

## BAG PIPE HISTORY

The first issue of "The Bagpipe" appeared in September of 1946. It was mimeographed on 8½ X 11½ sheets with a printed heading, in plaid letters. It contained two pages, announcing the forthcoming first annual Thistle Class National Championship Series at Toledo, consisting of three races with an open field, to be sailed September 14 and 15. "Sandy Douglass took off a little time from building Thistles and had himself a clean sweep at the Bay" in the Inter-Lake Regatta. Thistles also participated that season in the South Shore, ~~Rhine~~ Sandusky and Cleveland Yacht Club Regattas, and the Toledo Frostbite Sweepstakes.

The second issue announced that Sandy Douglass won the Carron Perpetual Trophy as the first TCA National Champion. There were nineteen entries in the series. "The Course, a three-mile triangular affair, was sailed twice around, with one mark of the starting line being the turning point. Saturday evening a banquet and dance was held in the Toledo Yacht Club ballroom and fifty-four honest-to-goodness Thistlers were on hand. A swell time was had by all . . . ." The Annual Election of officers was held with 25 present and C. B. Seifert was elected President, succeeding John Bohannon. "A long and heated discussion was held on the use of battens in the jib and the use of Nylon sail-cloth for working sails. . . The motion was referred to the Executive Committee. Their decision . . . is forthcoming on October 15, and all members will be informed."

The November, 1946 headline was: "Thistle Class Association Adopts Use of Nylon Cloth." "It would appear the Nylon Sails are "The thing", but, if not, they are at least superior to the type of cotton cloth now available."

Sections of the By-Laws were printed. Dues of active owners were \$3 and co-owners paid \$1. Unattached and Associate Members paid . . . "one-half of Active dues but not less than one dollar in any case."

In December, 1946, the headline announced that colored movies would be shown of the 1946 Nationals at the Winter meeting in Cleveland, scheduled

for January 25, 1947. The dinner cost \$3.25.

The January, 1947 issue was the first three-pager. The Sandusky fleet had grown to six boats; Detroit and Toledo both had five members. Detroit organized and requested a fleet charter. ~~Meanwhile, the Vermilion group was preparing for the 1947 Nationals.~~

February, 1947 found the Cleveland Fleet organizing at Rocky River. Ten members either had boats or planned to own them by Spring. John Lovett (Sr.) put his Thistle #3 in the waters of Lake Erie Sunday, January 19, 1947. Ken Glor and he reported a cool, but delightful sail. Seven members of the Watkins Lake Yacht Club, Pontiac, Michigan, had placed orders for Thistles to be delivered in the Spring.

At the Cleveland meeting, it was decided to hold the second annual TCA Championship races in Cleveland in August/September.

March was another three-pager. 68 members/<sup>had</sup>attended the second annual winter meeting at Cleveland. Nine fleets were represented and the treasury contained \$216.12. The third page of that issue contained By-Laws and Constitution revisions including:

"Thistles may not have permanent decking intended or designed to shed water. Detachable canvass (sic.) spray hoods, extending from the bow to the mast and main shrouds, may be used, but must be made with an opening running from the bow to the mast to permit stowing the jib inside the boat."

The April, 1948 issue announced that the Labor Day week-end had been selected for that year's National Championship. One of the features which was mentioned was a ". . . dandy swimming pool". The Edgewater Fleet of four boats was formed. It was noted that there are now three boats in Los Angeles and five in the New York City area.

The Leatherlips Fleet was building up in May, 1947. They had two #24 and #25, boats/and were looking for a third. The issue closed with:

THISTLE SKIPPER: "Say, Doc, do ya' think I'm liable to strain myself stepping and unstepping that mast all the time?"

SAWBONES: "Son, the worst you can get is rigger mortis!"

June-July was a combined issue heralding the forthcoming Second Annual National Championship. The Cleveland Hotel was recommended for housing at \$6 for a double room. "Dances, Splash Parties, Picnics and Song Fests are scheduled." The Executive Committee located five districts: Long Island Sound, Western Lake Michigan, Eastern Michigan, South Shore Lake Erie and Southern California. Boat numbers had progressed into the 140s.

The August, 1947 issue announced 29 entries already received for the Second Nationals. Nineteen Thistles sailed in the 54th Annual Inter-Lake Regatta at Put-in-Bay in early August, including a plaid boat owned by Ray McLeod. Jack Caldwell (father of Jack #3475) finished third in #12 in the first race. He also won the third race to finish second in the series. "Most every boat in the fleet used inboard rigs to trim their jibsheets and it does seem to let the Thistle point a little higher. Nylon sails were almost universal and so were Nylon spinnakers."

On July 26-7, there were 22 boats participating in the Cleveland Lakefront Regatta. Sandy wrote an article including:

"Thistle would be light and graceful - how she would slip along in the lightest airs leaving hardly a ripple on the water, sailing right through the entire fleet."

Bon E. Bagpipe