



## THE OTHER SIDE OF THE NORTH AMERICANS (FROM WAY DOWN)

By Jack Burwell

We are sure that if you have read this far, you have read the title of this article and are well aware that you will not learn anything about how to make a Lightning go faster. The idea behind this article is to be able to relay more about what happens at major regattas, such as the North Americans — to some of those people who are not fortunate enough to have come home with the "silverware". While we did not come home with silverware, we feel very fortunate to have been participants in the North American Championships, and to enjoy the festivities which take place at this regatta.

Had it not been for Stuart Anderson, the well-known wooden boat Lightning sailor from Buffalo, New York, who spoke to the New England District at its Winter Meeting some 8 or 9 years ago, I would not be writing this article. I attended the New England District Winter Meeting to hear from Stuart Anderson how to make my boat go faster. At that time I was content to be the State of Maine Champion and had never ventured out of the state to compete and, therefore, had not attracted anyone to come into the state to compete. It was plain to see that if you wanted to win in your own waters — don't attract any outsiders. For about the first three minutes of Stu's talk I was a little dismayed to learn that he was not going to discuss sail shape, tactics, or how to get the most out

of your crew to win races. The thing he emphasized was to get involved with this great bunch of people who sail Lightnings. He went on to say that among all of the people he had met, Lightning sailors were the most enjoyable and after listening to this great guy talk about what he enjoyed so much, it was apparent to my wife, Marilyn, and myself that we should start trailing our boat to other regattas. After meeting many of the very nice people in the Lightning Class, it did not take us long to get into the swing of things (although we have yet to win or even place in a major regatta, our children think it's great when we show up at home)! So, due to Stu Anderson, we did get involved and we did almost everything he suggested except win. Therefore, if you are a serious competitive sailor, you may as well go along to the next article. In the event you enjoy participating in Lightning sailing events as much as we do, you might be interested in reading the following which is a brief summary of our experiences at the 1976 North American Championships.

To begin with — to qualify in our District (New England) you had to finish in the top seven at our District Regatta. Since we were lacking only three boats to send eight to the North Americans, I, as District Commodore, suggested at the



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meeting preceding the Skipper's Meeting for the District Regatta that the District pay for the three more boats as "the life you save may be your own". As luck would have it, the District Commodore finished 8th in this Regatta and slipped into the North American Championships on a gratis basis from his District.

After qualifying (if you could call it that), Kip Hamblet from Keene, New Hampshire called me to see if I would have any interest in sharing a Winnebago with him for the trip to Sheboygan. After about three minutes of consideration, it was decided that we would love to make the trip to the mid-west with Kip Hamblet and his crew. This not only sounded like a fun trip, but it also seemed to be a very inexpensive way to attend the North Americans.

After leaving Maine, we met Kip Hamblet and his crew, Ed Wall in Keene, New Hampshire. (Robin Greenlead, his other crew member was meeting us in Sheboygan.) We were joined there by my crew of Jerry Baker and Chris Wight. My wife, Marilyn, joined us for this delightful week and a half of fun. Kip arranged with a friend of his to get a "cut rate" on a modern Winnebago and I supplied the double decking trailer which carried our *Gusto* and Kip's No. 8480-F.O.B. (full of beer). We left New Hampshire right on schedule (about six hours late) and stopped in Northern Massachusetts to replace our broken refrigerator with one which Ed Wall's parents had in their basement. We then proceeded to Buffalo and went north into Canada. While everyone else in our Winnebago thought this trip took a great deal of time, the author thought the trip passed rather smoothly as he was only required to drive for three hours. I do remember being awakened as we were going through customs just northwest of Buffalo as the lady in the customs booth was trying to negotiate joining us with driver, Jerry Baker, (Ed Wall and Kip Hamblet). The thing that really woke me up was my wife and Chris' voices saying "no, you can't join us — we've got a full van". At any rate, we got through customs successfully and we were on our way westward. Sleeping in the top bunk at the rear of the Winnebago, the next thing I heard was a rat-tat-tat at which time I thought we were being shot at. Upon questioning other people in the van, I found that no one else was in the van and then after looking out the window it was apparent that we were at a standstill. After getting my head together, I realized that the rat-tat-tat noise was a power wrench taking the lugs out of one of our rear wheels. I then located my crew (at this point I was skipper of the van because of my seniority in years) and it was pointed out to me that we had not only blown a tire about 100 miles east but had recently blown one of the double tires on the rear right of the van. After much haggling with languages which none of us understood very well (Marilyn is a certified French teacher), it became apparent that we must venture westward with five inflated tires on a six wheel vehicle.

