NCESA

SUMMER 1986 Vol. 22. No.1

E REPORTER

THIS ISSUE:

— Zen and the Art of E-Scow Racing by Mike Fortenbaugh
— Winning the Melges Way - by Harry Melges III
— How to Sail Lake Minnetonka by Nat Robbins Jr. (Summer 1966 Reporter)
— Interview with Joe Frederico by Mike Fortenbaugh
— South Carolina R&R photo - Report
— From the Archives

PHOTO: ROBERT DEGERBERG

Scott Callahan enroute to 1985 Championship at Little Egg

THE COMMODORE COMMENTS:

The 1986 sailing season opens with your organization in a strong healthy postition. Our membership number is stable and thanks to previous administrations, our financial condition is excellent. We are well on the way to solving the near decade long question of masthead flotation. To reiterate my comments in the last Reaches, your board of directors did a marvelous job in simplifying the problem and arriving at a solution which is palatable to all. At this writing, the results of the ballot are not in, but I feel the wisdom of the E boaters will prevail, and this proposal will pass. With the membership's endorsement of masthead flotation, we will be able to actively pursue fleet expansion. I strongly feel our job in attracting new sailors to E Boats is made much easier by not having to discuss the mess of righting turtled boats. The resolution of the masthead flotation question should both generate new revenues for the association through expanded membership, and keep our equipment costs as low as possible through the economies of volume.

Interestingly, the possibility of increased revenues and fleet expansion outside the traditional boundries of scow country presents two new challanges to your Board of Directors. First, in the financial area, I feel we are challenged to develop a philosophy of income allocation budgeting. Simply stated, we need to figure out which source of revenue should cover which expenses. A philosophy of this sort will allow us to make decisions based on hard numbers rather than emotional pleas. This policy will not only allow and promote logical planning but will give continuity of thinking and action to future administrations. Paul Wickland, Vice Commodore and Finance Committee Chairman, is drafting such a policy for presentation at the fall NCESA board of directors meeting.

The other challange presented your board is to become truly a national organization. Currently this organization consists of four regional associations: the Inland Lake Yachting Association (ILYA), the Western Michigan Yachting Association (WMYA), the Mid-States "E" Scow Association (MESA), and the Eastern Class "E" Sloop Association (ECESA). The existing associations which comprise the NCESA represent the area basically surrounding the Great Lakes; Missouri, New Jersey, and Iowa were tossed in because someone felt sorry for them (that's a joke Ted). Outside these areas, prospective E sailors and potential local fleet organizers are out of luck with regard to real membership and participation in NCESA. Our inability to accommodate the southeastern association is a prime example of how ill equipped we currently are to serve the needs of E boaters on a true national scale. I feel we must answer the question as to how we might divide un-scow country into regional associations and how we might provide these new associations with a voice in NCESA. George Hill, Rear Commodore and Membership Chairman is preparing a proposal to present for discussion at the fall board meeting.

Both of these new challenges should elicit lively debate and I am sure both George and Paul would appreciate your input.

Have a great time on the water this summer. I look forward to seeing you all in Minnetonka.

Commodore Chip Ulrich

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ZEN AND THE ART OF E-SCOW RACING

by Mike Fortenbaugh

Whose ideas for the spot illustrations were implemented by the REPORTER editor.

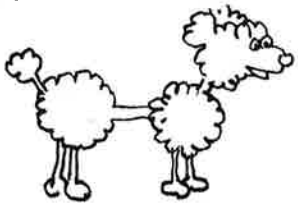
[This is an article of learning, improvement and hope. It is not, as several people have already inquired, an article about Zenda, Wisconsin, home of several E-Scow champions. Instead, the following paragraphs illustrate an approach to sailing, or even better described, a philosophy encompassing both sailing and competition in general. To those preparing to embark across these pages, you may begin with an introspective pause. Decide why you read this. If your aims are improvement in sailing, then realize that it is self-improvement and heed the lessons of John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, remember that those who toil through hardships reach their goal while those who breeze easily through end as far away as when they began. Read slowly and thoughtfully, argue each point in your own head and above all, re-read again and again. Finally, Willie deCamp informed me that I have probably misused "zen" in my article. As he wrote me, "Did you know that real zen is not in favor of winning — since it's not in favor (or opposed) to anything?" Well, I am still young and haven't read Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance, so please pardon all of my inevitable misnomers.]

Just after the 1985 Blue Chip Regatta, after our boat had been mothballed and our crew was preparing to head off into the working world, and after a disappointing Blue Chip series at which the Wizard of Zenda suggested I go home, buy a small poodle and kick it across the room, I headed off to New York City. There,

with the great skyscrapers rising above my head, I roamed the streets searching — not to find the meaning of money nor the meaning of life, but to discover in some alley or car-swallowing pothole or hidden in the indecipherable graffiti on subway cars, the secret of E-Scow racing.

My search began fruitlessly but I spared neither pain nor limb in my efforts. Altogether, I believe I rubbed over one thousand magical-looking lamps in the shops of Manhattan. Several of these stores tossed me out forcibly but I only suffered a broken forearm and a few bruises, cuts and twisted appendages. So I kept on and began visiting coin shops, seances and palm and tarot card readers.

Then one day, under extraordinary coincidences, I was pulled into a Barnes & Noble book store on East 18th Street. This very large lady, wrapped in a fur coat, was just about to enter the store through the revolving doors and was tugging a leash to get her small poodle, probably named Fifi, to join her. Realizing my op-



portunity to help, I rushed up to punt the tiny animal into the store. In mid-stride, with my kicking foot already swinging down, the shrieking lady pulled Fifi aside, causing me to miss and sending me through the air, smack into the revolving doors which cushioned my crash by graciously revolving and admitting me into the store. It was divine guidance.

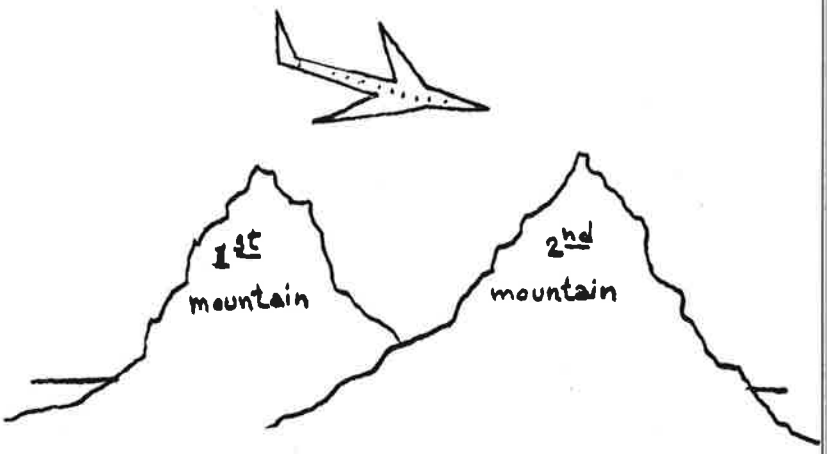
So, I hurried through the turnstiles and past the best seller section, partly because that ungrateful lady was making rather loud and preposterous suggestions about what I had tried to do to her mutt, and partly because I hadn't read anything since my subscription to Captain America comic books expired in 1983. I asked for directions to the comic section from the nearest clerk and she pulled out a floor map and explained the route with such exaggerated slowness and repetition that I thought she thought I was a bit slow mentally. Anyway, I thanked her, followed her pointings and found that she had not sent me to the comics, but instead to the "self-help" section — divine guidance again.

Being slightly superstitious, and knowing things happen in threes, I closed my eyes, spun round and round till I lost all sense of direction, walked forward till I hit a shelf, and then reached out and grabbed the first book I touched. Divine guidance number

three — I had pulled out a small hand-written, dacron-mylar covered book entitled "How to Improve your E-Scow Sailing." I opened the small book, it had only two pages and one was the title page, looked at the author's name, Dali Bhagawind Lama, and read the text. There smack in the middle of the white page, were three small words and two punctuation marks. It said this:

Come see me.*

I searched the page bottom for an explanation of the asterisk and read, "Take Pan Am Flight #730, daily non-stop from JFK to



Tibet, follow Tibet National Highway #1 from airport to beginning of Himalayas. Climb second mountain on left." Now everything was clear and by the end of the week, I was standing high a top this wind-whipped mountain and staring down at an old bearded guru who was freezing his bottom off by sitting lotus-position in the snow.

"Oh, exalted Dali Bhagawind," I began cautiously. "Please tell me the secret of E-Scow sailing."

Slowly the Dali Bhagawind responded, first by forming a circle with his thumb and index finger which rested on his knee and

then by humming. "Ah grasshopper," he spoke softly and knowingly, "be one with the boat."

Of course this shocked me a bit, especially after the long plane flight, so I blurted out rather impetuously, "I only have one boat and an old one at that! How the heck do I make it faster?"

"Ah youthful grasshopper, first buy this flower, then I tell you the survival-of-the-fittest theory."

Well, that was too much. Jule Hannaford had already told me that theory at the Nationals, and for free! (See interview of Joe Federico in this issue.) So, I huffed and puffed and turned dejectedly back down the mountain until I stubbed my big toe and experienced an orgasmic state of E-Scow nirvana which transcended everything. I became part of the oneness and felt what the Dali Bhagawind had said and had visions of Buddy Melges guiding me upwind, of Brian Porter working on my scow, of the big silver bowl in the sky, and even of Willie deCamp drinking at a cocktail party. I was so stunned that I forgot all about having to walk down the mountain and had simply walked straight off into the air and was, believe it or not, floating. (I choose "floating" instead of "flying" because if people thought I could fly, imagine the publicity. The mayor wold want me to join the police force like Superman, Time magazine would put me on their cover, the FBI would surely lock me up in some lab in Arizona and could you imagine the number of requests "to please rescue my helpless cat from the tree?" Of course, this doesn't even touch on the legal implications of me flying my boat upwind on light air days. If all you do is float, nobody bothers you.)

So, I floated back to the Big Apple, drifted through my window and sat down at this typewriter to spread the word and preach to everyone the zen of E-Scow racing.

* * *

Zen is free. I'm not going to preach and then ask you to send a donation and I won't tell any non-believers that they're doomed to the back of the fleet until Harry Melges III retires. But you can't pick up zen at the corner drug store on your way home from work. Short of flying to Tibet yourself, the best way to get your zen is to absorb it through these pages here. Read on as I try to explain the Dali Bhagawind.

