

# TRADITIONS AND MEMORIES OF AMERICAN YACHTING

By WILLIAM P. STEPHENS

Part Forty-Three

The Herreshoffs of Bristol—Continued

MENTION has been made of the one-design class built in 1896 and known popularly as the "Newport Thirties," much of their racing being done off that port. While proving satisfactory for the immediate purpose (racing), they did not entitle their owners to representation in the New York Y. C., the By-laws calling for "thirty feet load waterline length, if single-masted, and

representation or not entitled to representation, with power to procure from naval architects designs and estimates, and to submit the same to the members who may contemplate building in such classes."

The Committee, W. Butler Duncan, Jr., Addison G. Hanan and Newbury D. Lawton, sent out the following circular:—

"A proposition having been made by a number of members of the New York Y. C. for the building of restricted or one-design class, and a committee having been appointed to take up the matter and put it in shape for consideration by such members as may be interested; following out the views of those who have originated the idea, the committee have prepared the following suggestions, as to the details for the class:

"Type.—The boat to be of a type intended to be promoted by the present rule of measurement of the New York Y. C., a wholesome seaworthy craft free from freak features.

"Size.—A keel boat, about 30ft. waterline, short overhangs and of moderate beam and draft.

"Plan.—Cabin house not less than 10ft. 6in. in length, about 4ft. wide, having straight sides with glass transom lights, toilet room with closet and basin, berth for man, forward, cockpit not less than 6ft. long with rail set outside to form seat on deck.

"Fittings.—Complete but simple outfit for cruising; transom cushions; stove, ice-box; tank.

"Sails and Rigging.—Sail area about 1,000 sq. ft.; jib and mainsail rig; spinnaker and balloon jib allowed; solid spars.

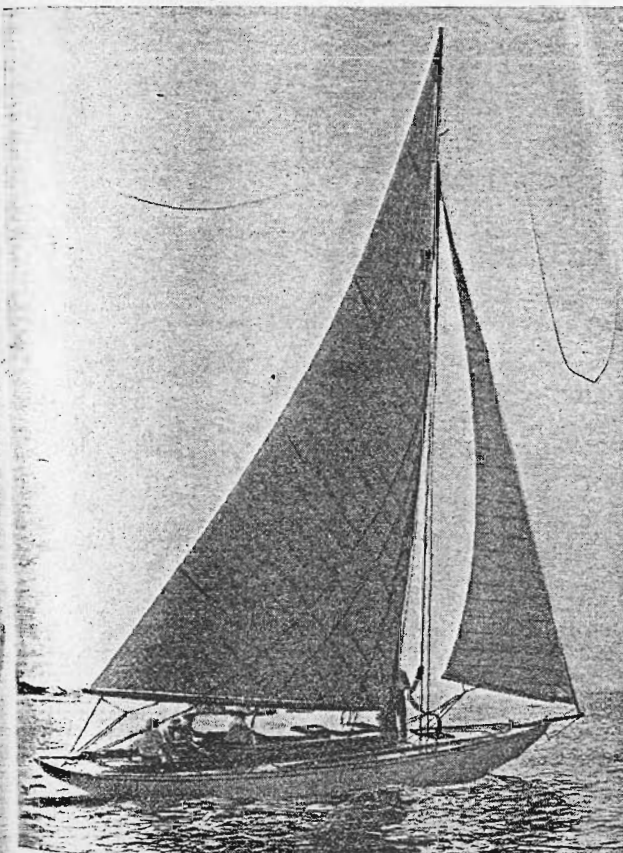
"Selection.—Boats when completed to be drawn by lot.

"Regulation.—Yachts to be steered by a member or amateur. Two paid hands allowed. Crew all told limited to four persons. Entire cruising outfit to be carried.

"Special specifications to be agreed upon for sizes, weights and details of outfit.

