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WHAT CLASS IS THAT?

MARCH : 1955



A start of the Thirties in 1927. "Phryne's" experimental marconi mainsail shows in the background

Rosenfeld

THE THIRTIES ARE FIFTY

A Salute to the First Class of One-Design Racing Yachts to Reach the Half Century Mark

By WILLIAM. H. TAYLOR



TWO SCORE AND TEN years ago, the Herreshoff Manufacturing Company brought forth what was destined to become, in this year of 1955, the first class of one-design racing yachts ever to reach the ripe old age of 50 years—and still racing. Not, to be sure, still racing as the red hot one-design class they were for most of those 50 years, for most of them have been re-rigged and probably no two are exactly alike now. But most of the New York Y.C. 30-Foot Class are still actively sailing on waters all the way from Puget Sound to Chesapeake Bay and some of them, at least, will be racing among themselves and in mixed company in their 51st season.

It is difficult to remember now that when they were built these 30-foot waterline keel sloops were "small boats." They were, in fact, the smallest things that the New York Y.C. recognized as sailing yachts at all. Men whose boats weren't at least that long on the waterline had no vote in the club, and no smaller craft, even though owned by members, could race in the annual cruise and other club events.

The movement to build such a class came from a group of younger members of the club, but among the 18 original owners were a number of men who could or did own much larger yachts. What they had in mind was "a wholesome, seaworthy craft, free from freak features, about 30 feet

waterline, with short overhangs, moderate beam and draft, cabin house, complete but simple outfit for cruising, sail area about 1000 square feet."

With these requirements in mind a committee consisting of Newbury Lawton, Addison G. Hanan, and W. Butler Duncan, Jr., went down to Bristol, R.I., to dicker with Nathanael G. Herreshoff. Herreshoff was receptive, and the committee came home with an agreement. Besides the dimensions of 43'6" o.a., 30' w.l., 8'10" beam, 6'3" draft, the agreement specified merely: "Framing best white oak; fastenings, bronze and copper; planking, yellow pine, to be double below the turn of the bilge to the sheerstrake, the inner thickness to be of cypress. Deck, selected white pine, canvas covered. Mahogany raised cabin house; outside lead ballast; sloop rigged."

Such a simple document was all an owner asked, or got, from Captain Nat, even for far bigger and costlier yachts than the Thirties were to be. And all Captain Nat wanted from the owners, except the checks as payments came due, was that they stay away and let him design and build the boat as he wanted to. As usual with the Wizard of Bristol, the results were all that could be desired.

Since Mr. Herreshoff laid down his hulls from models (see "A Museum in Nat Herreshoff's Memory," YACHTING, Dec. '54) the owners never saw even a sketch of the lines of their new boats. The lines reproduced here were taken off *Phryne*

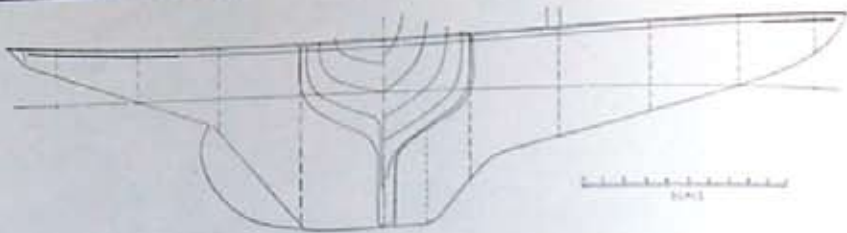
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Rosenfeld

"Playmate" (above) was the first Thirty to try a yawl rig

The profile and sections (right) were taken off "Phryne" by measurer John Hyslop



by measurer John Hyslop some time later on.

It had been agreed to go ahead with the class if eight owners signed up, but very shortly there were 18 boats ordered. The first Thirty was launched at Bristol and tried out early in January, 1905, and by mid-April all 18 were



Ray Krantz

"Vixen" (ex-"Phryne") on parade on Lake Washington, Seattle in 1952

ready for delivery and their first season of racing. The names of the men they were built for, which we'll come to later, would have made quite a page in a "Who's Who in Yachting" at that time, and for many years thereafter. Few, if any, of the original owners have survived the boats, of which at least 14 are still going—some still racing actively, others taking life easier.