First of all, I realized the need to translate the Dali Bhadawind's message into modern lingo. Just a few weeks ago, I let the word

"oneness" slip out at a cocktail party and I got looks like, "Don't you know the sixties are over!" "Has he been eating too much horseradish?" "Boy, the flies sure are thick here!" and "Hey man, got any extra drugs?" What the Dali Bhagawind meant, translated into hard-core, unimaginative eighties-speak was roughly: "concentrate with your boat." This doesn't mean concentrate *on* the boat, don't stare at the board which didn't get completely down and don't worry about the spreaders which are in some harmless position. Instead, concentrate *with* the boat. Feel the boat accelerate in each puff. Feel the boat react to a trim in the mainsail. Look in front of the boat and feel the waves and further in front and see the puffs. Feel each crew as they hike a bit more. Feel everything, concentrate and be one with the boat, grasshopper.

For some reason, concentration is a prerequisite for excelled learning and peak performances, not just in sailing, but almost every facet of life. However, I'm not a doctor, medical researcher, or even aspiring student of medicine and with my history degree, I can't philosophize about the powerful and underemployed the mind. So, I won't discuss how much your brain can do at once, like simultaneously reading a book, hearing music, feeling a back rub and thinking about the text. Also, I won't ramble on about the sub-conscious mind which dreams while we're asleep, but which keeps working even while we're awake. Who cares for amateur theories? Instead, let's just look at what other athletes have done and why. (By the way, I may have forgotten to tell you, sailors are athletes.)

Consider weight lifters and the mental exercises they go through before each lift. First, they clear their minds, often by sniffing smelling salts. Then they concentrate on the weighted bar and lifting it over their heads. Nothing else is allowed to enter their minds, not the crowd, not the other competitors, not even personal discomforts. When the lifter feels he has achieved his most concentrated state, he attempts the lift.

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1986 WINS

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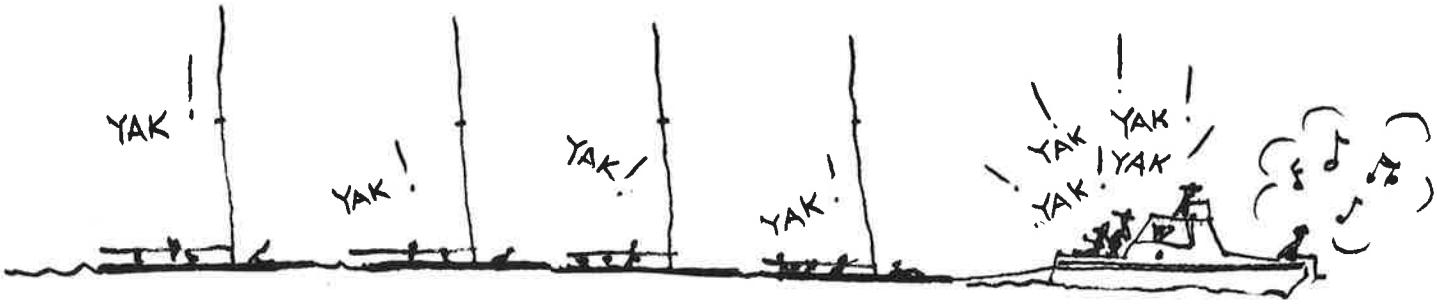
Consider divers and the warm-up techniques they used in front of national television during the 1984 summer Olympics. Between dives, they put on walkmen and listened to songs. This music, which was familiar and stimulating, helped calm their thoughts and emotions and screened out the crowd and pressure, thereby allowing them to concentrate on the upcoming dive. Once they achieved this state of high concentration, they visualized themselves on the diving platform and they performed the dive, twist for twist, over and over again in the minds. When they finally climbed the platform, they had already "completed" that dive several times which was relaxing and encouraged the best performance.

Consider the 1976 Olympic high-jumper Dwight Stones, who also benefited from the technique of visualization. Dwight would stand on the high-jump approach in a trance-like state for an unusually long time. He explained that while he stood there, he visualized his approach step-by-step, from first step to clearing the bar. He saw himself jump again and again until he had jumped perfectly. Then he was ready and made his actual approach.

Of course, some infidel will ask, "Why does this work?" And I ask back, "How should a history major know?" Sure, I've got my theories, but you should draw your own. Be one with the article, grasshopper.

You might have noticed these three examples of visualization performances occur in sports which are basically unvarying. All you have to do is lift the weight, jump into the water or spring over the bar, external factors do not change drastically. Soccer, on the other hand, is a dynamic sport. The ball and players are constantly changing positions and relationships. In soccer then, it wouldn't do much good to visualize yourself kicking the ball because every kick is different.

Sailing is also a dynamic sport, but visualization can be used to an advantage. I discovered this at the 1984 Eastern Championships. Our crew had always been musically hip since we loved "happening" music. During this regatta, we introduced old-timer Jerry Lee Lewis to the scow community and earned the nickname "Team Breathless." Since the racing area was far from the yacht club, we would all form a tow. During these long tows, my nerves already raced back and forth and up and down and my mind could think of little except the start. Most other people on the tow were being normal and gossiping, but this distracted my attention from my goals. So, I put on my walkman and simply shut the distractions out. I sat at the bow of the motor boat so I could be as close to and see as much of the water as possible. The music, the noise of the boat pushing ahead and all the water on every side, gave me an incredible feeling of relaxation. One song was particularly soothing and I would sit, listen and actually picture myself sailing upwind during the race. In fact, after listening again and again, I could sail the entire race within the song. The beginning chords corresponded to the start and certain musical stanzas were upwind legs and others downwind. There were even tacks, jibes and mark roundings. Over and over I would listen and visualize us start cleanly and be within the top ten at the weather mark. Then we'd sail downwind and upwind and methodically pass boats until the last downwind leg when we'd be battling it out for first. We'd get bouyroom at the mark, turn the corner and sail off. There was even a part in the song which corresponded to the winning gun.



Mighty queer, right? Maybe, but we won three of the five races and it wasn't because we had fantastic boatspeed. We had just hit the concentration groove, we were relaxed and we knew what to do. Dali Bhagawind would have said, "Congratulations, grasshopper, you were one with the boat."

Now visualization isn't the method for everybody. Could you imagine Sam Merrick or Runnie Colie warming up for a race by listening to a walkman and breakdancing on the bow of a scow?

"can you imagine!"

Somehow, the image just doesn't fit the people. But don't throw away this method just because you can't see yourself acting like a teenage rock & roll addict (you could situation classical music — after all, it soothes the savage skipper). Instead, stuff this technique into your pocket and let's think some more about "becoming one with the boat."

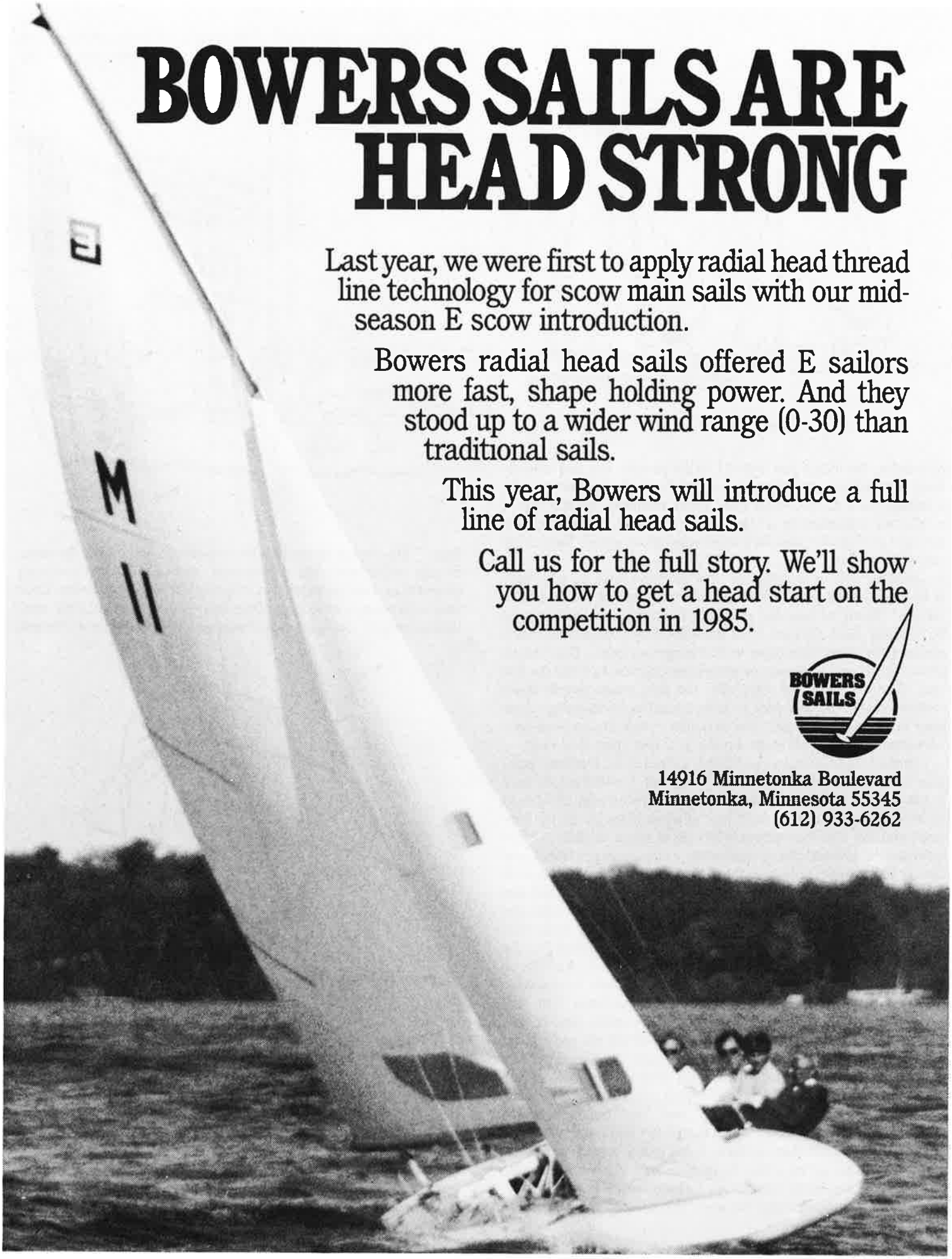
Another way to increase the concentration level on your boat is to practice the golden rule, "Talk only racing while you're racing." From the warning gun until the finish, you should only be thinking about the race. You must not drop your mental guard and let your thoughts wander to less important items. Don't think about the upcoming parties or your latest squeeze or even the last race. There's plenty of time after the race when people stand around, drink, eat and wait to hear something interesting. Save your tidbits until later and you're bound to win the cocktail conversation and walk off with anyone you had your eyes on.

