

# BEACHCOMBING TO THE CHAMPIONSHIP OR 31,600 MILES TO VICTORY

By Carl Eichenlaub

In the spring of 1955 I decided to build a Lightning for my father. The boat's name was "Billie" after my mother, it's number was 6028. Little did I think at the time that this boat would lead my crew and me to four adventurous trips from coast to coast. This boat was built very light and similar in many respects to the Stars that we were building at the shop, however, since I was an International 14 dinghy sailor and had limited Lightning experience (crewed for Bill Pirie at Detroit in '54) I rigged the boat somewhat like my 14 with certain Star boat variations. After sailing the boat for 2 months in various California regattas both my dad and I figured we had a pretty good boat so the next step was the sail in the Districts and try for bigger things. For the Districts I had as a crew my wife, Dimi, (the best International 14 crew at the time, probably anywhere) and Carl Hultgren, another member of our local 14 fleet. The crew worked together splendidly and we won the Districts so we decided to bundle "Billie" up and head for New Orleans.

Before starting the trip across country I decided to consult with my old friend, Don Adams. Don was an expert on long distance travelling having towed a Penguin across country many times behind an old 1933 Plymouth with a top speed of 40 miles per hour. Don also knew how

to economize as he usually bought a loaf of bread and a jar of jam to last him the trip for food and financed the gas for the return trip by selling his sails at the regatta. Don, however, knew how to tie down a boat for a long trip and was very helpful. He showed me how blocks and all loose gear must be secured and the boat must be completely covered for the haul across desert regions. Don also showed me how he tied a rope to the windshield wipers and through both side windows and back again to the wipers. When he ran into rain the crew could work the wipers by pulling the rope back and forth. I did not need this bit of info., however, since our wipers worked by themselves.

At New Orleans we hoped to find out how California ranked with the really top Lightnings; and this is the subject we discussed all across the desert and the long stretches in Texas.

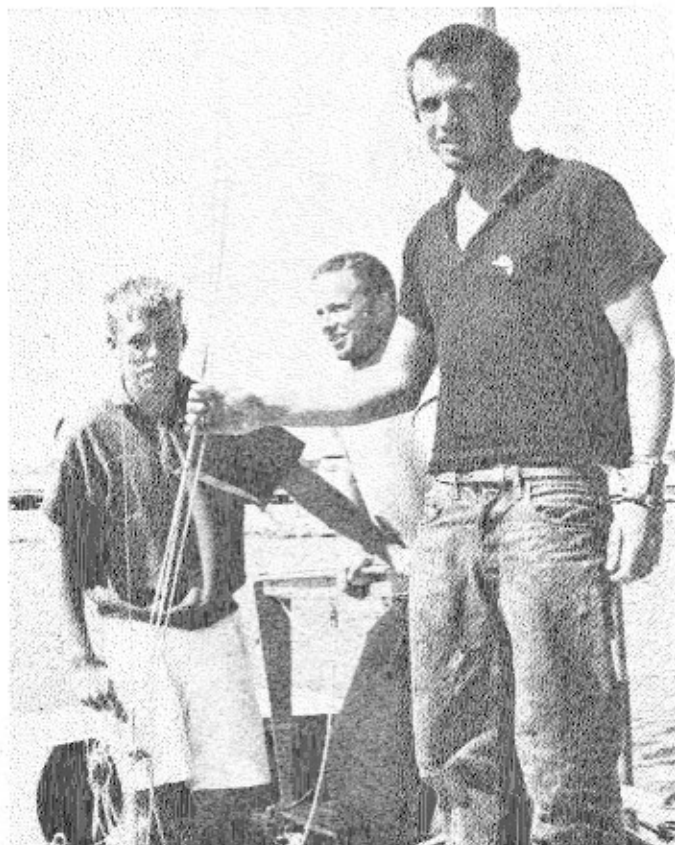
During the series at New Orleans we found that our windward work was very good in general as we usually were among the top boats at the first weather mark but did very poorly off wind. Our bad off-wind performance to a great part was due to an outmoded spinnaker and partly our own fault at not being experienced Lightning sailors. At any rate, our best race was the third race (1st.) and I can remember promising Hultgren on the run that if he kept the shute full and nobody passed us that I would sing at his wedding. Since this time I have promised him during various series including the Mallory that I would sing, dance and do various other stunts at his wedding if he would only keep up ahead on the runs. He has sworn to this day that he will hold me to my promises, in which case his wedding will be quite a spectacle.

After the third race we were 2nd. in the series; 2 points out of 1st. The fourth race for us was a bad one since my wife fell overboard on a reach and we could not recover her. The last race we led all the way around by several minutes only to fall into a hole at the last mark and finish about 7th.

On the way home we decided that this cross-country travel was a snap and that we would keep trying to win this elusive regatta so that the home folks would have an opportunity to race in the "Big Casino."

The following year I did a little Lightning sailing but not as much as I should have so that by regatta time in '56 we were not too well prepared and my ace crew, Hultgren, was in the Army so I had to ring in a very fine Starboat sailor, Paul Murrill, as a sub. This time since my wife was teaching we decided that Paul and I would tow the boat to Buffalo behind my new '56 Ford truck and Dimi would fly. This added expense forced us to really beachcomb to save more.

We arrived in Buffalo somewhat haggard after sleeping in our truck during the long haul but nevertheless we were hot to compete and were full of hope that this would be the year. The "Billie" was really cooking during the tune up races and it looked good for us. However, once the series started we began to slip and wound up a very



Left to right: John Shine, Malcolm Whitt, and Carl Eichenlaub, Jr.  
Crew of International Champions.



poor 16th in the standings. I might say, however, that even though we were disappointed we had a ball at the series and enjoyed renewing the friendships that we had made the previous year. We also enjoyed our trip to the regatta by truck and even decided to go back the Northern Route (Hwy. 30) for the scenery.

