	19
20		James Taylor	Erie Yacht Club	Erie, Pa.	No Name	247	14	12	DNF	0	20	6	18
21		Ted Siferd	Indian Lake Y. C.	Lima, Ohio	Jean S.	120	18	8	17	9	DNF	0	17
22		Wm. E. Girkins	Devils Lake Y. C.	Toledo, Ohio	Sparkles	480	23	3	21	5	18	8	16
23		T. J. Newman	South Shore Y. C.	Columbus, Ohio	Marjorie Ann	557	22	4	20	6	23	3	13
24		George Joslyn	South Haven Y. C.	South Haven, Mich.	Joy	337	19	7	DIS.	0	22	4	11
25		Durker Braggins	Erie Yacht Club	Erie, Pa.	Scud	653	DIS.	0	16	10	DNS	0	10

(Continued from page 1)

season and Larchmont Race Week winner, though only seventeen, also carried a junior crew of Garry Fitzgerald and James Hall. His Slipper II placed a creditable seventh in the National series. James Taylor, who qualified from the Erie Y. C. fleet, brought with him three years of experience in a 14-foot dinghy class, though he is only seventeen years of age.



ABOVE: John M. Stern, Buffalo Canoe Club Skipper of Thunderbolt (left), receives congratulations from his crew of Robert Wood, Jr. (center), and Robert Crane at the finish of the final race in the 1941 National Championships.

The 69 visiting skippers and crews were accompanied by more than 150 friends, relatives and interested spectators from their respective clubs and cities, which, supplemented by a capacity crowd of spectators from Central New York, made the largest attendance ever to witness a Lightning Class championship. The visiting contestants were entertained at a clambake on Friday evening, followed by a dance at the Skaneateles Club. On Saturday night a banquet was held and trophies presented to the winners. It was announced that the Buffalo Canoe Club would be the scene of the next National Regatta.

BELOW: Start of the second race in the Championship series. Note two of the junior skippers, Ted Maher (No. 252) and Bunny Bourne (No. 522) in foreground. Next picture, taken during the final race Saturday afternoon, shows Bill Gukins (480) and Ted Siferd (120) reefed and



COMMENTS ON THE NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

By Judge Oliver, Chief Measurer and Vice-President

The 1941 National Championship Regatta at Skaneateles was most successful. It was held at a place of great beauty and charm. The weather and hospitality were perfect, the winds brisk, and, in the last race, strong enough to test seamanship as well as racing skill. Twenty-five boats participated, coming from points as distant as Michigan, Maine and New Jersey.

The boats were carefully inspected before being permitted to sail. In view of the many notices sent to owners, it was surprising to find that five of the boats had booms which exceeded by two or three inches the ten-foot overall length provided for by the specifications. These were promptly cut down to proper size. On several boats the skippers had failed to install permanent stoppers to prevent the booms coming below the black bands on the masts. These stoppers were installed. At this time, it is again suggested that these thoughtless variations be corrected. Surely no skipper wants to win any race, even in a local regatta, by evading the specifications. These variances are no doubt due primarily to mere inertia, but whatever is the cause, let us keep our class strictly one design. Before you put your boat up for the season see that it conforms in all details as set forth in the *Year Book*, pages 82 to 108.

Some of the skippers did not understand the reason for the disqualification of Boat No. 220 at the close of the second race. It may be helpful to the class to explain the situation in detail.

The first leg of the course was laid to windward. Just before the starting gun, Boat No. 456 was sailing toward the line hard on the wind on the starboard tack, and laying a course which would have enabled it to clear the stern of the judges' boat, marking the starboard end of the line, by about two or three feet. Boat No. 220 was to windward and inside of No. 456 as they approached the line. It had an overlap. As they reached the judges' boat, No. 220 called for room, but No. 456 held its course, *as the starting signal had not yet been made*. Under the circumstances No. 220 should have come about onto the port tack and jibed to starboard, so as to come through in the wake of No. 456. However, making a slight miscalculation in timing its start, No. 220 held its course also. Less than a second *before* the starting signal was made, it collided with the stern of the judges' boat. It was disqualified because, until the starting signal, it had no right to call for room, and should have respected the superior right of way of the leeward boat. Until the starting signal there is no required side for passing a starting mark, and such mark does not rank as an obstruction to sea room. Mere possession of an overlap under such circumstances gives no right to room.

