NOT LIPTON'S CUP OF TEA

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Kit Kat Club
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For hundreds of years Britannia had ruled the seas in both its military and merchant fleets. These sea faring traditions and the technologies they spawned produced an equally strong tradition of British yachting which had prospered for at least two centuries. Yachts were owned chiefly by the nobility and wealthy gentry who had formed yachting clubs, the most notable of which was the Royal Yacht Squadron, founded in 1815. The sport of yachting continued to develop in other parts of the world including North America where the well-known New York Yacht Club was founded almost 30 years later in 1844.

These developments were set in the context of major technological changes including the transition from sail to steam as the principle power source for naval and commercial ocean-bound transportation.

The British, with characteristic immodesty, were considered, by themselves as well as by others in the sport of yachting, to be clearly superior to their counterparts throughout the world. However, design and technological changes were about to overtake their supremacy. Indeed, a syndicate was formed by John C. Stevens, commodore of the New York Yacht Club, along with five other club members, including his brother Edwin, with the express intent to design a boat to challenge British supremacy in 1851, the year of the first great World's Fair.

After several exchanges of correspondence between the New York Yacht Club and the Royal Yacht Squadron, the challenge was accepted and an approximate race date for summer, 1851 was set.

The syndicate commissioned William Brown to build a yacht along the lines of the pilot schooners, which were considered the fastest boats in American waters. Their speed was forged of economic necessity since the first pilot boat reaching an incoming ship would win the assignment to guide the ship successfully into port. The syndicate, in its desire to transfer as much risk as possible, found Mr. Brown to be a truly entrepreneurial yacht builder. He agreed that if his boat did not prove to be the fastest in the United States or that if it were unsuccessful in its attempts to beat the English challengers, the syndicate could return the boat to her builder without payment.

The resulting yacht, the now famous "America", was 102 feet long, 22 feet at the beam, with a draft of 11 feet and total sail area of 5,300 square feet. She weighted 170 tons of which 45 tons were inboard ballast and accommodated 15 men. Her radical design included such major design changes as a long, sharp bow with wider sections toward the stern, compared to other ships of the day that had blunt bows tapered steadily to the stern, a design known as "The Cod's Head and Mackerel Tail". Perhaps the major design change was the "America's" use of machined cotton sails versus the British use of baggy flax sails. The machined cotton fabric allowed the sails to be set more tautly, thus providing an extraordinary speed advantage.

A launching date was set for April 1. However, due to various delays, the America was not launched until May 3 and was not ready for trials at sea until May 17, 1851. In her sole test, a

race against another of Commodore Stevens' boats, "Maria", which was reputed to be the fastest boat in the United States, the "America" was soundly beaten. Nonetheless, due to the press of time and the syndicate's enthusiasm and confidence, no further trials were attempted. Various minor modifications were made to her spars and sails and she put to sea June 21 for the long journey to England.

Due to unfortunate weather, the "America" was forced to set anchor some 6 miles away from the Royal Yacht Squadron clubhouse at Cowes. The next morning one of Britain's fastest yachts, the cutter Lavenrock, sailed out ostensibly to escort the "America" to her birth at Cowes. In fact, the Lavenrock's captain had an ulterior motive which was to engage the "America" in a race. Commodore Stevens could have set limited sail allowing the Lavenrock to win. However, this would have been considered unsportsman-like. So Captain Stevens went all-out and won handily. This surprising victory over a worthy opponent, eliminated, for the time being, British yachtsmen's enthusiasm for challenging the upstart Americans. Further, the odds on wagering went so strongly in the American's favor that at such time as a race was finally set the economic support for the challenging syndicate was virtually destroyed.

