

West Wind

The Newsletter of the NZ Zephyr Owners' Association

Volume 45 Issue 4

Internet address: www.zoa.cjb.net

May 2001

EDITORIAL

I often begin an editorial with some sort of apology it seems, and this issue of West Wind is no exception. A number of things have contributed to this edition being later than I would like.

National Championships 2002

Plimmerton Yacht Club has expressed interest in hosting the 2002 National Championships and a tentative Notice of Race appears inside. The P and Starling nationals are on in Wellington around the same time and this has "soaked up" the available Race Officers – there are not too many in the Wellington area. As a result we have still to confirm the final dates with the club and check the availability of a Race Officer, so there is still a possibility of a change. Otherwise Plimmerton sounds as though it will be an interesting venue to sail at.

Measurer's Comments on Timaru

Any gathering of Zephyrs provides an opportunity for informal surveys how boats are set up, and compliance with the class rules. Austin Ebert and Andy Holland, both Canterbury based measurers with long experience in the class, had the following comments:

Mast Holes: Remember that these must be circular, with a diameter of 65mm plus or minus 2mm. There is a tendency to exploit the tolerances and have the minimum width but maximum diameter fore and aft.

Mast Step: The maximum allowable movement in the mast step on the keel is 20mm. Some boats look to have more than that. This should be inserted into the measuring sheet as a routine measurement.

Make Weights: A few boats have required transom weights to bring them up to the 57kg minimum. Boats must be reweighed if they have been removed.

Measuring Certificates: Class rule 1.10 states that change of ownership invalidates measuring certificates, but does not require the boats to be re-measured. At present there is a relaxed attitude to certificates and it may be that the association needs to tighten up on this aspect at national events.

New Trophy

Noel May, our current Patron, has donated the Patron's Merit Trophy. It is a scale model of a Zephyr made from recycled kauri, mounted on a walnut base. It was awarded to Keith Paine, handicap winner in Timaru. Thanks, Noel, for the time and workmanship. It looks quite impressive.

Lost Trophy

Some senior members of the class will recall the original National Championship trophy, a half model of a Zephyr transom. It disappeared many years ago, but it must be out there somewhere. If you are going through your club trophy cabinet, keep an eye out for it.

The Fiftieth Nationals

This year's event was the 45th. I know it is a long way off, but it does look as though the class will make it through to

(Continued on page 6)

FROM THE PEN OF ALEX AITKEN National President



As I reflect on what to comment on in this edition of West Wind the mail has just been delivered. I open the correspondence addressed to the Zephyr Owners' Association and there is a cheque with instructions to please order a new coloured sail and thanking me for attention to detail. This is what it's all about, people communicating and having confidence in the running of ZOA. For me this is also an "adrenalin rush" as I reach for the ASB deposit book, the order book and fax a message off to our supplier.

For a number of Zephyr owners the club season is drawing to a close. The past two to three months have been interesting and there has been some ongoing debate as to the future of building hulls, the performance of sails and battens. Should the track on the mast be glued in place before riveting? Should the mast collar on the hull be of a greater diameter to allow for more mast bend. Much of the debate comes from Canterbury and the odd snippet from the North. *A remit to the AGM is needed if you want to consider a rule change.*

I've had some interesting comments from our sail maker about performance. Rob Ebert has been chasing this subject along with a result that Chris McMaster of Doyle Sails has contributed an article with some history and thoughts.

One of the compelling features of the Zephyr yacht is that class rules prevent owners from waving a cheque book in order to achieve performance. It is a mystery sometimes as to why some boats perform better. It seems to me (a very average sailor) that sailors who spend time trimming the boat, concentrating, achieving a good start and have the knowledge and ability to cover their position inevitably win races. I think what is meant – don't always blame the boat.

Rob Ebert is looking at the question of where we hold the Annual General Meeting which should by rotation be held in Christchurch. There is a lot going on in the North and I think efforts are needed to encourage the Auckland fleet to branch out and socialise. Perhaps a forum on Saturday followed by a dinner and AGM may be appropriate

Rob Ebert is in communication with Dennis and Bob. We will communicate in good time to let you know venue and date.