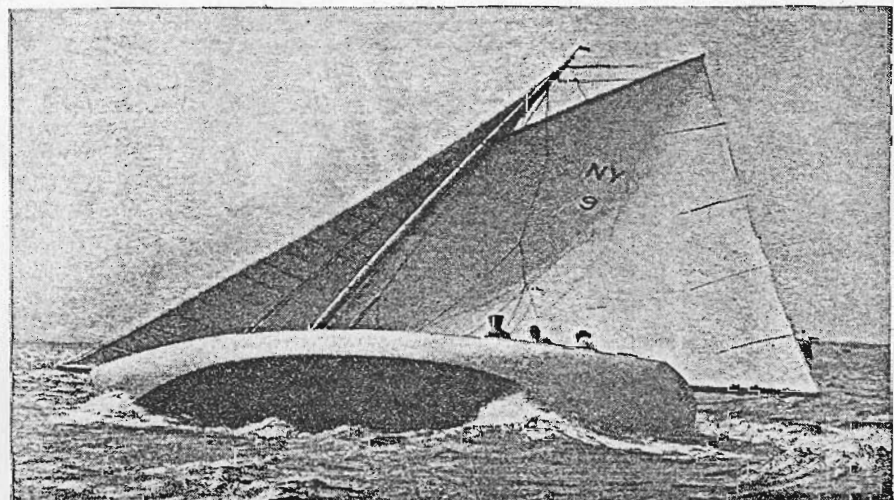
"Preliminary plans, specifications and estimates have been obtained.

"The committee would be glad to learn if you are interested in building in this



Left: Tobasco, a New York Thirty, 1905, showing the long square cabin trunk.

Below: A Thirty well heeled over in a stiff breeze



that she is a full-decked vessel, reasonable cockpit excepted; and, further, by her design and construction she is well suited to accompany the Squadron on a cruise."

Late in 1904 a movement was started for a class of small yachts which would meet these requirements, and at a meeting in October the following resolution was adopted:—"That the Chair appoint a committee of three for the purpose of interesting members of the Club in the building of yachts in one-design or restricted classes, and of sizes either entitled to rep-

class and if you desire to have notice of the meetings of the committee.

"The committee wish also to state that, should the members so desire, they are prepared to take up the question of a class or classes, either larger or smaller than the one that has been outlined, and they would be glad to receive any suggestions as to such class or classes."

The Rule alluded to was the Universal Rule, just adopted by the Club, as formulated by N. G. Herreshoff.

Designs and estimates were received from several designers, but those of the Herreshoff Mfg. Co. received the first consideration, the position of this Company as both designers and builders giving it a great advantage over designers who had to rely on outside builders for estimates. At a special meeting of proposed owners in the Class held on November 10, 1904, the Herreshoff design and bid was submitted:—not less than 14 orders, the price to be \$4,000 delivered at Bristol, payments to be \$1,000 on signing the contract, \$1,500 when hull was completed, and \$1,500 on delivery; the yachts to be planked with yellow pine, single below the turn of the bilge, and double above, with an inner planking of cypress and outer of yellow pine; Herreshoff anti-fouling paint to be used on the bottom.

The first yacht was completed by January 5, 1905, and was tried by Mr. Lawton, representing the Committee; although the trial was made in very light air, it was declared satisfactory, and work went ahead on eighteen hulls. When completed the ownership was decided by lot, the names of the yachts and their owners being:—Minx, Howard Willets; Pintail, August Belmont; Maid of Meudon, W. D. Guthrie; Neola II, George M. Pynchon; Phryne, Henry L. Maxwell; Cara Mia, Stuyvesant Wainwright; Alera, A. H. and James W. Alker; Atair, Cord Meyer; Linnet, Amos T. French; Nautilus, Addison G. Hanan; Adelaide II, George A. and Philip H. Adee; Anemone, J. Murray Mitchell, Jr.; Tobasco, Henry F. Lippett; Banzai, Newbury D. Lawton; Ibis, O'Donnell Iselin; Dahinda, W. Butler Duncan, Jr.; Oriole, Lyman Delano; Carlita, Oliver Harri-

man. The equipment furnished with each yacht was most complete, including no less than 88 separate items, among them one 47-pound gooseneck anchor; one 47-pound straight stock anchor; 300 feet 2¼ inch manilla cable;

50 feet 2-inch mooring line; 180 feet 1¾-inch manilla warp; 1 sounding lead and line; one 10 quart galvanized pail; 1 scrub brush; 2 pipe berths with mattresses; 2 blankets; 2 pillows; 8 sheets; 1 butcher knife; 1 can opener; 1 coffee pot; 6 plates; 3 soup plates; 1 tin; 6 teaspoons; 6 dessert spoons; 1 doz. towels; 1 manila bag; 1 No. 1 jib, 1 No. 2 jib, 1 spinnaker, 9 sail tacks. Judging by these samples from the long list, the outfit was the most complete ever furnished by a builder. All the yachts were painted white on delivery, but after a few races Phryne was painted black. Of recent years, in conformity with modern fashion, the fleet has shown a variety of colors.

