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## **The history of the Neenah-Nodaway Yacht Club of Neenah, Wisconsin: an account of yacht racing on Lake Winnebago from 1859 to 1957. 1957**

Kimberly, James C.

Neenah, Wisconsin: [Privately published], 1957

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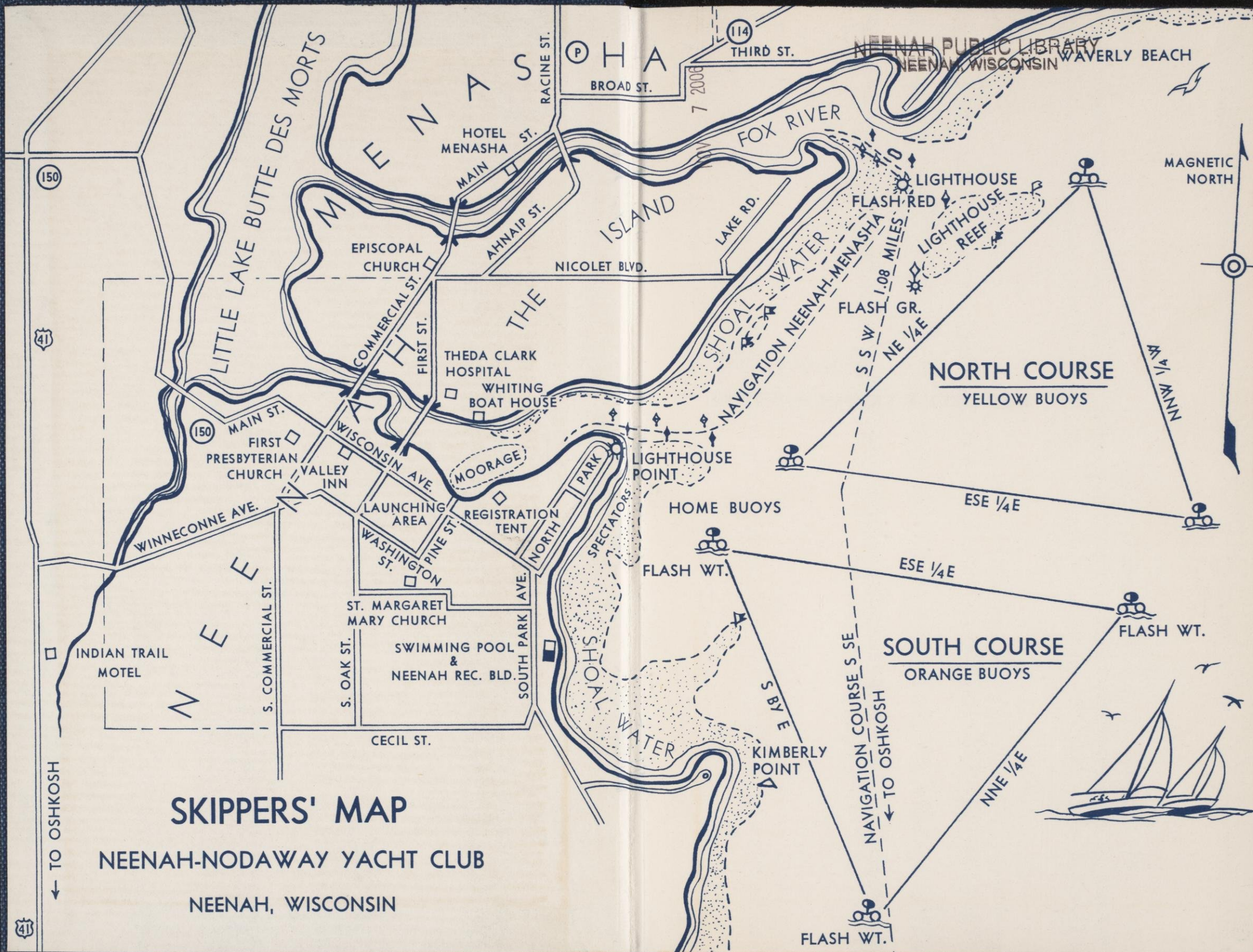




# SKIPPERS' MAP

NEENAH-NODAWAY YACHT CLUB

NEENAH, WISCONSIN









THE HISTORY OF THE

NEENAH-NODAWAY YACHT CLUB









R. H. Larson photograph

*Sea Gull II*, holder of the Winnebago record of 1:11:42 for the twelve-mile triangular course (page 128) and two-time winner of the Felker Cup (page 129).



