

Copy to W. Maxwell



Matthew Bender

Matthew Bender
& Company, Inc.
11 Penn Plaza
New York, NY 10001
212-967-7707

December 18, 1995

Mr. Richard H. Roberts
Race Secretary, Off Soundings Club
60 Dart Street
New London, Connecticut 06320

Re: 1995 Fall Series

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I am writing to you to express some concerns shared by myself and many of my fellow participants in the 1995 Fall Series. Let me elaborate.

I have been crewing on Off Soundings for the past fourteen years in Class B on WINDRIDER, my father's boat, and I have served as Guest Master on the same (Spring 1986). Before and since that time, I have participated in numerous one-design races (Brown University Yacht Club [Lasers, 420s]; Niantic Bay Yacht Club [Atlantics]; Cold Spring Harbor Beach Club [Atlantics]; Centerport Yacht Club [Ensigns, Stars, Penguins]. I am a member at Centerport where I have participated in Race Committee course meetings. My concerns lie with the direction I feel the courses going as evinced by the second day of this past series.

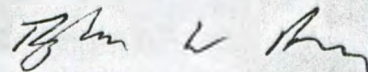
The lion's share of participants in Off Soundings share a similar background with myself, in that many participate in one-design racing at the club level, and as such are more than familiar with the Olympic-style course such as those raced on Saturday. However, this is not what the term "Off Soundings," or the traditions of the racing, have brought to mind. For one, most boats are cruising boats, designed for a more distanced course. Secondly, serious questions are raised as to the effects upon the rating system that a course with seven or eight tacks and sets, as opposed to three or four, will ultimately have. Those boats with lighter displacement, more sets of sails and with larger crews are clearly in a more advantageous position.

I do not seek to put into question my Corinthian spirit; the course outlaid will be the course we will follow. However, the chatter amongst those of us before the mast was that, should the shorter Olympic course become the rage, cruising canvas was becoming much more appealing. As the two cruising classes have burgeoned while others have waned, I do not think it is in the best interests of Off Soundings to exacerbate this already deepening trend.

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Whatever the result, we will see you in the spring. A happy and healthy new year to you and yours.

Fair Winds and Following Seas,



Douglas Brown, Esq.
Able Bodied Seaman

cc: Russell W. Brown, Master, WINDRIDER
William G. Gunther Commodore, OSC