When Commodore Stevens tried to arrange a match with other British yachts there were no takers. This embarrassing situation was alleviated when the Royal Yacht Squadron announced that a race for all-comers around the Isle of Wight would be held August 22, 1851 for a cup valued at 100 guineas. The odds were indeed stacked against the challengers from America since half the course would be in enclosed waters where local knowledge would be vital. To have to sail under this handicap against a whole feet of yachts was beyond the limit of bad

manners from a host to a guest. However, the "America" turned up at the starting line and anchored, as was the custom in those days. She found 17 British cutters and schooners in the starting line ranging from the 47-ton cutter, Aurora, to the 3-masted schooner, Brilliant, at 392 tons. Thus the "America" was about middle-size in this fleet of the cream of British yachts. When the starting gun sounded, the "America" had some difficulty with its anchor and left the starting line last. By the time she reached the first turn at the Nab Lighthouse, she had passed all but four members of the British fleet which were keeping close together so that the "America" had difficulty in passing, every attempt at which was invariably blocked by the clannish British. This first portion of the race was on a run (with a tailing wind). However, when the yachts turned at Nab for the beat (the wind facing the boats) for St. Catherine's Point, the "America" raced to the front and proceeded to victory nearly eight miles ahead of its nearest competitor.

Queen Victoria's interest in the race had led her to be present at the finishing line on the royal yacht. As soon as the "America" had crossed the line, her Majesty asked who would be second. The curt reply from the Royal Yacht's captain was "Your Majesty there is no second." Thus, the 100-guinea cup went to America and although English yachtsmen asked their guests to remain while a challenging yacht was built, the wagers offered for the race were too small to make a prolonged stay by the Americans acceptable.

Score: USA - 1

Great Britain - 0

And so the fabled history of one of sports most coveted and successfully defended trophies begins. The ugly and, more or less, useless cup (it had no bottom therefore it could not be drunk from) was returned to the United States and remained in the custody of Commodore Stevens at his home in Washington, D.C. In 1857 he and the remaining four members of the original syndicate deeded the cup to the New York Yacht Club to be held as a permanent challenge cup at the international level. Conditions of the Deed of Trust were as follows:

1. Any organized yacht club of any foreign country could challenge for the cup.

2. Challenge matches would be in the host country's waters. If a course of mutual consent could not be agreed upon, then the course would be the usual course of the annual regatta of the defending club.

3. Yachts must weigh between 30 tons and 300 tons.

4. Six months notice in writing must be given along with the proposed match's starting date.

5. The cup would be the property of the club and not the member or members of the club.

6. The challenging boat must sail to the defender's waters on her own bottom.

Seventeen years lapsed before a single challenge was issued and accepted which resulted in a thirty five mile race on the New York Yacht Club's regatta course against the club's entire fleet which, like the original challenge issued by the "America" in 1851, provided an enormous advantage to the defending club. This fleet race, combined with the fact that the challenger was obliged to sail across the Atlantic on her own bottom created an almost insurmountable double challenge for the British. Further, a yacht of sufficient size and durability to suffer an Atlantic crossing was generally considered to be slower and less efficient than a shallow or center board yacht that could skim along the water rather than through it.

Mr. James Ashbury, on behalf of the Royal Yacht Squadron, challenged for a race to be held in Summer 1870. In the two years that he lapsed between issuing the challenge and the planned race date, Mr. Ashbury carried on a lengthy correspondence with the New York Yacht Club. He made numerous proposals, the majority of which were not allowed within the terms of the original Deed of Gift. Finally the Americans gave Mr. Ashbury the option of sailing for the America's Cup in one race over the club's regular regatta course, a distance of 38 miles, but against the club's entire fleet. Mr. Ashbury reluctantly accepted the challenge and commenced practicing for the race to be held August 8, 1870. Twenty-three boats appeared at the starting line to sail against Mr. Ashbury. Public interest was immense with Wall Street and Broad Street finance houses closed and thousands of people flocked to the harbor to witness the start.

The British challenger finished the race in tenth place after suffering the loss of its top masts due to setting too much sail on the second leg of the race. Interestingly, the "America",

winner of the 1851 race, finished in fourth place. Mr. Ashbury, a gracious loser, was liberally entertained and all parties agreed that henceforth the "America's" Cup race should be a match style race between two boats, one from the defending country and one from the challenging country.

Mr. Ashbury challenged again the following year. After being defeated in two separate matches he returned to England amidst substantial misunderstanding and incivility which engendered considerable ill will between the two countries but resulted in establishing fairer rules and better contests in the future.

