

Star Class Newsletter for the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Districts

January, 2001

#### JANUARY REGATTA SCHEDULE

20th District

Jan. 6-7, 2001 Bob Levin Memorial Jan. 23-27 Olympic Classes Regatta

#### 90th ANNIVERSARY OF THE STAR CLASS

Ninety years ago this month 22 Stars were under construction at the boatworks of Isaac E. Smith, located in Port Washington, New York and another 11 Stars, known at the time as "Nahant Bugs", were being built by Richard T. Green & Co. of Chelsea, Massachusetts. These 33 boats were the first Stars to be built. Now, 90 years and more than 8,000 Stars later, Star boats continue to be built.

In this issue of Stardust we will look at the man who not only drew the plans for the original Stars, but also supervised the two changes in the rig and sail plan, first in the early 1920's when the rig was changed from the gaff rig to the short Marconi, and then at the end of the decade when the rig was changed from the short Marconi rig to the modern rig the Star still uses today. Few of us realize how much the Star Class is indebted to Francis Sweisguth. This seems to be an opportune time to pay tribute to him.

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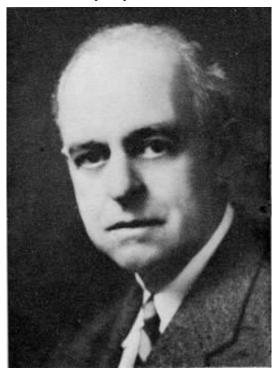
# FRANCIS SWEISGUTH 1882-1970 DESIGNER AND DEVELOPER OF THE STAR

Much has been written about the origins of the Star boat and the Star Class, for example in the past anniversary Star Class Logs (1922, 1931, 1941, 1951, etc.) and Starlights (January, 1986). For a detailed history which covers all of this material see C. Stanley Ogilvy's book, "History of the Star Class", available from the Central Office. Here we will focus in on the important role of Francis Sweisguth, the draftsman in William Gardner's Naval Architect office who drew up the plans of the Star boat.

In about 1906 George A. Corry, the ring-leader of a small

group of yachtsmen from the New York City area, asked William Gardner to design a small, inexpensive chine-built arc-bottomed sail boat with a keel. George Corry was a friend of William Gardner, and it was natural for Corry to contacted him to design the boat. The first fruit of Gardner's effort for Corry's group was a boat known as the Bug. The Bug was drafted by Curtis D. Mabry of Gardner's office and made its appearance on Long Island Sound in 1907. The boat is reported to have been 17' long with a keel weighing 150 lbs.

After four years of racing the Bugs in the waters about New York City the owners of the Bugs decided that the boats were too small, too wet and much too uncomfortable. A committee was appointed, consisting of George Corry, A. B. Fry, Thornton Smith and William Newman, to take this matter up with William Gardner. That was done in the early fall of 1910. This time it was Francis Sweisguth who was Gardner's draftsman who drew up the plans for the boat.

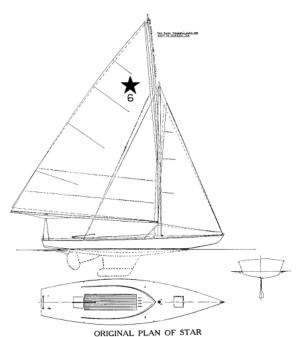


FRANCIS SWEISGUTH

It is interesting to note that apparently by the time the boat was ready to be built it still did not have a name. In fact when copies of the plans for this new boat were sold to the Nahant Dory Club in Massachusetts for construction of a class boat for that club the name of the resulting boat was the Nahant Bug. Despite this name, these Nahant boats for some unexplained reason had red Stars on their sails. In any case, in the beginning George Corry wanted to name the new Long Island Sound class the Big Bug. Fortunately for the Star Class, Stuyvesant Wainwright of the American Yacht Club suggested the name Star as being more appropriate for the new Long Island Sound class.