The following rules were adopted on November 10, 1905, for the government of the Class:—

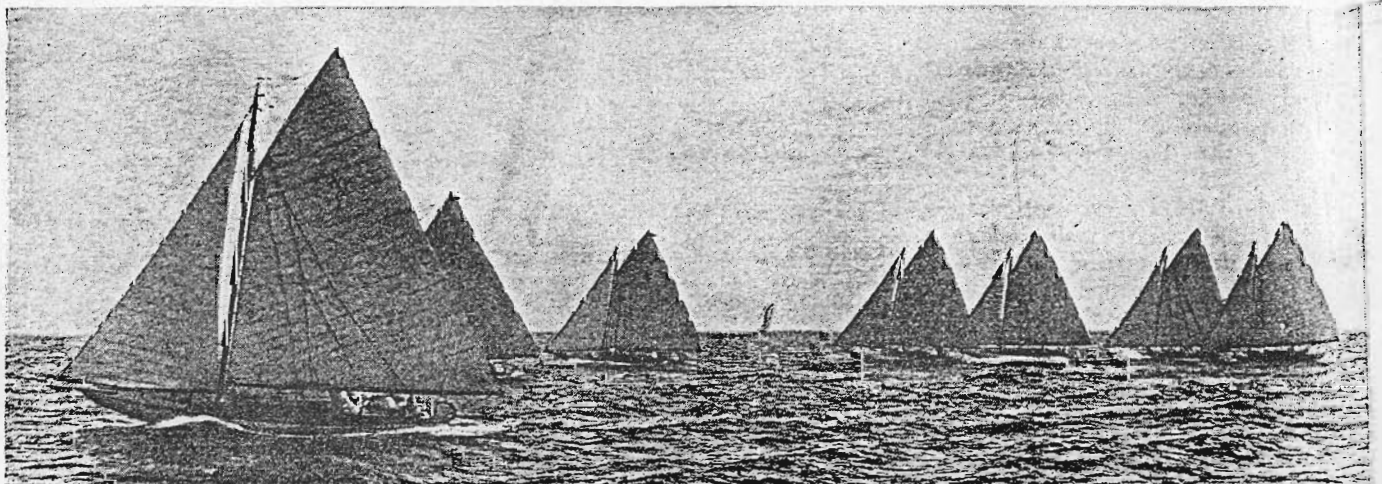
Outfit: Everything delivered with the boat, as per specifications, shall be on board in every race, except the anchor and cable, which need not be carried. Anything lost shall be replaced.