THE HISTORY

OF THE

*Neenah-Nodaway  
Yacht Club*

of Neenah, Wisconsin

AN ACCOUNT OF

YACHT RACING ON LAKE WINNEBAGO

FROM 1859 TO 1957

*by James C. Kimberly*



*Privately Published*

NEENAH WISCONSIN 1957

GEORGE BANTA COMPANY INC., MENASHA, WISCONSIN



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## Foreword

*THE* idea of publishing this history of the Neenah-Nodaway Yacht Club of Lake Winnebago did not merely occur to James C. Kimberly; it was almost forced upon him.

Few followers of the sport on Lake Winnebago are left to tell the story of early sailing on this very particular body of water, and fewer still are able to trace its development from the beginning.

Mr. Kimberly has been a yachtsman for more than sixty years. As one of the organizers of the Nodaway Yacht Club in 1894 and its first commodore, he has been called upon so repeatedly for accounts of yachting on Winnebago that, whether he likes it or not, he is the historian-archivist of the club. In fact, he has been so from the beginning; it has never needed another.

After searching the records and studying the mass of source material which came to light, Mr. Kimberly planned a layman's approach to the club story.

To carry out his ideas he found an understanding collaborator in Helen B. Hartman, who wrote the history from the data and records furnished her.

Karl A. Oberreich of Neenah, who is virtually a co-author of the project, spent many hours searching through newspaper files, libraries, and club minutes. The completeness of this history is due in a large measure to his diligent and careful research.

John D. Buckstaff and Tom Anger of Oshkosh provided part of the material on the activities of the Oshkosh Yacht Club.

Among other enthusiastic helpers, Ed. Malone of Fond du Lac sent in news dispatches relating to that club; Ernst C. Schmidt, Secretary of the Inland Lake Yachting Association, supplied the records of the early Inland regattas and the list of Inland Class A champions; Robert H. Larson provided the illustrations from his

own excellent collection; and last the several contributions are deeply appreciated of persons, too numerous to mention, who furnished random items of interest. Obviously the book owes much to the various newspapers and periodicals for the local color as well as for statistical records; whenever available, the name of the newspaper accompanies the quotation used.

I consider it a rare privilege to provide a note of introduction to Mr. Kimberly's history. As a life-long sailor on Winnebago and, like him, a commodore of the Neenah-Nodaway Yacht Club for 1937, as well as a director of the I.L.Y.A. and former commodore of that organization for several years, I am happy that I was one of the many who urged the writing of this book and that it is now an attractive and highly readable reality.

—WILLIAM R. KELLETT



## *Lake Winnebago: A Preface and a Preview*

**WISCONSIN** yachtsmen have known Lake Winnebago as a sailing man's paradise for almost a hundred years. Here is a proving ground about two hundred square miles in area which will test the skill and mettle—and occasionally the patience—of any sailor.

In its three major ports, generations of yachtsmen have built up a yacht-racing tradition: at the north in the twin cities of Neenah and Menasha; at the south in Fond du Lac; and, midway between the north and south, in Oshkosh, situated at the mouth of the Fox River and at the lake's widest point. About half-way between Neenah and Oshkosh and only a short cruise from either city lies Garlic Island. As the southern corner of a giant triangle that stretched across the lake, it figured early in Neenah's yachting history. Later, as Island Park, it served as a camping ground for visiting yachtsmen during regattas and as a favorite picnic spot for cruising fleets.

Because Lake Winnebago lies in the heart of the Wisconsin lake region, it has drawn yachtsmen from nearby lakes and bays almost from the beginning. By the early 1870's men from Winnebago and Butte des Morts just to the west of Oshkosh, from Green Lake and Mendota to the southwest, and from Green Bay at the north were competing with local yachtsmen. They sailed their boats down the rivers to the lake when possible, sent them over the rails on flatcars when no water route was available, and, if necessary, loaded them onto wagons and carted them by horse team over the rough or miry roads of the day. As early as 1878, three craft from Lake Michigan—the forty-ton *Cora* and the *Agamemnon* from Chicago and the *Mamie* from Kenosha—entered the annual regatta at Oshkosh. The *D. J. Pulling* of Oshkosh, skip-



pered by Eb Stevens, won the race. But then, as now, most competitors came from the smaller lakes.

