

OOD 34 NEWS by Dick Kenny

Cudmore wins Royal Lymington Cup Again

photo: William Payne



It is an oft heard cry amongst Solent racing fleets that skipper and crew rarely meet their opposition for a kind word or trophy until the end of the season prizegiving.

With their well-supported racing programme now firmly established the OOD 34s are in the enviable position of being able to do something about the problem. The Class Championships in July, as last year featured a cocktail party at the Royal Yacht Squadron and dinner the following night at the Royal Corinthian in Cowes. Building on this basis the class included a third "stopover" race in their offshore series, the Cowes-Deauville at Whitsun, joining the Cowes-St. Malo, final race of the Championships, and the Lymington-Cherbourg. Inshore, the Royal Southern's Hamble-Yarmouth race was included, and a Class Rally and barbecue party took place at Buckler's Hard following the RYS Solent Points race in May.

The identical boat concept of the OOD 34 makes it ideal for match racing, and once again they formed the fleet for the invited "star" helmsmen competing in this year's Royal Lymington Yacht Club Match Racing Series, which was won yet again by Irishman, Harold Cudmore.

A condition of loaning their yachts to the RLymYC is that each owner may be aboard during the racing. This exposure to match racing has flowered into a match racing series organised by the class for themselves; this year in September.

Three new trophies have joined the silverware being fought for this season by the twenty or so OOD 34s which race regularly throughout the summer. The Round-the-Island Race has its own OOD 34 prize, the Beaulieu Trophy, won this year by POOH-STICKS, the Otten Trophy awarded for the Solent Circuit Series; and the Captain's Cup, presented by Sir Peter Johnson, goes to the first OOD 34 home in the Fastnet Race SKYFLASH.

Racing is keen in the OOD 34 fleet; so keen that these yachts account for over half of Class 2 in those SPC events designated by the class for their own series. It is interesting to note therefore the OOD 34 reaction to new Mylar, or laminated, sails which are beginning to blossom amongst the IOR fleets. Keen not to stifle individual owners' search for speed, but wary of falling into that old high-cost, new-gear rat race from which the owners have made the break, the class has banned laminated sails for 1981 only. By next season it is thought that the picture on which of these new sail materials is here to stay will have cleared, allowing the class to adopt whichever seems the most suitable.

Justification of the new building techniques employed by Jeremy Rogers Limited for the OOD 34s came recently when two yachts in the class, after a couple of years' hard racing in and offshore, came on the second-hand

market. Both surveys carried out by Lloyds showed no structural defects whatsoever. Also one OOD 34 new building is entered for the RORC trans-atlantic race which starts in November.

Class Championships

SKYFLASH, owned by the Royal Air Force Sailing Association, was winner of the OOD 34 annual championship. Her prize is the Royal Yacht Squadron Coronation Cup. This is of extra significance because the RAFSA has decided to standardize on the class and intends to order one new OOD 34 each year for the next three to five years.

The championships were held over two weekends. The first consisted of four races over well chosen courses in the Solent by the Royal Yacht Squadron in winds that varied from calm to 10 knots apparent. The second was the Royal Ocean Racing Club's 166-mile Cowes to St. Malo race, where the class winner was WINDSPRINT (Bruce Banks). There were no less than seventeen OOD 34 entries in the RORC Class III (over one third of the class) and Banks was first on corrected time beating forty-six IOR boats including the latest British and French One Tonners.

Little Eagle in Cowes

In Cowes Week, where the OOD 34 Class had its own start for the third year running, boys from Aiglon College in Switzerland participated in LITTLE EAGLE, a chartered OOD 34. They were always well up amongst the lead of the fleet. More of their experience in the next issue of LOGBOOK. The emphasis is again that the boat is well suited, because of its large size (seven crew) and strict one-design rules, to charter and club ownership in racing. Other boats are owned by the Royal Navy, Rank Xerox and at least three charter companies as well as the Royal Air Force Sailing Association mentioned above.