

# BRITONS FACE CLASS TEST AT LYMINGTON

By TONY FAIRCHILD

WITH RESPECT to the distinguished overseas visitors, the mainpoint of interest in the Lymington Cup, starting today will be the performances of Chris Law, Lawrie Smith and Edward Warden Owen, all British competitors.

The three are America's Cup aspirants and each has got something to prove, especially Smith, Britain's most experienced 12-metre helmsman.

He skippered Lionheart and Victory '83, dislodging John Oakley, Harold Cudmore and Phil Crebbin, on the way, and not being required by the current British Group challenging for the America's Cup, has been helping the Australians.

Smith, a formidable yachtsman, has been steering, very successfully, Kevin Parry's Kookaburra, and so should be in good shape for his meeting with Law and Warden Owen, lieutenants to Cudmore in the syndicate representing the Royal Thames.

Smith will meet Warden Owen in turn sharpened by finishing runner-up in last week's French Match race series in only his second round at Lymington. He opens against Peter Isler of the United States.

Then Smith faces Law in the third round, and, with both crucial meetings likely today, weather permitting, the action will be in Christchurch Bay or the Solent, depending on the conditions, which were yesterday expected to be "dreadful".

## Skirmish to savour

Law versus Warden Owen, another skirmish to savour in view of both being pretenders to the wheel on skipper Cudmore's No. 1 British boat, will not come until the last of the intermediate rounds, probably tomorrow.

Though a couple of other Britons, Andrew Hurst and Jon Ellis, could cause an upset, if should, on recent form, be Chris Dickson, of New Zealand, who is the man to beat—though nine others will try to prove otherwise in the nine preliminary rounds.

1st Rd draw.—A. Hurst v M. Pelaschier (Italy), C. Dickson (New Zealand) v E. Warden Owen, P. Isler (US) v L. Smith, G. Jobson (US) v J. Ellis, C. Law v L. Bartolotti (Italy).

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## Owen and Law start a duel for Cup yacht place

By ADRIAN MORGAN

CHRIS LAW and Eddie Owen clash today in what could be the start of an intriguing struggle over which of them will be Britain's America's Cup helmsman in the challenger trials next November.

### Friendly

The annual Royal Lympington Cup has been won six times by Harold Cudmore, the skipper of the British challenge. Owen, a sailmaker by trade, was Cudmore's helmsman on the Admiral's Cup-winner Phoenix last year and is fresh back from a near-win at a similar match-racing series in Antibes.

Law was runner-up to Cudmore in last year's event.

Both Law and Owen,

although very different in style and temperament, stress the friendly, constructive side of their rivalry, but it is hard to see either giving up a chance to stand at the helm of a winning 12-metre.

Cudmore will be watching the Lympington series with great interest.

But the man to watch could be Victory 83 skipper Lawrie Smith, who recently has been steering the Australian 12-metre Kookaburra to a series of significant victories over Alan Bond's 12-metre world champion Australia III.

□ LIONEL PEON'S Esprit d'Equips was yesterday confirmed winner on handicap of the Whitbread Round the World race. She beat the Dutch yacht Philips Innovator by just over 22 hours.



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## Helmsmen in cup clash

EDDIE OWEN, one of Britain's America's Cup Helmsmen, beat New Zealander Chris Dixon in the first race of the Royal Lymington Cup match race championships yesterday but lost to Lawrie Smith, who now meets Chris Law, the other British helmsman. Law won his match against Italian Lorenzo Bortolotti, then fell to America's Gary Jobson. The ten invited helmsmen meet each other in a best-of-90 race series with semi-finals then the final tomorrow. **ADRIAN MORGAN**

***Yachting***

# Americans master strong wind

By **TONY FAIRCHILD**

THE AMERICAN representatives, Peter Isler and Gary Jobson, were the only two of the 10 invited helmsmen to come through yesterday's first, truncated day of the Westerly Lymington Cup unbeaten.

With only two rounds deemed possible in the strong South-westerlies, the Americans made a sound start, taking the scalps of two of the leading Britons, Lawrie Smith and Chris Law.

Isler, from the America's Cup Courageous syndicate, beat Smith and Mauro Pelschier, of Italy, while Jobson, who last week quit the Chicago 12-metre group for television, beat Law and Jon Ellis, the Crebbin Cup qualifier.

But for rounding the leeward mark incorrectly, and, in re-rounding, losing what seemed a winning lead, Chris Dickson, of New Zealand, must surely have been set also to start today's resumption of the preliminary rounds with two wins.

## Protest lost

As it was, Dickson's error gave one victory to Edward Warden Owen, who was subsequently not only beaten by Smith but lost also his protest alleging that his opponent had tacked in his water.

The start and first weather leg of the Smith-Owen clash had been one of the most absorbing of the day, when the action was switched from Christchurch Bay to the Solent and when the race committee were further hindered by having to re-lay the course for the second round as the wind backed.

With the breeze around 20 knots from the start and topping 30 knots when racing was halted, the postponement seemed a wise decision in view of the gear failure already being suffered by the fulmars in use.