Had the starting signal been given just before, instead of just after, the collision, Boat No. 220 would have had right of way. It was un-

without jibs tearing along at power-boat speed in the 35 to 40 mile breeze. AT RIGHT: The runner-up, David Cluett of Cedarhurst Y. C. (left), is shown on the deck of Linnet with crewmen Sam Robins and Bill Chisolm, all under sixteen years of age.

fortunate that Howard V. Siddons of Island Heights, N. J., a magnificent skipper, in the fastest boat in the regatta, had to be disqualified in that race, and thereby lost the championship, although his boat crossed the finish line first in all three races.

As many of our skippers will still be unconvinced, it seems advisable to refer them to the N. A. Y. R. U. rules involved.

The second and fourth sentences of Rule 34 read as follows:

"The marks of the starting line are marks of the course from the making of the preparatory signal for each class, but there is no required side until after the starting signal has been made. * * * A mark, until it becomes a mark of the course as above defined, shall be an obstruction to sea room."

It will be noted that a mark of the starting line has no required side until *after* the starting signal has been given and that, as it becomes a mark of the course at the preparatory signal, it then ceases to be an obstruction to sea room.

Rule 31, dealing with giving room at marks, provides in part:

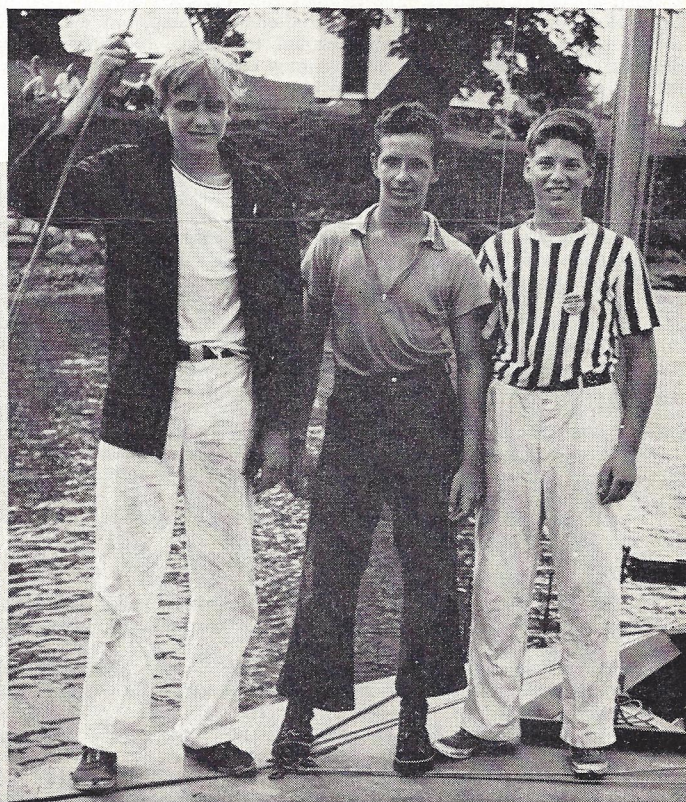
"If an overlap exists between two yachts when both of them, without tacking, are about to pass an obstruction to sea room, or a mark on the required side, the outside yacht must give room to the yacht in danger of fouling such mark or obstruction, whether she be the windward or leeward yacht, provided the yachts are overlapping on actually reaching such mark or obstruction."

Therefore, it is clear an overlap confers a right to room only in two cases: (1) when passing an obstruction to sea room (and Rule 34 above says a starting mark is not such an obstruction after the preparatory signal) and (2) when passing a mark *on the required side* (and Rule 34 above says a starting mark has no required side until after the starting signal). As Boat No. 220 was therefore merely a windward boat, with no right to call for room prior to the giving of the starting signal, it was required by the rules to give way.