At the J-24 Midwinters in Miami, I worked the foredeck position on Dick Tillman's boat. From the front, I could see the race develop and was calling tactics. During the upwind legs, I'd always be looking over our windward hip, upwind, through the jib window, and any direction where information might be had. All this information allowed me to constantly evaluate the situation and decide if we were sailing in the right direction. Also on board, we had a sailor who was competing in his first major regatta and as luck decided, sat next to me on the windward rail. After the start, he was nice and quiet, probably awed by the fifty boats sailing upwind so close together. But by the second upwind leg, he had developed an unfortunate case of blabber mouth in which he talked about the time he cruised in the Virgin Islands, his decision to buy this type of boat, the race he won in his local fleet, and on and on and on. The problem was, every other remark was directed towards me. Every time he'd ask or tell me something, it drew my concentration away from the race. At first, I politely answered him as best I could while still observing and computing what was happening in the race. When he persisted in conversation, I shortened my answers to "yes" and "no," hoping he would get the hint that I was busy. When that didn't work and his mouth started moving faster than our boat, I said to him something similar to this, "Look, we're trying to race so let's leave the barroom conversation for later." Although I didn't earn a bosom buddy, his hot air disappeared and we were able to keep thinking about the race until the finish.

These are just two ways of increasing your concentration and as the Dali Bhagawind Lama suggested, "becoming one with the

boat." The central theme to both is concentration during the race. If you understand this importance, then you'll start catching yourself as your concentration dips below a certain level. Your new awareness will subsequently help you to increase your concentration level and span. So off you go, grasshopper. May the zen

be with you. But first, I suggest you try the "zen scratch-and-sniff" box which, if you scratch and sniff, will give off a bit of Tibetan air which I brought back from the top of the Dali Bhagawind's mountain for good luck.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NCESA CHAMPIONSHIP REGATTA

Thursday, Friday, Saturday - September 4,5,6, 1986
Lake Minnetonka, Minnesota

Regatta details concerning registration, rules, entries, fees, Racing Schedule, Program of Events, check-off List etc. will be forthcoming.

NOTE: All E-Boats will be **Wet-Sailed** so bring appropriate ground tackle.

★★★★★FINAL WORD★★★★★

Notice to all EASTERN Sailors! You are welcome to leave your boats at Lake Minnetonka after the Inland in Okoboj. It might be more convenient to drive them to Minnetonka, fly out of Minneapolis and return two weeks later for the E Nationals. The boats will be kept at someone's home in Cottagewood. Please call Gordy or Laurie Bowers. 933-6262/623-1200.

The Minnetonka Yacht Club celebrated its Centennial (1882-1982) and can boast of being one of the oldest yacht clubs west of the Atlantic.

Although there had been talk of forming a yacht club in the early 1870s, it wasn't until an eager group of competitive yachtsmen met in August of 1882 at Lookout Point that by-laws and sailing rules were drawn up. Famous Minnetonka sailors — Brackett, Gale, Hurd, Seldon, Phelps, Bovey, Janney and Reeve — were among the officers of the 25-member club.

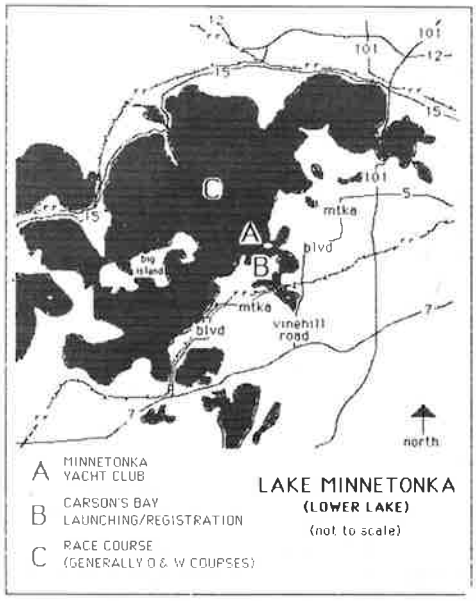
In the early years the sailing was light-hearted and social. By 1888 the sailing had become more competitive and the fleet doubled — to 30 boats and 55 members. More people began sailing because the railroads brought more people from the Twin Cities to Minnetonka. The Club took this opportunity to promote sailing and in 1890 began construction on the official Clubhouse on Lighthouse Island. (A fire destroyed the original club house in 1943, but the new one was built in the place where it stands today.) Dues were assessed at five dollars upon the Club's completion in August 1890.

As the Club expanded, new boats and new classes developed, thus causing the sailing rules to be revised. By 1892 the sailing rules were fairly strict and dictated the designs of the boats.

In 1899 the Minnetonka Ice Yacht Club was founded with an initial membership of 167. The massive club house that was built in 1889 on Bug Island burned down five years later, in 1904. Although it was never rebuilt, the ice boating continues with great zeal.

Sailing thrived on Minnetonka until 1917 — when America entered WWI. It resumed in 1919 but only our large A and C boat fleets could be maintained. The E class was introduced in 1923 but due to the poor economy and WWII it didn't really begin to grow until 1945. More boat design flourished in the 50s and 60s, bringing better equipment for all classes. By the early 1950s Minnetonka's races had become extremely competitive and the Club became less social. All fleets began expanding but the emphasis was on racing, not lunches, uniforms and, social events. The competitive emphasis is very much alive in today's Minnetonka Yacht Club with 400 members, 200 boats and a 1986 racing schedule of 125 races.

— From the Minnetonka Yacht Club Centennial History Book.



EDITOR'S NOTE:

Almost exactly twenty years ago Nat Robbins wrote the following "How to" about Lake Minnetonka. We are reprinting it for a couple of reasons. The first because to date we had received no current copy and secondly because we feel that 1986 sailors would add to or improve on Nat's thoughtful and thorough analysis of his old home waters.

HOW TO SAIL LAKE MINNETONKA

Nathaniel Robbins, Jr.

In 1959 I was asked to write an article on How to Sail Lake Minnetonka, which was put into the Summer issue of Scow Slants. Since that time I have grown a little older and a little wiser, and feel that some changes are in order.

In my opinion one of the most difficult assignments one can undertake is that of telling sailors how to sail a certain lake. First of all, it is difficult because I don't believe there is any one thing a person could do which always applies. Maybe the problem should be approached as a statistician would and I should say we can be 75% confident that the south side of the lake would be advantageous when the wind is from the west. Or we could handle the matter much as a stock market analyst would and hedge any statement with variations and exceptions. Secondly, with all respect to Ted Wells, I don't think sailboat racing is scientific and with the almost infinite combination of variables that exist (wind deviation, wind velocity, air density, boats, sails, skippers, crews, etc.) no conditions are exact enough to allow rules to be formulated. Lastly, if there were certain ways by which Lake Minnetonka should be sailed, they would have been discovered long ago and every race would be a procession.

Be that as it may, there is information about the lake which should prove helpful. For example, I believe that Minnetonka is basically an "honest" lake. That is, rarely is there a situation which favors local knowledge. Over the years we have, of course, experienced wind from almost every direction and velocity. From my observation I am convinced that seldom can one predict which side of the lake to sail, or where to tack to pick up a favorable slant. Again, though, there are exceptions and later I will try to point out where to go and usually expect an advantage.

I have found that since it is an honest lake, the wind snakes as it comes down the lake and the big advantage goes to the sailors who tack on the headers and stay in phase with these wind shifts. At the same time the beat must be planned to arrive at the windward mark on the starboard tack, at the time the wind is favoring that tack. A big assignment to be sure, but in a large fleet you can depend on some boats hitting it right and if you haven't, you have some catching up to do.

So to be helpful, let's go about this systematically and box the compass in a clockwise direction, starting with a west wind and taking up the various conditions I have observed. Please bear with me as I use such qualifying phrases as: usually, almost always, mostly, etc. For no matter what I say, I know there are exceptions.

Our west wind is one of the freshest and steadiest. It is from this direction that I have seen about the strongest fair weather wind. Here we generally sail a boat to the Crystal buoy (#2) straight across the lake from the Yacht Club. Frequently, the Big Island side of the lake is favorable. However, the most important thing is to play the cyclical wind shifts. If the course is a starboard triangle and the next mark is toward Point Lookout (#3), stay well below Brackets Point, for here the higher shore does have a marked blanketing effect. Then as the point is passed and the wind picks up, get back to the course line because you could get a north shift, making it difficult to fetch the mark carrying a reacher.

The northwest wind on Minnetonka rarely blows extremely hard during the midsummer. On a clear day it will not likely exceed 20 MPH. With this wind we have a nice beat to Brown's Bay buoy (#5). I've seen boats go along the Northome shore on the east side of the lake and others go along the west shore under Brackets Point and meet at the buoy. I feel sure that here, playing the shift during the entire beat is the most important factor. The wind will alternate only slightly from one direction to another.

In midsummer, the wind directly out of the north or slightly east of north is an undependable wind, particularly on a clear day. It starts out fresh and seems to subside all during the day. If it is one of those light and variable winds, don't get away from the Northome shore on the east side of the lake. It is the only place where you can count on a breeze. Heaven help us if we get this wind during the regatta, as it will be awfully crowded over there.

Our northest wind is usually accompanied by cloudy weather. It is a fairly strong wind, but doesn't blow very often. Under these conditions we start at Crystal (#2) and beat up to a stake buoy at the mouth of Robinson's Bay. I think that here, local knowledge does help. It has been my experience that boats should favor the center and north part of the lake instead of taking a long port tack toward the club and sailing the starboard under the Northome shore.

Occasionally we have a wind out of the east. Sometimes it is slightly north of east and sometimes slightly south of east. This is the most difficult beat we sail. The first half of the beat is fairly honest, but the last half of the beat is almost impossible to figure out. The wind becomes very shiftly and to me unpredictable. All you can do is try to read the puffs on the water and look at the flag on the Yacht Club Island. Watch out for false headers! By the way, if you are sailing a port triangle and are reaching north to Point Lookout (buoy #3) don't be fooled by the wind being very broad as you leave the home mark (#1); it will harden as you approach Robinson's Bay and you can be on a very close reach by the mark.

The south or east of south wind is our best and most dependable. It comes from this direction more frequently than any other, probably half the time. It generally blows hard and you can count on it all day. Most of the time the east shore is favorable and you should head for it. If the wind is south, it is not as important to stay on the east shore. But if it comes out of the east slightly head for that shore as fast as you can. This wind is very squally but the directional shifts are small.

Finally, there is the southwest wind. We don't have it much. It can be heavy or light. If it is light and we are beating towards Crystal (#2) my observations have been that the port tack out to Brackets Point is best and when you flop onto starboard you should get a good lift. One short hitch and you're at the buoy. If the wind is heavy, the same applies, but the difference between that side of the lake and the other is not as great.

Well, now you know all I do. None of this will make sense unless you are extremely familiar with the lake. I'd advise getting out a map and going over these paragraphs one at a time, orienting yourself to each situation.