Crew: The crew shall not exceed five men, two of

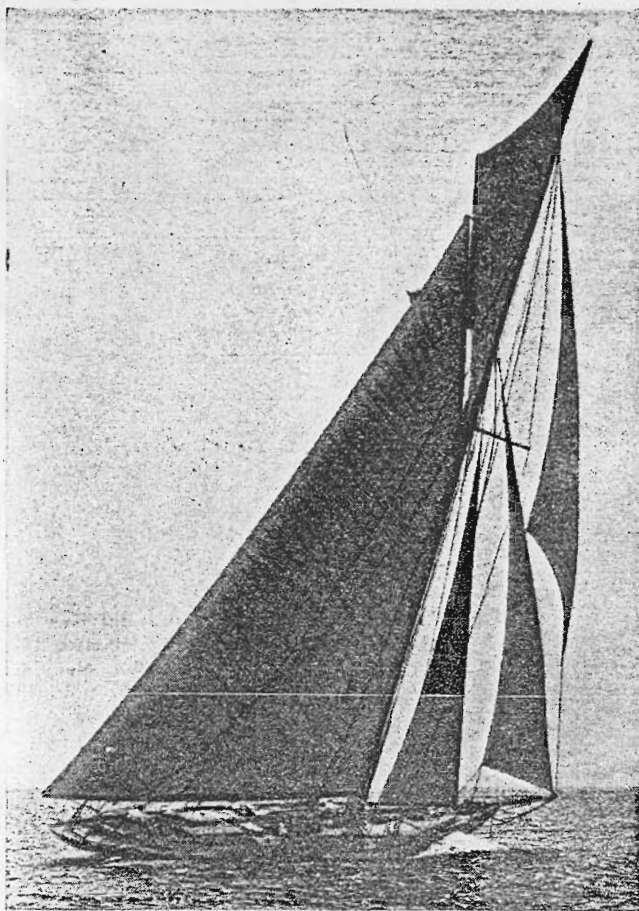


Right: Raccoon, a Newport Thirty, 1896, half decked with shelter roof. Below: A fleet of Newport Thirties in a race, 1896.

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whom may be paid hands. The helmsman shall be an amateur.

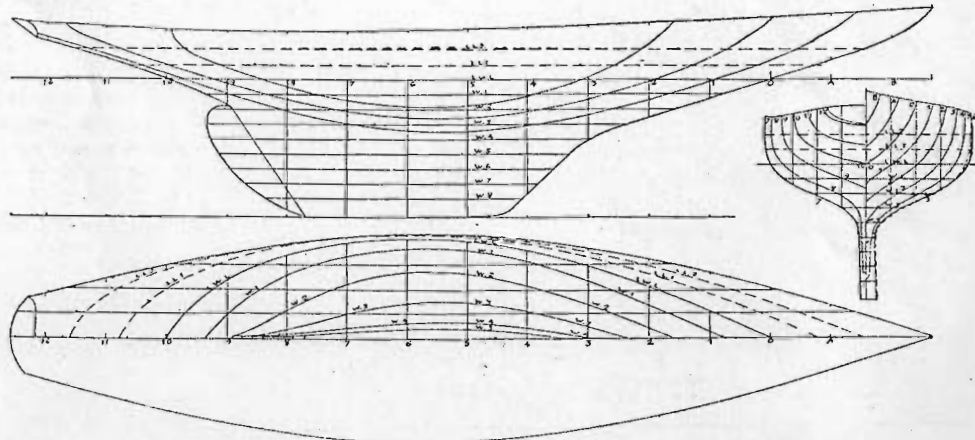
**Hauling out:** The boats shall not be hauled out, or put on the beach, more than once in two weeks; and when hauled out shall not remain more than three days. In case of accident the Committee may waive this Rule.

**Sails:** Not more than two new suits of sails shall be used when racing in any one season on any boat. In case of an accident to a sail the Committee may waive this Rule. Balloon jibs shall be barred except when racing against boats not in the Class. A black band shall be painted around the mast at a point whose distance above deck shall be determined by the designer, above which the jaws of the gaff shall not be hoisted.

**Length of spars shall not exceed:**—boom, 32 feet; gaff, 19 feet; spinnaker boom, 19 feet 6 inches. The size of the mainsail and jib shall not be limited except that the length of boom, gaff, hoist or fore triangle shall not be altered. Spinnaker shall be of the same size as originally furnished. Bow-

Top of page: Istalena,  
65-foot One Design Class

Right: Lines for the  
New York Yacht Club  
50-foot class, 1913



sprits two feet longer than originals shall be fitted under supervision of designers. (Note: The boats proved hard-headed on a reach, and the original bowsprits were replaced by new ones two feet longer.)

Ballast or spars shall not be altered in any way. Pot-leading shall not be allowed. Only solid spars shall be carried. Each boat shall carry a special number above the reef points. Spinnaker sheets shall not be carried forward of or around the fore stay.