Kip told me not to be concerned as he was certain that we

could get back into the United States and get new tires. While I knew we had a great "deal" on this Winnebago, I was not certain that the rental price included replacement of one or more new tires. To make a long story short — after stopping in northern Michigan and working our way southwest, we finally found a store which, much to the dismay of all of the striking tire workers, stocked tires which we needed — this store was located in Ann Arbor, Michigan. At this point it became apparent that we not only needed one tire but needed four tires for the back of the van. We soon discovered that this garage would not accept a personal check unless we had a reference in Ann Arbor. Knowing that the IRS might look unfavorably towards a life insurance agent buying four 16 inch tires in Ann Arbor on his company's credit card, I pointed out that I did have an uncle who lived in Ann Arbor. They asked me his name and I told him and their reply was "you should be so lucky, he's the largest real estate tycoon in the area". Needless to say they thought that I was kidding them even though I was not and we ended up putting the tires on the company credit card. We proceeded down around Detroit and headed north just about at dusk. Just outside of Milwaukee we had a trailer tire blow and you can imagine how four people from the hinterlands of New England felt while changing a trailer tire on a busy Wisconsin Freeway.

At any rate we arrived safely at the Sheboygan Yacht Club very late in the evening and were greeted by the gracious members of the Sheboygan Fleet. They suggested where we could park the van and we did so and promptly fell asleep. Upon waking in the morning we found that we were parked next to Fred Hamblet's executive crew's liner which he had spent three days driving to Sheboygan while listening to stereo music which made the sound of his air conditioner more tolerable. Hamblet's rig seemed to have everything — carpets, curtains, hot and cold running water, shower and bathroom facilities — what a deal!

After successfully completing four qualifying races, we found that we were near the top of the yellow division. That did not dampen our spirits as Chris Graf and his charming wife were extremely gracious hosts at the Governing Board Reception and Marilyn and I have never attended a Lightning affair in foreign parts where we were made to feel more at home. Our sincere thanks to the Grafs for their gracious hospitality!

As I indicated earlier, I am not going to discuss what makes the boat go faster (needless to say, I don't know) and, therefore, am not going to discuss much of the racing. I will mention a couple of races in which we did well, however.

The day following the Governing Board Reception we ran out of water in the Winnebago and Jerry Baker, Kip Hamblet and myself thought we would just run down to the local gas station and fill the Winnebago with water. I sincerely thought this would score some points with Marilyn who was doing the washing, ironing (what little was being done) and all of the cooking, as well as taking care of both Kip's boat and mine as

head of the pit crew. Meaning very well, Jerry, Kip and I took off to the local gas station and as we turned into the gas station it became obvious to all of us that we should have secured at least one half gallon of wine, vodka, bourbon and gin that were on top of the refrigerator. Upon returning to the campsite, both Marilyn and Chris Wight were delighted to know that we had filled up with water so that they would not have to go to the Yacht Club the next morning to brush their teeth. When they entered the Winnebago, they were somewhat less than impressed by the aroma which greeted them. At this point Marilyn borrowed Year Book Editor, Dave White's car and drove into Sheboygan and bought four pounds of kitty litter. The kitty litter was spread throughout the Winnebago and while I do not speak as an authority on kitty litter, it is unbelievable as to what it picks up. I am sure that within the next five years, no one will ever be able to detect what was spilled in the Winnebago that day. I had no idea that I was sleeping in a kitty-yard until I woke up the next morning and found myself scratching my ear with my foot. At any rate, life went on and we sailed our first championship race in the Yellow Division, ending up with a 17. The second championship race was not any better, in fact, it was one worse as we trudged in a disappointing 18th.