I've heard from a Canterbury contact that there are some Zephyrs that have no forward water tight bulk head and in the event of taking on water the boat goes nose down and cannot easily be righted without assistance. This surely is against the rules of adequate buoyancy and should be picked up by the measurers. Could someone please have a look at this. Rob and I have been thinking ahead to 2006 and the 50th Anniversary of the Zephyr class. I mention this so owners may like to come up with ideas on venue and programme.

(Continued on page 5)

Chris McMaster on Zephyr Sails

Over the years the ZOA has had a number of comments about the shape of Zephyr sails and what could be done about them. We put the issue to Chris McMaster as Boyd and McMaster have been associated with the sails for considerable time, perhaps since the beginnings of the class. I have summarized his comments made in a series of emails. He says:

As long as I have been sail making there have been complaints about the shaping of Zephyr sails! The original Zephyr sail pattern design was provided by Max Walker in 1972. The pattern was designed for a soft finish fabric, but over the years sail cloth finish has become firmer for better shape holding and control. This has probably not helped the Zephyr sail shape, but has improved the life of the sail. Most owners replace a sail which has become soft and pliable. When the sail softens the creases and distortions that reflect the old design of the sail start to disappear.*

From past experience I have found that for some reason most Zephyr sailors tend to shape their battens very heavily at the front. This is fine in an old sail, but on the new sail it closes the leech, and moves all shape well forward, resulting in poor light and medium air performance.

Over the last 15 years we have several meetings at the loft with sails that are supposedly very different, and each time on careful examination the shapes have been proven exactly the same. One thing to check though, is the foot and luff rope shrink over the first few months as this can alter the shape. To remedy they need to be unstitched on the seizing and eased away.

We are conscious of the general quality of sail finish. For the last ten years the same person made all the Zephyr sails. This person has now left and at the same time the company has grown in size. Naturally, any quality problems will be rectified at no cost to the association or the buyers.

If the sail were to be constructed using modern methods, the existing profile – batten positions, roach, detailing etc, would be retained. The current shape would be achieved by shaping the panels and luff round. The main noticeable difference would be the elimination of the darts along the foot of the sail. This would eliminate the creasing at the foot, and make the sail much more responsive to foot tension, enabling the foot of the sail to be flattened right out in heavy air. Performance wise it would be very hard to know if modern sail construction methods would improve the boats much, but it would make the sail easier to use through various wind conditions.

* I have followed up on some of Chris's comments, speaking to Max Walker who was active in the class in the 1970s. At the time Max compared a number of sails in use at the time and as a result made some minor modifications to the sail pattern. I imagine that pattern endured until it was transferred to the computerised plotter relatively recently. In the 1970s, the class had been in existence for 20 or more years with a standard sail, so it seems unlikely that Chris is referring to the original pattern. Some of our life members reading this may be able to shed more light on the issue, if so, I would be keen to hear from them. It is probably all in the early minutes too, but I do not have ready access to these.

The sails have been modified from time to time, the most notable change being the omission of the angle batten on the lower leech. Some Hamilton sailors still do pretty well with such sails!

Rob Ebert

Estuary Capers

This is the new title for the newsletter of Canterbury Zephyr Owners' Association. Issue 3 boasts eight pages of interesting reading. Thanks Russell and Brenda for putting it all together. I counted thirteen topics ranging from a woman's view to Don's rules, a profile of Andy Holland and a complete up date of championship and handicap results. Russell and Brenda are overseas as I write and that poses some questions as to the date and venue for the AGM and prize giving for CZOA. However, I believe Richard and Phil have the matter in hand and we will be advised of details in good time.

Over the last few weeks Canterbury Yacht Clubs have had their closing day races and prize giving. Waimakariri Sailing and Power Boat club had their closing day on Sunday 22nd April and of the twenty nine boats on the river Zephyrs made up a third of that number. River conditions were ideal with a light to moderate easterly. I am told that Waimak is the home of twelve Zephyrs with 6 - 7 regularly on the water.

The season has ended on a high note with good fleets and lively interest in the class. There are still a number of good boats for sale and this coming winter owners will be busy with renovations.

Alex Aitken.

Trading Corner and Finances

The financial year has seen good activity in our trading operation which continues as a small earner to bolster our balance sheet.

Sale of equipment to date.

Alloy masts	5
Alloy booms	2
Sails	8
Sail battens (sets)	4
Cedar hull #258	1

These represent a turnover of \$1100.00.