1st Rd: M. Pelschier (Italy) bt A. Hurst, 1min 14sec; E. Warden Owen bt C. Dickson (N. Zealand), 1-00; P. Isler (US) bt L. Smith, 1-14; G. Jobson (US) bt J. Ellis, 1-30; C. Law bt L. Bortolotti (Italy), 2-27.

2nd Rd: Isler bt Pelschier, 24sec; Smith bt Warden Owen, 0-51; Ellis bt Hurst, 2-42; Jobson bt Law, 1-10; Dickson bt Bortolotti, 2-42.



## A hero back at the helm

By Barry Pickthall

While Chris Law and Eddie Warden-Owen battle it out in their attempt to assume Harold Cudmore's mantle at the Lymington Cup match-race championship this week, the Irish maestro is girding himself for a head-to-head series Down Under this weekend against the America's Cup-winning helmsman, John Bertrand.

The Australian hero is stepping out of retirement to take the helm of South Australia and add much-needed talent to the Australian yacht's afterguard, who have been struggling against Crusader in the continuing tuning trials between the two 12 metres this month off Fremantle. Graham Walker, the British syndicate head, is in Perth to watch the action and will be staying on to see Crusader II arrive from England next week.

Canada's Trine North syndicate are dead. Last-minute plans to amalgamate the Halifax-based group with their rivals from the Secret Cove Yacht Club were killed by the threat of legal action by the Royal Perth Yacht Club, who control the deed of gift governing the America's Cup, and the views of Bruce Kirby, the Canada II designer, who said that all his yacht needs are two winches, a bowman and a Windex!

### Jobson's new job breaks the link

Gary Jobson, the veteran America's Cup tactician who first made a name for himself sailing with Ted Turner on Courageous during the successful 1976 defence, has resigned from the Buddy Melges-led Heart of America campaign just as their Chicago-based boat, launched this week, is about to commence trials off Newport against the New York Yacht Club's America II.

Jobson, who is also competing this week in the Lymington Cup, found that his direct link with one American syndicate was hampering his work as a television commentator on cup matters for the American ESPN channel.

Freed from these ties, Jobson's first task as a full-time reporter was to travel to Honolulu last week to sail with Dennis Conner. He was able to quash rumours that the Sail America group had run short of funds.

On arrival in Lymington this week Jobson was able to report that the man who appears on television commercials in Australia saying "remember me, I'm the man that lost the America's Cup" is hungry, well organized and has all the money he needs. The latest to sign up with Conner is Budweiser with a \$2 million cash injection which will easily cover the building programme for his fourth 12 metre under construction.

### Space ship secret of the sailcloth

The second Gary Mull design built for the St Francis Yacht Club's problem-ridden Golden Gate challenge this year is being trucked across America from its East Coast builder but not before being cut in half "for minor modifications" to have an eight-inch fillet added amidships after a mix-up over design details.

By all accounts, club members who have had to watch with increasing irritancy the pathetic performance of their first boat, USA, launched in February in trials against the six-year-old Clipper, are not amused. One acid remark overheard in the St Francis bar last week was "designed by computer, built by robots and sailed by morons".

After the success of the Briand-designed French Kiss at the recent world championship off Fremantle the Australian designer, Ben Lexcen, has drawn up his interpretation of her lines for testing at the Ship Model Basin in The Netherlands. The results indicate that the French have not made a breakthrough in design and this has led Lexcen to take a closer look at the French yacht's radical rig with its excessive rake.

One aspect that he might do well to investigate is the origin of the distinctive French sailcloth developed originally for a joint Russian-French space probe to Venus.

This partnership was eventually disbanded but not before the French Space Agency had developed the necessary material and tooling to produce the cloth in bulk, which might well have been scrapped had one researcher not been a keen boardsailor who saw another possibility for the cloth. Naturally enough, this multi-laminate material remains a closely guarded secret unavailable to syndicates outside France.



Yachting

## Dickson hopes hit by protest

By TONY FAIRCHILD

NEW ZEALANDER Chris Dickson, who ended a bruising day on the water with the best record, was the first to suffer as the Westerly Lymington Cup protests were resolved last night.

Dickson was disqualified for an incident involving the Italian Mauro Pelaschier, leaving the series wide open for the start of today's last day.

Conditions, including strong tides, meant that it was rugged, not only for the 10 crews and the Fulmers being used, but also for the 60-strong Royal Lymington Race Organisation.

It was the controversial match between Dickson and Pelaschier which was one of the best of the day, the New Zealander getting the gun only after a spirited tacking duel on the short last beat.

### Committee under fire

Dickson's progress had been hindered, first by being over the line against Pelaschier, then the disqualification, as the protests were resolved, left his position less prosperous for today's finale.

Standing level with the New Zealander are American Peter Isler and Chris Law, who each finished with five wins on the water, but who also faced protests—both by Jon Ellis, the Crebbin Cut winner.