In order to hedge these predictions further, I would like to point our that they largely apply to summer sailing. Since this regatta takes place in the fall, I do not have a long list of observations. Basically, we can expect either very light winds or it is going to blow the sails off our boats. In either event it will be a good test of man and equipment.

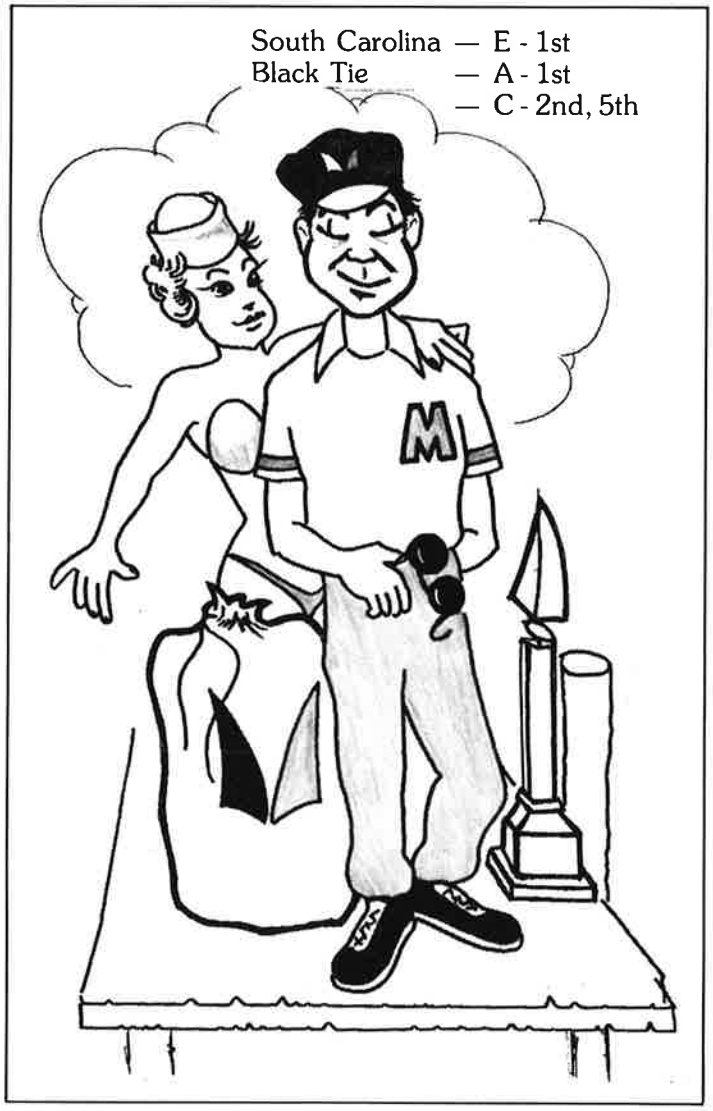
It's Your Choice . . .

The proof is in the results, and the facts are obvious. Racers using Melges Sails win more regattas, more regatta races, and more club championships than any other sailmaker's customers.

In 1985 Melges Sails dominated the major scow classes winning almost every C-scow spring regatta and capturing the C Inland Chanpionship for the second consecutive year. Melges E-scow sails won every regatta in the Inland, along with many Eastern events, backing up our claims of the fastest sails in the world. Melges Sails also won every major X-boat regatta in 1985. These are just a few of the classes that we dominated.

Melges Sails continues to be the leader and innovator in every aspect of sailmaking. So, whether you sail an X-boat or an A-scow . . .

The choice is yours!



You can sail with Brand X and risk no results, or you can sail with MELGES and get results.

Melges Sails, Inc.

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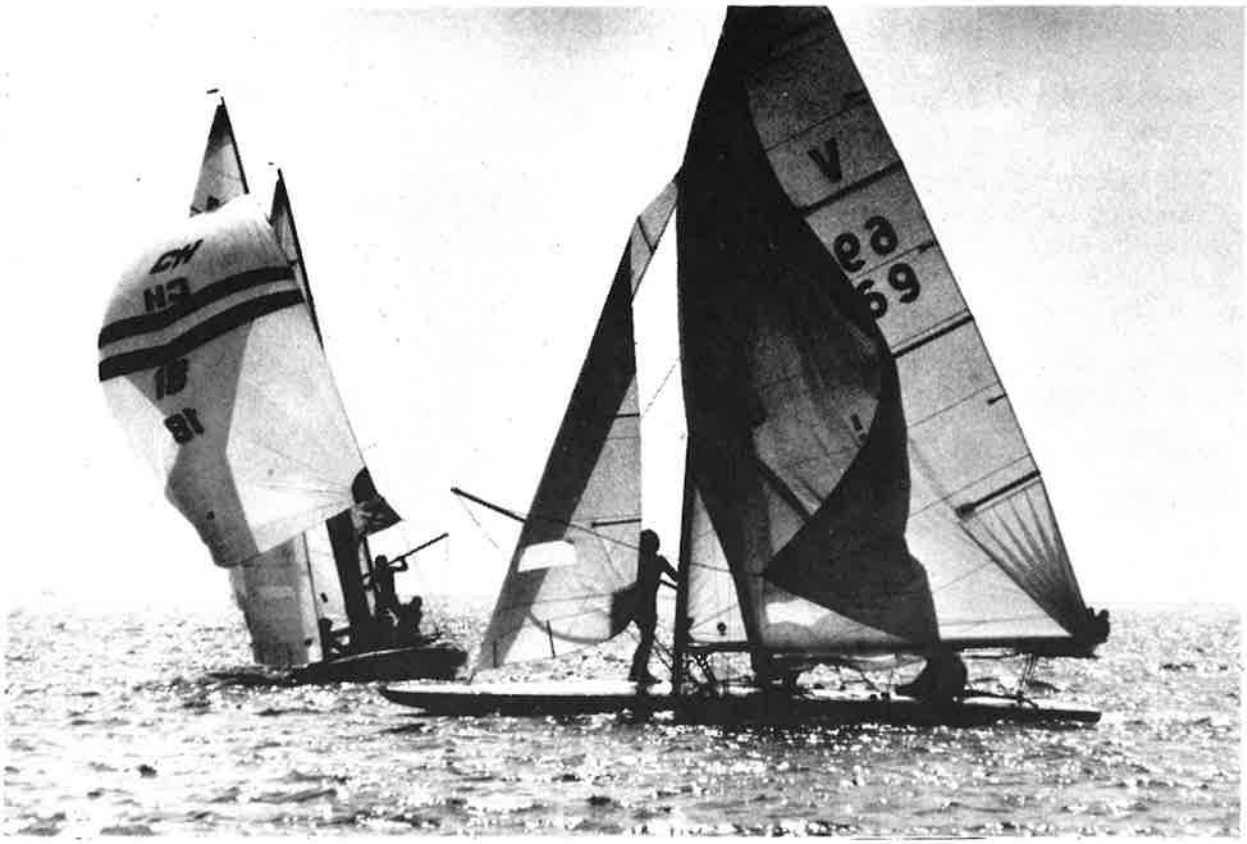
PHOTOS: ROBERT DEGERBERG



Looks like Erik is responding to Eric's jibe to starboard

Looks like M-101 is making alot of leeway.

WINNING THE MELGES WAY

by Harry Melges III

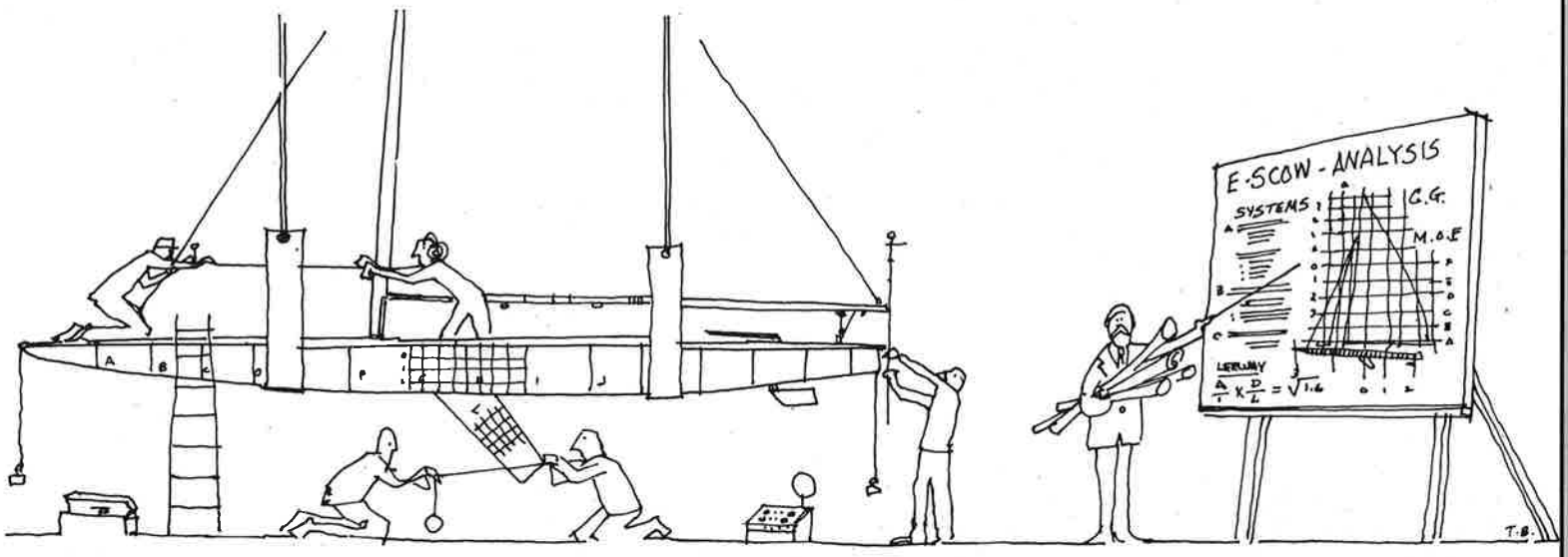
(reprint of sketches by the Editor)

Growing up in the middle of a corn field, similar to the one Stuart Johnson owns near Green Lake; gives fellows like me plenty of time to think about how we are going to win more races. With an influence such as Muddy Bilges, the hog farmer from Wallenda, there's no excuse to lose. The booming town of Zenda (it's not the end of the world, but you can see it from there) instills in each of its inhabitants an appearance of simplistic quality, awesome consistency, an aggressive pace (sometimes hidden to strangers), and an ability to fight back to the top when temporarily caught off guard. These are some of the qualities instilled in us by Zenda and the Wizard who rules it. These same qualities help us win regattas consistently.

I realize that everyone wants to do well without spending a great deal of time training. Being in the sailmaking and boat building business our goal is to create a boat, mast, and sail combination that is forgiving to different conditions, and is easy speed. I will try to be as unbiased as possible, and I will discuss some of the less obvious reasons for our success.