On the administration side we are keeping our heads above water. Total income from subscriptions stands at \$1160.00 and donations \$30.00.

The administration costs add up to \$993.47. With this edition of West Wind and some small admin costs we should break even at balance date 31 May 2001.

As at 3 April we have in the 50 account \$4707.48 and the mould replacement account \$723.90.

As a footnote to the trading corner our builder is completing cedar hull #259 and the retail price is **\$3176.00**. Hull #260 will increase to \$ 3400.00 due to increase in material costs.

Included in these figures is a sum of \$200.00 for royalties and \$50.00 to cover administration costs. ZOA in effect passes each hull on at cost.

Archivist

We need the services of a semi retired or retired person to ferret out and catalogue documents, photos, and records of the Zephyr Owners' Association for the period 1956 to present day. This is a job which requires order, system and patience. We are approaching our 50th anniversary and will need to publish the history.

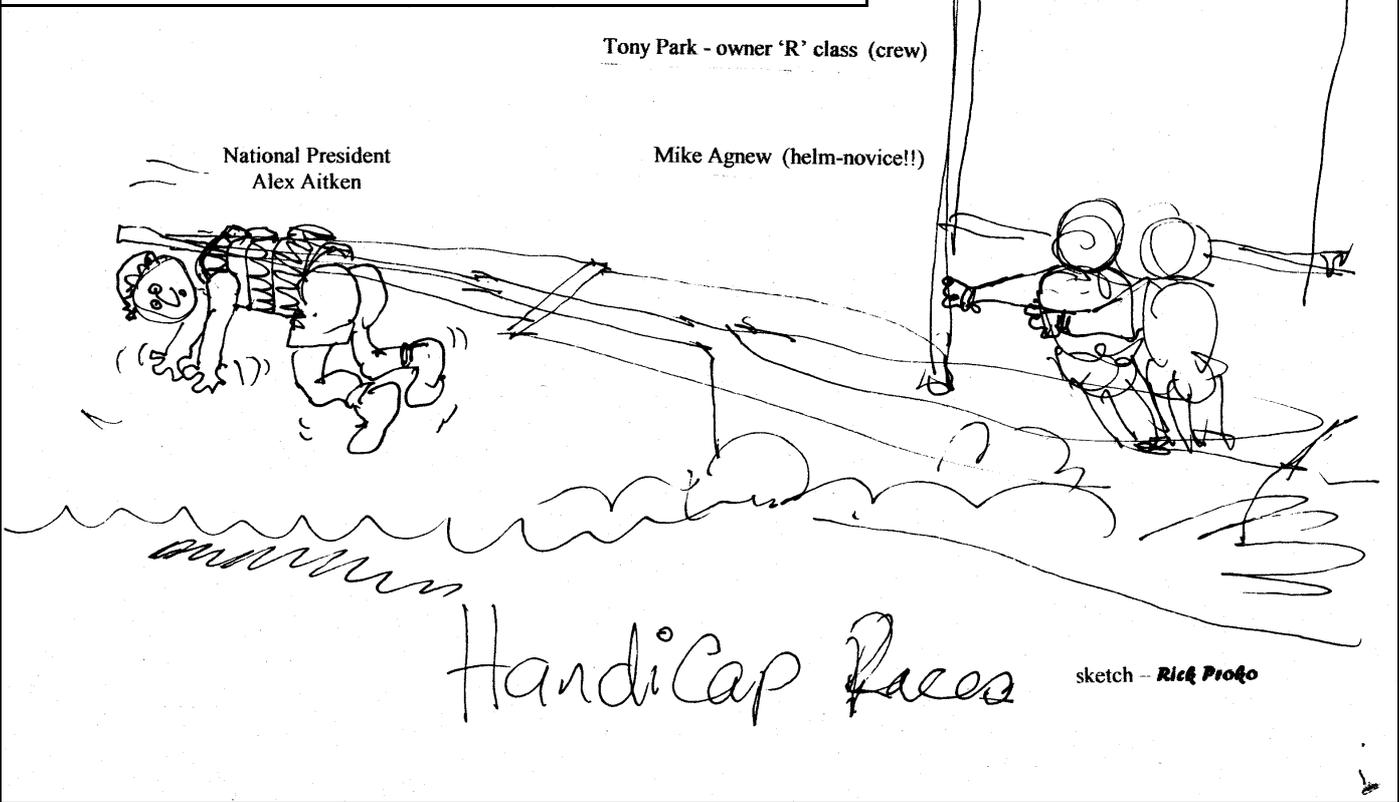
Expression of interest should be addressed to Alex Aitken or Rob Ebert.

