

OUTLINE OF STAR HISTORY

(by C. Stanley Ogilvy)

(From the 1951 Log)

To record the many achievements of the Star Class and to give due credit to the innumerable individuals responsible for its development on every continent would fill several LOGS. Only a sketchy outline of the history can be given here.

The success of the Star Class can be attributed, first to its organization and second to the remarkable qualities of the boat itself. The Class was fortunate to have had in the early days a group of enthusiastic and untiring workers who, in spite of strong opposition at times, had the courage and foresight to disregard ancient traditions handed down from the cloys of the big racing schooners and to formulate rules and procedure that were then unheard-of but now familiar as applicable to the needs of small one-design racing yachts. The hull design remains the same as it was in 1911, as does the sail area; but the rig has undergone changes. The gaff rig (or sliding gunter) was replaced by the short Marconi, which in turn gave way to the tall Marconi rig. These changes kept the boat up to date, and were made gradually so that no owner suffered. As a result, the Star has not only maintained its popularity through the years, but after 40 years is as modern in appearance as any other racing yacht of the present era.

The Star is not only international in scope, but truly the most international of all racing yachts in design. It combines the characteristics of both the old world and the new. The hull is distinctly American. The common ancestry of the type is probably the New Haven Sharpie which goes back to 1835. The evolution, however, can be traced from the log canoe through the flat-bottomed little boats of early Colonial days down to The Departure (the first chine built, fin keel racing sloop) designed by William Gardner in 1896. The next step and last connecting link was the Bug the lines of which were practically identical to the Star. The Bermudian rig, later called Marconi, was developed as a racing rig in Europe. The idea of the one-design yacht also comes from the old world, apparently starting with the Water Wags at Dublin Bay, Ireland in 1878. The owners of those boats had a Class Association; but yachtsmen had to wait for more than half a century before a small group of Star owners in North America conceived the idea of developing this principle on a large scale.

1907 - The Bug, a 17' prototype of the Star, designed by Curtis D. Mabry, in the office of William Gardner, at the suggestion of George A. Corry, and costing \$140.00, appeared on Long Island Sound. Corry owned the Big Bug, won most of the races for

four years. The Class was considered too insignificant to warrant a Y.R.A. Championship medal, and was too small, wet and uncomfortable even for Corry.

1909 - The Indian, an improved Bug, sponsored by Carpenter, was raced at Ossining, on the Hudson River. This branch of the family had no issue.

1911 - The Star was born. Francis Sweisguth extended the lines of the Bug, in William Gardner's office, at Corry's suggestion, earning for the latter the title, "Father of the Stars." Stuyvesant Wainright, American Y. C. who never owned a Star, gave the Class its name and Ike Smith built 22 at Port Washington, N.Y. First race, May 30, 1911, held by Harlem Y. C. on Long Island Sound, won by "Pop" Corry sailing No. 17 Little Dipper, 5 entries. No. 1, named Taurus, originally owned by W. B. Emerson, was bought in 1924 by "Pop" after Bill Inslee had won the first national and international Star Championship with that bogs. It was presented by the Star Class in 1945 to the Manhasset Bay Yacht Club where it is being kept in memory of Commodore Corry who was also the founder of that club.

Same year, Green Brothers, Chelsea, Mass., built 11 Stars, known as Nahant Bugs and not identified as Stars until 1921. Note the lack of unity at that period when yachtsmen 250 miles apart did not know of each other's boats for eleven years.

For five years "Pop" Corry won practically every Star race on the Sound, including four Y.R.A. Championships (a feat never duplicated) while the Motley brothers and A. S. Johnson took most of the races in New England waters.

1913 - The Fish, sponsored by Ed. Willis, was introduced. Four of these 28' Stars were built. The Class lasted only two years. The Star evidently hit a happy medium in size for its larger and smaller cousins enjoyed only a brief existence. By this time 11 more Stars had been built including a small group by Versoy which raced at New Haven, but that group broke up two years later.

1914 - The Star Class Association of America was organized. Dues \$1.00, rules on one mimeographed sheet, about 35 members mostly on the Sound, 4 on Lake Erie, 6 on Gravesend Bay. George Corry, Pres, George Elder, Vice-Pres.; Allan Walker, Secy., and Charles Hyde, Treasurer. Became effective the following year. New Stars beginning to increase from original price of \$250.00. Cost of sails, \$25.00.

