

## HISTORY OF THE SHIELDS ONE-DESIGN CLASS

Youngsters all have dreams of heroic achievement. I vividly recall many of mine. I would, in some magical way, make a great deal of money and buy my mother a beautiful automobile. I wanted a sailboat that I could race. I pictured myself becoming another Charlie Barr, legendary skipper of the America's Cup yacht RELIANCE. Another, of less importance, of course, was when I made my first sling-shot: one Sunday during a long sermon I imagined myself shooting down every bit of bric-a-brac in the church - I never missed. When I grew older and learned to play football, tackling intrigued me more than any other part of the game; again in church I became the hero who made beautiful flying tackles and brought down a group of robbers who were attempting to escape up the aisle after stealing the proceeds of the collection plates.

Fanciful dreams carry over, and grown-ups, too, express their wishes through this wonderful mysterious medium where everything we desire materializes. Sometimes they really come true; one of mine did.

For many years I have observed the great problem involved when series are conducted and it is necessary to borrow one-design boats for the contestants to race in. The committee must persuade owners of class boats to loan their boats, and

owners are reluctant to do so for obvious reasons. Then contestants are unhappy because seldom are the boats evenly matched. Of greatest importance, sails are not equal on all boats. Some boats are generally run down. In other words, important series have had to be conducted on lop-sided bases. It was forcefully brought home to me in all our series for the North American Sailing Championship and the Mallory Cup.

I have gone somewhat astray in reciting the foregoing, but it does have some relationship to my dreams. What a wonderful thing it would be, I thought, if a class of completely one-design boats were presented to the Yacht Racing Association (YRA) to be used for the various important series that are run in the Long Island Sound. The Hipkins Trophy and its qualifying series; the Mallory series when it came to the Sound; the SYCE Cup for the Women's Championship on the Sound; the Adams Cup for the National Women's Championship when it came to the Sound, and the Sears Cup for the National Junior Championship. Well, this was a sizable dream because of the cost of the type of boat that would be appropriate for these important events. People just can't make gifts of this magnitude, and I couldn't see how it could be done.

Then, in 1961, we were being blessed with a wonderful year in our business, which placed me in the position of being able to make a gift. But the YRA didn't qualify as a recipient. Why couldn't I make a gift to a university or a school and ask them

to consider building a fleet of one-design boats, and when they were not using them in the summer to loan or charter them to the YRA? I approached a number of institutions and obtained disappointing reactions. Time was running out by late November as I had to make my gift before the year's end. I went in other directions with no promising results. I will always remember a call I made on the subject (it was getting to the point where there wasn't time to wait for replies to my letters) to a professional member of the Olympics Committee. He was actually rather annoyed and said he would call back when he found time to give further consideration to the proposed gift. I never heard from him.

I was really becoming discouraged. I have always taken pride in being able to sell my ideas, whether it was the sale of securities, industrial companies, etc., and here I was unable to convince an institution that it should accept a considerable gift. In a talk with Drake Sparkman about my problem, he asked if I had considered the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy at Kings Point, Long Island, and the New York State Maritime College at Fort Schuyler. Here were two logical candidates right in our front yard. It was exactly the same reaction I used to have in the firm when we were trying to sell a difficult deal and I unexpectedly found two possible purchasers.

I couldn't wait to formally write them; I telephoned Captain Tyson at Kings Point and Admiral Moore at Fort Schuyler.

They exploded with enthusiasm. In fact they couldn't believe it was true. I think I was even more excited than they after some of the receptions I had received. The idea of the boats being made available to the YRA was entirely agreeable to them, as the cadets were away a big part of the summer on cruises and vacations. The final arrangements with each academy were completed a week or ten days before New Year's, so it was indeed a happy ending for us all. One of the nicest parts was to come some months later when I met the cadets. Their enthusiasm and appreciation was most inspiring to me. They immediately named the boats the SHIELDS CLASS and suggested the sail insignia be a shield with the letter S on it.

"My dream" pictured a boat of about 30 feet overall, with a nice, long, straight, countered stern and a dainty little transom, and with the bow a straight raked stem. I had always loved sheer, so of course this was embodied in my fanciful boat. As a token of appreciation for Drake Sparkman's many favors to me, I wanted Sparkman & Stephens to do the designing. Olin Stephens made her come true in beautiful fashion. He shaped an underbody whose sections are ideal. She is extremely lively in light weather, and very stiff and able in a hard breeze - an unusual combination indeed. Cape Cod Shipbuilding Company was selected as the builder because of that company's long experience with fiberglass. They delivered a beautifully constructed boat.

Cape Cod Shipbuilding Company built the first twenty boats. I then persuaded Chris-Craft to take over their construction. They bought the original mold and all the patterns so as to make certain the boats were identical in every respect.

Chris-Craft obtained a magnificent result in furthering the Class. There are now 150 in existence with excellent prospects for great expansion. Fleets have been established in Long Island Sound, Marblehead, Mass., Edgartown, Mass. and Buzzards Bay, Mass., Rochester, New York, Chicago, California, Dallas, Texas, Gulfport, Mississippi and a fleet has been started in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Those identified with the Class feel that we now have the most One-Design of all One-Design Classes in the world. e.g., Chris-Craft delivers every owner a certificate giving the weight of the keel, the deadwood and the hull and also an overall weight.

The boats enjoy an important characteristic in that they are UNSINKABLE. Floatation tests have been run. The boat completely filled with water with twelve aboard, did not sink.