Score: USA - 3

Great Britain - 0

The next British challenge would come fourteen years later. In the meantime the Canadians provided challenges through the Royal Canadian Yacht Club in 1876 and in 1881. In the 1876 race, the now 30 year old "America" sailed over the course, although not officially in the contest, and beat the challenger by 19 minutes and 9 seconds. This was the first race in which the start was not made from anchor. This challenge also marked the end of two-masted schooners in America's cup racing.

In the second Canadian challenge, the boat's skipper brought his craft through the Erie Canal instead of sailing it up the St. Lawrence River, thus violating the original Deed of Gift condition requiring that challengers arrive at the defender's waters on their own bottoms. Yachtsmen

from all over the world felt that the spirit of the America's Cup had been violated by the Canadians towing the challenger by mule through the Erie Canal.

The 1881 American vessel was the first iron vessel to participate in the America's Cup challenge series and the first to be built according to scientific designs instead of wooden models which had previously been used to provide lines for the hulls.

Score: USA - 5

Challenger - 0

Prior to the next British challenge Mr. George Schuyler, the sole remaining member of the original 1851 syndicate, was requested by the New York Yacht Club to draw-up a new set of rules. The revised Deed of Gift contained match rules consistent with those described above with one additional clause which incensed the Canadians, namely that if their clubs challenged again for the cup the challenging Canadian club must be situated on the Canadian seaboard, i.e. not in Great Lakes ports.

The next British challenge came from Sir Richard Sutton whose boat, the Genesta, was referred to as "the plank on edge" because of her narrow beam, extreme length and massive keel. When she was accidentally rammed by the American's boat, The Puritan, Sir Richard was informed by the race committee that if he merely sailed over the course at any speed the race would be awarded to him. However, in the true style of yachting sportsmanship he

declared that he came to New York for a race, not a leisurely sail and announced that he would, after suitable repairs, be prepared to race the Americans. His copper-clad Genesta put up a good match, loosing the second 40 mile race by less than one minute and forty seconds.

Another insignificant British challenge was mounted two years later in 1885. Next the Scottish Royal Clyde Yacht Club raced in 1887 and was soundly defeated.

Score: USA - 8

Challenger - 0

The British returned five years later in 1893 with a boat by G.L. Watson, designer of the royal yacht, "Britannia". The defender won all three races with victories ranging from 40 seconds to 10 minutes.

Boats by the same designers, challengers, and defenders again raced in 1895 with the significant technological innovation coming from the Americans in the form of magnesium, bronze and aluminum plating both above and below the water line, resulting in an extremely light craft.

The 1895 race was shrouded in controversy. The American's boat, financed entirely by William K. Vanderbilt, should have been the talk of the race due to Herreshoff's seminal design. However, poor sportsmanship on the part of the British captain, Lord Dunraven, overshadowed

Herreshoff's magnificent accomplishments. After loosing the first of three races in the standard international yachting match format he accused the Americans of carrying more ballast than allowed which was refuted upon post race measurement. He also claimed that his yacht had been hampered by the spectator fleet. During the second race with just seconds to go before the official start, the British boat's main boom swung across the deck of the American boat and snapped her starboard shroud. Nonetheless, the race continued with the British winning by only 47 seconds despite the American's use of temporary rigs and sails. However, due to the foul at the beginning of the race the British were disqualified. At the beginning of the third race which was held two days later the British crossed the starting line and immediately recrossed it and returned to harbor in protest. The Americans sailed alone over the course and were declared the winner.

The poor sportsmanship and lack of competition resulted in the Americas cup and all it meant to international yacht racing and sportsmanship, sinking to its lowest ebb. The headline in the New York Herald's Monday, November 11, 1895 edition denounced Lord Dunraven. He was called a "pettifogging sea lawyer who should be horsewhipped" and "an incorrigible sore-head." The New York Yacht Club appointed a committee composed of J. Pierpont Morgan, William C. Whitney and four others to review the charges. The committee found that Dunraven's allegations were baseless and completely exonerated the defenders.

