

# FIRST NA CHAMPIONSHIPS FOR STARS SAILED IN 1939

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The highest honor the Star class can bestow on a skipper is the "Gold Star", symbolic of the world's championship of the class for which selected contestants race once a year. The next highest award is the "Silver Star."

There are only five Silver Star events at the present time, one of which is the coveted North Atlantic Championship.

In 1939, the world's championship left the United States for the first time when Walter von Hutschler took it to Germany. The idea was then conceived to schedule a Silver Star event for the championship of North America during the years when the World title was out of this continent. The first series, sailed that year at San Francisco under the co-sponsorship of the 1939 World's Fair at Treasure Island, was won by Walter Sumner and Jack Watson of San Diego. Fourteen Stars competed, all from the West Coast.

The next European Gold Star series was sailed in Portugal in 1948, and again we had a Silver Star, this time at Seattle. It went to the Ross brothers' "Cene" of Puget Sound. In 1952, the series was resumed with a much larger turnout (31) at Toronto, but through some misunderstanding it was only a three-race event. The next year it was expanded to five races, and has been a five-race series ever since.

The 1953 event at Milwaukee, which drew 29 entries, was won by Robert Lippincott's "Flower."

Dacron sails were then making their debut, and it was this series that proved to be the swan song of the ducks as Lippincott and others definitely demonstrated the superiority of the synthetics. Off Rockport in 1954, 37 boats sailed a hard fought series in the open Atlantic. At the end of the week Jack Van Dyke's "Sea Skate" emerged the winner, as one point separated the first three contestants.

During these years the policy was formulated of awarding the series not to the home fleet or club of the preceding winner, but to any well equipped fleet anxious and able to hold the event, and with an eye to keeping the series circulating among the various centers of Star population around the continent.

In 1955, Charlie de Cardenas brought the World's championship back from Europe to Cuba; but by this time the North American Championship had become so popular and was such a successful major event that no one wanted it discontinued, and a fine series was sailed on Long Island Sound (off Rye), with an all-time record of 54 entries. It was won

by Jorge de Cardenas, and Papa Charlie went on to win the World's again the same year. Not only were father and son thus simultaneously Gold and Silver Star champions, but brother Carlos was the crew who assisted in both victories to complete the record of this extraordinary family.

The event has continued to be an annual fixture regardless of the location of the World's. The 1956 series at Vermillion, Ohio, won by Howard Lippincott, drew another big entry list (49), and then the series moved to California once more for 1957. That series went to Lowell North, whose subsequent world's championship victory at Havana made him the only skipper ever to have held both championships at the same time. The Oxford, Md., series of 1958 was won by E. W. Etchells by a considerable margin, and the Jackson Park event of 1959 was taken by Chicago's skipper of the year, Gary Comer.

Milford was selected for 1960 because the Silver Star has been sailed on the east coast only once in the past four years and because the Milford Yacht Club and the Mid-Connecticut Fleet offer such fine facilities for the event. With the world's championship of 1960 being sailed in Rio de Janeiro, a large entry list of experts is anticipated for the North Americans. The series gives every promise of being the finest ever sailed.