The Executive Committee of the N. A. Y. R. U. rendered a decision on an appeal, in the case of Riptide vs. Stella, in January, 1937, which confirms the above ruling. That decision reads as follows:

"In this case two yachts closehauled sailing the same or nearly the same course and overlapped approached the Committee Boat marking the weather end of the starting line. When the starting signal was made, the bow of 'Stella,' the leeward and outside

(Continued on page 4)



(Continued from page 3)

yacht, was still about three feet from the stern of the Committee Boat, 'Stella' failed to give room to 'Riptide,' the overlapping inside yacht, for the reason that she was unable to do so without contact.

"Before the starting signal, the right of the outside yacht, 'Stella,' under Rule 30 (H), to decline to give the inside yacht, 'Riptide,' room to pass between the Committee Boat, which had no required side, and the outside yacht, is unquestioned."

"After the starting signal, however, the outside yacht, 'Stella,' could not divest herself of the obligation under Rule 31 to give the inside overlapping yacht, 'Riptide,' ample water to pass the Committee Boat, 'a mark,' on the required side, and she ought to have foreseen the conditions which arose and ought not to have been in a position where she could not comply with the requirements of that Rule, the instant it became effective.

"The decision of the Race Committee of the Edgartown Yacht Club in sustaining the protest of 'Riptide' under Rule XXXI is upheld and the appeal of 'Stella' is dismissed."

Please note that, in this decision, Riptide, which was approximately in the same position as Boat No. 220, was held to have the right to room solely because the starting signal was made *before* either boat reached the Committee Boat. The paragraph in italics shows that where, as in the case before us, the starting signal has not yet been given, the outside yacht, approximately in the position of Boat No. 456, has the unquestioned right to decline to give room.

If further authority is needed, refer to the 1940 edition of "The Sailing Rules in Yacht Racing," by George E. Hills. On page 42 he says:

"In other words, during the preparatory period a mark of the starting line is neither an obstruction to sea room within the meaning of Rule 31 entitling the inside yacht to room, nor has it a required side on which it must be passed. Any other construction would make the second sentence of Rule 34 meaningless."

On page 171 he emphasizes the distinction that exists with respect to rights at the starting marks *before* and *after* the starting signal has been made.

The Siddons decision was a hard one for the Committee to make because the penalty, under the rules, had to be so drastic for the slight error made. However, as the collision was with the judges' boat, and was observed by the judges, it could not be ignored. The incident was reported to the Committee Boat from the judges' boat before either boat left the course. Furthermore, we had made a similar ruling for the same kind of happening at the start of the first race. That decision had been easy to make because the collision had occurred several seconds before the starting gun, and the disqualified skipper, in any event, had not finished among the leaders. The Siddons case involved only a fraction of a second and it meant the loss of the championship, but we nevertheless could see no course to follow but to enforce the rules in the Siddons case as we had done in the prior case. I participated in the hearing and voted for the disqualification because I am convinced it was proper. You can appreciate how I felt in doing so when I report that, since its organization, I have been the Captain of the Barnegat Bay Fleet which Siddons represented in the Championship, and it was at my most urgent solicitation that he and his crew made the journey. I felt the loss of the championship almost as deeply as did Siddons and his crew.

For the purpose of our decision in the Siddons case, it was unnecessary to determine exactly what courses were being sailed by the two boats. In arriving at our conclusion, we assumed that Boat No. 220 was sailing approximately the same course as Boat No. 456. If, instead of sailing such course, Siddons' boat was coming in free upon a boat sailing hard on the wind, his position was doubly untenable. This is pointed out solely to emphasize the fact that full and careful compliance with the rules is just as essential to victory as sailing skill and boat speed.