1915 - First Annual dinner held at Mouquin's, New York City, Dec. 1, 1915. This was the forerunner of the Atlantic Coast Smoker, which has been held every year since. Present method of organization with Fleets, Districts etc., devised and submitted at that meeting by George Elder, but tabled because of the war in Europe and not acted upon for seven years. First year of the Captain's Island Race and last year of "Pop"

Corry's racing supremacy. After having won everything in sight for 4 years the nearest he ever came to winning a Series after that was when he placed second in the Eliminations 11 years later.

1916 - Stars became popular on Great Lakes, new ones built for Toledo, Detroit and Rochester. On the Sound honors were being divided between Hyde, Willis, Elder, Iselin and Percival, with Inslee winning on Gravesend Bay. While on the Lakes, Boice, Alexander and Wakefield complete the names that figured most prominently in pre-World War I Star racing.

1917 - America's entry into the war curtailed yachting activities, but in spite of it, 25 new Stars were built. Open regattas were cancelled, but Stars raced in local harbors on Sundays. Of the hundreds of little racing boats that were laid up for the duration, only a handful were ever put in commission again. This ended the era when each club had its own little one-design class.

1918 - The first Marconi rig was tried out by Donald Cowl on Star No. 46 and proved a failure.

1919 - The war over, open regattas were resumed. The Star was the only Class which had held together. On the Sound no other Class had more than two starters. The big racing yachts also failed to put in an appearance. Their day was over, as was that of the professional skipper. The future of sail boat racing hung in the balance. A "B" Star division was formed on the Sound to encourage beginners.

1921 - Only one new Star was built this year, the lowest ebb in the Class' history. New names were coming into prominence, among them being Linkfield, Teves, Jack Robinson, Ernest Ratsey, Connors of Detroit, and Burlingham and Wait at the Eastern end of the Sound.

1922 - Elder was authorized late the previous year to organize a race between Lake Erie and the Sound. Going a step further he interested other Star groups in his pet project of a standard world-wide cross to the point where a meeting was held on January 20, 1922 at the Hotel Astor in New York and the Star Class Yacht Racing Association was launched. It consisted of five fleets, Western L.I.S., Eastern L.I.S., Lake Erie, Detroit River and Narragansett Bay. The officers were: Corry, Pres.; H. S. Waterson Vice-Pres.; Elder, Secy., and Burlingham, Treas. Jack Wood of N.B. and John Miller of Detroit completed the executive committee. A National Championship was scheduled for September. Other localities heard about it and began organizing fleets. Inslee, representing W.L.I.S., won the three race series and the trophy, which was then, a half model of a Star. Ben Weston brought a boat from California and placed second, with J.P. Schweitzer of Lake Erie, third. Bill McHugh of the newly

formed Central L.I.S. Fleet, Geo. Armitage of N.B. and B.N. Heminway of Eastern L.I.S. completed the list. This was the first time in history that yachts from each major section of the U.S.A. competed against each other.

1923 - The Star Class became international with a fleet at Vancouver, B.C. Fifty-four new yachts were built and by this time 14 fleets belonged to the Association. Inslee again won the championship, the event now being called the "internationals." From this point on, for winners of the championships, see Historic Events. "Starlights," so named by Ernest Ratsey, was instituted as a bulletin made up of three or four mimeographed sheets and with J. F. Miller as editor, was published spasmodically. Ben Weston became Vice-Pres., and Bill Gidley, Treas. The Class now totaled 164 Stars.

1924 - The Star roster jumped to 27 fleets, 85 new boats were built bringing the total to 249. International development really began. Cuba, New Zealand and the Hawaiian Islands formed fleets, the Class spread the length of the Californian coast, the Gulf coast organized, Stars were built for Lake Michigan, the Chesapeake, the Peconic and many other localities. Jack Robinson won the first official Gold Star which was adopted this year and Elder's plan of Districts and District Secretaries became effective. The short Marconi rig, optional since 1922, was now generally in use. The height of the luff was the same as that of the Gaff rig; hence the same sails could be used.

1925 - First printed issue of Starlights came out in January. Not a single monthly issue was skipped from then until 1943. The North American Yacht Racing Union was formed and Star members were responsible for bringing in many localities. Only two additional fleets were formed, but existing ones increased materially in size, the year ending with 327 Stars in existence. Iselin won his first Internationals. The first trophy, having been retired and presented to Inslee, was replaced by the present cup purchased by popular subscription. The Atlantic Coast Championship was also inaugurated. George Corry was elected Commodore, George Elder, Pres.; Prentice Edrington, Vice-Pres.; Tim Parkman, Secy., and Bill Gidley, Treas.