The following year we were unable to go to the "Big Series" as we were building Stars and Ocean Racers at the shop and were too busy but we missed making the trip so much that I decided never to let business interfere with my sailing again.

The next Internationals for us was at Spray Beach. I was very rusty for this one, having raced my Star, "Flimsy," all the previous year but I decided to go anyway and see what could be done. For this regatta I had for the first time as crew, Douglas Collins, and my father. Doug and I drove the truck to Spray Beach and my father flew. During this trip I came to find out why someone as young as Doug could be so big; he ate like a horse. We would stop at a restaurant and eat a large dinner, only to have Doug, after dessert, order a hamburger to settle his stomach.

On our way to this regatta we again took the Northern Route and stopped in Las Vegas and various other points of interest along the way and sleeping in the bed of the truck at night. We arrived at Little Egg during a storm at about midnight and were able to talk the caretaker into letting us sleep in his sail storage barn.

During the series at Little Egg we had several flashes of brilliancy (a 3rd. in the tune-up and a 3rd. in the middle race) but most of our races were mediocre. This was not the fault of the crew but the fault of the operator. I just didn't have the old bomb going.

Next year I foolishly continued to race the Star and forget Lightnings, this, of course, was a mistake as the two boats are entirely different and sailing one sure doesn't help the performance of the other. At any rate, the next year for a crew I had the great Hultgren as well as Douglas Collins. A tremendous group, full of vim, vigor and devilment. This was the first time that we were faced with the problem of carrying three men in our little truck but we decided to solve this detail under way so we shoved off for Detroit.

En route, everything went smoothly until Douglas began to stretch out a bit in the cab. This made it rather congested so we held a vote and moved Douglas back aft. We then carefully observed him all through the desert to see if he would survive so that in case he did we could also enjoy the freedom of lounging in the back. After our observation proved that survival was possible, the rest of our trip was comfortable because if we wanted fresh air all we did was take our cigars and retire to the rear. We did, however, receive some strange stares once we got to civilization from various cars on the turnpikes who seemed to notice a member of the crew riding with bare feet hanging over the tail gate while smoking a cigar and watching the scenery roll by.

At Detroit we did so poorly that it would not even be worth while writing down the results but we did learn a lot and made up our minds to go home, peddle the boat and start fresh with the idea of coming back next year substantially improved.

When I arrived home the first thing I did was sell "Billie" to Glen McPherron of our club and write Margaret Teske for measurement certificates. Then I assembled the greatest bunch of yachting brains that I could dig up and we went to work to dream up a fantastic

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*No wonder Doc Murphy didn't want to race.*

Lightning that would give the fickle crew and operator incentive to win a big one. After much haggling and designing we finally took out the transit and shot in Lightning #7420; the date was late October, 1959. By November we had a varnished beauty ready for launching except for one thing, the name. My wife, at this point, took over and demanded the boat be named "Bull" for all of the bull sessions that had preceded the boat's construction. The features that we dreamed up were too numerous to reiterate in this article but they included such things as 100 lbs. of heavy wood laminated into the center section of the hull, yet the rest of the boat is so well engineered that she is minimum weight, a very light, flexible spar with a minimum of windage; a ten to one boom vang; a beautifully faired hull, to our design, within LCA tolerances; various pumps at different points in the bilge; very sharp chines; very sharp skeg and a real good varnish finish. A lot of the above, of course, is controversial among many sailors. However, difference in opinions is what makes boating interesting and we believed in this monster that we had created and that was the important thing. Sailing the boat against my old boat proved to us that we were on the right track so we decided to take "Bull" on the Southern Circuit.

For this trip I took as my crew, Malcolm Whitt (the Univac) and Randy McLaren, both 200 lb. men and both very good sailors. We again wrapped up the boat (this time in our brand new trailing cover) and headed east. Being Southern California fair-weather boys we were not

equipped for what was to come. Up in the mountains, outside of San Diego about 80 miles, we ran into snow. I insisted that this was a detail and that we would soon be in the desert and any fool knew that it never snowed in the desert. This hypothesis proved correct until we got to Wilcox, Arizona, where it began to snow in dead earnest and things began to get a bit chilly in our truck (no heater).

The rest of the trip was a little hectic as the farther east we got the harder it snowed until it was impossible to see out of the windshield because it would freeze. This problem was partially solved by taking a lantern out of the boat (we use the lantern in light air as a tell-tale), and, taking turns, we commenced to blow the heat from the lantern onto the windshield. After a while the combination of smoke from the lantern and smoke from the cigars began to get to us so we opened the windows. This naturally caused us to freeze so we wrapped up in blankets like Indians and were able to proceed. Crossing the Mississippi River bridge was quite an experience for us sunny Californians as it was frozen solid from one guard rail to the other.

After reaching the other side of the river we drove a few miles to a little town called Jackson, Miss., where we spent a day and a night snowed in, reading the weather report of the previous night which proclaimed that all was well.

The next day we were able to proceed with the aid of chains but gradually as we got farther toward Savannah



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the weather improved.

We were fortunate enough to win the regatta at Savannah which whetted our appetite for St. Pete. At St. Pete we managed to eke out a 5th in the series and reestablish our own faith that perhaps with practice the crew and I could make "Bull" really go.

