

SORC

With Chris Bouzaid
in a Rogers 39

For years there were a few series around the world that I wished to compete in. However, until I moved to the States, I never thought I'd do the SORC. From the outside it carries a certain mystique.

I sailed onboard ASSIDUOUS II, which is a Rogers 39 (similar to ECLIPSE) designed by Peterson, built by Jeremy Rogers and owned by Norbert Berger. We were in Class E



Rogers 39 ASSIDUOUS II finished a close third in the '79 S.O.R.C. sailed by Chris Bouzaid.

which, unfortunately, was the class with the widest spread of ratings. The highest in our class rated 30.3' the lowest less than 27.5' – four foot span of rating, greater than any of the other classes except Class A. ASSIDUOUS is a fairly conventional 39 footer, with masthead rig. Of all the IOR boats that I have sailed recently, I think it fair to say that she was undoubtedly one of the best all-round boats I have had the pleasure to be on.

The first race, the Boca Grande, was probably the most unpleasant anybody could experience. It rained heavily about 50 per cent of the time. But, by the end of the race, we were first over the line. Unfortunately not managing to save our time on the best one-tonners.

The next race, St Petersburg – Fort Lauderdale, is the longest in the SORC. In the early stages ASSIDUOUS was not looking too good. Not saving her time on any of the light displacement fractional rig one-tonners. Then the race really started as

1980 Dunhill Royal Lymington Cup match-racing championship



Guy Gurney leads George Tinley round the windward mark by a margin of six seconds.

Match-racing ace Dick Deaver looked unbeatable with a five-out-of-five score at the beginning of the second day of the Dunhill Royal Lymington Cup match-racing championships (9th/10th May), and onlookers were complaining that nobody was a match for the American helmsman. Then local skipper George Tinley, called in as reserve at the last minute when Chris Bouzaid cried off, beat him fair and square, and threw the competition wide open.

Now Deaver, John Oakeley and Irishman Harold Cudmore had each lost one match. And two of Britain's might-have-been Olympic helmsmen, Phil Crebbin and David Howlett, were close on their heels with two matches down apiece.

But then Oakeley, skipper of the twelve-metre Lionheart, lost his match with Cudmore, and after that everything hinged on the Cudmore-Deaver contest in the penultimate round.

In the pre-start manoeuvring, the initiative went this way and that, but Cudmore had the advantage at the gun,

seconds after the Irishman. Cudmore only had to hold his own against Guy Gurney in the last round to win. Which he did.

The series was a triumph not just for Harold Cudmore, but for the sport of match-racing. In almost ideal conditions, the ten competitors duelled with one another in turn, sailing carefully-matched OOD 34s round in short sharp course unaided and unhindered by chance or any differential in boats and gear.

The event was organised as usual by the Royal Lymington Yacht Club, which this year for the first time had the backing of tobacco company Alfred Dunhill.

Before the draw, in which the borrowed OODs were allocated to the competing helmsmen, it seemed as if the competition was doomed to mediocrity, when not only was Chris Bouzaid unable to come, but Dutchman Tjerk Romke de Vries (helmsman of the twelve-metre Windrose) also sent his regrets. And to deepen the gloom, Harold Cudmore was without his tactician, Andy Rose.

However, there were points of interest. The organisers had elected to extend the pre-start manoeuvring time from five to ten minutes, to bring the series into line with other match-racing events round the world. The course was to be in Christchurch Bay, where the tidal current is less fierce and more evenly distributed than in the Solent. And two of the invited helmsmen were dinghy aces with little or no experience of yachts: Cathie Foster (Women's World Double-Handed Champion), and Paul McNamara (who, with his crew from the Grimsby and Cleethorpes Sailing Club, won the 1980 RYA team racing championship).

McNamara and his band failed in the event to win a single match, though they beat Barrie Perry, Harold Cudmore, Guy Gurney and John Oakeley at the starts. As one might have expected, tactics were no problem for the team racing dinghy champions; big boat spinnaker handling was.

It seemed as if everything was a problem for Barrie Perry, who had been invited to participate as a result of his appointment as Lionheart's reserve

helmsman at the beginning of the year. He lost all his starts, and only won one match (against McNamara). During the week following the Dunhill Royal Lymington Cup, he resigned his position aboard Lionheart.

John Oakeley himself made one or two mistakes, the most noticeable of which was also the most surprising in that he made exactly the same mistake at the same competition last year: he failed to pass through the starting line at the end of the first lap. His opponent in the match, David Howlett, also failed to pass through it, and both boats rounded the windward mark before the crews registered their mistake. Then each followed a different course of action. John-O decided he had to correct the mistake by 'unwinding', and he retraced his track back round the windward mark and outside the starting line before passing through it and setting out correctly on the second lap. Howlett decided the windward mark was irrelevant since he had failed to pass through the starting line, so he did not 'unwind'. At the protest meeting, the jury decided in favour of Howlett.

A number of other protests were made and heard during the two-day contest, but only one result on the water was reversed by a decision in the protest room, and this was a simple port-and-starboard case between George Tinley and David Howlett.

Reserve helmsman George Tinley competed once before in the Royal Lymington Cup, and is the local X One-Design Class match-racing champion. But Bill Green, the man who introduced this kind of racing to Britain, told him before the series: "George, we need you as cannon fodder."

After Tinley's coup in his match against Deaver, Bill Green's voice was heard across the water. "Cannon fodder rules," was all it said.

RESULTS

1st	Harold Cudmore
2nd	Dick Deaver
3rd	equal: Phil Crebbin, David Howlett and John Oakeley
	George Tinley
6th	Guy Gurney
7th	Cathy Foster
8th	Barrie Perry
9th	
10th	Paul McNamara



John Oakeley close on the tail of Phil Crebbin first time round. Oakeley finished ahead after the second round.

and rounded the windward mark 39 seconds ahead. Deaver inched closer throughout the two-lap course, but he never broke through, and finished 19