1926 - Habana holds first Mid-Winter Championships for Cup of Cuba, won by Ernest Ratsey. First Bacardi Cup for a Cuban-American team race, won by the latter. The Class meets affable Cuban host, Rafael Passo. The Internationals won by Ben Comstock (N.B.), breaking five year monopoly by Western L.I.S. skippers. International Race Committee created for future events as a result of dispute over fourth race held by the New York Y.C., which was started in a gale with only 3 boats at the line and no Marks placed, it being the first year of the standard courses Star Class ordered race re-sailed. More trouble - outsiders hearing of limitations spread vicious rumors and practically every winning skipper was accused of sailing an illegal

Star. At Iselin's suggestion measuring system adopted and task of measuring nearly 400 Stars begun. Only 1 boat, which had never figured in the records, was refused a certificate. The practice of lending local boats to some distant Fleets discontinued, due to charges of partiality by skippers who sailed them and dissatisfaction among those from smaller fleets who felt they were forced to race against borrowed boats that were better than their own. A year of discord produced constructive rules for the future.

1927 - The Internationals on Narragansett Bay resulted in a three cornered tie, the sail off won by Walton Hubbard of Los Angeles by a split second over Fred Bedford, of C.L.I.S. with Harold Smith, Chesapeake Bay trailing. Jeff Davis became Editor of Starlights. Four new Fleet charters granted, including Philippines and Solent (England), first European Fleet. Colen Ratsey's Jay, first European Star, built.

1928 - Enrique Conill (European Father of the Stars) establishes two fleets in France, Paris and Cannes. European yachtsmen opposed to what they considered an antiquated rig, which leads to adoption of tall Marconi the following year. Edrington of New Orleans won Internationals, never placing better than third. Watkins, C.L.I.S., defeated Jessop, San Diego, in sail-off for second place. Another tie occurred for the Cup of Cuba, Frank Robinson, Peconic Bays, winning sail-off over Tim Parkman of Gravesend. H.M. Worcester elected Treasurer. No other change in officers.

1929 - Tall Marconi demonstrated at New Orleans by Frank Robinson, made optional after 8 hour session of Annual Meeting, same area retained; L. M Bainbridge, Prescott Wilson, Ernest Ratsey, Francis Sweisguth and Frank Robinson appointed Committee to perfect it. Southern hospitality at New Orleans provided phenomenal entertainment. Graham Johnson, with his brother Lowndes as crew, won an Internationals marked by light airs and endless postponements. Disqualifications in unfinished races and unfinished re-sails thereof, made it practically impossible to determine which entries under N.A.Y.R.U. rules should be barred from each re-sail. This resulted in adopting a new rule wherein an unfinished race was completely ignored. Paris holds first European Star race. New District and National events inaugurated.

1930 - The tall rig produced almost immediate results in Europe. Enrique and Fernan Conill sending in one Fleet charter application after the other Fleets were organized in Spain, Portugal, Switzerland and 7 in France. The Internationals on the Chesapeake brought together for the first time entries from Europe, Asia and America. Arthur Knapp took the big cup back once more to Western L.I.S. Enrique Conill, in recognition of his services, was elected Vice-President. Both tall and short Marconi rigs raced against each other in most major events, including the Internationals that year. The tall rig demonstrated its superiority and was made the only official rig (a year's grace to convert was allowed). The Class now consisted of 52 Fleets, 793

yachts distributed throughout 12 nations, with the healthy average of 15.2 yachts per Fleet.

1931 - A Fleet at Maracaibo, Venezuela brought South America into the Star Class. Fleets were established also in Germany and Switzerland. Bill McHugh took the Internationals from Western to Central L.I.S.

1932 - The Star, in its third decade, with a Fleet at Phillipville, North Africa, was now established on every continent. As a last step toward world-wide development, it was included in the Olympic games. Gilbert Gray (New Orleans) won the first Star Olympics for the U.S.A., Colin Ratsey (England) runner-up, Sweden, Holland, France, Canada, and South Africa also entered Star skippers dominated the Olympics, Churchill U.S.A. winning in Eight Metres and Lebrun in Monotypes. Eddie Fink wins Internationals against 28 entries, taking the title back to California. Aizpurua, San Sebastian, Spain, wins first European Silver Star. With the U.S.A., Nassau and Cuba in the Mid-Winters, this was probably the most international year in Star history.