After arriving back in California I decided to practically live in the boat and really learn to sail her; so all winter long we tuned, caressed and groomed "Bull" in many races and practice sessions for the coming series at Tawas. We felt that to windward the boat was going equal or better than the best and especially good with moderate air and high seas (ocean ground swell). For these conditions we were using a beautiful, deep draft suit of North sails and all our practice was done with this suit. When the time drew near to leave for Tawas we became aware that a change in sails would probably be necessary as we would be sailing in more wind than Southern California and the seas would be smoother (a chop but probably not a ground swell), therefore we elected to use Murphy and Nye sails for several reasons: 1) they were smaller and flatter enabling us to feather higher in smooth seas with wind; 2) M & N sails have a beautiful leach runoff on both main and jib; 3) these sails like North's were cut for flexing spars, the only sensible way to cut a sail.

My crew of John Shine and Malcolm Whitt, on arriving at Tawas, after a very pleasant cross-country hop decided to attack the problem of winning the Internationals in this manner: All pre-race tune-ups would be only with boats that we rated as hot (boat speed). This list included 1) Cawthra, 2) Nickles, 3) Carter Ford, 4) Bill Uhle, 5) Tom Allen. I might say that after sailing the regatta we would unquestionably add others to this list but these are the fellows that we felt had the greatest boat speed.

We decided that John Shine, since he weighs 140 lbs. would sit in the middle and be used to run all over the boat like a rabbit untangling lines and hiking in light air while Malcolm got down in the boat to reduce windage. We would not use a compass but rather would sail the series boat for boat and try always to rely on our ability to point higher. We would be very cautious in the qualifying series and just try to place. It was apparent to the three of us after the tune-up series that the "Bull" was doing exactly as she was supposed to do and that if we aimed her right we had a very good chance.

After the first 3 races of the "Big Series" we enjoyed a 10 point lead and I was very proud of the crew as they had arisen to this great challenge and things were working out well. The 4th race started out in a terrible blow and we were worried after the start to tack to a port tack for fear of losing momentary control or of hiking very hard for fear of turning over to windward. Instead we voted to rely on her off-wind performance and make the best out of the beat. We rounded the first weather mark 23rd but with no panic and very well under control. We cinched down on the vang (10-1) and let her roll on the hump line to the next mark. On this first reach we picked off a few boats so that by the time we started the 2nd weather leg we were back in the boat race; arriving at the 2nd weather mark in fair shape but very determined to make her go on the reach. This reach was the greatest thrill I have ever experienced in sailing. About half way down this leeward leg we shook "Bull" over her bow wave and started on a fantastic plane which carried us all the way from about 12th up to Bud Olsen's transom (he was 4th). Around the leeward mark we actually held onto 4th for a while, at any rate, we wound up 7th at the line but were thankful to have salvaged the race and maintain our 4 point lead.



The last race we voted not to try to sit on Cawthra at the start but rather to stay near him and always remain on the same tack but slightly to weather. This way with any break we could get by him but at worst he probably couldn't put 3 boats between us. On the second weather leg we got our break and staying slightly to weather payed off as we lifted on a favorable slant of air way out abeam of Hank so that at the mark which we just layed he had to fetch sailing across on a header. This, in effect, was the series and we had nothing to do the rest of the race but chase Carter Ford and think about the awesome task of shaving our 2 week old beards.

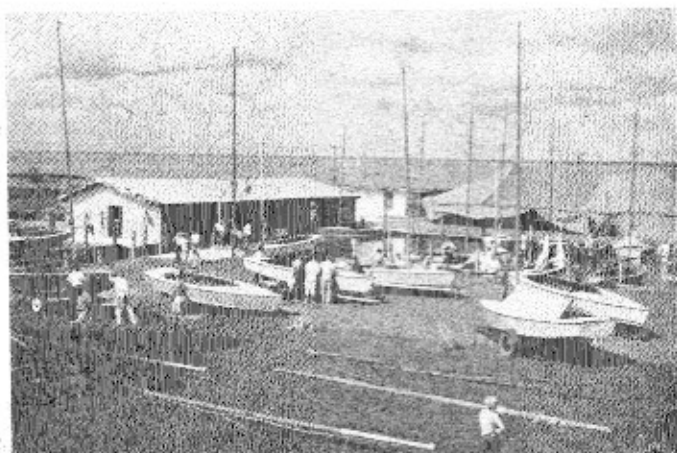
My various crews and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the host clubs that we have visited in our travels and the LCA for putting up with us Southern California "slobs".

I would also like to urge everybody in the Association this summer to break out a box of cigars, a jar of jam, a loaf of bread, buy a truck and head west. Cross-country travel with a boat is a ball that every Lightning owner should experience.

## CALIFORNIA! HERE WE COME



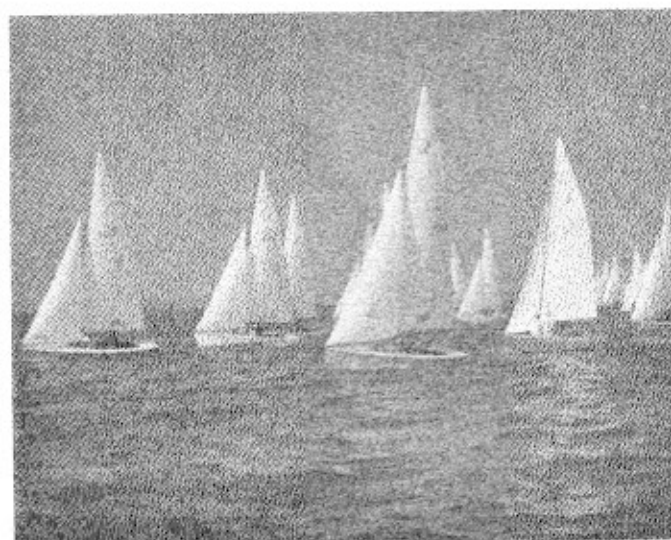
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*Start of first International race, Bernel in #7244 went on to win this one.*