Their first race was held by the Manhasset Bay Y.C. (then only 14 years old) on Long Island Sound early in the spring of 1905. Thirty years later the same club held an anniversary race for them over the same course—Matinecock Point was one turning mark—and about half the original 18 turned out. This year Manhasset is scheduling the Thirties again in the club's annual Fall Series in September. How many will turn up remains to be seen, but some certainly will, as many of the active survivors are owned in the western Sound ports and some may come from farther away.

The Thirties sailed 51 races in 1905, with as many as 15

starters in some races—apparently all 18 never got together on one starting line. Nine of the races on the Sound were run by the New York Y.C., five for the Thirties alone. The season's racing disclosed but one fault in the boats: a strong weather helm which was corrected by the addition of a short bowsprit that winter. From then on for 25 years very few of them were altered in any way, although eventually hard racing and sail carrying—a Thirty skipper rarely reefed, blow high or low—called for some reinforcement in the way of the mast step and rigging.

During all those years, and well on into the 1930s, the Thirties, in addition to being one of the hottest, most competitive classes on the Sound, were always to be feared by bigger craft in such events as the New York Y.C. cruises in which, year in and year out, they saved their time to win the major trophies now and again.

The Thirties could go in a hard breeze, and drag what sail they couldn't carry with the aid of their 8500-lb lead keels. They could also ghost in what seemed no breeze at all. The writer vividly remembers lying becalmed off Easton Rocks all of one hot, seemingly windless summer day in a heavy Friendship sloop—no slouch of a sailer in most weathers. Mel Smith, in the 30-footer *Interlude*, ghosted out of Manhasset Bay past us in the early morning, sailed some 15 miles to Center Island, sailed in and finished a *Seawin* haka regatta, sailed home, and late that evening passed us struggling back into Manhasset Bay.

The boats saw a lot of other classes come and go. When the one-design Eight-Meters were built in 1928 we heard they were to "take the place of the Thirties," but a few years later the Thirties were still racing as a one-design class when the Eights had ceased to do so.

The caliber of the owners and skippers who sailed them had, of course much to do with the class's being one of the hottest in the sport for 25 or 30 years. But the virtues of the boats, and the way they measured up against newer classes and against modern, fast, cruising-racing yachts, had a lot to do with attracting such men. Most of them changed hands in the first four or five years, but the new owners were as keen as the old.

Some of them liked the Thirties so well they came back into the class after dropping out. For instance Jim and Teddy Alker, at different periods, jointly owned No. 1 and No. 18. J. P. Morgan first had No. 2, later had No. 17, and

her, and bought her back again. John Mahlstedt also owned the same boat twice—No. 12—besides owning No. 3 at one time. Johnston deForest owned Nos. 7 and 13 at different periods; Ralph N. Ellis Nos. 12 and 18; W. C. Atwater, Jr., Nos. 12 and 14.

Gradually boats dropped out of the strictly one-design class. Rigs were altered, engines installed, cabin accommodations improved. Gaff mainsails were old-fashioned, though it has yet to be proved that the Thirties are better boats under jib-headed rigs. And while their original accommodations were fine for a stag crew on a yacht club cruise, later owners wanted extra comfort below for family cruising.

Among them, the Thirties have borne quite a collection of names, and belonged to a lot of yachtsmen. Only *Alera*, *Linnet*, *Oriole*, and *Banzai* seem to have gotten through 50 years under their original names. The prize name collector was No. 3, which started life as *Atair*, was *Atair* when she was lost, and was *Atair* during two other periods in between. In the interims, she was known as *Okee II*, *Hope*, *Carita*, *Lesmone*, *Alberta*, *Alida*, *Nachtan*, *Gray Goose* and *Ou-*

handsome, graceful sheer and trim overhangs that were bred into her from old Nat Herreshoff's original model.

To attempt a complete history of these amazing old yachts would be a prohibitive and probably a thankless undertaking. But here are a few details from their life stories:

No. 1. Built as *Alera*, for the Alker brothers, of Manhasset Bay, she migrated to Lake Ontario some years back and is now owned by W. A. Cannon, Jr., of Youngstown, N.Y., still called *Alera*.

No. 2. As *Ibis*, she was built for C. O'Donnel Iselin. Her second owner, in 1908, was J. P. Morgan. In 1927, then called *Silhouette*, she was shipped to Puerto Rico, but she found her way back to the Sound and is now *Huntress*, owned by Barbara and Morton Engel, of Larchmont, N.Y.

No. 3. Originally Cord Meter's *Atair*, she has had many owners and, as noted above, many names. In 1952 she was again *Atair*, owned by Dr. E. A. Epstein, of City Island, N.Y. But a fall gale tore her from her mooring and she was wrecked beyond repair.