Score: USA - 10

Challenger - 0

If the America's cup were to be revised and its purpose, as stated in the two Deeds of Gift brought to fruition, someone had to come forward whose ideals in sportsmanship fitted the situation. Luckily in the late summer of 1895 the Royal Ulster Yacht Club of Belfast, Northern Ireland challenged, on behalf of one of its members, tea merchant Thomas Lipton. The races, providing for the best three out of five, were scheduled for October 1899. Thus began Sir Thomas' 30 year crusade to wrest the cup from the clutches of the upstart Americans. From 1899 through 1930 he brought six different Shamrocks (all of his racing yachts had the same name) to the United States. Over the 30 year period of his effort to capture the cup, Sir Thomas' yachts campaigned in twenty five starts and fifteen completed races, never winning a challenge but refusing to give up until after the 1930 race when Sir Thomas was 82 years old. Some of the matches were very close and he once came within seconds of victory.

Immediately following the acceptance of Lipton's first challenge for the 1899 race, J. Pierpont Morgan commissioned Mr. Herreshoff to design and build the Columbia. Both boats were the first in America's Cup racing history to be fitted with steel masts. The first of Lipton's challenges was also significant in that the defender and the challenger built racing machines designed solely for the purposes of America's Cup races. Measurement rules were closely studied and everything possible was done to take the slightest advantage of any loophole. The extreme designs of the single purpose racing machines resulted in such great expense that very few individuals were able to finance a challenge or build a defender. Thus the contest in 1899 set a pattern which was to run for the next half century in that only one nation, Great Britain, continued to challenge.

The first Shamrock crossed the Atlantic by way of the Azores uneventfully except for the necessity of being towed 1,300 miles due to a dead Atlantic calm. Taking advantage of the steel mast innovation, each ship set almost 14 thousand square feet of sail, counterbalanced by extremely heavy keels in the range of 80-90 tons. The lines and profiles of the two boats were quite similar and the race was anticipated with great excitement on both sides of the Atlantic. In order to assure an uncluttered race course, an amendment to the navigation laws of the United States was passed by Congress in 1896 providing for revenue cutters to patrol the America's Cup racing area insuring an open seaway from start to finish. There would be no repetition of the crowding that Lord Dunraven had complained so strongly of 5 years earlier. The first race was scheduled for September 21 but the two boats did not meet until the 26th due to delays caused by the assassination of President William McKinley.

The Shamrock was defeated in all three races of the 1899 match. However, British Isle sailors were highly encouraged by its competitiveness in its first challenge and felt they could do better and probably win. Sir Thomas Lipton was in agreement. He issued a challenge in late 1900 for a race in 1901. That second Shamrock race brought about the closest ever match to date.

Sir Thomas retained the services of G.L. Watson, mentioned earlier as the designer of the royal yacht, Britannia, who had also built the Scottish challengers. Watson added to his design reputation by conducting the first tank tests on experimental model yachts. Herreshoff was retained by the American syndicate but his new design was beaten by his boat, the

Columbia, victor of the 1899 race, so Shamrock II sailed against the same defender as in the 1899 race.

The challenger differed little from Shamrock I except that she carried even more sail, approximately 14,500 square feet. The races were staggeringly close. In the first, Columbia won by 1 minute and 20 seconds, in the second by 3 minutes and 35 seconds, and in the third by 41 seconds. The third and final race was fantastic. The course was the usual 15 miles out and back, the return trip being the beat (racing directly into the wind). As the yachts came toward the finishing line they were almost along side each other and amidst wild excitement the Shamrock crossed 2 seconds ahead of Americans but had to allow 43 seconds adjusted time based on the respective boat's lengths, length at waterline, beam, draft and weight. This finish was the closest in the history of the cup. Indeed, after 90 miles of sailing, and this does not count the distances traveled when tacking, the Americans beat Shamrock II by a total of 3 minutes and 27 seconds actual sailing time.

Disappointed though he was, Sir Thomas Lipton vowed to keep his racing flag aloft until he won. He offered an immediate challenge for the next year which was rejected according to the terms of the cup's Deed of Gift calling for a two year waiting period for any challenger. Sir Thomas, ever the cheerful loser, bided his time and, with no other contenders in sight, his challenge was finally excepted for 1903.

