

Telephones  
Secretary 72677  
Caterer 72290

Royal Lymington Yacht Club  
Lymington  
Hampshire SO4 9SE

MATCH RACING - ROYAL LYMINGTON CUP

Most sailing competitions involve a fleet of boats. In a match race, on the other hand, there are only two competitors. The America's Cup is an example.

The Royal Lymington Yacht Club introduced match racing to this country in 1974. Initially it was arranged on a personal basis with friends lending Contessa 32s, the helmsmen being helmsmen of repute involved in the Admiral's Cup and various other championships. The first event was such a success that there was pressure to do the same in future years.

In 1975 it was decided that in view of all factors it was probably better to run the event in the Spring rather than in the Autumn as had been done in 1974. So it was arranged that it would be staged in the Spring of 1976. This event was again a success and from that moment onwards the event became established as a major feature in the annual yachting calendar, and international helmsmen were invited to take part. Contessa 32s continued to be used until 1978, and it was then decided that the OOD34, manufactured by Jeremy Rogers in Lymington, should be used. This decision met with universal approval after the first series, as the boat is ideally suited for match racing and is far better than any similar boat used in match racing in other parts of the world.

Although match racing had been largely an American phenomenon until introduced to Europe in 1974, it is gaining rapidly in popularity and match racing competitions took place last year in Norway, France, New Zealand, South Africa and in various other locations in the United Kingdom and Ireland. The interest continues to grow and the Royal Lymington Cup, which the competition became known as in 1977, is the best known match racing competition on this side of the Atlantic. It is now of equivalent importance to its American counterpart the Congressional Cup, from which it developed.

The America's Cup competition during the last Autumn emphasised the importance of match racing if a serious attempt is to be made to regain this famous trophy. The chances of success in the America's Cup depend on design, equipment, crewing and helmsmanship. It has been our intention in each of the competitions run by this Club, to eliminate the first two factors by providing identical boats equipped with identical sails. It is therefore only a matter of sailing skill which remains to be tested.

Internationally famous helmsmen are now invited to take part and they sail a series of two boat races against one another in turn. (Forty-five individual races over two or three days) The course is short and the racing tense. Each race lasts

about forty-five minutes. Competitors employ tactics which cannot be used in a normally crowded yacht race, but which are inevitable in a closely fought sailing duel. Consequently the event is an exciting spectator sport. In fact it is one of the few forms of competitive sailing which is ideal for media cover, including television.

Unfortunately the cost of staging the event has steadily increased. In the first years, reliance was placed on contributions from the various organisations concerned with the construction and marketing of the boats involved. Whilst Contessa 32s were used, the various firms contributed limited sums and we were able to persuade sailmakers to manufacture sails as private ventures which, after the event, were offered to the class for sale at very competitive prices. The OOD34 however is a smaller class and there is less market for second-hand sails. As a result, sailmakers have not been anxious to manufacture sails as a private venture, and we are forced to purchase them. This is a major item, but if at all possible we would like to buy another eight spinnakers and eleven reefing genoas in 1981 so that we would then be able to mount this event for a number of years. On the other hand, it might be possible to arrange some method of renting which would reduce the capital cost, but would, in the long term, be more expensive. The total cost of this event in 1980 is shown in Appendix A and the budget for 1981 in Appendix B.

We would prefer to continue to run the event on the same general lines. Economies could be made, but we feel that it would detract from the success of the event which has received extremely favourable comment in the yachting press. The item in the costings relating to air fares, refers to an arrangement in 1980 between the Long Beach Yacht Club in the United States, which has staged the Congressional Cup for the last twenty years, and ourselves, by which the winner of the Congressional Cup is automatically invited to compete in the Royal Lympington Cup along with his complete crew. This arrangement occurs in other international competitions, and to ensure the continuity of our arrangement, we have offered accommodation provided by Club members, but airfares will have to be provided.

The Royal Lympington Cup has already attracted considerable attention from the Press and the boating public. It is probable that the event, as it develops, will attract even more in the future. Moreover, there has been television coverage in the past, and with the changeover of the franchise in this area, it is thought likely that the new franchise holders for the Southern region of ITV will be interested in providing good coverage. We understand from the BBC that commercial sponsorship would not jeopardise future television coverage by the BBC who would treat the particular event on its merits.

We therefore find ourselves responsible for bring to this country a number of prominent yacht racing personalities, organising a competition which is strong enough to stand up to international scrutiny, making suitable arrangements for spectators and providing facilities for the press. We have improved our spare part service for the competing boats so that the competition is not delayed by a breakage. We have

improved our service to spectators, and would like to charter a steamer or ferry boat in future. We have also provided better facilities for the press and the international jury. We would like to provide extra prizes for the overseas skippers and crews.

All of this has raised the cost of the Royal Lymington Cup to a level which this Club feels it cannot handle on its own. In 1980, these expenses were met by Dunhills who, regretfully, are unable to continue support of the event as we had hoped in the future.

4. 1. 1981  
Lymington Cup  
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APPENDIX A

ROYAL LYMINGTON CUP MATCH RACING CHAMPIONSHIP 1980 -  
EXPENDITURE

COMPETING BOATS	Scrubbing	100
	Identification Letters and names	120
	Repairs etc.	650
ENTERTAINMENT	Food	620
	Drink	900
FARES	Airfare for winner of Congressional Cup & crew from USA to Lymington	1,000
POSTAGE	Telephone/postage	150
PROVISIONS	Packed lunches for helmsmen crews, jury, helpers & organizers for 2 days	450
SAILS	Purchase and hire	2,850
SUPPORT CRAFT	Mark laying, patrol & spectator craft, hire & fuel	585
VIDEO	Video tape recording of the competition for replaying at the Club during competition & subsequent occasions	360
INSURANCE	To indemnifying owners against loss of no claim & first payment	210
SUNDRY	Prizes (bulk provided by sponsor), scoreboard	325
		8,320
	VAT	1,072
		<u>£9,395</u>

APPENDIX B

ROYAL LYMINGTON CUP MATCH RACING CHAMPIONSHIP - 1981 -  
BUDGET

COMPETING BOATS	Scrubbing	120
	Identification letters & names	150
	Repairs etc.	400
ENTERTAINMENT	Food	700
	Drinks	1,000
FARES	Air fare for winner of Con- gressional Cup & crew from USA to Lymington	1,250
POSTAGE	Telephone & postage	200
PROVISIONS	Packed lunches for helms- men, crews, jury, helpers & organisers for 3 days	800
SAILS	Purchase & hire	6,000
	Repairs	200
SUPPORT CRAFT	Mark laying, patrol & spectator craft, hire & fuel	600
VIDEO	As 1980	400
INSURANCE	AS 1980	230
SUNDRY	As 1980	350
		12,400
	VAT	1,650
		<u>£14,050</u>