

## OFF SOUNDINGS CLUB

February 15, 1991

### COMMODORE'S WINTER NEWSLETTER

Our days are a little longer now and even with a winter that has been very mild, thoughts around our house have already turned to Spring and to the sailing season. With the latter in mind it's my traditional responsibility to bring our members up to date on what's been happening and what's ahead for the Club.

**BOARD OF GOVERNORS;** One of the most far reaching and long overdue area for modernization of our club is the rule that members "be automatically dropped from the rolls" upon buying a motorboat - unless he also owns a sailboat which he regularly races. Our records show at least 49 members have resigned for this reason, and probably others have without mentioning exactly why. One of the most obvious faults of this rule is that it forced men from the club who were long time members and for, who for a variety of reasons, decided to buy a power boat. Some of our members found that they were no longer able to move about a sailboat because of physical limitations - age and fitness should not be a criteria for membership! Some said they found as their children got older, the quest for crew got to be too much, and some elected for power to appease other members of the family....., etc.

Whatever the reasons, these resignations first of all and most importantly, represent a loss of these friends to our club; and, frankly in a era of declining members, a severe loss of revenue. These members probably were no longer actively racing their own boats so their dues helped to offset our race expenses - the part of our budget which is not self supporting! Not only have we lost these good members who are still enthusiastic and supportive of the club but we have lost a potential pool of motor boat owners who might be willing to volunteer their services to our Race Committee. Who better knows what's happening on our race course and who understands our format better than our own members....

So, the board has unanimously voted to recommend at the annual meeting that members after 15 years may own a power boat without also owning a sailboat which he must race regularly. Flag officers would be ineligible for office upon such a purchase. These proposed changes to our constitution, along with the recommendation that prior members who have resigned under the old rule may apply for reinstatement, will be mailed to all members prior to the April meeting.

Another item of importance to come before our membership for vote in April is the election of two outstanding members to honorary status. These two gentlemen who have received the unanimous recommendation of the Board of Governors are Roderick Stephens, Jr. and Edgar L. Raymond, Jr.

Rod Stephens has been a member since the early days of our club. He joined in 1940 and served as a flag officer from 1951 until elected commodore in 1956. Known behind his back as the "Great God Rod", he has always been able to do just anything that had to do with sailing. Beginning with his talent of attracting a great number of good friends who to this day hold him in great awe and respect, he is the kind of person everyone would like to have around when the going gets tough. Along with his ability to go aloft hand-over-hand, friends recall his fighting a fire on a boat anchored nearby -without the occupants even knowing he was aboard! They tell of the time in Dering Harbor when a raft of several boats started to drag as the wind blew up: and, Rod noticing the developing problem, jumped into a dinghy and while a shore based trumpeter played "To The Rescue", he stabilized the situation to the relief of the owners and the cheers of our watching members. A few years ago a British entry in the Fastnet Race was scouting around for someone with good local knowledge.....and selected Rod...an event he won aboard Dorade back in 1931! In 1933 Dorade won the Fastnet again along with the Trans-Atlantic Race and the same year Rod was awarded the Cruising Club of America's Blue Water award. He continued to be a part of racing history as a part of the J Boat Ranger, defending the America's Cup and the following year found him aboard the 12 meter Vim. Rod's boat Mustang had a successful racing and cruising career high-lighted when she won her class in the 1952 Bermuda Race. Rod's contributions to our club and to our sport are legendary .....it's fitting that we honor him!

Ed Raymond's achievements and contributions to our club are well documented. After joining our club in 1945, Ed became a flag officer in 1960 and was elected commodore in 1963. He was active on the Board of Governors for many years and, until he resigned his post this fall was the respected chairman of our protest committee. Throughout 60 years of cruising and racing, Ed has always exemplified the true meaning of sportsmanship. He has always displayed a humble regard for his successes; and has insisted that, while winning is important, it is more important to win fairly and to observe both the racing rules and the rules of good conduct. As Chairman of our protest committee he has been known to chide our more over zealous members from the podium if he felt they weren't observing the spirit of the rules. Sailing since the early 20's, Ed acquired his now famous "Chantyman" in 1935 and together they have won over 200 trophies.

Some of Ed's races include;

- 25 consecutive Stamford-Vineyard Races
  - 1948 - Winner in smallest boat in history
- 24 consecutive S.O.R.C. series
- 11 wins - Riverside\Stratford Shoal Race
- 4 Buenos Aires-Rio Races
- 10 Marblehead-Halifax Races
- 12 Bermuda Races
- 6 Chesapeake Races

and then several Fastnets, Nassau Cups, Havana, Baltic, Florida to Jamaica, and Chicago-Mackinac's

Ed has won so many of our races that he is one of only three persons in our history who have the distinction of reaching our maximum handicap of 35%. Throughout all these accomplishments he has always shown that sportsmanship is the most important ingredient of any worthwhile endeavor. The Board is pleased to recommend Ed to the membership for this coveted recognition.

OTHER ITEMS; This spring we have invited the Marion to Bermuda race fleet to join us racing to Block Island. Their start to Bermuda is the following week so it was decided to revive this old tradition which was started many years ago. We hope to have up to a dozen boats accept.

To honor and to express our thanks to the Mystic Seaport for serving as our home ashore we have invited the schooner Brilliant to join our race series for 1991. She'll be in A-1 so watch for her distinctive rig which was such a common sight in our fleet in the early years.

Speaking of our race series - we have formed a Long Range Race Planning Committee composed of four members from our general membership plus the related committee chairmen to take a look at our complete race format. Nothing is being considered sacred to this group and I'm sure we'll see some interesting changes to enhance our racing - perhaps as early as our Spring Series!

Guest invitations for our 1991 race series closes on March 20th so get you friends names into the race secretary soon. Remember that our O.S.C. certificate is required to race, but it is easy to get if he has his P.H.R.F.

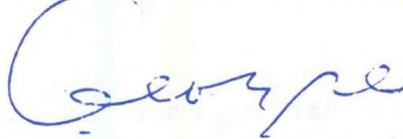
I'm sorry to report the loss of Bill Donovan who passed away February 4th. Bill will be long remembered as one of our most winning skippers - having successfully campaigned a succession of boats named "Not by Bread Alone". The name alone is a fitting epitaph to Bill and the sport which he loved so much.

Our revised dues structure plus some excellent budget management by our committee chairmen has resulted in a great improvement in the club's finances - all without changing any of the magic that makes this club what it is. Speaking of dues, we have a policy of waiving dues for those men on active duty with our military. We understand there are several members who have been activated. Jack Haugh is the only one who has come to our attention, so please let us know of others. Obviously we wish all of them our very best.

Good news from the Dyer Dhow Derby - the O.S.C. team won! This means we took second place and will not have to host the event next year.....

Mark your calendars for April 6th - come hear the venerable Rock of Ages band, toast the new sailing season with old friends, enjoy some excellent flicks contributed by the Seaport, and best of all, congratulate those folks taking all those beautiful trophies home!

Best Wishes for 1991

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "George". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "G".

George Hohenstein