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1960 Great Lakes Champion

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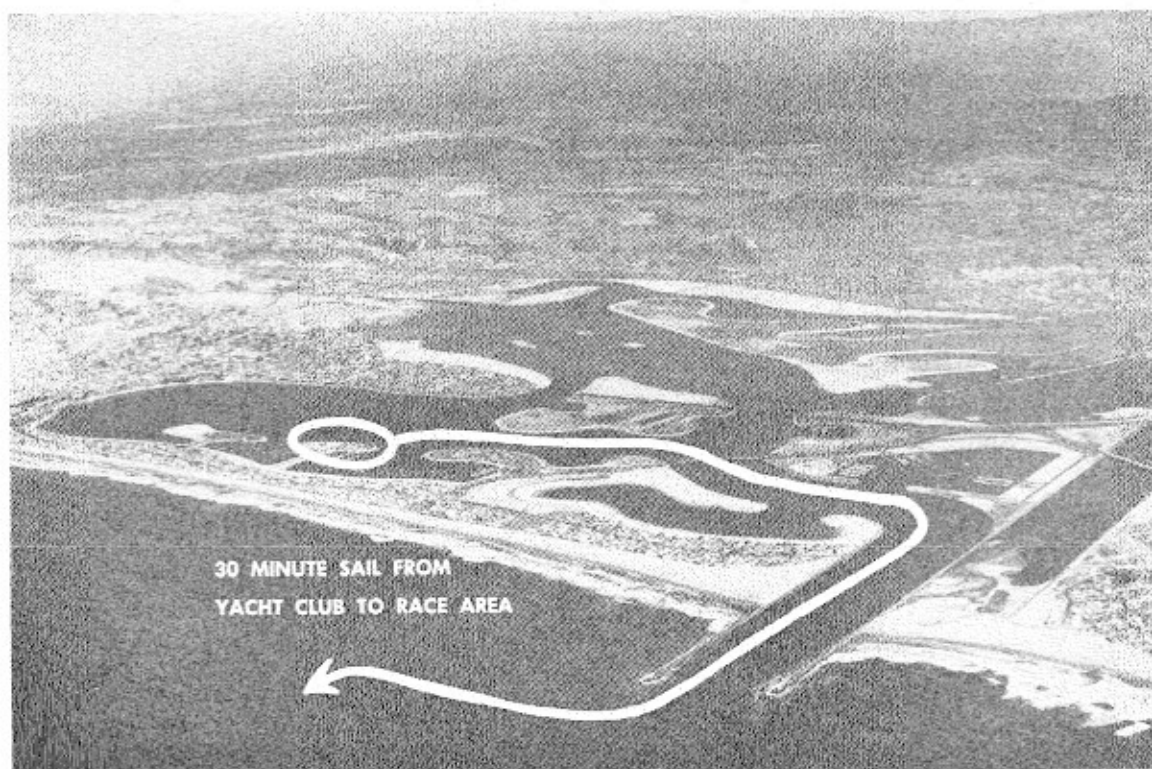
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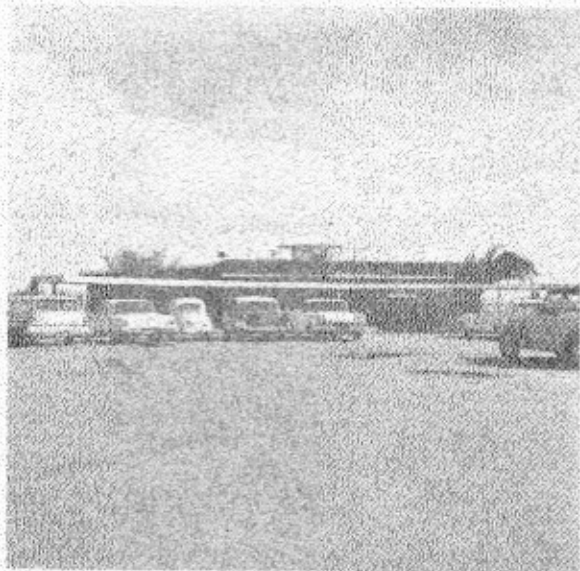


# A VISIT TO MISSION BAY YACHT CLUB

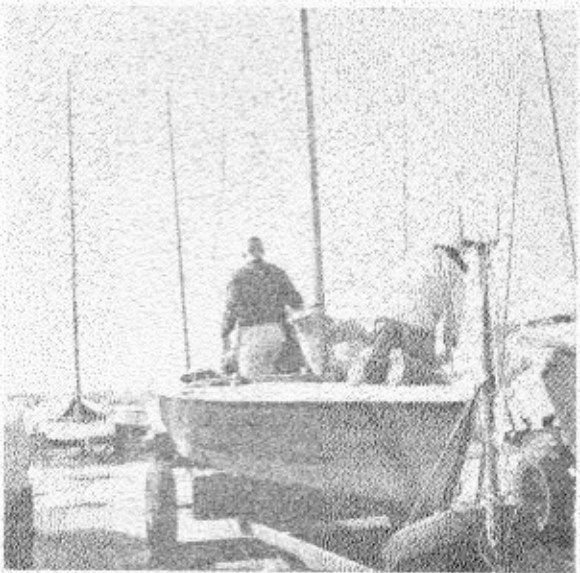
By Henry & James Burke

I suppose many club members are wondering what Lightning sailing is like at the Mission Bay Yacht Club at San Diego. So—here is what we saw when we had the pleasure of visiting the club as guests of Mr. Carl Eichenlaub, Jr. on Sunday, November 13.