Many people spend hours upon hours tweaking their rigs, measuring their mast rake, marking sheets and adjusting jib and main tracks down to 1 or 2 degrees. To me, if a boat and its sails have to be tweaked to such a fine line, then this cannot be a fast all purpose set-up. Too much time must then be put into tuning and fretting about whether that adjustment was wright or wrong. You must have sails that fit your spar and your boat should be reasonably fast whether you raked forward or back or your shrouds are loose or tight or your tracks are out 2 inches or more than they are supposed to be.

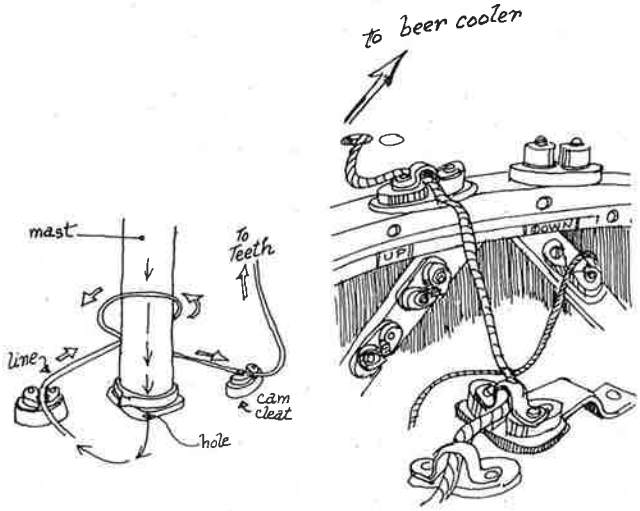
On our boat our shrouds change everytime we put our spar up, our rake changes every time we raise our sails, and our jib and maintracks change everytime a puff hits. With our set-up it just isn't that critical to be exact. There isn't a sailor in the world who could tweak every adjustment exactly perfect in each changing condition and be right every time. So what we do is eliminate the need to tweak and build the speed into our equipment.



KEEP IT SIMPLE

With the ever increasing wave of technology we continue to see more gadgets and gimmicks on every boat. What I have found, is that the more complicated and cluttered a boat is the greater the possibilities for both mental and mechanical breakdown. Of course, you must have fingertip controls, but all you need are the three basic boat speed adjustments: Traveler, vang, and cunningham. There are many people who love to "trick out" their boats. There is nothing wrong with this as long as you are not distracted from the more important overall picture. Sailors such as the Porters are state-of-the-art when it comes to "tricked out" boats. However, the Porters are real smart and they can still comprehend what's going on outside of their own boat.

What I strive for is a very simple set-up with fingertip controls and the proper amount of purchase. This enables our entire team to concentrate on tactics and boat speed, without searching for the right line to uncleat. Especially when its blowing 25 and you uncleat the cunningham when you were supposed to uncleat the vang and by the time you figured out that you've uncleated the wrong line you're going to be up to your chin or over your head in water.



STRIVE FOR CONSISTENCY

In order to win regattas you must be consistent. In order to be consistent you must spend enough time in your boat to have confidence in your team's abilities and your boatspeed. With enough practice, your teamwork, boatspeed and consistency will come naturally, and things will automatically happen in your favor. What most of us want is to jump into a new boat and immediately compete with the top racers in the class. Unfortunately, this can not always be so easy, even with the best equipment. I realize that most people don't have the time to practice as much as they want, but if you have three club races a week, as we do, this should be sufficient. Remember, consistency wins!

NEVER GIVE UP

One of the greatest reasons for our success is our ability to sail through the fleet after a poor start. Now, as I look back, I think it was a blessing not being able to have good starts in my younger days. I became very accustomed to sailing through the fleet, and struggling for good race results. The tendency for most people is to hit the corners when they're behind. This is easy to do but most often you lose another ten boats. Patience is very important when you're behind. You have to be content with sailing in bad air as long as you're on the lifted tack. "Get in phase and go with the flow." What this means, is stay in the middle of the course, tack on the headers with the majority of the leaders, and be patient enough to sail in their bad air until you see an opening. If you've ever watched Walter Payton run a sweep, this is exactly what I'm talking about. He stutter steps behind his blockers until he finds a hole and then he blasts through into the clear. In sailing, you tack with your blockers, and when they make a mistake you don't. The next thing you know you're sailing in the clear, right up with the leaders. You have to concentrate on one boat at a time and keep pecking away. I almost enjoy these kind of races more because it really tests our abilities. It's much harder to sail in the pack and move up, than it is to remain in the top 5 when you're already there. When we get behind we just go crazy, our adrenalin starts to pump and we sail like heroes.

If your boat handling and race tactics are perfect and you sail flawless regattas and you still don't win, then you better give me a call. You see, if it's the 2 or 3 degrees here and the ½ inch there that you're worrying about, then chances are that the one bad tack or one bad start ruined your chance for success. What I'm trying to say is that you should have spent more time learning where to start and when to tack; all the tweaks in the world won't take the place of the tactics and boat handling. Perhaps we spend 20% of the time on the water tuning our rig. The rest is spent in the boat handling and executing tactics. That's what wins!

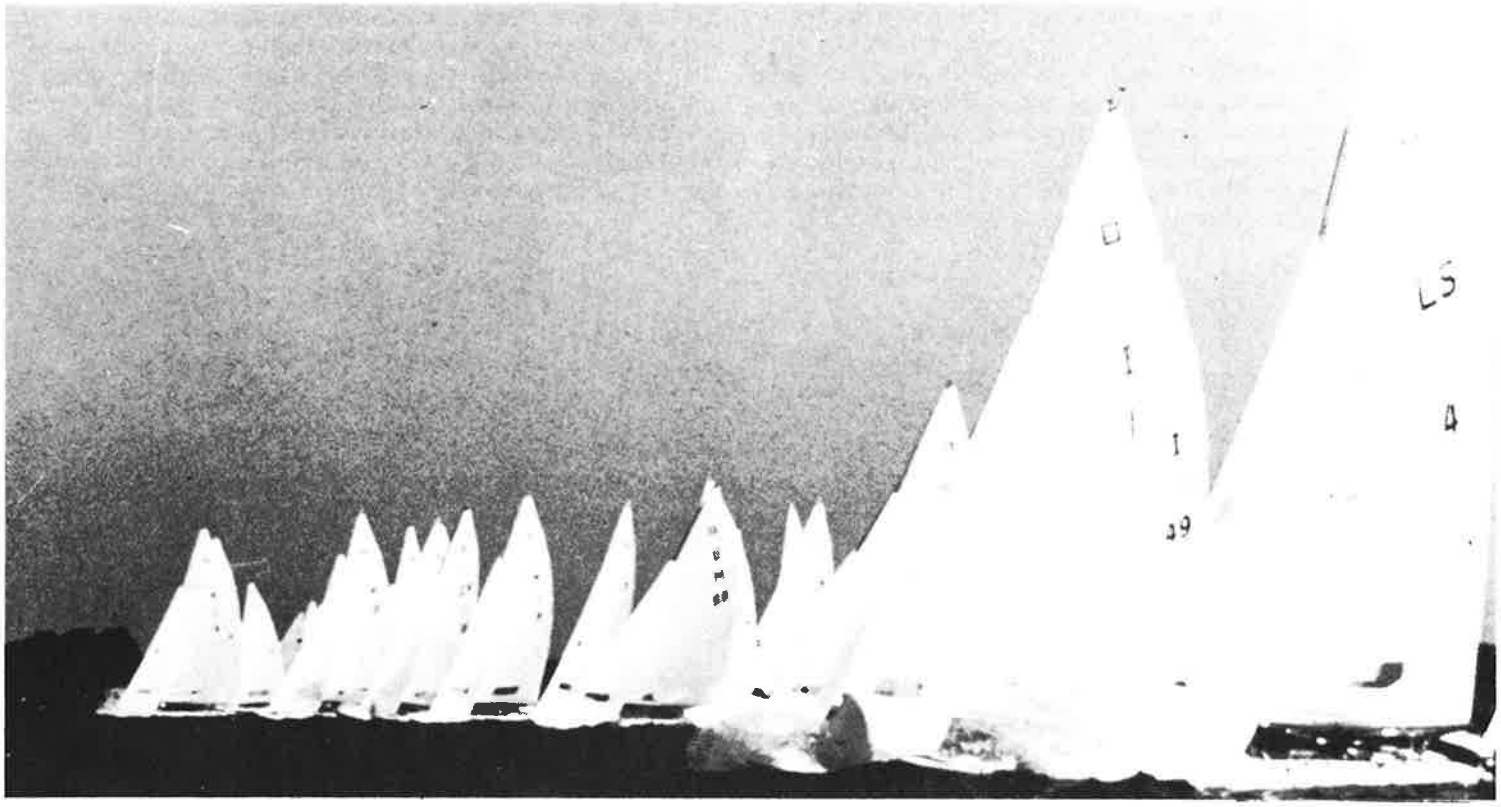


PHOTO: JON GREELEY

BE AGGRESSIVE

Aggression on the race course is all too important. At the start you've got to really want to win every start to have consistently good ones. When I was younger I always had a problem with starting in large fleets and this detracted from my overall confidence on the course. I would have one good start out of five and this was not acceptable. Eventually I became more aggressive, more confident and 4 out of 5 good starts became second nature. In my sailing, this became a key element to our success. We became so confident in our starts that we were able to plan our start and then plan our first three legs of the course before they materialized. To me the start is a very important part of each race, and the only way to have successful starts is to be very aggressive and have your boat handling down to a tee. You have to intimidate the boats starting around you so that they are so flustered they lose their concentration and when the gun goes off, they're miles behind.

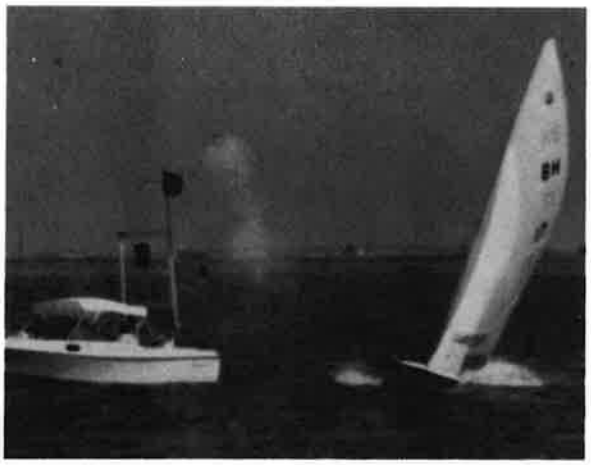
After the start we go after each leg of the course with a vengeance, never letting up and never giving the other guy the benefit of the doubt.