In 1903 Sir Thomas Lipton's third Shamrock raced against the greatest mass of canvass ever spread on a single masted yacht. Herreshoff's design, commissioned by a syndicate headed

by Cornelius Vanderbilt, carried 16,100 square feet of sail, almost 10 times that of a modern 12-meter yacht. The defender's towering size, whose extremes and dimension would never again be duplicated, overshadowed Herreshoff's innovations designed to handle her. The mechanical fittings he had put into the defender were unusually efficient. His winches were used in cup defenders as much as 30 years later. Sir Thomas' misfortune continued to the extent that after loosing the first two races of the match, Shamrock III became lost in a dense fog that rolled in from the east, missed a turning point on the race course and headed out to sea and did not show up until 30 minutes after Reliance had won the race.

Score: USA - 13

Others - 0

Sir Thomas, although dispirited by defeat in three attempts to win the cup, promised to try again. Little did he know that World War I would cause a 17 year lapse before he would race in his fourth attempt. The intervening years were to bring a change in the measurement rules which, while allowing free design, would restrict sail area and depth of keel and contribute substantially to the evolution of design.

In 1913, Sir Thomas sent a challenge through the Royal Ulster Yacht Club and requested that the New York Yacht Club name a yacht of no more than 75 feet, waterline length, to defend the cup. This condition could not be accepted because the Deed of Gift still stipulated that the challenge must be unconditional. Lipton considered this for some time and finally sent an

unconditional challenge. The New York Yacht Club immediately accepted this and replied, saying that the defender would be a 75 feet waterline length boat. Thus, the terms of the Deed of Gift were upheld and Sir Thomas' wish was met in the gentlemanly and sportsmanlike fashion of international yacht racing.

The "universal measurement rule" had been adopted by the New York Yacht Club and provided for restrictions and penalties against excess sail area in relation to waterline displacement. It placed a greater premium than before on the design of sturdy, fast, habitable boats capable of sailing safely around the world and contributing to the advance of international yacht racing. Sir Thomas' Shamrock IV was the most successful of all the Shamrocks. Her many innovations included webbed frames and laminate wood construction, as well as many refined mechanical improvements. These unusual features, however, did not prevent her from being referred to at "the ugliest challenger ever built", looking more like a canoe with 10,000 square feet of sail area than her sleek competitors. The American defender, again, was designed by Herreshoff for a 5-man syndicate, including J.P. Morgan and Cornelius Vanderbilt.

During the final four trial races to select the American defender, and while Shamrock IV was in route across the Atlantic, Archduke Ferndinand was assassinated and Austria-Hungry declared war on Serbia, Germany on Russia and France, and Great Britain on Germany. Shamrock IV was shepherded into Bermuda by Sir Thomas' steam yacht. The America's cup matches were postponed and Shamrock IV was taken to Brooklyn, where she remained in storage during the war.

In 1920 after the conclusion of World War I, Sir Thomas renewed his challenge with his fourth Shamrock. Basic terms were quickly agreed upon, with the exception that the New York Yacht Club had suggested a course off Newport, Rhode Island because of better winds in that location and the difficulty of the massive spectator fleet to transport itself from New York to Newport. Sir Thomas, admittedly a bit of a showman, disagreed and so the Americans settled for the old course off the Sandy Hook light vessel. The same two yachts that would have sailed in the Summer of 1914 were pitted against each other to begin the post-war matches.

Shamrock IV won the first two races of the best of five match. The third, and possibly deciding race for Lipton's quest of the holy grail of yachting, resulted in a dead heat after 34 miles with elapsed times of 4 hours, 3 minutes and 6 seconds. However, the Americans were awarded the victory on corrected time. To Sir Thomas' obvious disappoint, the next two races went to the American's with the defender crossing the finish line 4 minutes and 13 minutes respectively ahead of the challenger. This was the first time a challenger ever won a race although not the match. The competition was improving.

Thus, the cup stayed in America and the yachting world awaited the next challenge, in some doubt as to if and when another challenge would be issued. It might have been supposed that Sir Thomas Lipton, now getting along in years, would have abandoned all further attempts to win the elusive race. Nonetheless, in November of 1929 a fifth challenge came from the Royal Ulster Yacht Club on behalf of Sir Thomas Lipton. This best of seven series was won handily by the Americans in four consecutive races which took place off Newport, Rhode

Island to avoid the large crowds at the New York course and to take advantage of more steady and reliable winds.