After talking with my office that evening, I found that it was not only Burwell's boat that was in trouble — it must be Burwell — the office was doing very well without him. That evening we had our traditional New England District cocktail party.

Our party which was established to be a precedent for other New England District Commodores to follow, was held at the tailgate of the Winnebago. While our good friends the Peters did not make it, (they were supposed to be notified by a green boat from Keene, New Hampshire), new and old friends like Gordon and Linda Ettie and the great gentleman from the South, John McIntosh, Esq. did attend. A special visitor at this party was a favorite of all of the mobile home owners, Samuel the Rat. My friend and crew member and super navigator, as well as fellow alumnus of the Maine Maritime Academy with Bill Shore, thought he caught the rat under a carton, but for some reason, his coordination seemed to be off a little bit and the rat ran off with Jerry's hors d'oeuvres and drink, leaving Jerry merely a plastic cup in his hand. Someone told me later that he knew the difference, however, you could not prove it by me.

As night fell, Yearbook Editor, Dave White, and John McIntosh, agreed that they would join us for dinner. The crew from Fred Hamblet's deluxe executive mobile home joined us in our bare plywood interior Winnebago for a gourmet meal of chop suey and a great deal of noise. It seems it is very difficult to put 18 people into one stripped down mobile home and have everything go along smoothly. However, when you have a peacemaker like John McIntosh and a mechanic like Fred Hamblet, there are very few things that come up which cannot be handled in a routine manner. During this entire evening there was a ship just opposite the channel from us which was having a cargo of coal removed which took place most of the night. As the noise broke up from this unloading and the sun

rose, it became apparent that we must get up. Marilyn shook Chris out of the bunk which instantly turned into the dining room table (on the Lightning we call it a centerboard trunk and on our motor boat my 7-year-old son, Charlie, calls it a chopping block for the fish he has just landed.) At any rate, there was a great hassle to get breakfast, showers, shaves, etc. before the 3rd and 4th races in the all-important Governors Cup. I do not mean to imply that the North American Championships which we were attending were not of extreme importance. At this point our good friends Bill and Bonnie Shore were leading the North Americans and one of the nicest guys we have ever had the privilege of meeting in the Class, Fisk Hayden, was looking as though he was a strong second in the Blue Division. A fellow New Englander, Stu Nickerson, was rebounding after a poor 26 in the first race. Our next door neighbor, Fred Hamblet, appeared to be leading the President's Cup series and our Winnebago roommate, (who rented the rig and slept on the roof) was leading the Governors Cup. Despite the headache, this day looked like a good day for sailing and as far as I am concerned, Lake Michigan was never better. We finally ended up 4th and 1st in the next two Governors Cup races and it was a great deal of fun to finally sail in the Green Fleet. As we were finishing the 4th race, Chief Measurer, Dave Peters and Dave White, as well as Fred Hamblet, were yelling over at us "those guys must sail better with a hangover". This night, before the final race, was a relatively quiet one as it meant a great deal to Kip Hamblet who at the time was leading the Governors Cup.

As luck would have it, our District neighbor from the Connecticut-Rhode Island District, John Cuccio, edged out Kip Hamblet for the Governors Cup and Dave Peters from Ann Arbor, Michigan (same town my famous uncle is from) edged out Fred Hamblet for the President's Cup. At any rate, fellow Connecticut-Rhode Island sailor, Bill Shore, won the North Americans with Fisk Hayden second and Stu Nickerson, third. We feel honored to be a part of a group of such wonderful people who make up such a great Class and produce outstanding champions.

Our sincere congratulations to North American Champion, Bill Shore — First Runner-Up, Fisk Hayden, and third place winner Stu Nickerson. Also, our congratulations to Dave Peters, winner of the Presidents Cup and Fred Hamblet who was second followed by Matthew Bryant who was third. Further congratulations go to John Cuccio for winning the Governors Cup, Kip Hamblet for finishing second and Joe Friebele, third.

Perhaps of more importance than winning the North American Championship — it is worth mentioning that we heartily congratulate families who sail together such as those of Tom Allen (many times North American Champion) who sailed with his daughter, Brenda and son Tom, Jr. Family sailing could be our most important asset and I, for one, hope that it continues.