No. 4. Starting life as W. D. Guthrie's *Maid of Meudon*, she had many owners, among them J. B. Dunbaugh, C. Sherman Hoyt and Francis S. Page. The last record we have found of her is as *Interlude*, owned by A. S. Ruben of the Stuyvesant Y.C. on City Island in 1939.

No. 5. Built as *Pintail* for August Belmont, later E. D. Morgan's *Gossip*, Lloyd Griscom's *Yolanda* and Ogden Reid's *Lena*, she is now owned by William Winberg, Jr., of Waltham, Mass., and sails out of Marblehead and Sandy Bay.

No. 6. W. Butler Duncan, Jr., had her built as *Dahinda* and W. Emlen and George E. Roosevelt were among her early owners. She was the first Thirty converted to yawl rig, by Frank B. Draper in 1914, and later as *Playmate* she won many cruising races under Henry Frisch and Bob Teller. Still *Playmate*, she is now owned by Nelson L. Rockefeller, sails out of a Long Island port, and is a sloop again.

No. 7. Originally Henry F. Lippitt's *Tabasco*, she was owned by Johnston deForest as *Nepsi* and for more than 20 years by Gherardi Davis as *Alice*. Now a yawl named *Carolina*, she belongs to Thomas O. Woolf of Greenwich, Conn.

No. 8. Built as *Carlita* for Oliver Harriman, she had many owners, including one in Scituate, Mass., in the '30s and
(Continued on page 120)



Robinson

"Minx" (above) sails Lake Erie with lofty, short-boomed marconi mainsail and big genoa. Her "doghouse" is an addition. "Oriole" (right) is another one that can still win races

Dream. Others have rejoiced in anywhere from two to eight name changes. Some have had a dozen owners, others only four or five.

But whatever their names, these boats have remained outstanding testimonials to the art of yacht building, as it was practiced down there in Bristol half a century ago. Look at a lot of other old boats—and a lot that are a great deal younger—and you will see hogged, sagged and twisted hulls—lopsided, humped up at the chainplates, and running down hill at the ends. The stresses of hard driving, transmitted through light hulls to heavy ballast keels, have done most of it. None of them has been driven any harder than the Thirties have been, and the latter have had their share of groundings and dismastings and collisions, too. But I can't remember ever seeing a Thirty that did not retain the same



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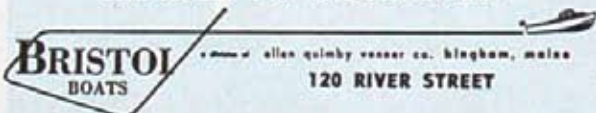
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Florida bound. Ann Davison aboard her "Felicity Ann" prior to her departure from New York last November

barrassed. The foolhardiness in undertaking this winter passage seemed to be altogether too far reaching in its disturbance.

Ten hours after taking on the tow, the fishing boat tied up in Hampton, Va., and for their most estimable services the skipper and crew would accept no more than my heartfelt thanks.

It took a week to dry out the ship, but what matter, I thought, it is plain sailing from now on down the Waterways to Miami, wherein I was wrong again, but that, as the raconteurs have it, is another story.

THE THIRTIES ARE FIFTY

(Continued from page 57)

another on Chesapeake Bay in the early '40s. From 1946 to '52 she sailed out of Manhasset Bay as Robert F. Linder's *Stasia*, but seems to have dropped out of the records since.

No. 9. Built for Philip and George Ade as *Adelaide II*, she was *Amorita* most of her life under several owners among whom were Hendon Chubb and Howard C. Brokaw in the later '20s. In 1939 her home port was Rochester, N.Y., and her owner J. M. Odenback, but she is one of the four that "Lloyds" and the class records have lost track of.

No. 10. Always named *Linnet*, and built for Amos Tuck French, she was owned by Charles H. Talcott as far back as 1916 and was still owned by Mrs. C. H. Talcott in 1939, when her home port was Chester, Nova Scotia. She is reported to be still sailing, somewhere on the coast of Maine, but we have been unable to learn her present owner's name.