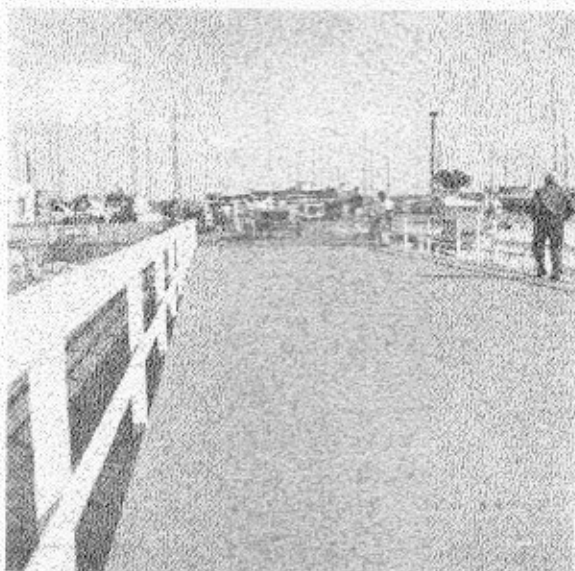
The modern club house is situated on Mission Bay. It's a neat, well maintained club where food and refreshments may be obtained. All races are run from the "control tower" on the club house roof. The permanent starting line is at the club house. You can see the boats start and finish from the club house deck, which makes for ideal arm chair skipping.



Here is the club house—note the "control tower" on the roof. The starting line is to the right, boat storage to the left, and the pier to the electric crane at the photographer's back.



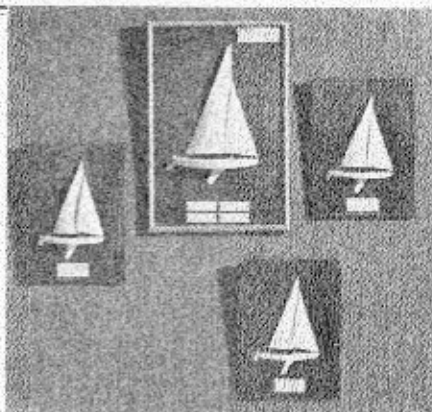
The storage yard is a busy place when there is sailing to be done.



This fine pier leads from the storage yard to the launching cranes.

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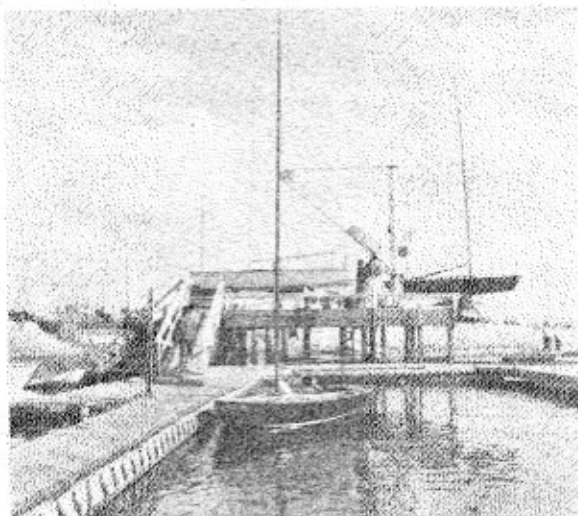
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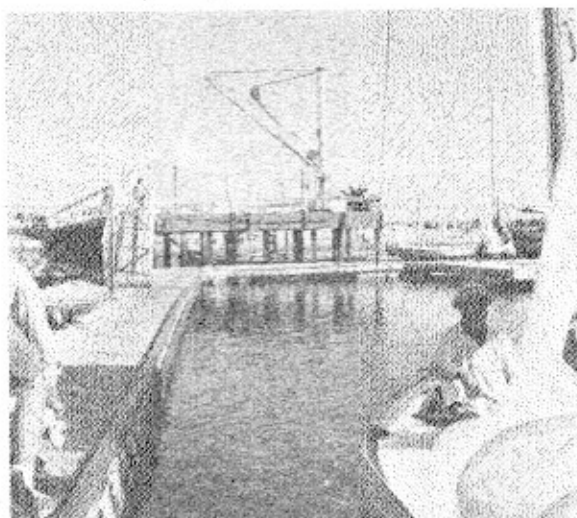
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WELLFLEET, MASS.

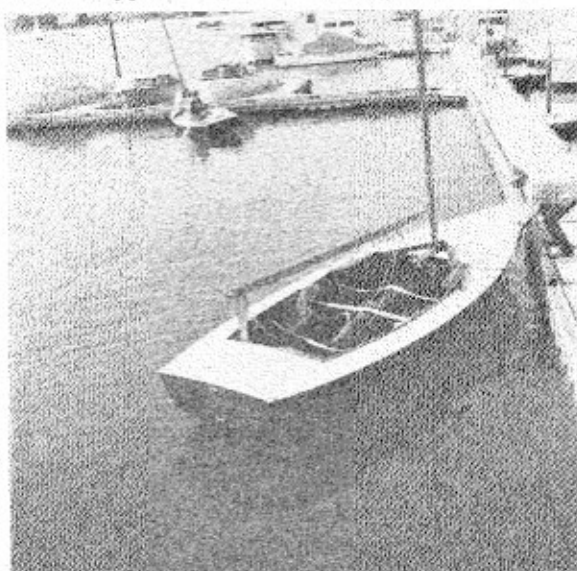




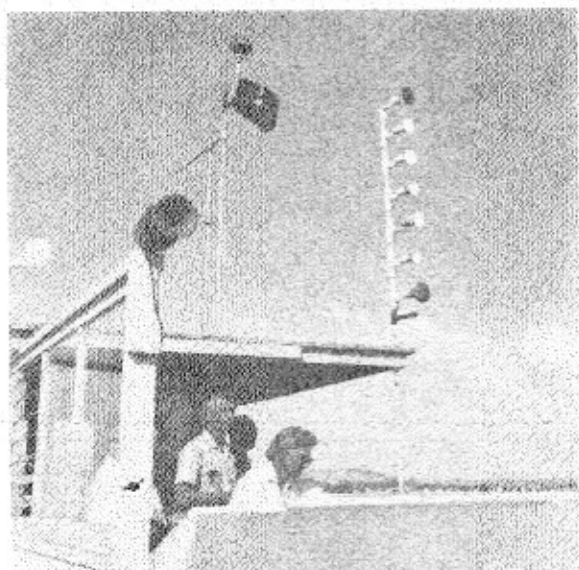
The club's two electric cranes are putting two Lightnings into the water. International contestants will use these facilities for launching.