Incident at the 'Auld Salts Regatta', Pigeon Bay 24/1/01

What really happened?

Pigeon Bay was the venue for the "Auld Salts" regatta. Two Zephyr owners decided to have a blast in an "R" class. Several boats, including me, opted for a port start in the third race. I was on the line and received a sharp prod in the lower back from the pole (dangerous weapon). According to the helmsman he was out of control but the grin on his face as he apologised suggested a more sinister motive.

Alex Aitken



Hamilton Happenings

It has been something of a frustrating season on Hamilton Lake this year. Generally light conditions prevailed throughout the season, with a number of races abandoned in the light conditions. Jack Ninnes forsook his Young 88 and ran out the Zephyr Champs winner. Roger Walker was there in the hunt as always, but Graham Bridges found the lighter conditions this year frustrating. John de Fluiter had his first year in the class showing steady improvement throughout the season. Frank Ward, in the oldest (it certainly looks it) boat in the fleet, was capable of surprising in the light conditions. Jim Brokenshire also turned in a few good results and is now threatening to paint his boat! Brian Smith also made the odd raid on the club's trophy cabinet with an occasional sortie onto the lake.

We reinstated the Swap Boat Series this year. Eight skippers willing to share turned up and we drew boats for three short races. Best Boat, maintained in what can only be described as average condition was #237 *Goldfinger*.

John Elliott, the Hamilton Yacht Club's lone (forty something) 3.7 skipper continued his bar room attacks on the class. In one particularly scathing moment he claimed that the Zephyr was the only boat that felt like it was sinking when it was on the plane!

A number of Tauranga skippers came through to the Hamilton Regatta and borrowed local Zephyrs. This has stimulated considerable interest in Zephyrs with the nucleus of a fleet emerging over there.

All in all a very average sailing season, but the Zephyr class and its sailors continue to make an important contribution to Hamilton Yacht Club.

PRICE LIST FOR ZEPHYR COMPONENTS

Effective 1st April 2000
All prices include freight and GST

Component	North Island	South Island
Mast	\$635	\$645
Boom	\$295	\$300
Sails	\$585	\$585
Sail Battens	\$170	\$170

ZEPHYRS FOR SALE

#215 *Minx*: Alloy rig, galvanised boat trailer and well looked after. Contact: Allan Richardson (07) 856 7796, Fax (07) 8556928, email richkiwi@ihug.co.nz

#116 *Frith*: Contact: Barry Mackie (07) 849 6556

#156 *Chinook*: Wooden rig, beach trolley, road trailer, good sail. Needs minor repairs. Contact: Rick Cable 03 312 2667

#171 *Tania*: Contact: Ted Frankham or Dennis Craig 09 817 3150

#32 *Dee Dee*: Needs a new deck, wooden rig, two sails, road trailer. Contact: Neville Riley 09 534 3753

#329 *Spartan*: This is an excellent boat, close to minimum weight and well maintained. Two rigs, alloy and wooden, two sails, rudders and centreboards. Launching trolley and cover for travelling. Asking price \$3200. Contact: Bruce Johnston 03 327 7278

#209 *Born Free*: White boat with wooden rig and good running gear. Sailed mostly for pleasure. Paint needs a little work. Good sail, purpose built galvanised road trailer and launching trolley, both professionally built. \$1200. Contact: Frank Pinion 03 352 6462

AUCKLAND ZEPHYR CHAMPIONSHIPS 2000/2001

A motley crew of 12 men and 12 boats arrived at the Auckland Zephyr Champs on the 24-25th February, keen to blow away the cobwebs spun during a season of consistent light winds on the Manukau harbour. This season has failed to supply a decent blast on any organised race day at French Bay.

The Zephyr fleet are always sceptical of official weather forecasts, so were pleased to see a slight ripple on the water on arrival on Saturday morning, imagining the sea breeze to be enjoyed that afternoon.

Race 1 & 2 were sailed in 0-5 knots, or was it minus 5-0 knots? At least the direction was consistent, somewhere between south and east. In Race 1 Colin Maddren took the left on the first beat to command an unassailable lead which he protected to the finish, followed by Murray Sargisson and Bob Still, who was showing good light air speed with his new foils and blue string rig.