No. 11. *Oriole*, always so named, was built for Lyman Delano. Samuel C. Pirie, of Sea Cliff, L.I., bought her in 1917 and raced her until the day he died in August, 1938, in Newport, R.I., at the end of a day's run of the New York Y.C. cruise. She was the last of the Thirties to race regularly on these cruises, and until the end, under veteran Sam Pirie, was always a threat to the younger boats and often a prize winner. In recent years, under the ownership of Richard L. Wagner, of Port Washington, L.I., she has been a consistent winner in the Long Island Sound handicap class and in overnight races. Power was not installed in her until 1945. In 1924 Mr. Pirie sailed *Oriole* from Mattapoisett, Mass., to Hempstead Harbor, L.I., 158 miles in 22½ hours—better than seven knots and an outstanding demonstration of how these boats can get over the ground.

No. 12. First George M. Pynchon's *Neola II*, she was subsequently owned by Ralph Ellis, Holland S. Duell, John A. Mahlstedt (twice), Gordon Hammersley, Howard L. Curry, W. C. Atwater, Jr., and others. She had eight names but has been *Minx* since 1923. Now owned by C. F. Shaffer of Rocky River, Ohio, she won the Cleveland Y.C. auxiliary class championship in 1953 and is regarded as one of the fastest cruising boats on Lake Erie today.

No. 13. The original *Minx*, built for Howard Willets, she became *Phantom* in 1924, and has been owned for 15 years and actively cruised and raced by Dr. Gustav I. Steffen of the City Island Y.C.

No. 14. Stuyvesant Wainwright's *Ca-a Mia* the first year, she figured in several yachting books and articles as H. A. Calahan's *Old Timer* in the late '30s and now, under the latter name, is owned by John P. Ohl of Port Washington, L.I.

No. 15. Built for Newbury Lawton and sold the next year to Clifford D. Mallory, she has always been *Banzai*. Edmund Lang, of the Manhasset Bay Y.C., bought her in 1914 and sailed and raced her steadily until his death in 1940. Owned since then by Maurice L. Mulligan, of the same club, she still carries the original gaff rig and was perhaps the last Thirty to have power installed, in 1950.

No. 16. *Nautilus*, built for Addison and Wilmer Hanan, has always carried that name except briefly in the '20s when she was Harvey Flint's *Wanderer VIII* and then William L. Inslee's *Taurus*. A few years ago, at her mooring in Manhasset Bay, a night-landing airplane ripped off her rig and cabin top without touching the hull. But she has been rebuilt by her present owner, George Nystrom, who lives aboard her at Port Washington.

No. 17. *Phryne*, built for Henry L. Maxwell, has been around. J. P. Morgan owned her at two different times, and fitted her in 1927 with the first jib-headed rig ever put in a Thirty—as a class-authorized experiment. With 100 feet less sail, she raced on even terms with the others, but the class voted that the boats—then a mere 22 years old—did not warrant making the change officially, as the estimated expense of around \$2500 might force some owners out of the class. She was sold and shipped to Japan soon after. Shortly before Pearl Harbor her then-owner, John Drummond, of Victoria, B.C., built a secret compartment behind *Phryne*'s icebox, in which he smuggled some valuable possessions and family heirlooms past the Japanese customs hounds when *Phryne* was shipped back to Victoria. Now named *Vixen*, she is owned by Victor Beck, of Seattle. In 1952 in the annual yacht parade which is a feature of Seattle's season opening, this old trouper won first prize as the best-decorated yacht in the show.

No. 18. Originally *Anemone II*, owned by John Murray Mitchell, she has had more than a dozen owners, including at least one on Lake Ontario in the late 1930s. She is now *Blue Moon* owned by Henry L. Horrocks, her home waters are Chesapeake Bay, and she still carries Nat Herreshoff's original gaff rig.

All of which brings us down to date on the known whereabouts of the surviving Thirties. Only a few of them have done much serious racing in recent years, and those few are widely scattered. But there are plans afoot to stir up something worthy of the occasion. There is no formal 30-Foot Class organization at present but Dr. Steffen, owner of *Phantom*, has been acting as a volunteer clearing house and central office—it is from his records that some of the information on present whereabouts, above, was gleaned.

Dr. Steffen has been in correspondence with other owners, and a number of them are ready to get into any anniversary festivities that may come along, both competition-wise and in the cruise or rendezvous line. The Manhasset Bay Y.C., as previously noted, plans to schedule racing for the class. The New York Y.C., though few Thirties are now owned by its members, has scheduled races and trophies for the class in its two-race annual regatta which will be held on the Sound June 4-5.