Sir Thomas had been unsuccessful in his 3-decade attempt to "lift the old mug" from the New York Yacht Club. He had, however, lifted the greatest yachting competition to the heights which the original donors had hoped to achieve. Clearly, the America's Cup was not Lipton's cup of tea.

Score: USA - 15

Others - 0

The torch passed to a new generation of British challengers, beginning with the 1934 race headed by Sir Thomas Sopwith. He had every qualification for undertaking a challenge. His aircraft firm and its famous camel of World War I had taught him much in the field of light metals. He had done well sailing 12-meter yachts in the late '20's and had bought Sir Thomas' Shamrock V. There was additional special interest in the Sopwith challenge because he was to be the first owner/skipper contesting for the cup.

The Sopwith series was noted for its revolution in sail design. Genoa jib sails replaced jib top sails. Unfortunately for Sopwith, the revolutionary sail design was spotted by American spies while he was testing in European waters and was copied by the Americans in time to supply the new sails to the defender, thus, greatly helping the Americans defend the cup. One further problem hounded Sopwith prior to the commencement of the race in that his

experienced crew went on strike for higher wages. Sopwith informed them they could come to America on the original and agreed upon terms or not at all. About 2/3 opted to stay home, requiring Sopwith to recruit an additional 20 yachtsmen in a brief 3-day period to complete his 31-crew compliment. Sopwith won the first two races of the best of seven match and lost the third race due to a last minute tactical error within a few hundred yards of the finish line. He lost the fourth and fifth races, each of 30 miles, by approximately 1 minute each.

In spite of all the disappointment, the good-hearted and magnanimous owner/skipper, Thomas Sopwith, left the United States with a promise to return one day. True to his word, Sopwith challenged for races to be held in 1937. Unfortunately for him he was pitted against the Americans, Ranger, which was the fastest J-class yacht ever built due to several sail innovations and outstanding hull design. In this match Sopwith's yacht was beaten by times not seen in the prior half century of the America's Cup challenge matches.

Score: USA - 17

Others - 0

If the first World War reduced the potential challengers in big yachts for the America's cup to a handful of dedicated yachtsmen, the second World War eliminated them altogether. Consequently, 20 years went by before the next challenge was made, again, by the Royal Yacht Squadron. For the first time, however, the British formed a syndicate since no single yacht club member could afford the escalating cost of the challenge.

By the Deed of Gift the yachts had to have a minimum waterline of 65 feet. Both Americans and Englishmen were determined to find a solution to this expensive dilemma and finally agreed that the New York Yacht Club should take the matter to court. They requested a ruling to reduce the waterline length of yachts to 45 feet. This could only be a court decision because the last of the original custodians of the Deed of Gift had died and therefore it was no longer possible to return the cup and ask for a new deed to suit modern financial exigencies. The court found in favor of the 45 foot waterline length and the stage was set for the reopening of the America's Cup competition. The standard 12-meter yacht was the one which best answered the new length and the remaining existing conditions more nearly than any other. Although the 12-meter could perfectly well cross the Atlantic on its own bottom, this condition was waived by mutual consent. Compared to its predecessors, the 45 foot 12-meter boats were indeed diminutive. Their sail area was about 1,900 square feet which was like a handkerchief in relation to the 16,000 square feet carried by turn of the century boats.

The British challenger was beaten badly in four consecutive races leaving much questioning among its British syndicate members regarding the original design competition, tank testing, and hull construction. In spite of all the disappointment, the British received a roaring reception at the finish line along with a signal sent by the New York Yacht Club's Commodore in which he quoted a signal from British naval history. It was sent by St. Vincent to Nelson, after Nelson had failed to capture Teneriffe "To mortals it is not given to command success, but you and your gallant companions have done more. You have deserved success."

Now it was Australia's turn. In 1960, the Royal Sidney Yacht Squadron challenged for a match to be held in 1962. New 12-meter boats were designed by both challenger and defender and the first race took place on September 15. President John F. Kennedy was there on a destroyer, together with the largest ever spectator fleet augmented by aircraft overhead and a large force of coast guard cutters clearing the course. The Australian challenger prevailed in the first of the five races and lost the remaining four.