In closing, on behalf of the Class, I would like to thank Race Committee Chairman, Terry Kohler, of the Sheboygan Yacht Club and their entire crew for the marvelous week of fun which they provided for the Lightning sailors.



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Less Perfection



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The water is this way Bill.



My Daddy put his motor in here.

Photo Credits: Clair Kilton, Mary Huntsman and Jake Jacobson



The Kids put on a Flag Ceremony.



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Jumpin Jimminy.



Near the Weather Mark

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Disappearing Act.



Driving Hard.



At the gybe mark.



Spidel Twist o' Flex.

Photo Credits: Mary Huntsman, Clair Kilton and Jake Jacobson.

# MARK BRYANT "LOOKS BAD GOES FAST" JUNIOR NORTH AMERICANS '76

By Mark Bryant

Some 15 hours of driving and all the indecision on who would crew was over as we arrived at the MYC. My crew was Joe Downing a 7 year veteran and Peggy Walsh a fairly young sailor with lots of desire.

We received our new sails about 2 hours before the race. They fit as expected so we started to sail to the starting line. It looked like a really tough field. We thought the two toughest would be last years runner-up Jay Lutz and Greg Florian who was the leader of last years championship until the last race. Jay would be tough in the heavy stuff and Greg in the lighter air. Our best chances were in the moderate to heavy air.

## 1st Race 15-20 SE 5'seas

We started near the middle of the line along with Florian and Lutz. Greg went left side Jay and we went the middle left side. At the weather mark Lutz and we were close. Florian was 3rd. As we got our bag going Peggy fell overboard and we gathered her in. Lutz led this one all the way, Florian caught us when our mainsail fell down about a hundred yards from the finish line. We managed a 3rd with Burridge and LaPier coming very close to us. 1st race finishes, Lutz, Florian, Bryant, Burridge, LaPier.

## 2nd Race 18-25 gust 28 SW seas choppy

This race started off exceptionally close, so close we didn't have time to find the proper leeward mark. The whole fleet followed us except for one boat. The race was cancelled and restarted.

The actual race was to show how tough our fleet was. The fleet divided half taking a center left course lead by Graff and the other half to right corner lead by Lutz. Graff lead at the weather mark by a boat length over LaPier. The weather leg had two winds. The shore breeze blowing straight and the sea breeze very shifty with a roll instead of the steep chop inshore. Lutz lead at the rounding mark. We were moving well on the weather leg and caught Lutz and went on to get our first victory of the series. Lutz 2nd, LaPier, Florian and Gelenitis. Series scores Bryant 4, Lutz 3, Florian 6, LaPier 8, Burridge 10 pts.

## 3rd Race 15-20 SW choppy

This race was our lucky race. Again off the line it was "Looks Bad goes Fast", Lutz and Phil Dennis. Half way up we were leading followed very closely by Lutz. We lead the first triangle, with the inshore tack to be favored on the next leg. We headed for the lay line and as we approached it we tack. As

we tacked we tipped over. As we started to sail again Lutz had taken the lead but we weren't far behind. As we got our boat dried out we started to catch Lutz. We finally caught him at the jibe mark. Once we were back in front we could continue to cover for the tie in the series. Jay and I had now figured out that it would be a fight between the two of us. At the finish it was Bryant, Lutz, Dennis, Forhecz, Series score - Bryant 5, Lutz 5, Florian 12, LaPier 13, Burridge 14. (Editor's Note: Mark's boat is not self-rescuing!!)

## 4th Race 12-17 SW choppy

At the start we discussed our position in the series. We were tied with Lutz and 7 points ahead of our next competitor. We figured that Jay would be the boat to beat in the next two races.

After one weather leg Lutz was 1st, we were 2nd and Forhecz was 3rd; we knew we had to beat Jay. The second weather leg was a tough one. Lutz wasn't going to let us get to the starboard side of him. Finally Jay made the mistake. After we tacked to port he tacked directly to weather of us. As the wind phased to the right we worked out on him and took the lead. We went on for our 3rd victory of the series and a one point lead in the series. Series Score - Bryant 6, Lutz 7, Florian 16, Burridge 24 and LaPier 25 points.