PHOTOS: ROBERT DEGERBERG

The winner steaming right along

Nice tight quarters

Colie Mains Blow the Doors Off the Competition.



Bang! *Mike Fortenbaugh winning the third race of the 1985 Nationals.*

Bang! *Dave Magno winning the fourth race of the 1985 Nationals.*

NCESA National Championship — 1st, 2nd
Blue Chip Invitational — 2nd
Easter Regatta — 1st
Lake Hopatcong Spring Invitational — 1st
Toms River Invitational — 1st
Little Egg Harbor Invitational — 1st
Barnegat Bay Y.R.A. Championship — 1st
Keuka Lake FLACE — 1st

When races are won on boat speed...
they're won with Colie Sails.

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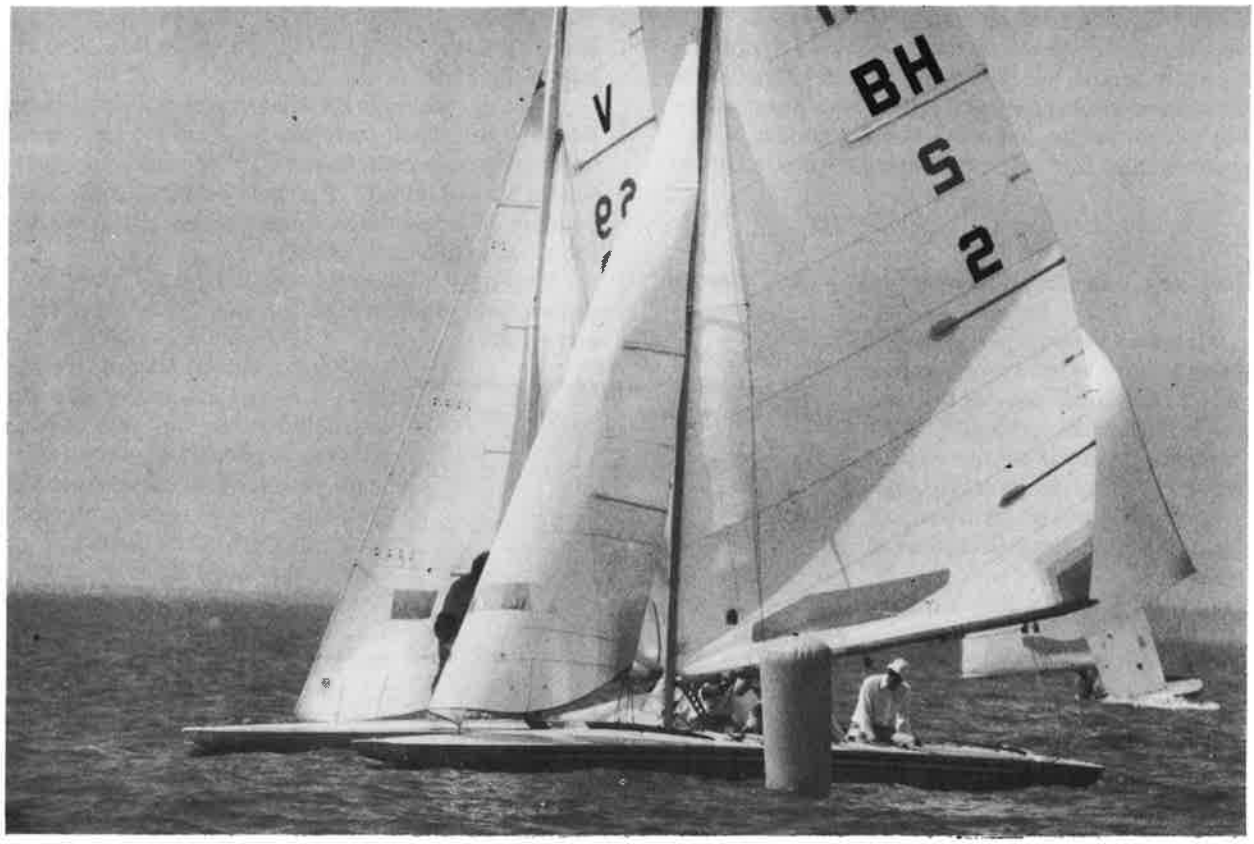


Is someone on Sam's boat lifting the boom to clear the mark?

Are concerned committee Dede Myer and Walter Smedley watching BH-2 above? (most of the time Walter didn't need the loud hailer)

INTERVIEW WITH JOE FEDERICO

Mike Fortenbaugh interviewed his rock-star crew Joe Federico to see what lurked behind his dark Vuarnet sun glasses. The resulting conversation was humerous as well as very insightful into the world of E-Scow racing. In the following interview, Mike's questions appear in bold face while Joe's answers are in normal type.

* * *

Okay, Joe, let's talk about E-Scow sailing. Any general thoughts?

E-Scow sailing has been very very good to me.

We're going to have to get more specific than that. Let's start with our nickname. What exactly is "Team Breathless?"

It's not something real, it's a mysterious force. Sure we're a bunch of hard working guys off the race course, but get us on the water and we're a couple of maniacs. Team Breathless is just hard to define.

Isn't everything about sailing hard to define?

Yeah, like why do we sail? Maybe for the girl groupies? In that case, we're all pretty dumb because there aren't too many.

That never stopped your famous jacuzzi parties at the Easterns. In 1987, the Nationals are scheduled for Chautauqua so people from all over the country will be looking forward to more memorable events. Let us in on some secrets to a good party.

It's music. It's enough of the right liquid refreshment. It's the girls — how do I say that without being a male chauvanist pig? Our parties are good clean fun. Most of all, you need the right atmosphere and we provide that.

What else do you need for a good party?

Not much. We have really pretty and fun loving women.

Care to name any names?

No need to.

You stud, you. Maybe we should "leak" the plans we've been making for this summer.

This year the Inlands will be hot. All the Easterners that come are going to hold a party for the Westerners. We'll make a big sign, bring our boxes and when the Westerners join us, we'll have a crazy time.

Last season was the first time we raced seriously out in the Midwest. Did you notice any differences in sailing styles?

There definitely is a difference. They have bigger fleets and their top guys were all really fast. But when we had the Nationals out East, not enough Westerns came. When the Nationals are out in the West, all the top Eastern boats with a chance will make the trip. They go out not only for the Nationals, but also for the Blue Chips. But when the Nationals are in the East, we only get the Melges team, the Porters and one or two others. Take the top five at the Inlands and ask how many came to Nationals. Only two. Then in the E-Scow magazine, the Inlands are treated like the Nationals. They even printed the Inland results instead of the Nationals in the "Finish-line" of Yacht Racing & Cruising. The Midwesterners have the attitude that their Inland Championship is the National Championship and that's not the way it should be. That attitude should change.

I think you're right on target, but how do we change attitudes? I tried snapping my fingers once, but it didn't work. Maybe if we meet more Midwesterners, party with them and become closer friends, we'll have some affect. Like Jule Hannaford, remember his theory which he told us after a great party night out at the Nationals?

Oh yeah, you mean the "Survival of the Fittest Theory?" Well, first you go out and party real hard and late. By morning, all the weak brain cells are dead and only the strong ones survive. That's always worked for us. We seem to put together the best races when you turn up at 9 in the morning after using the cockpit of the boat for a bed and sails as covers.

That only happened once, but we definitely have a sailing philosophy which allows for fun behavior. Care to divulge any of it?

I'm breathless. I mean, we're breathless. Here, I'll give you an example about how we sail. Erik Johnson (CH-18) and myself are from the same town and we both bought sailing boots at the same time for ourselves and Erik's crew. Half way through the season, Erik came over to me holding up his boot and pieces of his crew's. He asked me if my boots looked like his. Mine were shiny and new looking still. If I held a seminar on hiking, my advice would be, "Be one with the hiking straps."

Do you think Jule will remember his promise to find us an A-Scow for this year's Inlands?

I hope so but we'd better give him a call.

How about sails, Joe? What are some of your thoughts?

Well, use dacron, don't use rubber. Rubber breaks, I know. Here, let me ask you that question.

I think there is a herding effect in scow sailing. Last year Harry Melges did well so he's going to have a lot of business. Everyone copies the winners. I noticed the same thing with boats in our area a few years ago. First everybody thought one boat builder was better and two years later, the feelings had shifted completely around. As far as sails go, I believe our Colie is fuller and has a tighter leech than say Melges'. But who is to say which is actually a faster design? We have good speed and so does Harry. Sailing is still a very inexact sport on this level. In fact, most of the time we're going fast with things other people tell me are definitely slow. All someone has to do is win and the herd goes stampeding again.

I hope we influence the herding effect this year.

One final thing, how did the famous call of the "Auk" originate?

That's going to be boring.

Come on, Joe. We've got to record this for history.

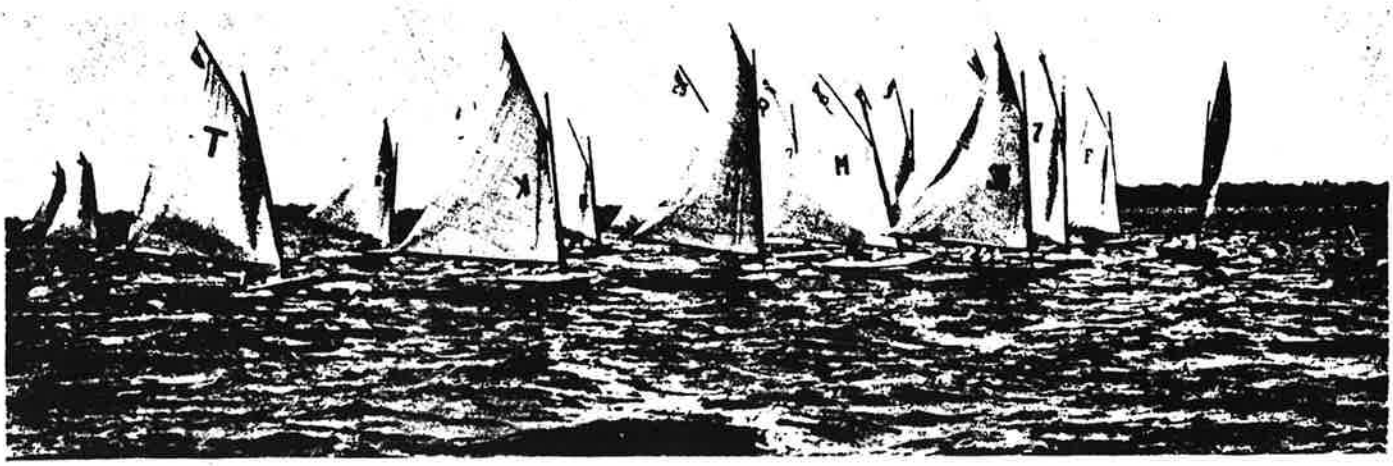
All right. On early Sunday mornings, when I was still in bed, a friend who I used to race motorcycles with would come to pick me up. He knew I didn't have an alarm clock, so he would scream this maniacal laugh out of his car window as he drove up my drive way. It always woke me up and also psyched me for the days events. It seemed the perfect cross-over to sailing. We started it on Chautauqua Lake and Erik Johnson picked it up. Now Team Breathless does the best call of the Auk.