Race 2 saw similar conditions but a less vicious incoming tide. Murray was in the groove and took the race ahead of Bob Still and then Don Waterer, who was always chasing the leaders. The wind swung to the SW in Race 3 but failed to build in strength, allowing the outgoing tide to separate the men from the boys. The whole fleet parked for a rest at the windward mark, waiting for the wind to win over the tide. The reach saw the entire fleet take the proper route to the wing mark, except for Dennis Craig who headed for home in the opposite direction, only to gybe out from the shore and reach across to overtake the whole fleet before the wing mark. We can only assume the years of capsizing has allowed him to accurately survey the underwater terrain, giving him an unfair advantage in a strong tide. Dennis won comfortably ahead of Bob Allen and Bob Still, who seemed to have tuned his strings perfectly at last.

Auckland Championship Results

Place	Name	Boat	No	Points
1	Bob Allen	Wizard	188	12
2	Murray Sargisson	Gazelle	82	13
3	Dennis Craig	Winsome	62	21
4	Bob Still	Slipstream	195	22
5	Don Waterer	Flippant	175	23
6	Colin Maddren	Ebbtide Express	253	24

Sunday saw almost identical conditions in the morning. Race 4 got underway after a heavily port biased start to see those with clear air get away. Bob Allen won with Robin Dew and Murray closing in from behind, and another 5 boats finishing within the next 2 minutes or so, testament to the competitiveness of the fleet.

The longed for SW 15 knot breeze arrived bang on time for the final race. A starboard bias at the start led to the inevitable raft of bargers, and Don over the line having been a bit too keen to get the perfect start. The fleet changed gear to deal with the swell, which built rapidly. Bob Allen, Colin, Murray and Don were in a close duel throughout and Dennis hanging in. Finishing order was Bob, Colin, Murray, with good close racing right through the fleet.

It was good to see Mike O'Connell making the journey to represent the Waiuku sailors. Hopefully next year we can coordinate with the Hamilton fleet and get some friendly intercity rivalry going.

Many thanks to Ted Frankham who did a great job as race officer, keeping us racing in the light air and providing challenging courses.

Bob Allen

(Continued from page 1)

A planning committee probably needs to be in place by the start of the 2004 season.

If you glance at the section on trading you will see that there is an increase in the price of cedar hulls. #259 has just been completed by our Auckland builder and awaits a buyer. Stuart Macky of Glendowie Boating Club has just completed his new Zephyr #258 and will be on the water soon to tune it for racing. I am looking forward to meeting up with Stuart and looking over the boat and discussing prospects of establishing a fleet at Glendowie club. It looks as if a new Zephyr can be put on the water for around \$8500.00 which is still reasonable compared with similar designs.

Another topic of interest to me is the name "Zephyr Owners' Association". When non boating people are confronted with the title they invariably question me - have you a Mk 1 or Mk 2. To most people a Zephyr is a car. I would invite your comment.

To end on a positive note, Rob has confirmed that Plimmerton Boating Club have agreed to host the January 2002 national contest. This almost central location means that travelling costs can be kept under control. Thanks Rob for all your effort.

Gary Matthews on Zephyr Hulls

Over the last few weeks I have had a number of conversations with Gary Matthews and Robin Dew of Matthews Boatbuilders over the steadily increasing price of the Zephyr hulls.

A significant component of the cost is the 50 or so hours of labour in each hull, a consequence of the cedar core of the hulls. There is quite a bit of shape in the Zephyr hull, so the cedar strips are under considerable tension. They have a tendency to twist and provide an uneven surface which must be faired before glassing.

The alternative suggested by Gary is to change from cedar as a core and move to a GRP hull. This would be about \$650 cheaper to produce, but would require expenditure of some \$1800 on a mould, probably taken off the recently completed #259. A GRP hull would be maintenance free - other than a polish - and much easier to repair. They would be very similar in total weight and weight distribution to current boats, the only noticeable difference would be no visible keel inside cockpit. Ply decks and timber gunwales and bulkheads would be the same as at present.

GRP construction would require a change to Rule 4.3.2 governing the Hull Shell and any change to the rules would need to be done in accordance with Rule 1.9. Alex and I would be interested in reaction to this proposal to gauge the feeling on support for a rule change allowing GRP construction.