This Lightning is launched and ready to go. Who is the handsome skipper? I don't know, he didn't Shay!



A club member, (some are slob), ties up before putting on sails.

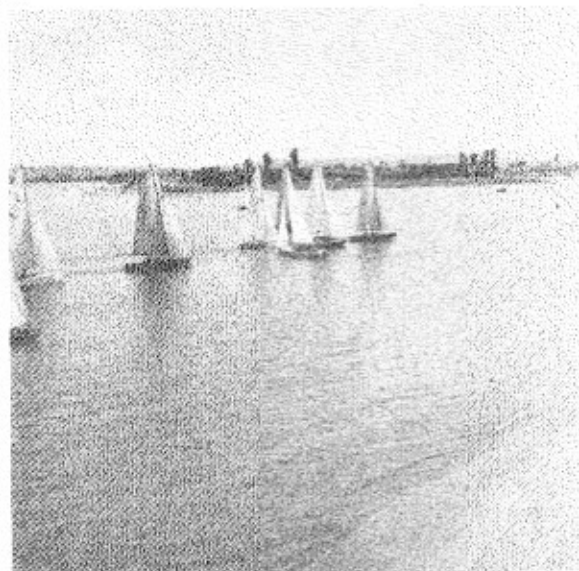


This is an enthusiastic sailing club where races start and finish every few minutes on a sailing day. All is controlled by this busy tower on the club roof.

The five white and one red light face the starting line. All are lit at 5 minutes before a start. At intervals of one minute the white lights go out. This picture taken at 4 minutes before a start shows one white light out. The red light signals 30 seconds, and a horn signals the start.

The speaker on the pole back of the lights turns on a swivel so that announcements may be made in any direction.

This fine control tower will not be used at the Internationals, since these races will be sailed in the open ocean.



This shot of the start of the Lightning class was taken from the club house roof.

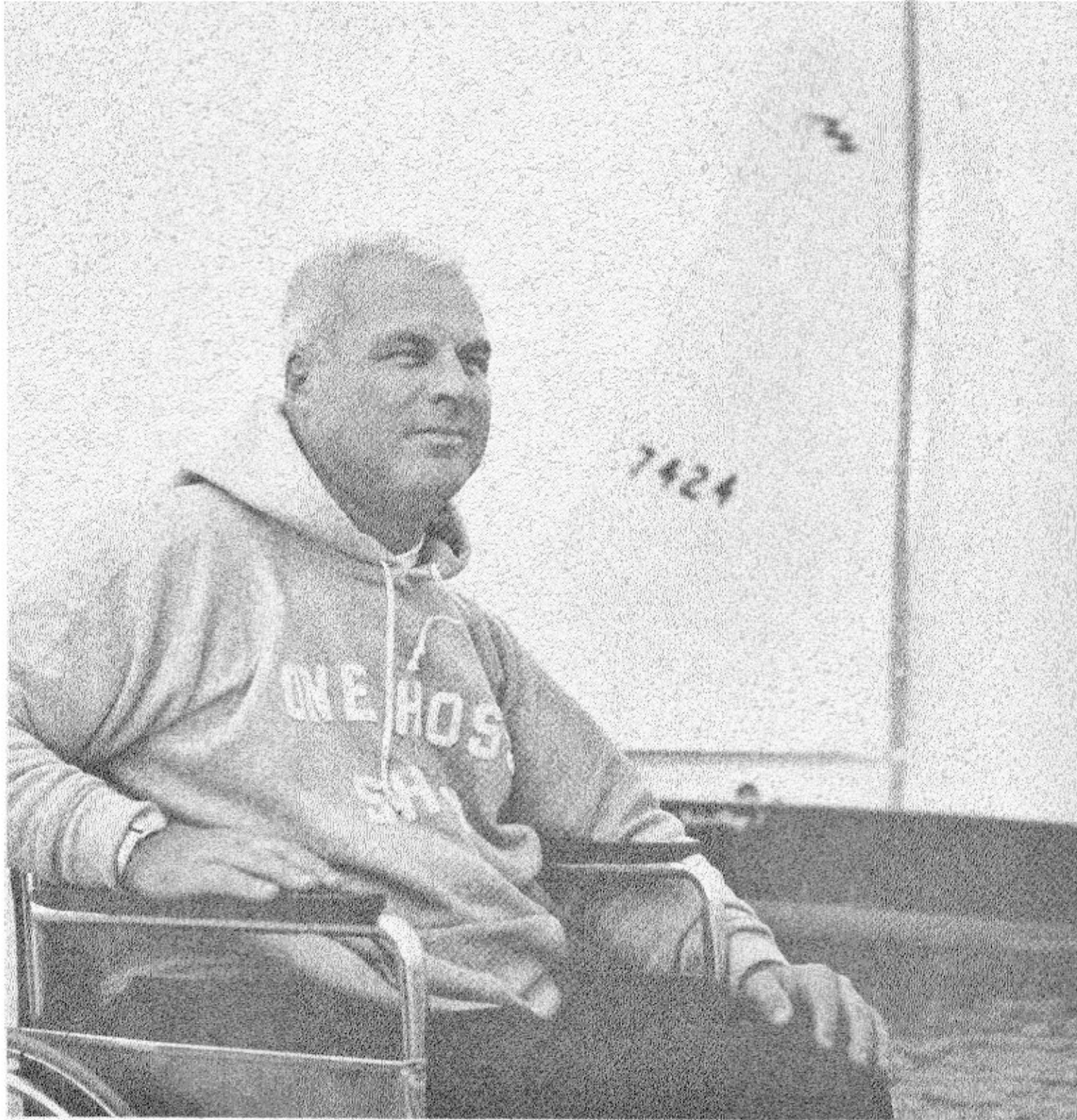
So—that's what we saw. It was a beautiful day. We got a nice sunburn at this friendly, very active, all-year sailing club.