During the winter of 1910-1911 twenty-two Star boats were built by Ike Smith of Port Washington for the Long Island Sound group. It is interesting to learn from the 1922 Star Class Log, the first Log put out by the Star Class Yacht Racing Association which had just been formed that same year, that Francis Sweisguth was one of the original owners of the Star Class yachts built by Smith. According to the Log, Mr. Sweisguth owned Star # 6 from 1911 to 1915.

The Star, as originally drawn up by Mr. Sweisguth, was a gaff rigged boat with a long boom, very typical for racing boats of the day. The luff of the mainsail was 24"11" as opposed to 30'6" now used on the modern rig and the foot of the mainsail was 18'4" as opposed to 14'7". As the Star Class continued to grow and develop during the late 1910's



Showing both Marconi & Gaff Rig and how same sail can be used on either Mainsail area 223 sq. ft. Jib 58.5 sq. ft. Keel 840 to 860 lbs.

and early 1920's it became clear that the rig should be modernized. The first step was to change to rig from a gaff rig to a Marconi rig. This changeover occurred gradually during the early 1920's. The same mainsail could be used on either rig.

The 1922 Log shows the Star sail plan with both the gaff rig and the Marconi rig. The caption to the plan states that the same sail can be used on both rigs. It is interesting to note that the number on the mainsail of the boat in the sail plan is # 6. While this is just a conjecture, it seems most probable that Mr. Sweisguth was responsible for drawing this sail plan.

During the 1920's high aspect ratio Marconi rigs became more common on racing sailboats. Already by this time several Star skippers were also involved in racing bigger boats, including the America's Cup boats, so most assuredly developments in the aerodynamics of yacht sails were well known to the members of the Star Class. As a further push in the direction of adopting a more modern high aspect ratio rig for the Star there was pressure from Europe which indicated that the Class would be better accepted in Europe if it had a modern rig.

In the April, 1929, issue of Starlights, in an article entitled "Modernizing Star Rig under consideration", there is the following comment: "Though the idea of adopting a more modern rig for the Star Class is not a new one, Larry Bainbridge, D.S., is responsible for placing it before the I.E.C. in such a convincing light that it has been unanimously voted to give the project wide publicity and then place it before the next annual meeting at New Orleans... Our present rig with it's long boom is out of date, it does not appeal to the new man who is coming into the game and it will not retain the interest of the keen skipper who may be driven out of the Star Class and into classes that offer the modern improvements in sail design..."

The Starlights of November, 1929, continued the story in the article "Modern Rig Adopted for 1930": "A modern rig was adopted at the annual meeting in New Orleans by a vote of 434 to 66, to become effective March 1st, 1930.... The rig recommended by the Bainbridge Committee, which gives a boom to the transom and about the same sail area as the present rig, was adopted in principle and referred back to a Technical Committee, to be appointed by the President for any necessary refinements. This Technical Committee consists of Prescott Wilson, head of Geo. Burrows, Inc., sailmakers, Ernest Ratsey, of Ratsey & Lapthorn, Inc., sailmakers, and Francis Sweisguth, who drew the original plans and was formerly with Wm. Gardner."

Obviously, although now almost 20 years later, Mr. Sweisguth still had more than a passing interest in the Star boat and the Star Class, and it is interesting to see that the Class included him on the Technical Committee when the

decision to go to the tall Marconi was made. In as much as no direct evidence has been found one can only speculate how much Mr. Sweisguth had to do with the development of the tall rig, and in particular the rigs experimented with on Ernest and Colin Ratsey boats Irex (#24) and Joy (#361), and on Prescott Wilson's boat. Even after the modern rig was adopted by the Star Class in 1930 Mr. Sweisguth continued to be listed in the Logs as the head of the Technical Advisory Committee until 1933.



Ernest Ratsey's Joy with the experimental rig in 1929

It should be noted that at about this time Mr. Sweisguth was a partner in the naval architect firm of Ford, Payne and Sweisguth based in New York City. Mr. Sweisguth continued to design small class boats at least into the 1930's. The 18' Interlake, designed in 1932 for Sandusky Bay, Ohio, is an example of one of his later works.