For the benefit of Lightning skippers who have not studied the racing rules, I recommend a careful study of the following, in the order named: "Principal Sailing Rules of the N. A. Y. R. U." interpreted by Fearon P. Moore of 3 Tuxedo Road, Glen Ridge, N. J. This is a small, graphic digest and makes an excellent starting point.

"Yacht Racing Rules and Tactics," by Gordon C. Aymar. This book contains 130 action and diagram photographs.

"Year Book of the North American Yacht Racing Union." This book contains not only the rules, but many important decisions.

"The Sailing Rules in Yacht Racing," by George E. Hills. This book contains a masterly analysis and discussion of the rules, and should be studied last. It represents advanced study.

There are many other books of great value. I have mentioned the above only because they happen to be the books with which I am most familiar.

May we hope that all Lightning skippers know their rules thoroughly before the next National Championship. In addition to the matter above discussed, beware of barging at the start. Any skipper up-wind of the line before the start is definitely flirting with disaster, because he may

NEW REGISTRATIONS INCREASE

Stickle Bros. of Sparta, N. J., is building two new boats for the growing Lake Mohawk fleet. Walter A. Clayton will have boat No. 769. The owner of the second boat, No. 770, is undetermined as yet.

Lightning interest in Texas continues to increase, as evidenced by a registration, No. 771, purchased recently by R. W. Pitts of Brownsville; No. 774, purchased by John H. Snyder of Dallas; No. 777, purchased by J. Lewis Foster of Wichita Falls, and No. 781 by H. Dial of Houston.

Two of five or six new boats now under construction for the Devil's Lake Y. C. Fleet will be owned by H. F. Rankins of Toledo, Ohio, and R. L. Robinson of Ypsilanti, Michigan. According to reports, the Devil's Lake Fleet, stimulated by C. B. Crittenden's win at the Lake Michigan District Regatta and William E. Girkins' participation in the Nationals at Skaneateles, expects to become the largest and most active group in the Michigan District during the coming season.

Bernard Halterbeck has taken registration number 773 for one of the many new Lightnings on the Long Island area. Mr. Halterbeck lives in Long Island City.

Donald W. Neal of Pine Lake, near Pontiac, Michigan, is building his own boat, for which he has registration No. 776.

The first Lightning to be identified with the Crescent Sail Yacht Club of Detroit, Michigan, is being built by the new owner, W. G. Phillips of Detroit. He has No. 778.

In Hartford, Connecticut, No. 782 is being built by Sailor G. E. Tranberry, while Clifford Marshall of Jamaica, N. Y., is at work on No. 787 and Raymond Stewart of Royal Oak, Md., starts construction of No. 788. Dr. C. Spencer Davison of Salem, N. J., is also trying his hand at construction with No. 793.

Professional builders have been active this fall, too. Dunphy Boat Corp. applied for six new registrations this month, Sculthorpe Boat Works at West Point Pleasant, N. J., has one new registration, and Walter C. Rice of Niantic, Conn., also has one. Hatley Craft of North Hatley, Quebec, has sold one Lightning to Mr. Hugh Chambers for use at Brome Boating Club, Knowlton, Que., and is building another which he expects will be owned at the same club. This looks like a definite fleet prospect for Canada.

BUNNY BOURNE RECEIVES "YOUNGEST SKIPPER" TROPHY

Graham ("Bunny") Bourne of Lakewood, N. Y., skipper of "Cutty Sark II," who represented the Chautauqua Lake Yacht Club fleet, was awarded a trophy for being the youngest skipper in the National Championship Regatta at Skaneateles last month. Bunny is the son of Dr. and Mrs. Malcolm G. Bourne, and earned the right to represent the Chautauqua Lake fleet through his sailing skill in competition with skippers many years his senior in age and experience. Although he did not finish the first race at Skaneateles, he placed 15th and 17th in the strong field of 25 for the second and third races to earn a total of 20 points and 18th place in the series. He had his 14th birthday on April 21 this year.

find that he is converging on a boat sailing a proper course and that he is therefore not in a position to claim an overlap, even though the starting signal is made before he reaches the starting mark.