All who attend the Internationals will find this a wonderful place to sail, and the club's facilities are out of this world. Imagine—electric cranes?

Well it's tough to see how others live—but back to ice, mud, and rust in Virginia.

Oh—who won the race? The Bull, natch!





## Congratulations to Dave Shay...

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# DOUBLE DECKING TO CALIFORNIA FOR THE NORTH AMERICAN CHAMPIONSHIP

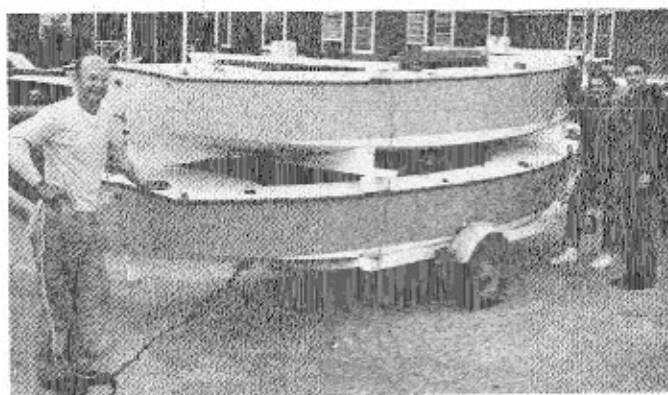
By Bob Lippincott

The prospect of trailing to the west coast next August is frightening indeed, however, the many problems of time, money, roadability of trailers and cars for such a long trip can be cut in half by "double decking."

The feasibility of this system is proven by the 4400 miles the Lippincotts have traveled double decked this past year, also the delivery of two new boats to Colorado in this manner.

These are a few basic precautions that must be taken to insure a trouble free trip.

1. The trailer selected must be sturdy.
2. The tires must be in good shape, a spare is a must with a jack that will work.
3. The tread of the wheels, i.e., distance between the tires must be at least 6'6", wider if possible.
4. It is important that the trailer be low. Many of the popular metal trailers are low slung, that is the boat sets low inside the wheels. This gives you a good start to maintain a low center of gravity.
5. Wheel bearings must be inspected and packed with the proper grease, especially on the small wheel type of trailer. An extra set of bearings is not expensive and a good precaution to have along on the trip.
6. The trailer hitch should be well fastened to the frame of the car because it will be subjected to strains not normally encountered with only one boat.
7. Safety chains from each side of the car bumper should be fastened to each side of the trailer to do a good job of keeping the trailer straight in case of hitch failure.
8. As much weight as possible should be eliminated from the top boat. All gear from the top boat should be securely packed in the bottom boat.
9. Bailers in both boats should be left open to permit water to drain.
10. Chafing and damage to the hulls can be entirely eliminated by intelligent and conscientious packing.
11. Racking boat beds for the top boat demands special attention. Make shift will not do. Care must be taken to maintain enough height for the keel to clear the spray shields intersection of the bottom boat, likewise skeg and back deck.
12. A third boat bed under the bow of the bottom boat takes the spring out of the trailer tongue and prevents the bobbing that tends to fatigue welds.
13. Hitch weight should be about 75 to 90 pounds.
14. Hold down bars for the top boat are standard and carry both masts securely padded and lashed together. Tie masts to gudgeons and bow fitting in addition to the regular mast racks on the hold down bars.



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# LIGHT AN' BAFFLING

By Karl Smither



*Karl Smither taking time out for tea!*

When ye Yearbook Editor asked me to write a page article on racing in subject airs, my first reaction was that the whole yearbook did not contain enough pages to cover the problem adequately. These are some notes on the most vital points. I give you my own best ideas freely, because I believe that the strength of the Lightning Class lies in the willingness of its members to tell each other what they have discovered to make their boat go faster.

We are dealing with the wind—that invisible, ever-changing breath of the skies. The most fickle breezes seem to be associated with a high barometer, and vary generally between north and west, back and forth, in greater and lesser swings and puffs. I privately suspect that this is caused by the descending tendency of the air in a barometric high. More and more air is being poured down onto the surface. It just does not know where to go. So, it goes wandering, at constantly varying velocities. Our problem is to use this to our advantage, particularly in working to windward.

First, we must have SENSITIVE MEANS of telling what the instant wind is. I prefer a home made masthead fly. I make my own, using a 12" piece of 1/16" aluminum tubing, with a 9" piece of nylon seam binding taped to the tip thereof. Such tubing is available in hobby shops, and the seam binding at department store notion counters. The gadget is delicate and therefore expendable, but the cost is modest. You should always have a spare on hand. I do not mean shroud tell-tales should be discarded, because the more indicators you have the better, within reason. Every so often you race on a day when the water is flatter than a platter, but there is a zephyr stirring aloft. Then the masthead fly tells you its direction, and lets you take the tack which is most advantageous.