In 1961, as the part of the 50th anniversary of the birth of the Star boat, Mr. Sweisguth was made an honorary Life Member of the Star Class. C. Stanley Ogilvy, Star Class editor and historian at the time, visited Mr. Sweisguth in his Larchmont home, in part to get Mr. Sweisguth's version of the history of the Star Class. Part of this interview was reported in Starlights of May, 1961. Then, in August, 1970, Starlights carried the obituary of Francis Sweisguth which

read in part as follows:

Francis Sweisguth, who drew the original lines of the Star in 1911 in the office of William Gardner, died recently at his home in Larchmont, N.Y. at the age of 87. Mr. Sweisguth was the last of the "charter owners", who sailed one of the first boats in 1911. In a very real sense he was the designer of the Star hull. The smaller Bug had been designed in the same office. Mr. Sweisguth said, in an interview a few years ago, "The Bug lines were not drawn by me. When Billy Gardner asked me to do the Star, I started from scratch, without looking at the Bug lines. If the two boats looked alike, it was because the lines of all chinebuilt boats with an arc bottom are similar."

Further search through the Star Class archives at Mystic Seaport Museum may reveal more about Mr. Sweisguth's involvement with the development of the Star boat. However, if the above information is accurate, then Mr. Sweisguth not only designed the Star, but was the technical advisor for the Star Class during time the two rig changes took place. During these 20 years the Star boat went from having a gaff rig to the short Marconi and finally to the rig we still use today, and Mr. Sweisguth was at hand for each of these phases of development.

When Mr. Sweisguth died in 1970 the Star Class was in the middle of a technological revolution. Fiberglass boats had just become approved and aluminum spars were being discussed by the Technical Committee. Throughout the next 30 years innovation and refinement have been the guiding principles of the Star Class. One has to wonder what would Mr. Sweisguth make of his boat today, now 90 years young?

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#### **BALLOT RESULTS**

The ballots have been tabulated at the Central Office. Here are the results:

#### INTERNATIONAL OFFICERS

President	Riccardo Simoneschi
V.P., Hemisphere 1	J. William Allen
V.P., Hemisphere 2	Jochen Schwarz
Secretary	Harry W. Walker
Treasurer	Robert F. Maine III

#### HONORARY OFFICERS

Commodore Sir Durward R. Knowles

Vice-Commodore John Chiarella

Otto Schlenzka

Rear-Commodore George Iverson Roberto Pamplona

Carlo Rolandi

# STAR CLASS NEWSLETTER for the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Districts 2001

January,

# CONTINENTAL VICE PRESIDENTS

North America

1st Vice-President Joe Zambella 2nd Vice-President Forrest Miller

# 2001 Furono

Secretary

Secretary Asst. Secretary

Secretary

Asst. Secretary

Asst. Secretary

Asst. Secretary

Asst. Secretary

District 11

District 12

District 13 Secretary

District 14

District 15

District 17

Secretary

Secretary

Asst. Secretary

Europe		Secretary	Herman F. Weiler
1st Vice-President	Rainer Roellenbleg	Asst. Secretary	Gunther Lux
2nd Vice-President	Mario Caprile	District 18	
South America		Secretary	Alejandro Suescun
1st Vice-President	Torben Grael	Asst. Secretary	Eduardo Sanguinetti
2nd Vice President	Luis Bustelo	District 19	
Australia		Secretary	Constance Drew-Bear
1st Vice-President	Phillip R. Baker	Asst. Secretary	Sonke Breckwoldt
2nd Vice-President	Glenn Tucker	District 20	
		Secretary	Craig Prandini