The 1964 and '67 challenges from England were disasters for the British. They set the wrong kind of record by loosing one of the four races by over 20 minutes, the worst drubbing in America's Cup history since 1886. The 1967 race was equally lackluster for the challengers.

The 1970 race marked the hundredth anniversary of America's Cup competition. England, Australia, and, for the first time, France, challenged. When the English challenger was unable to raise sufficient capital, the face-off for the honor of challenging the Americans fell to Australia and France.

This time the French challenger, Baron Bich, enlivened the contest with his unusual approach to the sport. It appears he had been looking for some challenge to enrich his life, not with money making in mind since he had all he needed through his Bic ballpoint pens, but to spend his money on some great achievement. He settled on the America's Cup and began to design and build his 12-meter boat in great secrecy. For two years his fleet of four 12-meter yachts raced in the Mediterranean and then he set about building his challenger 3,000 feet up in the French Alps, not far from the Swiss border.

Upon his arrival in Newport, he literally spread himself across the harbor at the most expansive moorings accommodating his 70 foot ex-RAF air/sea rescue launch, two 30 foot fiberglass tenders and three 12 meter yachts. Ashore, he took over a mansion called the Miramar, normally a girl's school, in order to house his wife, 9 children, 33 yachtsmen, 5 carpenters and sail makers, 4 technicians, 2 clerks, 2 divers, a house manager, a masseuse, 2 pastry cooks and a Cordon Bleu chef. By way of explanation upon his arrival, he said this entourage was indicative of the fact that winning the cup was a long-term scheme and he was here for the long run. He was determined to succeed where British, Australians, Irish and Canadians had all failed. If he lost this time he intended to come back time and time again.

During the challenge heats, the volatile French owner fired, rehired, fired and rehired his first captain, changed various crew members as often as modern baseball managers change pitchers, and ultimately lost the challenger series in four straight races.

The Australians were victorious against Bich in the challenge match and faced the defenders beginning September 15, 1970. After four of the five races the Australians and Americans had each won two races on their times. However, the Australians were disqualified in their victory in the second race, which was the first disqualification since the Earl of Dunraven in 1895.

The Americans won two of the three remaining races for a 4-1 race victory margin, despite the fact that the Australian boat was generally conceded to be the fastest 12-meter boat

afloat. American defensive tactics in every aspect of the sport were so good that their superior helmsmanship carried the day.

After the second race of this hundred year anniversary match, the apocryphal tale is told that Bus Mosbacher, the world renowned American helmsman, stood gazing at the America's Cup in its special place atop a plinth in the New York Yacht Club. He turned to the yacht club's president and asked "What do you think we will put in its place if we ever lose?" The answer was short and to the point, "The skull of the guy who lost it."

Score: USA - 22

Other - 0

EPILOGUE

Australians challenged again in 1974, 1977 and 1980 with little success. However, in the 25th match of the America's Cup held in 1983, Australia II defeated The Liberty, captained by the famous helmsman, Dennis Connor. While the Australia II was by far the faster boat, Connor's superior sailing skills kept the Australia II from winning the first two races. However, experts agree, he made several uncharacteristic errors in the last three races after being ahead 3 races to 1 and needing but one more victory to keep the cup. In each of these races The Liberty was ahead and was unable to hold the lead due to abandoning normal match race tactics.

Succeeding races have brought both yacht owners and captains to court in contention over interpretation of the complicated 12-meter formula, proving that even the gentlemen of the yachting world have succumbed to the litigious nature of modern society.

Score: USA - 25

Others - 1

On a concluding and personal note, I had the great pleasure of crewing a 12-meter Canadian yacht off St. Maartin in the Virgin Islands with Ron Pizzuti and 10 other land lubbers selected more or less at random from a willing contingent of crew participants. After a suitable or unsuitable training period, we engaged in a 6 mile race with another 12-meter Canadian yacht. This experience was the highlight of a delightful four day cruise and the inspiration for this evening's paper.