## 5th Race SW 8-20 Smooth water

Just before the start the wind died almost to nothing. But you could see wind to the right. As we started at the weather end so we could tack to the right for the wind. Lutz stayed on the starboard tack. I received strong advice from my crew for splitting tacks with Jay. As the wind filled in Forhecz and I tacked to starboard and appeared in good shape. Lutz was still in the center of the course with less air. We were first at the weather mark with Forhecz 2nd, Morely 3rd, Lutz 4th. We got the lead shortly after rounding the leeward mark with Forhecz 2nd, Lutz 3rd and Morely 4th. Positions stayed about the same to the finish with us winning the race and the '76 championship. Lutz caught Forhecz and Burridge 4th, Hamilton 5th. Final points: Bryant 7, Lutz 9, Florian 23, Burridge 28, LaPier 33.

I think my crew of Joe and Peggy are of world class crews and I'm sure I couldn't have won this regatta without them. Jay Lutz's crew of Tom and Don Schon are a super crew as they showed in the North Americans by placing 4th and qualifying for the worlds in Switzerland.

I'd like to thank the Milwaukee Yacht Club for a fine regatta on and off the water.

# 1976 JUNIOR LIGHTNING N.A.'s

Final Position	Boat #	Skipper and Crew	1	2	3	4	5	Points
1	9373	Mark Bryant, Joe Downing, Peggy Walsh	3	1	1	1	1	7
2	12405	Jay Lutz, Don Schon, Tom Schon	1	2	2	2	2	9
3	12974	Greg Florian, Todd Grohne, Lynn Nixon	2	4	6	4	7	23
4	11217	Matthew Burridge, Ron Dibler, Randy Dibler	4	6	4	10	4	28
5	12620	David LaPier, Mark Beaton, Linda Schon	5	3	5	12	8	33
6	10350	John Morley, Phil Schemel, Pete Schmidt	6	12	10	5	3	36
7	12837	Stephen Craig, Cindy Craig, Jeff Grinnan	10	9	9	6	12	46
8	11800	Teddy Forhecz, II, Janice Moritz, Jim Gelenitis	8	15	15	3	6	47
9	12861	John H. Morse, James Morse, Jim Draheim	15	7	7	16	10	55
10	12341	Bill Crow, Rick Phillips, Steve Weedfall	7	11	8	14	15	55
11	11740	Phil Dennis, Debby Freeth, Mark Schneider	25	10	3	8	11	57
12	12428	Scott Hamilton, Doug MacClymont, Scott Evanson	12	18	17	13	5	60
13	11442	Karen Cady, Dana Cady, Rob Hamill	9	16	13	11	14	63
14	12586	Charlie Medlock, Jennifer Ann Hillman, Julie Baiden	11	17	11	17	9	65
15	11784	Paul Gelenitis, Dick Thomas, George Francis	14	5	25	9	18	71
16	11090	Bill Draheim, Richard Draheim, Craig Kelley	13	19	14	18	17	81
17	12822	Jay Matteson, Ian Lamp, John Podmajersky	25	18	12	15	16	86
18	11788	Philip Barth, Skip Wilday, Craig Farquharson	25	14	16	19	13	87
19	12179	Mace Linde, John Griffiths	16	21	18	25	25	105
20	12420	Randy Ruhlman, Peter Milani, Kate Caldwell	DNF	DNS	DNS	7	DNF	107
21	11188	Eric Graf, Mark Hilpertshauer, Tim Gottsacker	DNF	8	DNS	DNS	DNS	108
22	12342	Steve Schmidt, Bill Rieselbach, Mike Schoendorf	DNF	20	DNS	DNS	DNS	120
23	12402	Peter Kornhaber, Nina Nathan, Mark Huck	DNF	DNF	DNS	DNS	DNS	125
24	12691	James Howard, Jr., Lou Alison Howard, Jim Orr	DNF	DNS	DNS	DNS	DNS	125

DNF/DNS - 25 points

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