DISTRICT OFFICERS		Asst. Secretary	Claude Bonanni			
District 1 Secretary Asst. Secretary	Stephen Braverman Ted Lavery	ž	Ian K. Pearson John Carroll			
District 2		RESOLUTIONS				
Secretary Asst. Secretary	Larry Parrotta John J. Jenkins	#1-2000 (I.G.C.)	Passed: 86.15%			
District 3		#2-2000 (Proposed Resolutions)	Passed: 83.98%			
Secretary	Guy P. Brierre	#3-2000 (Novice Skipper)	Passed: 89.45%			
Asst. Secretary	Buddy Clarke	#4-2000 (Novice Crew)	Passed: 85.16%			
District 4		#8-2000 (3 additional boats)	Passed: 91.15%			
Secretary	Richard Brethorst	#11-2000 (Weight Rule)	Passed: 82.76%			
Asst. Secretary	Mark T. Lewis	#13-2000 (Advertising)	Passed: 87.05%			
District 5		#14-2000 (Duties)	Passed: 91.30%			
Secretary	Edwin J. Sprague, Jr.	#15-2000 (Honor awards)	Not Passed: 65.80%			
Asst. Secretary	Douglas D. Smith					
District 6			10000000000			
Secretary	Forrest Miller	000000000000000000000000000000000000000				
Asst Corretery	Charles C Dathleanf					

# LET THE GAMES BEGIN!

The Florida Winter Season began with the sailing of the Schoonmaker and Commodore's Cup Regattas. These regattas are to be followed by:

Bob Levin Memorial	January 6-7
Olympic Classes Regatta	January 23-27
Masters' Regatta	February 3-4
Biscayne Trophy	February 17-18
Bacardi Cup	March 4-9

The Schoonmaker Cup had participants from various northern fleets, and this number more than doubled for the Commodore's Cup. Snow Birds, it's time to put on your wings and fly South!

> SCHOONMAKER CUP November 18-19, 2000 Coral Reef Y.C. By Jock Kohlhas

Twelve boats sailed the Schoonmaker Cup, with five races planned. However, on Saturday with the wind light and variable only two races were sailed (and two on Sunday). On Sunday the wind was better with a stiff squall making the last

# Asst. Secretary Charles S. Rathkopf District 7 Jorge Bhering de Mattos Secretary Asst. Secretary Admar Gonzaga Neto District 9 Secretary Daniel Wyss Jean-Pierre Gailes Asst. Secretary District 10

Lars Lantz

Stefan Winquist

Phillip Baker Jr.

Iain Murray

John Chiarella

Richard Atkinson

Claus-Peter Luxa

Andrea Serpieri

Massimo Canali

Jose M. Pando

Jose M. de Bareno Bas

Robert Niemczewski

leg of the first race a bit exciting. Of note, Gene McCarthy sailed without crew, and Tony Herrmann with Dimitri Yakovenko spoiled a winning score with an OSC for the final race.

# Schoonmaker Cup Results

Boat#	Skipper	Crew	Fleet	R1	R2	R3	R4	Points
7963	Jock Kohlhas	Chris Rogers	BisB	2.5	3	1	2	8.5
7864	Kevin McNiel	S. Zwendalberg	AN	2.5	4	5.5	4	16
7996	Tony Herrmann	D. Yakovenko	WH	1	1	3	ocs	18
7614	John Foster	B. Weinstein	VI	6	9	2	3	20
7899	Chris Lanza	J. Hastings	BisB	8	8	5.5	1	22.5
7184	Henry Collie		LH	5	2	10	8	25
7626	Jim Freeman		SL	4	6	4	ocs	27
7670	Gene McCarthy		PPL	7	5	11	dnf	36
7832	Prieure Leary		BisB	dns	7	9	7	36
7506	Tony Riva	Guy Avelon	BisB	10	10	12	5	37
8000	Harry Walker	John Terrell	BisB	dns	dns	7	6	39
7162	Charles Kohlern	nan		9	11	8	dns	41

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# COMMODORE'S CUP December 2-3, 2000 Coral Reef Yacht Club

Twenty-one boats from 15 fleets participated in the Commodore's Cup. Augie Diaz of the local fleet was in top form, winning two of the three races. John MacCausland Jr. of Cooper River fleet came in second and Howie Shiebler of the West San Francisco Bay fleet took series third. There were two races on Saturday and one race on Sunday. Saturday's races were sailed in an East-Northeast breeze with light to medium chop. Sunday was sailed in a lighter shifty Northwest breeze. Joe Bainton of the Newport Bay fleet banged right the first time up and held the lead most of the way around, but Diaz was able to pass him at the end.