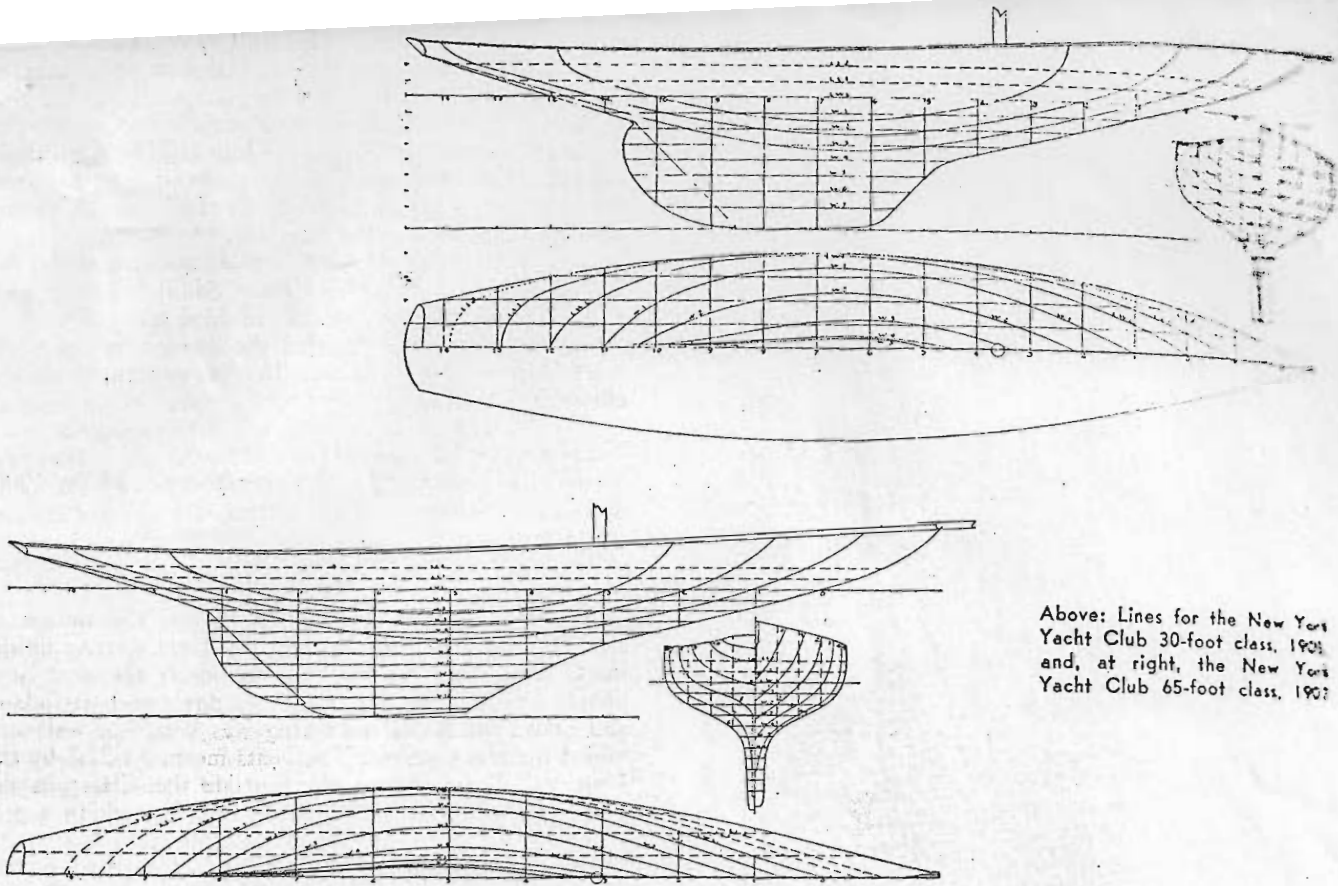
Prize money to professionals shall not exceed the following schedule:—\$1.00 for start, \$4.00 for first place, \$3.00 for second place, \$2.00 for third place. Questions arising under these Rules shall be decided by the Committee elected for the season by the owners, whose decision shall be final.

Newbury D. Lawton }  
W. B. Duncan, Jr. } Committee elected for 1906.  
A. G. Hanan }

These Rules shall be printed and a copy posted on each boat and in the Club House.

It must be admitted, that the original Committee, as above, handled the matter most ably from start to finish; the Class, large in numbers, was probably the most completely equipped from the start of any one-design class; and under the Rules the racing was keen and well sustained for many years. The boats measured 27.7 by the Universal Rule when racing outside the Class; in the first season the leading boat was Phryne, making a percentage of .780 in 20 starts; next came Cara Mia, with a percentage of .762 for 36 starts. Very close to her was Nautilus, with .726 for 35 starts; then Carlita, .682 for 16 starts.