Other good light air indicators are:

1. Cigarette smoke, either from hand held or clipped to

a shroud. A pack of cigarettes and matches, in a waterproof container can readily be stowed aboard.

2. A stub of candle set on deck. The flame gives a good indication in extremely light airs.

3. Carl Eichenlaub's barnyard lantern with the wick turned up high, so that it will smoke profusely. This is one gadget that really makes you able to "smell the wind."

All these indicators help you tack promptly on a wind-shift if headed, especially if the header is a trifle stronger.

OBSERVATION is the key to many situations. In addition to being alert to any changes shown by your wind indicators, don't despise a distant catspaw, or change in the behavior of smoke from a far away chimney. When racing within sight of the club flagpole keep a weather eye on that, too. Taking note of the sequence of wind changes on other days often gives you a tip on what to expect. I have sneaked in toward a northerly shore in a southerly drifter, and made out like a bandit when the new wind came off shore, as I had seen it do on other days.

The ANGLE OF HEEL of your boat can be very important. Up wind I believe that if you keep a Lightning heeled just enough to keep the leeward half of the bottom horizontal you will go best. This somewhat reduces wetted area and more important, makes the sails "sleep". Then sails do not flap around as much and assume a fair curve which drives the boat better. When sailing downwind with the spinnaker in very light airs, it helps to heel the boat to weather. This makes the spinnaker spread out to weather and fill better. Of course you will need to lash the main boom to the leeward shroud to keep it from flopping back into the boat.

An extreme example of heeling has been dubbed "Schnitzeling". This consists of hauling the centerboard all the way up, and having the crew sit way out to leeward so the rubrail touches the water. The leeward chine then serves as the lateral resistance. The sheets should be well eased for this caper, which is particularly effective for reaching in light airs. Norm Schaller, sailing "Schnitzel" in the 1950 Internationals at the Buffalo Canoe Club made this famous by outdistancing the fleet in one race. Fortunately the water was clear, so the competition could see his board was all the way up. They soon caught on and next race held him even.

SHEETS should be eased slightly in light air because forward drive is essential. The lateral resistance of the centerboard at slow speeds is not adequate to hold, if sails are laced in tight. Light nylon cord for temporary sheets on either jib or spinnaker should be used when the going is soft.

MENTAL ATTITUDE should be mentioned in conclusion. Patience is truly a priceless virtue in the above outlined exasperating conditions. The crew and skipper should move about as little as possible, and then on "velvet paws". Cramped legs and tired fannies are the order of the day. This is the kind of going that tries men's souls (and women's too). ETERNAL VIGILANCE is the price of success.



# PARADE OF CHAMPIONS \*



**FLYING SCOT** National Champion '59 and '60; Gordon K. Douglass, Oakland, Maryland.



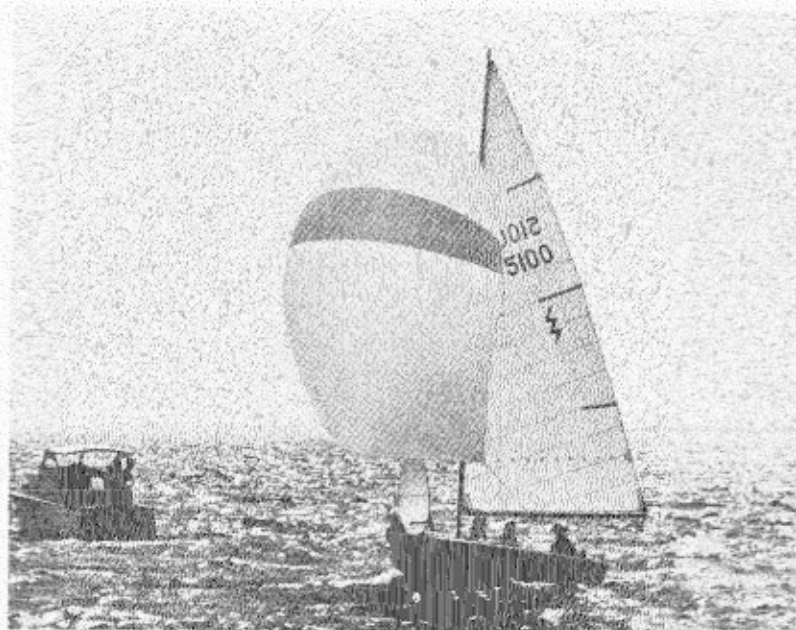
**BAYVIEW-MACKINAC** winner, Class D 1960; Aaron Evans, Grosse Pointe Yacht Club.



**INT'L 14**—George Moffat, Jr., New Brunswick, N.J., first American to win the Douglass Trophy in 35 years; six time winner of the Harry Hall Trophy; Governor's Trophy winner in '58, '59 and '60; winner of the Annapolis Fall Invitational Regatta 1960.



**JET 14** National Champion 1960; Calvin Engle, Island Heights Yacht Club, New Jersey.



**FLARE**, owned and sailed by Tom Fallon, winner of the Southern Circuit in 1960, runner-up in 1961.



**CHICAGO-MACKINAC** winner, Division II 1960; D.R.Y.A. Class C Champion '58, '59 and '60; Tom Hanson, Bayview Yacht Club, Detroit.



**LIGHTNING** Class President, Tom Fallon, Buffalo Canoe Club, winner of Mid-Winter and Southern Circuit Championships 1960.



**HIGHLANDER** National Champion 1960; Dick Farkas, Raritan Yacht Club, New Jersey.



**PENGUIN** 6th Regional Champion 1960; Thistle National Champion 1959; Jerry Jenkins, Crescent Sail Yacht Club, Detroit.

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