Some people may have heard the laugh and not known what it was. What does it mean?

It can be a way of saying "How's it going?" "You're nuts." "Glad to see you now get outta here." or it can be used as an intimidating call to distract the most intense skipper and crew.

So who does the funniest version?

Well, this year we have a new entry and he seems to be heading to the top. He's Willie deCamp but he's been practicing all winter and telephoning people to get help and that might be cheating.



A bunch of Class "C" catboats coming down on the turning mark in the Inland Lakes Regatta, sailed on Lake Winnebago last Summer.

A New Class for the Inland Lakes Yachting Association

Developing a Type of Eighteen-Footer Suitable for Racing or Pleasure Sailing. Results of Inland Lakes Regatta.

Even "Yachting" had typos!

AT the annual meeting of the Inland Lakes Yachting Association, that well-known organization which controls yacht racing on the inland lakes of Wisconsin and Minnesota, a new type of boat was adopted for the coming year. This is a smaller class than the "C's" and it will be known as Class "E." The boats will be 18 ft. long with a beam of 6 ft. 9 in., and will have the so-called Marconi rig and center board. The underlying idea of this new class is to produce a sail boat with practical value as well as a racing boat. The boats will be strongly built, and with their relatively simple rig will be good for sailing in all kinds of weather.

It was also decided at the meeting to hold the 1924 Regatta at Lake Minnetonka, near Minneapolis.

As the results of the sailing of the twenty-sixth Annual Regatta of the Association, held last year, have not been recorded in the East, a brief summary of these races are given:

The races were held this year at Neenah, Lake Winnebago, five races being sailed from Monday, August 20th, to Friday, August 24th. Seventeen Class "A" sloops and twenty-five Class "C" cats participated in the various races, fighting it out in weather which varied from a drifting match to half a gale of wind.

Monday, August 20th, the weather was moderate, and *Gadget*, of the Lake Geneva Y. C., came in a winner in Class "C," with *Whiskaway* second. In Class "A" *Kingfisher*, of the Minnetonka Y. C., won handily, followed by *Faith* and *Blue Heron*.

On Tuesday the boats faced a strong nor'wester, the leaders in Class "A" being *Deuce* and *Gadget*, and in Class "C" *Senta* and *Kingfisher*.

Wednesday proved to be a light weather chance, and produced some of the closest racing of the regatta. In Class "C" *Whiskaway* finally won out, with *Gadget* a close second, while in Class "A" *Blue Heron* won a close race from *Dorla* and *Faith*.

(from Sam Merrick's files)

E SCOW PRICE LIST

JUNE 1934

New Johnson	$850.00 *(+$40.00)
Freight White Bear to Bay Head, N.J.	$108.00
Rod Rigging	$ 55.00
Main (Ratsey)	$130.00
Jib (Ratsey)	$ 50.00

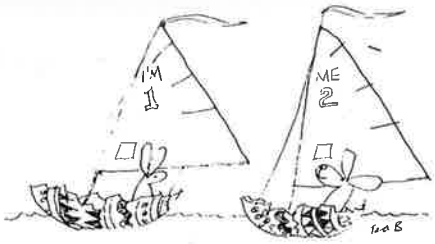
*full price $890.00 subject to $40.00 credit for unneeded wire.

Kingfisher, owned by Eugene Glueck and sailed by E. B. Savage, winner of the championship in her class and the Davis and Gilbert cups.

man, was the championship winner, and also took the Warren Cup. *Senta*, also from Lake Geneva, owned by O. L. Schmidt, and sailed by Ernst C. Schmidt, won the President O. L. Schmidt trophy.

The standing of the yachts is figured out in a unique manner, which has, however, in the two years of its use proven fair. A boat's standing is first figured according to the horse race system and then according to the point system. Then the standings of the boats in the horse race system and in the point system are added and the boat having the lowest number wins the first place.

The Association has re-elected all its officers for another year, as follows: President, Dr. O. L. Schmidt, of Lake Geneva; Secretary-Treasurer, Jay T. O'Brien, of Oshkosh; with Henry Mayer, of Pine Lake; Ward T. Burton, of Minnetonka, and Steve Davis, of Neenah, as members of the executive committee.



EASTER REGATTA

The Reporter editor visited briefly with Brian Porter and Harry Melges III to discuss the Easter Regatta in So. Carolina to amplify the photo and captions coverage sent in by Mike Fortenbaugh.

Both Lake Geneva sailors said it was a memorable regatta with good Committee work, fine courses and a marvelous new (and reasonable) Hilton hotel close by the Yacht Club. Available are two bars (one poolside and both featuring gorgeous cocktail waitresses), a jacuzzi, dance floor, great color TV area where at least 30 of the sailors gathered to watch the finals of the College Basketball Championship Saturday afternoon when the wind had dropped to zilch allowing them to get back to the hotel. As a result, most missed the yacht club party but they hope that next year it would be scheduled at the hotel.

A waffle house adjacent to the hotel offered a perfect antidote to all the empty ABSOLUTES and there were always about 15 sailors snuffling down these caloric sponges. With a Burger King on the other side for breakfast (mitt grits) this routine served as a fine conditioning program.

Brian did think that all this soft, good life distracted the Melges boys sufficiently to put them in 4th slot. The winds were light but once races were under way the boats kept moving — Brian reflected that brother John never did get up out of the low side swamp but new foul weather gear made this position bearable.

All hands promise to return next Easter.

Top Left — Here's everyone sitting around the bar at the Sheraton, watching the NCAA basketball playoffs and eating sandwiches. Notice the number of baby "Absolute" vodka bottles in front of Dave Bogle (2nd from left).

Top Right — This was the best feature, the indoor jacuzzi, capable of seating ten. The bar was only 20 feet away (notice how everyone has drinks). Left to right: Paul Magno, Dave Magno, James Madia, Cindy Magno, Jay Darling, Steve Schmidt and his crew.

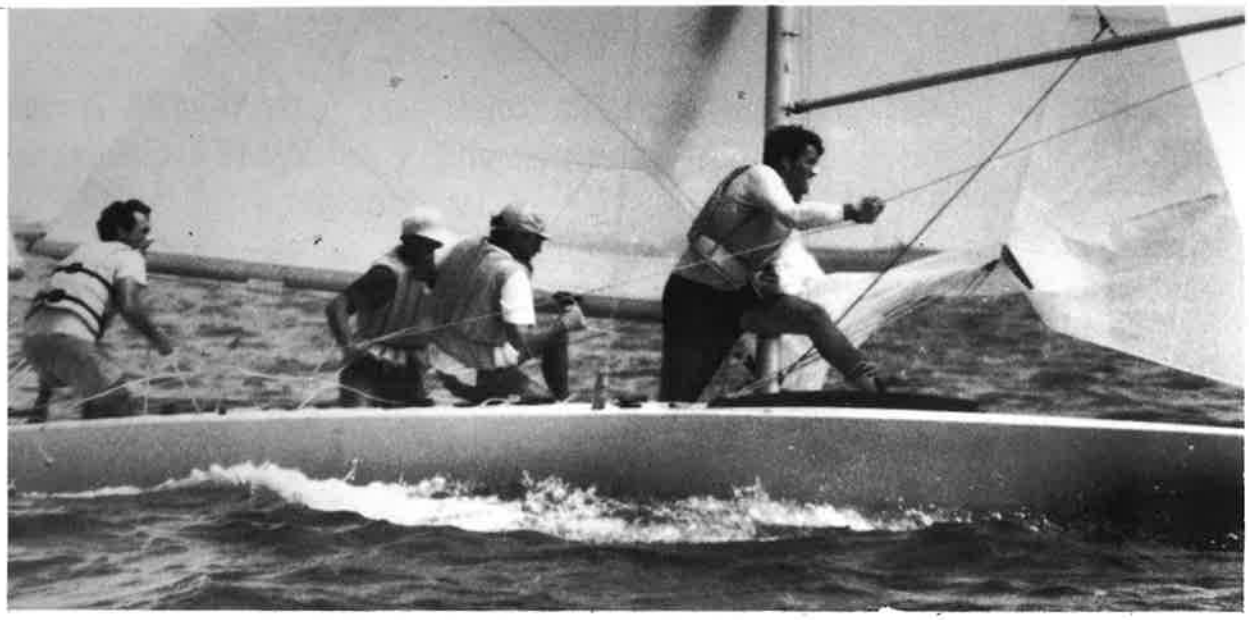
Jay Darling checks out the new Porter-Fortenbaugh Perpetual Trophy. The inscription reads: "For the person who ordered the most drinks on other people's bar tabs." The winner was Harry Melges who had a final bar bill of only $2!

Here's another picture of the bar at the Sheraton. Sailors are starting to gather for the basketball game on T.V. and Harry Melges (obscured by Steve Schmidt's hand) is getting ready to put the moves on the bartender (far right).

This is "Team Breathless" on their swing at the yacht club. These three guys would come in after racing, sit down, start drinking and never be able to stand back up. Left to right: Mike Fortenbaugh, Dave Bogle, Joe Frederico.

The Sheraton had a well equipped weight room (pictured left) with a sauna and jacuzzi. Here Dave Bogle demonstrates his favorite exercise, the one-arm curl. Hans Melges, the real weight king, was too shy to pose for a picture.

PHOTO: ROBERT DEGERBERG



Dickie Wight and crew — a study in aggressive intensity.

The Protest Corner

Brian Porter (I-49) wished to be on record that he doesn't feel that Willie de Camp's letter in REACHES about the Black Flag's employment by Race Committees was offensive or derogatory in that Willie pointed out that both regattas mentioned were successful and his main point being the Black Flag can be misused. Brian observed that with the Black Flag posted during the ILYA championship he chose to be extremely conservative during the starts and felt this really affected his overall standing.

When you race . . . . .

1st Nagawicka
1st Springfield

1st ILYA Invitational
1st ILYA Championship
1st MESA
1st Interlakes
1st Blue Chip

1st WMYA Invitational
1st WMYA Championship

. . . performance counts!

We deliver.