A number of the boats were regarded with special affection by their owners, who held them for many years; but there were numberless changes of both ownership and names, and it is impossible today to determine the fate of some which have disappeared from club books and Lloyd's Register. There is no record in the 1942 Lloyd's of Phryne, Cara Mia, Atair, Adelaide II, Linnet, Nautilus, Anemone, Ibis and Oriole. In some cases the name has been changed six or seven times; only two, Alera and Banzai, retain their original names. One of the Class is now owned in Buffalo, one in Philadelphia, and one in Detroit. More than a half dozen have had engines installed. In its history of 38 years the Thirty-Foot Class has proved a credit to the yachtsmen who created it and the genius who was quick to realize the possibilities of the idea and to do his part to make it a success.



Above: Lines for the New York Yacht Club 30-foot class, 1907 and, at right, the New York Yacht Club 65-foot class, 1907

**The 65-, 50-, and 40-Foot Classes**

As much cannot be said of the next, the 65-Ft. Class, so called, a select and semi-private affair limited to three yachts. Built in 1907, it numbered only Aurora, Cornelius Vanderbilt; Istalena, George M. Pynchon; and Winsome, Henry F. Lippett. Their dimensions were: l.o.a., 85 feet 3 inches; l.w.l., 65 feet; breadth, 16 feet 7 inches; draft, 10 feet 10 inches. As the lines show, they were good boats, with no freak features, and they made good racing for their owners, but they did nothing for the broad interests of the sport.

Following in 1913 came a large fleet, the 50-Foot Class: Grayling, J. P. Morgan; Acushla, G. M. Heckscher; Barbara, Harry Payne Whitney; Carolina II, Pembroke Jones; Iroquois II, Ralph N. Ellis; Peerless, Henry L. and Howard W. Maxwell; Samuri, W. Earl Dodge; Spartan, Edmund Randolph; Ventura, George F. Baker, Jr. The dimensions were: l.o.a., 72 feet; l.w.l., 50 feet; breadth, 14 feet 6 inches; draft, 9 feet 3 inches. As a racing class it proved very satisfactory and gave good sport for some years.

The last of these classes was the 40-Foot, built in 1916: Shwara, Harold Wesson; Black Duck, Arthur K. Bourne; Rowdy, Holland S. Duell; Zilph, James E. Hayes; Jessica, Wilson Marshall; Maisie, Morton F. Plant; Mistral, George M. Pynchon; Pampero, Dr. James Bishop; Pauline, Oliver G. Jennings; Dolly Bowen, Alexander S. Cochran; Katherine, Arthur F. Luke; Squaw, John S. Lawrence. The dimensions were: l.o.a., 59 feet; l.w.l., 40 feet; breadth, 14 feet 5 inches; draft, 8 feet. They were big, bulky boats, less graceful above water than their larger sisters of the 70-Foot, 65-Foot and 50-Foot Classes, but they gave good racing for many years and are still doing good work of another kind; the original rig has been changed to cutter, yawl or schooner, and in most cases auxiliary power installed.

All of these classes carried the conventional boom and gaff rig, the 30-Foot and the 40-Foot with single jib and the others with double headrig.

It is impossible today to predict the course of yachting when? and if?; many of the yacht clubs are in a very precarious condition; but there is no reason to believe that the sport of cruising, of long distance and ocean racing and of match sailing will be any less popular with Americans under normal conditions than it has been in the past. That its up-building will take time and effort is beyond question, but the spirit is still alive, the memory of the past is an incentive to new exertion, and with the return of peace we may look for a revival of all branches of sailing. It seems likely now that we have seen the last of the great racing cutters of the past, as well as of the big "floating palaces" in the power division; but we may hope that with the building of racing yachts of medium and the smaller sizes syndicate ownership will disappear and we shall see again the individual owner in consultation with his designer, leaving the one-design field to yachts not larger than the Thirties.

Sail plan of the New York Yacht Club 30-foot class, with lengthened bowsprit