Ellis, who had needed not only the 'spare' boat after one round, but fresh equipment after almost every other, was also involved in a protest with Pat Lawrie Smith, who announced his intention of protesting to the Race Committee:

**RESULT** (subject to protests).—C. Dickson (NZ), P. Isler (U.S.), C. Law, 3 wins, equal 1; G. Johnson (U.S.), E. Warden Owen, 4, equal 4; M. Pelaschier (Italy), L. Smith, J. Ellis, 3, equal 6; A. Hurst, B. Bortolotti (Italy) 1, equal 1.

**3rd Rd.**—Pelaschier bt Warden Owen, Isler bt Ellis, Law bt Smith, Hurst bt Bortolotti, Dickson bt Johnson. **4th Rd.**—Warden Owen bt Ellis, Law bt Pelaschier, Isler bt Bortolotti, Dickson bt Smith, Johnson st Hurst.

**5th Rd.**—Isler bt Warden Owen, Law bt Ellis, Dickson bt Pelaschier, Bortolotti bt Johnson, Smith bt Hurst. **6th Rd.**—Ellis bt Bortolotti, Dickson bt Law, Warden Owen bt Hurst, Smith bt Pelaschier, Johnson bt Isler. **7th Rd.**—Dickson bt Hurst, Warden Owen bt Bortolotti, Law bt Isler, Ellis bt Smith, Pelaschier bt Johnson.

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#### YACHTING

## Six of the best for Dickson

By Barry Pickthall

New Zealand's young America's Cup skipper Chris Dickson finished second to Australia III in the recent 12-metre world championship off Fremantle, took the lead in the Westerly Lymington Cup match racing championship last night with a one-race advantage over Britain's Chris Law and American Peter Isler after blustery winds again delayed progress during the second day of preliminary races.

After completing the seventh round of heats yesterday, Dickson could count six wins, while Law and Isler had both suffered two defeats. Third place is shared by Law's fellow America's Cup helmsman, Eddie Warden-Owen, and American, Gary Jobson, who will both be fighting hard through the last two heats this morning to avoid the cut for the semi-finals.

**LEADING POSITIONS AFTER SEVEN HEATS** (subject to protest): 1, C Dickson, 6 wins, 1 loss; 2, P Isler and C Law, 5 wins, 2 losses; 3, E Warden-Owen and G Jobson, 4 wins, 3 losses; 4, L Smith, M Peiascher and John Ellis, 3 wins, 4 losses; 5, A Hurst and L Bortolotti, 1 win, 6 losses.





Peter Isler (left) and his crew aboard Lullaby at Lymington. He was the eventual winner of the abbreviated series.

## Isler wins series after protest

By TONY FAIRCHILD

THE BREEZES which beset the start of the Westerly Royal Lymington Cup, deserted the series and prevented it from running its full, scheduled course yesterday, with the result finally decided by a protest.

The eventual winner was Peter Isler, of the United States, whose protest against Chris Dickson, of New Zealand, resulted in the disqualification of his rival with the result that Isler added the British match-race title to those he had previously won in Bermuda and New Zealand.

It was a less than satisfactory outcome, with the semi-final and final rounds having to be abandoned, but with Dickson and Isler generally the sharper of the 10 invited helmsmen probably an equitable result.

No racing was possible yesterday until shortly after 12.30 when the light southerly filled in to allow the Royal Lymington's stoical race committee to run the final two heats of the nine preliminary rounds.

The incident resulting in the protest occurred in the first meeting of the day, between Isler and Dickson, as their yachts approached the leeward mark with spinnakers set.

Isler was apparently ahead and jibed, and Dickson held his course. The protest committee deliberated for more than an hour last night before they announced their decision.

Isler had finished the preliminary rounds with seven wins. Four others, Dickson, the two Britons, Edward Warden Owen and Chris Law, and Mauro Pelaschier, of Italy were equal second with six wins apiece. Not only was there the protest to settle but the pairings for the semi-finals.

There was, though, a final bonus of a clash between Warden Owen and Law, the two yachtsmen vying for the role of helmsman under skipper Harold Cudmore on the British 12-metre for the America's Cup preliminaries beginning in Freemantle in October.

Warden Owen, runner-up in the French match-race series last week, got the verdict. After an inconclusive start he got away for what proved the more prosperous end of the line and went on to a comfortable victory.

Rd 8—P. Isler (US) bt C. Dickson (NZ) disqualified; C. Law bt A. Hurst, L. Bortolotti (Italy) bt I. Smith, E. Warden Owen bt G. Jobson (US); M. Pelaschier (Italy) bt J. Ellis.

Rd 9—Isler bt Hurst; Warden Owen bt Law, Dickson bt Ellis, Jobson bt Smith; Pelaschier bt Bortolotti.

Overall: Isler 7 wins, 1, Dickson, Law, Pelaschier, Warden Owen 6, eq 2, Jobson, 5, 6, Smith, Ellis, 5, 8 Bortolotti 2, 9, Hurst, 1, 10.