1933 - Creation of Governing Committee. Sampson Smith replaces Worcester as Treasurer. Depression catches up with Class. Falling off of membership. Glen Waterhouse wins Internationals against only 16 entries.

1934 - Internationals renamed World's Championship, won by Hook Beardslee, only 15 entries. Spring Championship inaugurated at Nassau and won by Adrian Iselin. Italy comes into picture when Giannini (Naples) wins European Championship. France, Germany and Italy organize National Championships.

1935 - A boom year, 21 new Fleets, including Fleets in Portugal, Romania and Japan. Large increase in membership and Association shows substantial profit. Beardslee again wins Gold Star. Iselin, runner-up, deliberately crashed into and run off course by Ashley Bown, causing the latter's expulsion from Class. This resulted in the anti-team racing rule. Jeff Davis retires as Editor, succeeded by Charles E. Lucke, Jr.

1936 - A special meeting adopted the new rotating rule for the World's Championship and awarded the event to Rochester on Lake Ontario Iselin winning. 35 entries. The Olympics, 12 nations competing, held at Kiel. Dr. Bischoff, Germany, won. Sweden, Holland, England, U.S.A. placed in order named, thus ending American domination of Star events. Von Hutschler, of Hamburg Fleet, barred as German representative in Olympics because he was a Brazilian, won European Championship. Sam Smith and Tim Parkman shifted jobs as secretary and Treasurer.

1937 - Star spreads like wild-fire throughout the world, 192 new boats, 13 new fleets, including Nova Scotia and Greece. Milton Wegeforth (SDB) wins world title over

record entry of 36 yachts, in spite of von Hutschler (HF) taking four firsts. The latter introduced the so-called "flexible rig" although a number of European skippers had, at his suggestion, experimented with it the previous year safely as a light spar innovation, but without realizing its draft control possibilities. The Great Lakes scored its first International triumph when Woody Pirie (WH) won the Cup of Cuba. The small lakes also were put on the map with Sam Smith taking the Spring Championship at Bermuda.

1938 - Light spars gain popular approval. Von Hutschler wins Gold Star, taking the event to Europe for the first time. Hurricane destroys many Stars along Atlantic Coast of North America. There were now 9 naval Fleets distributed among 4 nations, some being floating Fleets with Stars carried on battleships. The Italian Naval Academy won the European Championship. A Fleet chartered at Batavia in the Netherlands East Indies, 6 more in U.S.A., 3 in Italy and 1 in England.

1939 - World's Championship at Kiel, Germany, 21 entries won by von Hutschler, Straulino (Italian Navy) second. Dr. Peter Hanson (Kiel Fleet) third. Germany goes to war during the Series which was rushed through with double headers. Visitors given military escorts across borders. "Pop" Corry, who went over in style as a guest of the German government, returned in steerage on Danish ship. All Stars eventually reached their respective home ports safely. Harold Halsted wins his second Cup of Cuba and was elected as Treasurer to replace Tim Parkman, mail balloting now in vogue. European Championship cancelled but new Stars being built in neutral countries.

1940 - With Europe plunged in war only 4 countries from outside the U.S.A. competed for the World's title, which under rotating rules reverted to San Diego, Calif. Jim Cowie (LB) with giant roach mainsail was the winner. The across sail measurement rule limiting roaches was adapted as a result. Harry Nye won the Mid-Winters and Johnny White the Spring Championship at Nassau. Racing was confined to the Western Hemisphere.

1941 - The Star celebrated its 30th Anniversary with the clouds of war hanging over every nation. Only 13 Fleets, the lowest mark since 1924 entered the World's Championship, George Fleitz winning on his home waters off Los Angeles, Calif. Nye, finishing second, built up enough points to take the Series to Chicago for the following year. Nye also won the Mid-Winters and the Spring Championship at New Orleans. In spite of the war, the Championship of France was sailed, and won by Herbulot.

THE FOREGOING covers the first three decades of Stardom. You can count on one hand the veterans of the gaff rig days who are still in the Class. Even the short

Marconi has become a dim memory. The survivors of that period, with scarcely an exception, are the men who laid the foundation for the present organization. They were workers all. Modern Star history began with the tall Marconi and it is these aerodynamically minded skippers who constitute the bulk of our present membership.