### Commodore's Cup Results

Boat #	Skipper	Crew	Fleet	R1	R2	R3	Points
7970	Augie Diaz	Mark Strube	BisB	1	4	1	6
8024	MacCausland	S. Delancy	CR	4	3	4	11
7997	H. Shiebler	G. Iverson	WSFB	2	1	9	12
7963	J. Kohlhas	Rick Peters	BisB	6	3	5	14
7979	L. Whipple	H. vanLeiuwen	PS	8	6	3	17
7911	Jimmie Lowe	Andrew Higgs	N	4	8	6	18
7993	Joe Bainton	Brian	NB	11	9	2	22
7998	David Cutler	John Finch	GrL	7	12	11	30
7864	Kevin McNeil	S.Zwendalberg	AN	10	10	12	32
7899	Chris Lanza	Prieure Leary	BisB	5	5	ocs	33
7737	Joe Zambella	Peter Costa	BH	13	7	13	33
7734	Hank Rowan	Rick Burgess	LG	16	13	14	43
7670	Gn. McCarthy	Gl. McCarthy	PPL	9	16	19	44
7626	Jim Freeman	Bruce Hatfield	SL	12	15	17	44
7369	S. Haarstick	<b>Bob Wescott</b>	SL	19	11	15	45
795	N. Stephenson	T. Glackin	CLIS	20	19	7	46
7184	Henry Colie	M. Delorme	LH	21	18	8	47

7934	K. vonSchwarz	T. Kaczmarski	AN	17	20	10	47
7506	Tony Rivas	Guy Avelon	BisB	14	17	18	49
7614	B. Weinstein	Dave Luzney	BisB	15	14	dnc	52
7985	Barton Beek	Chris Rogers	NH	18	21	16	55

#### VICE ADMIRAL JAMES PINE TROPHY

For Stars in Intercollegiate Competition by Fran Charles

Background – Between 1941 and 1953 there existed a Star Class championship for college sailing. The US Coast Guard Academy sponsored the event and dedicated an enormous half model as the Vice Admiral James Pine Trophy. At that time the academy had a fleet of Star boats that introduced collegiate racers to the skills of close quarter Star racing. Then a gale destroyed the Stars at the Academy. They were first replaced by Ravens, then Shields and, presently, J22s. The Pine Trophy is contested for annually and the time has come to bring it back to the Star Class.

Last June the New England Intercollegiate Sailing Association proposed to host the 2002 Sloop North American Championship in Stars at Cottage Park Y.C. in Boston Harbor. Every other region in North America voted to reject our proposal because the Star would require a change of conditions from a 3 person boat with spinnaker to a 2 without.

The US Coast Guard Academy enthusiastically supports the rejuvenation of the Star Class championship of college sailing. The Pine Trophy belongs to us for 2001 and we will prove that a 30+ Star boat regatta is a whole lot more fun and competitive than a 10 boat sloop nationals in Flying Scots on the Detroit River.

Proposal – M.I.T. along with the Boston Harbor Star Fleet and Cottage Park Y.C. will host the Pine Trophy on September 8 and 9, 2001. This will be a scheduled 5 race open invitational series with one entry per school or university. All member schools in North America are invited to participate as well as any other college or university team in the world that meets the same eligibility criteria of full time enrolled undergraduate students. There will be no entry fee and free housing will be available.

The BH Star Fleet will then match up all prospective competitors with Star sailors in their own local area. Prior to the championship the collegians must race and sail to hone their boat handling skills in a Star boat. Once they master boat handling, the collegians will borrow that same boat to bring to the championship. For the teams that can't pull off the drive to Boston with their boat we will try to match them up with a local Star sailor who has an identical boat that they practiced in. Borrowed boat insurance will be available and, hopefully, completely underwritten by the Star Class. The competitors' exposure will be limited to deductible. All teams are encouraged to bring their "Star mentor" as a coach and all housing will be taken care of. Coach boats will be provided.