Some other clubs which in the past have started big fleets of Thirties in their regattas may be interested in doing likewise. As will be seen above, there are enough Thirties owned in the western part of Long Island Sound to make a good race, even if only half of them show up. Henry Horrocks is planning to bring *Blue Moon* up to the Sound from her Chesapeake home port if an active program is arranged, and some other outlying boats might be induced to come.

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sail plan, displacement, waterline length and other variables, a handicap system might seem desirable. However, the chances are that the only factors that would need to be considered seriously would be rig, sail area, and perhaps propeller allowance, and this would be simple enough. Or it might be better fun just to race them on the flat and see if the boats closest to the original equipment don't come out on top.

In any case, Dr. Gustav I. Steffen, 315 East 68th St., New York City, would like to hear from any of the owners, or from any club interested in running races, and to carry on from there. And if by any chance some reader knows the whereabouts of the boats we haven't been able to trace, both Dr. Steffen and the writer will both be glad to get the word.

"HOOT MON" WINS HER SECOND MIAMI-NASSAU

(Continued from page 90)

by Warren Bailey and owned by William S. Piper of the Coconut Grove Sailing Club, was only five minutes behind *Tioga*.

Class C honors went to *Hoot Mon* with *Finisterre* and *Spray* second and third respectively. Class B was won by *Tioga* with Horace Binney's *Chance* second and *Away*, sailed by Toot Gmeiner, in third place. *Valiant*, sailed by joint owners Carl, Hawn and Hill, took Class A with *Ciclon*, sailed by Sergio Gallo in the absence of Dr. Luis Vidafia, second and *Sea Lion*, sailed by Gilbert Verney third.

The summary:

Boat & owner	Class	Elapsed Time	Corrected Time
<i>Hoot Mon</i> , Pirie, Brown & Ulmer	C	52:31:18	43:51:48
<i>Finisterre</i> , Carleton Mitchell	C	53:06:27	44:26:57
<i>Tioga</i> , B. P. Noyes	B	51:41:04	46:36:57
<i>Spray</i> , W. S. Piper	C	55:58:54	46:41:50
<i>Chance</i> , Horace Binney	B	52:54:35	47:04:07
<i>Away</i> , W. D. Gmeiner	B	52:41:12	47:13:46
<i>Iolanthe</i> , A. B. Harrison	B	53:17:34	47:35:29
<i>Teal</i> , S. C. Smith, Jr.	C	54:25:35	47:36:01
<i>Jubilee</i> , F. D. Wetherill	B	53:20:52	47:47:02
<i>Dellah</i> , A. C. Gay	C	57:56:07	48:39:03
<i>Valiant</i> , Carl, Hawn, Hill & Wright	A	48:59:17	48:59:17
<i>Ciclon</i> , L. H. Vidafia	A	53:57:15	49:19:10
<i>Sea Lion</i> , Gilbert Verney	A	52:27:04	49:51:08
<i>Ticonderoga</i> , John Hertz, Jr.	A	51:02:38	50:12:19
<i>Malabar XIII</i> , Kennon Jewett	A	54:57:38	50:18:10
<i>Gulf-Stream</i> , M. E. Hemmerdinger	A	53:46:17	51:08:25
<i>Xanadu</i> , Geo. Arents, Jr.	B	57:29:37	52:27:00
<i>Callooh</i> , J. M. Brown	B	58:24:03	53:10:47
<i>Mogu</i> , F. S. Guggenheimer	A	56:55:57	55:30:11
<i>Rambler</i> , S. S. McCourtney, Jr.	C	68:20:00	62:32:55
<i>Spindrift</i> , G. V. Sumner, D.N.F.			

ROBERT H. SYMONETTE

MENDING THE MOTOR

(Continued from page 78)

cess calories, is dumped into the exhaust and overboard. So the problem in keeping the engine cool is mainly to make sure passages and piping are open and the pump pumping. Most failures can be cleared up with a little probing and cleaning, as in the case of the other fluid systems, so to be a genius in this department just know where the parts are located and have proper tools and access room.

If a flotilla of jelly fish tries to come into the boat by the intake, you are temporarily in trouble. And this is not uncommon. In some waters the jelly fish are so friendly, and have such tough skins, that I have seen ships stop daily to dig them out of the cooling system.

Ordinarily, there is no way to get obstructions out of the intake fitting without getting wet. Depending on whether you'd rather swim or have a geyser in your face, you can go over the side and scrape off whatever you've picked up; or you can take off the hose, open the gate valve and poke down through the fitting with a wire, such as a piece of coat hanger, until you strike water.

So if you are buzzing along, and suddenly the temperature