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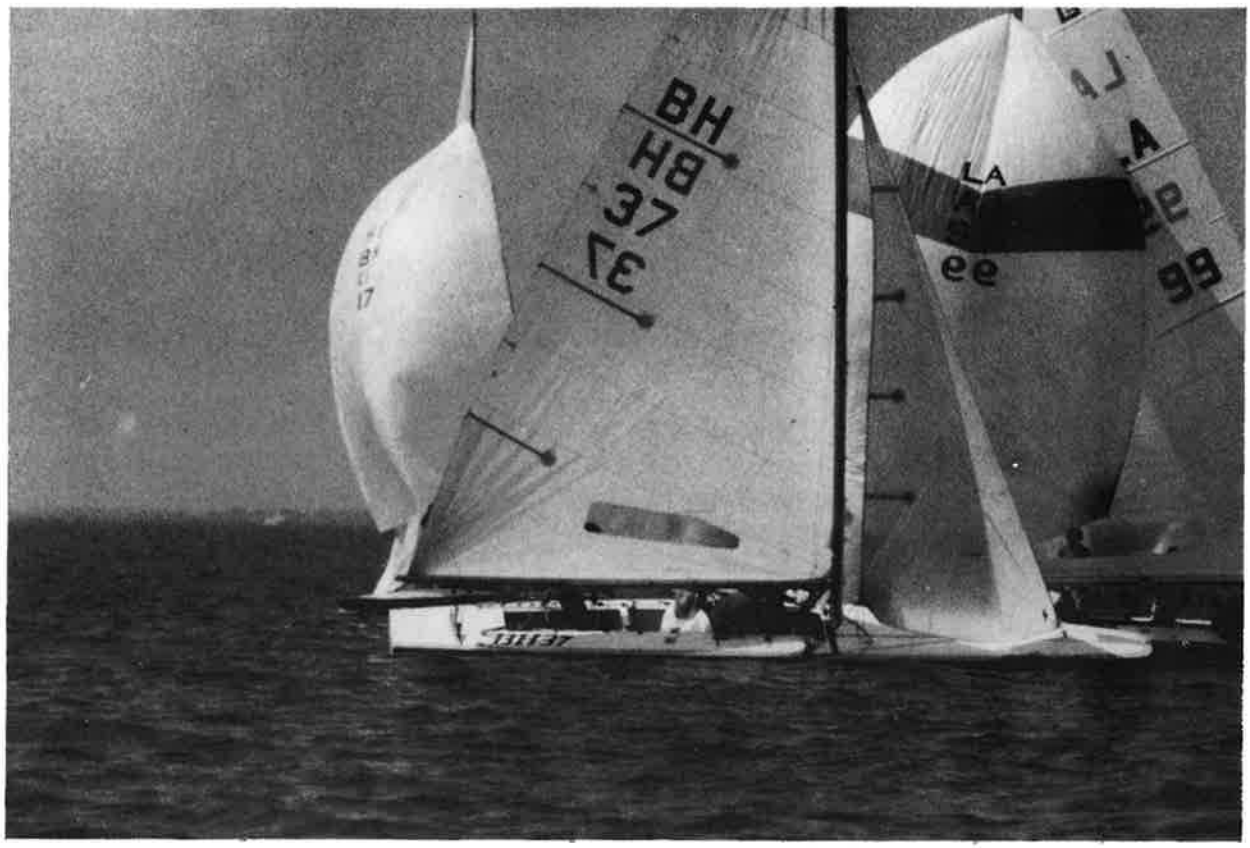
PHOTOS: ROBERT DEGERBERG



Scott sliding by Dave Magno

Willie sliding by also

FROM THE ARCHIVES

This document was uncovered in the E Publication Committee's Division of Trusts and Probate.

OBED GARDNER'S WILL.

Siasconset, May the 29th, 1841

I, Obed Gardner, master mariner, now livin at 'Sconset, write down this will.

Item. - I have cruised with my wife, Huldy Jane since 1811. We signed articles in town before the preacher on Independence Day. I want her and my older boy Jotham to be Captain and mate in bringin to port whatever I leave and to see that every one of the crew gets the lay as writ down on this paper. I put mother in command. I know shell be Captain any way, for six months after we started on our cruise I found out that I was mate and she was master. I dont mean that she ever mutinied, but I no that whenever we didnot agree she always maneovered to work to windward. Maybe it was all right for she could sail closer to wind than I could and could manage the crew of little ones that she had as much to do with shippin as I did. She always wanted me to do the swearin when there was any trubble. I no that when she and Jotham break bulk the cargo will be got out as well as I could do it myself.

Item. - In 1838 Captain Ichabod Worth got tired of the old Nancy Rotch and wanted to get rid of her so he got me to take a piece of her. When I saw her last she was lyin at the wharf in Valparaiso moren half full. I mean she was moren half full of oil. Mother never liked her. I want Jotham to have that piece as extra pay for what he does in settlin up my affairs heel have to steer things while mother is taken observations, watchin the weather and lookin over things below decks.

Item. - I want mother to have the house on Union Street until she goes aloft. Then I want it to go to the children in equal lays and if any child dies I want the lay of the parent to go to the parents young ones. But I don't want my daughter Belindy to have anything as long as her husband is livin. He is a lubber, but she has been cruisin with him for years. I havent got anytying agin him but he doesnt no how to navigate the sea of life. I do believe if he wanted to stop a leak board ship it would be just like him to go into the hold with an auger and bore a hole threw the plankin to let the bilge water out into the sea. But Belindy likes him. Thats just like a woman. If I should give the lay out and out to her, I am afraid her husband would maneover to get hold of it. So I want mother and Jotham to put it out at interest and give what comes out of it to her until her husband ships for a corpse below decks in the grave yard. Then she can take the lay and do what she wants to with it.

O.G.W. 8

Item. - I dont want my son Ezry to have anything from what I leave. All the children except him was good ones. They looked out for mother and me. He didnt take after either of us except the time he took after me with a fid and hit me over the starboard eye. He new what was to come and was smart enough to jump into Johnny Gibbs catboat, haul in the sheet and steer for the continent. When he got to Bedford he shipped as boat steerer on the old Falcon. I was glad he did. I dont know where he is now but I herd he was master of a steamboat runnin between Canton and Whampoa. I havent got any use of him and I guess he hasnt got any for me. The black eye he gave me is outlawed and I dont now lay anything up agin him for that.

Item. - I want mother and jotham to settle up things as soon as they can, break bulk and make a fair divide between the children. But dont forget what I have writ down about mother and Belindy. I dont think Belindys husband will make any fuss about the way I have taken care of her unless whe runs head on the shoals of a lawyers office. Then look out for squalls. I hope sheel stand off if she sees a lawyer comin thort her bows.

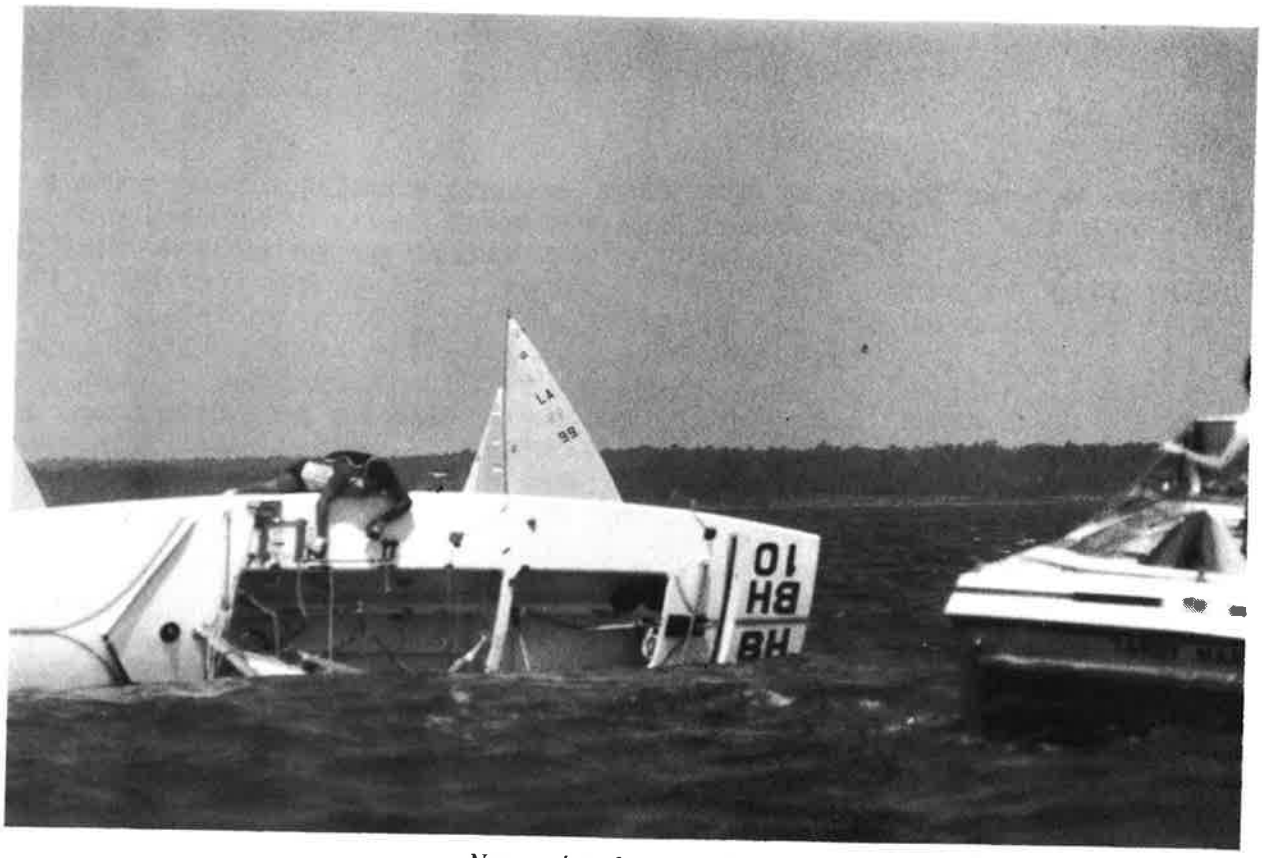
Item. - I want mother to have half of what comes from what is left of my property besides the house in Union Street. She deserves it. Every time I was around the Horn she did her duty to the young ones and I want her to have enough to live on until she goes aloft. Then I want her lay to go to the children in equal pieces except that Belindy shall only have what comes from it until her husband dies. If mother wants to marry again thats her business. I never did like to cruise without a mate, and I guess she wouldnt like to either.

Obed Gardner,
Master Mariner

Captain Obed Gardner ast us into his porch and opened his locker. He than ast us to take a drink of rum that was fetched to him from Boston by Captain George Swain. Then he pulled this paper out of his pea jacket and signed it and said it was his will and he ast us to sign it as witnesses. We done so, then he ast one of us to write down what took place and as they said I was more of a skoller than they, I did so.

Jethro Coffin, 2nd,
Eleazur Paddack
Shubael Starbuck.

PHOTOS: ROBERT DEGERBERG



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