Execution – The following teams are very anxious to compete. They have formally signed up and my task will be to match them up with Star sailors before March so that they can be taken under their wing in this coming sailing season. This event will take place on the 2nd weekend after the 2001



N.A.'s in Milford, CT. Tie the two events together on your calendar and help these young sailors get pumped up about Star sailing. They will get hooked on the Star Class for the same reasons that you are.... tough competition, sharing people who always lend a hand and encouraging folks who inspire all to keep trying to improve their skills. Maybe you know sailors at these schools or maybe you just want to help as an interested friend or alumnus.

Entries confirmed as December 15, 2000 – Boston College, Boston U., Bowdoin, Brown, Coast Guard Academy, Connecticut College, Dartmouth, Harvard, M.I.T, Massachusetts Maritime Academy, Merchant Marine Academy at Kings Point, Northwestern, Ohio State, Penn, Purdue, Tufts, UC – Berkeley, U. of New Hampshire, U. of Rhode Island, USC, U. of South Florida, U. of Vermont, Washington College, Yale.

Your role – Contact Fran Charles <sailing@mit.edu> and let me know how you can help or who you can help get out in your Star boat. If Boston is too far to drive, contact me immediately for arranging coordination with Star boat owners in Boston, Rockport, Milford or Sunapee. We can set things up with enough advanced coordination so that your students sail in an identically rigged boat to yours. You may also write off your expenses as a charitable deduction with a simple letter of acknowledgement from the school you are assisting. Everyone wins when we get youth in the Class.

Insurance – Hopefully, the I.S.C.Y.R.A. marketing committee will enthusiastically endorse this proposal to cover the policy expense. Two years ago we hosted the NE College Championships in Stars and the policy cost \$800 for 16 boats. It's reasonable and the Class gets great value for the expense. This support is essential to get boat owners to risk their nice

boat, rig and sails. The colleges' expense will be limited to the deductible. The I.S.C.Y.R.A. might consider putting these competitors on our mailing list for 2 years of Starlights as well.

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#### REGATTA SCHEDULES

#### 1st District

Please check the 1<sup>st</sup> District Web Site for more information about these regattas. Go to:

http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/fcsdesign/

*May 13	Captain Morgan (HB)
May 20	Skipper's Choice (BH)
June 2-3	J.F.K. (BH)

June 16-17 Arms White (Mid)

June 22-241st District Championship (BH)

July 21-22 Ned Hay (CA)

July 28-29 Atlantic Coast Masters (CLIS)

Aug. 4-5 Secretary's Cup/

Make-a Wish Regatta (Benefit) (BH)

Aug. 11-12 Picken Memorial (GSB)

EMIL'S CORNER

# Drawing by Emil Karlovsky

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Aug. 23-31	North American Championship (Mid)
Sept. 8-9	Pine Trophy (Intercollegiate Star Champ.)
Sept. 15-16	Bedford Pitcher (CLIS)

Sept. 23-24 Nutmeg's (Mid)

20<sup>th</sup> District

Jan. 6-7	Bob Levin Memorial
Jan. 23-27	Olympic Classes Regatta
Feb. 3-4	Masters' Regatta
Feb. 17-18	Biscayne Trophy
March 4-9	Bacardi Cup
April t.b.a.	20 <sup>th</sup> District Championship

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# **QUESTION**

What do the following boats have in common?

680, 1288, 1932, 2858, 4317, 5216, 5815, 6052, 6053, 6544, 6731, 7306, 7724

### **ANSWER**

They all belong at one time or another to Mid-Conn fleet member Joe Giunti.

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# SEND US YOUR MATERIAL

To submit material to this newsletter please contact: David Bolles: 203 882 9428 / d.bolles@worldnet.att.net