1942 - Charlie de Cardenas gave Cuba its first victory in the Mid Winters and Freddie de Marigny, of Nassau, won the Bacardi Cup. The team race was the only triumph for skippers from the U.S.A. Although roving packs of submarines endangered shipping, all visiting Stars reached home safely. Nassau cancelled the Spring Championship and most of the District Championships were abandoned. The Atlantic Coast and Great Lakes Blue Star events, however, were maintained throughout the war. There was local Fleet racing on a greatly reduced scale in some sections of the Western hemisphere. Racing in Sweden and Spain was almost normal, with the latter and Portugal becoming the Fifteenth District. Harry Nye won the World's Championship at Chicago, which became a Skippers Series for the duration. The home Fleet supplied the boats which were drawn for daily, no skipper being allowed to sail the same boat twice.

1943 - It now became a question of finding a Fleet with enough Stars, enough money and enough liquor to hold the World's Championship. The Great South Bay obliged. Art Deacon, WLIS, won over 19 entries without a single first. Membership began to show a slight increase, thanks to the Support of the men in Service. Paul Smart was elected Secretary due to Sam Smith's added naval duties.

1944 - The Star Class was in mourning. It had lost its beloved Commodore George A. Corry, shortly before the first of the year. The Star Class was his life and his one big contribution to yachting. He missed only two World's Championships. His high collar, cigar, and genial smile will never be forgotten. Adrian Iselin was elected as his successor at the Annual Meeting in Chicago, which again held the World's Championship. Jerry Driscoll, SDB, won it. Ted Everitt became Secretary. At the suggestion of F.A. Wardenburg Life Membership was inaugurated.

1945 - With the end of the war came the quick revival of Star racing everywhere. Fleets and Districts were reorganized as if by magic, and took up where they left off. In U.S., new Stars were hard to get, and remained at a premium throughout the following year. Harold Halsted, was elected to the Vice Presidency. The last of the skipper's series World's Championships was sailed in Long Island Sound off Stamford, and won by young Malin Burnham of San Diego.

1946 - Practically all major events were resumed. The membership doubled, and the number of boats increased by 200. The Class had weathered another World War. Fleitz again won the Gold Star, in a series held at Havana, because that Fleet had

earned the right to hold it under the point system just prior to the suspension of the regular series for the duration. Old, tired rigging, coupled with extraordinarily heavy weather resulted in many breakdowns for which the Class came under fire of outside criticism. Charlie Lucke retired after 10 years as editor of Starlights and the Log, and the job was taken over by Stan Ogilvy. A full sized Log was published for the first time since 1942, and Starlights resumed to monthly publication.

1947 - The World's Championship was won by Durward Knowles, who could not take the series to Nassau because it was due to leave North America under the rules. It was a year of rising costs and much concern over the high price of a new Star. Many skippers resorted to building their own. Activity was spurred in many countries by impending Olympic games.

1948 - An Olympic year, combined with a World's Championship in Portugal, resulted in the most truly international year the Class had ever had. 17 nations of 5 continents competed in the Olympics at Torquey, won by the Smarts of the U.S., and as usual the other crosses were heavily populated with Star personnel. A heavy weather series in Portugal went to Pirie of Chicago by one point over Italy's Straulino. The dues were raised for the first time in 25 years to keep pace with spiraling costs.

1949 - George Elder retired after a quarter century as President of the Association. He had become a fixture in the Class, like Commodore Pop Corry, and his loss was as keenly felt. However, he became Commodore, and so did not step completely out of the picture. Harold Halsted took over as president. A World's Championship entry list of 40 boats broke the all-time record; Nye won the Gold Star, in a light weather series in which he never placed better than third, duplicating Prentice Edrington's feat of 1928. Another record was shattered when 43 boats sailed in the European Championship, forcing a reduction in the number of entries in that event to one per fleet for the future.

1950 - Again the World's Championship broke the record as 41 entries competed. The series is covered in detail elsewhere in this Log. A Judiciary Board was created, to fulfill somewhat the functions of a Supreme Court in handling Associations interpretations, appeals and the like. The Class reached an all-time high with 167 active Fleets, more Fleets than there were single boats in 1923, and there seemed to be no end in sight.

1951 - Although dozens of other small boat racing classes have been started since the beginning of Stardom 40 years ago, many failed to expand, and those that did never really competed with Stars; rather they supplemented them, answering other special needs, and often supplied skippers who were soon to graduate into Stars. We enter our Ruby Jubilee year with the organization, competition, traditions, and world-wide

friendships of forty years behind us. We also have something that other Classes do not have and do not even understand, our greatest asset "The Spirit of the Star Class."