Rob Ebert

(Continued from page 1)

fifty years! By my reckoning it will be in the North Island and it would be good to make it a memorable event. I may publish the owners of past championship winning boats. It would be good to see a few of them, and maybe their original skippers, back on the water again. We need a club willing to host the event, so keep it in the back of your minds.

Mistral Revival

I was at the Waikato Thames Yachting Association Regatta on Lake Ngaroto earlier this year. This regatta attracts entries from around the Waikato and Coromandel. A surprise appearance was a fleet of 8 Mistrals ("two person Zephyrs", also by Des Townson) from Whitianga. The Mercury Bay club has adopted the class so it was good to see them back on the water! They looked great.

Completing a Zephyr

There has been interest in the costs of completing a Zephyr as a guide to prospective owners. A table of costs appears in this issue, based around the Marine Mail Agency catalogue in Christchurch. Remember that it is a guide only, published to help and inform. All care and no responsibility!

Interest from Tauranga

A number of Tauranga skippers have expressed interest in Zephyrs. Three Tauranga sailors visited me at Easter and we looked at the local Zephyrs offered for sale. Subsequently #34 *Pussyfoot* and #88 *Felix* have been sold to Tauranga and there is a strong possibility that #92 *Zonda*, (from Wellington) will end up there too. The interest from Tauranga plus that from Glendowie means that we are a bit short of boats for sale. Please keep your ears attuned for potential sellers. Unfortunately there are a large number of owners who are in the "won't sail, won't sell" category and this limits the growth of the class from time to time.

Hull Construction

A brief article based on conversations with Gary Matthews also appears inside. The cedar hulls are proving expensive to construct prompting some consideration of the alternatives. GRP hulls have been mooted from time to time and I guess it would also be possible (though not necessarily desirable) to revert to the triple skin method of construction.

Annual General Meeting

As you can see, there are a number of issues being pursued by your Association. Let us know what you think about them and arrange to have your views heard at the AGM. We are still working on the arrangements for that, but the plan is for Alex Aitken to travel to Auckland at a date still to be confirmed.

Rob Ebert

CONTACTING THE ZOA

National President

Alex Aitken
2 Shaftesbury Street
Christchurch 4
phone: 03 358 4600
fax: 03 358 4620
email: a-a.aitken@clear.net.nz

National Secretary

Rob Ebert
15 Gilbass Ave
Hamilton
phone: 07 838 9375
fax: 07 838 9376
email: ebertr@wave.co.nz

SUBSCRIPTIONS 2000-2001

Subscriptions for 2001 \$15.00 for the NZZOA, and \$10.00 for local associations in Auckland, Hamilton and Christchurch. If you are an "orphan" outside these areas, the \$15.00 NZZOA sub can be forwarded to Alex Aitken, President, or Rob Ebert, Secretary. Please include your boat name and number, so we can update the Zephyr Register.

We need your support for all sorts of reasons!

Tentative

Preliminary Notice of Race Zephyr National Championships Plimmerton Yacht Club

January 3-6 2002 (Thursday to Sunday)

Plimmerton have agreed in principle to host the event, but we need to firm up the dates and a Race Officer over the coming weeks.

The club has good facilities and the surrounding suburbs have a variety of restaurants to meet our social needs. Aotea Lodge has been suggested as having a range of accommodation for likely holiday budgets.

Annual General Meeting Zephyr Owners' Association Auckland

Mid to late August

Precise date and venue still being decided.
Agenda papers will be circulated in good time.

Canterbury Zephyr Owners' Association AGM and Prizegiving

20th May 2001

Ferrymead Tavern 1099 Ferry Road

1730hrs for Drinks

1800-1900hrs for meeting and prize giving

1900hrs Dinner

Contact

Phil Gurnsey 03 371 7277

Or Russell Wenham

Canterbury Yachting Association 2001 Mander Trust Awards Dinner

Gondola Restaurant

Saturday 14th July 2001

Pre dinner drinks 1830hrs

Dinner and Awards 1930hrs

Bookings to Glen Proko 03 384 2247

**Jim Park (owner of more than one Zephyr!)
will be presented with his Life Membership in
Yachting New Zealand in recognition of his
services to yachting.**