

Fatih took 3rd place overall.

THE CUP OF CUBA
The Mid-Winter Silver Star
Championship Trophy

Very early on in the formation of Star Class fleets Cuba played an important role in the development of the international aspect of Star sailing. The first Cuban fleet, la Flota de la Habana (FdeH) was chartered in 1923.

It might be mentioned that in 1920 the Prohibition Act was enacted by the U.S. Congress. One thing was for certain in those days; sailing and drink definitely did mix.

After three years of the Havana fleet prospering a decision was made to host a great event. George Elder, in his book "Forty Years among the Stars" gives a good account of the early days of the Mid-Winter Championship, also called "les petit Internationals":

Havana, Paris of the Caribbean, basking beneath the glory of azure blue skies and fanned by the soft tropical breezes from the Gulf, beginning in January, 1926, became annual winter rendezvous for Star skippers. For the first couple of years and, without any good reason, this winter classic was spoken of as "les petite Internationals." Henceforth it assumed its rightful title of "Mid-Winter Championship."

It is difficult to find adequate words to describe the gracious hospitality and good sportsmanship of the Cuban yachtsman. No effort is spared in providing entertainment and looking after the comforts of the visitor. Your Cuban skipper, when he loses takes it with a smile and, if he wins, he modestly attributes it to a stroke of good luck. That first year must have stretched the good nature of our hosts almost to the breaking point. Coming from an arid region of ice, snow and bath tub gin, into a Utopia, where a man could order any drink he could think of, did not help to

preserve decorum among the visitors from the States. At that time we did not know each other too well. We were looked upon as "crazy Americans" and certainly acted the part. That we were ever invited again, considering the many things that happened that year, is surprising.

The prizes made our eyes bulge. The Cup of Cuba, for the Mid-Winter Championship, is the largest sterling silver cup I have ever seen. Ernest Ratsey, its first winner, has a photograph of his young son sitting in it, and all you can see is the boy's head. The national crest of Cuba was on every trophy, as the government sponsored the event. In those days we went by rail to Key West and took the ferry across the gulf. And how some of those old steamers rolled! When the steamer docked, Rafael Posso - who does not look a day older now than he did then - came aboard. All contestants were asked to step forward and, while the tourists awaited their turn, we were whisked through the customs. After being photographed by a battery of cameras, we were driven to our hotel or to the yacht club, where those going stag were quartered "for free" in the dormitory. And what a gorgeous club the Havana Yacht Club is! Then came those first few nights of sampling wines and cordials, the taste of which we had almost forgotten.....

Below is a photo from the March, 1929, issue of Starlights showing the Cup of Cuba and other trophies at the final banquet of the 1929 Mid-Winter Championship. On the back page is a photo from the March, 1928, issue of Starlights showing the participants and hosts at the end of the 1928 event. Très chic, n'es pas?

It would be interesting to know what has become of the Cup of Cuba.



REGATTA SCHEDULES

1st District

- June 14-15 Arms-White (Mid)
- June 21-22 Ned Hay (CA)
- July 13 Junior Championship (CA)
- July 18-20 Districts (CA)
- July 26-27 Marblehead NOOD / N.E. Championship
- Aug 2-3 Secretaries cup/Make-a-Wish regatta (BH)
Mars-Venus(male & female in each boat)
- Aug 23-24 Atlantic Coast Masters Regatta (Mid)
100th Anniversary celebration of Milford YC
- Sept 6-7 Nathan Hale (HB)
- Sept 13-14 Bedford Pitcher (CLIS)
- Sept 20-21 Nutmegs (Mid)
- Oct 11-12 New England Intercollegiate Sloop Champs
(BH) - Pending ICSA Approval

20th District

- Jan 28-Feb 1 Olympic Classes Regatta
- Feb 15-16 Master's Regatta
- Mar 2-7 Bacardi Cup
- Apr tba 20th District Championship

5th District

- Feb. 15-16 SCYA Midwinter's (CYC)
- March 15-16 Spring Gold Cup (NHYC)
- March 21-23 ABYC OCR
- April 5-6 LAH/ SMB Fleet Champs (CYC)
- April 12-13 Delta Star (Stockton SC)
- May 1- Aug 28 Starlight Series (CYC)
- May 24-25 Rollins Bowl (SDYC)
- May 31- June 1 5th District's (SFYC)
- May 31- June 1 Cal Race Week (CYC)
- June 7-8 King of Spain (CYC)
- June 21-22 NH Fleet Champs (NHYC)
- July 5-6 SDB Fleet Champs (SDYC)
- July 12-13 Baxter Bowl (NHYC)
- July 26-27 Lipton Cup (SBYC)
- Aug. 30-31 Labor Day Pitcher (SDYC)
- Sep. 6-7 Harris Series (CYC)
- Sep. 13-14 Green Star (NHYC)
- Oct. 4-5 Fall One Design (CYC)ub
- Oct. 18-21 North Americans/ Calvin Paige, St.F.Y.C.
- Nov. 1-2 Ash Bown/ Octoberfest (SDYC)
- Dec. 13-14 Kriss Kringle (SDYC)



STAR GROUP AT HAVANA YACHT CLUB ON LAST NIGHT OF THE MEET