The pioneering yachtsmen who introduced the sport to Winnebago formed the nucleus of an inland yachting fraternity which grew as clubs were organized on lakes to the south. In due time Cedar, Oconomowoc, Pewaukee, Geneva, and Delavan clubs sent their craft to the regatta which annually marked the climax of Winnebago's sailing season. Whole communities followed the fortunes of the various boats, and regatta time in Oshkosh became one prolonged holiday. Spectators and visiting yachtsmen crowded the city. Entertainment and merry-making filled the hours not devoted to the races. Sailing became the leading sport of this fresh-water region, and it captured the interest and support of a surprisingly large segment of the population.

The formation of the Inland Lake Yachting Association in 1897 brought racing craft to Winnebago from Minnetonka and White Bear lakes in Minnesota, approximately three hundred miles to the west. And this was before the days of the automobile and the trailer. In 1916 the Northwestern Regatta Association and the Inland joined forces, thus bringing into one organization all the clubs of this vast region.

No glance at yacht racing in this north country can fail to take notice of the racing scow. At the turn of the century yachtsmen and boat designers in the area realized that lake racing demanded a different type of yacht from those favored by clubs on the Atlantic seaboard. They began searching for something smaller, lighter, and less costly than the traditional yachts, a fast boat especially adapted to racing on a lake. After some years of trial and error the present-day scow was evolved. In its design it abandoned the classic hull. The new boat was shovel-nosed, broad of beam, of shallow draft with a skimming-dish hull, and sloop-rigged. It appeared a strange craft when first introduced, but it had speed. In 1910 a yachting authority wrote that "the fastest going to the foot of boat length in American yachting today is found on board

these scows . . . ,” and the statement is still true. The Inland scow has character, too, and demands uncommon skill from its sailors. And it has beauty, as anyone knows who has watched the Class A fleet assemble at the starting buoy. Today’s racing scow, with its sleek, low-lying hull and tall sails, takes its place among the elite in the most beautiful sport in the world.



## *Yacht Racing Comes to Neenah-Menasha*

*THE* documented history of yacht racing on Lake Winnebago, as far as can be learned, dates from 1859. That year the first racing yacht of record at the northern end of the lake was built by one Noricon at Menasha for Charles Doty, a son of a former territorial governor of Wisconsin. It was a sloop with a twenty-foot waterline. Appropriately enough, Doty named his new boat the *Mayflower*, perhaps after the historic vessel which brought his Doty forefather to Plymouth, Massachusetts. Another yacht with a twenty-foot waterline, built for D. J. Pulling of Oshkosh, also came from the Noricon yard that year. A ballast ship, she was modeled after the *America*. This world-famed schooner of the New York Yacht Club had crossed the Atlantic eight years earlier, in 1851, and brought back the Royal Yacht Squadron prize since known as the America's cup.

That victory started a wave of interest in the sport moving across the country. When it reached Lake Winnebago it changed Neenah's summer pastime into her major sport. Though settled as early as 1835, Neenah as an organized town was only twelve years old in 1859, and Menasha, which had been set off from Neenah in 1855, was only four. Thus yacht racing became a part of community life here almost at the beginning.

Early records of Winnebago yachting are few and fragmentary, but those races that were reported in the papers show a young and vigorous sport. In 1860 ten boats from Green Bay, Neenah-Menasha, Oshkosh, and Fond du Lac raced off Oshkosh for a cup offered by its citizens. A surprising number considering the date. Three came up the river from Green Bay, all of the deep-ballast type; three entered from Oshkosh, owned by John Williams, Samuel Neff, and Hank Johnson; two from Fond du Lac, the *Petrel* of a Mr. Howland, a clerk in the Foster Hotel, and the



Joubert brothers' *Falcon*; and two from the Neenah-Menasha area, Charles Doty's *Mayflower* and John Nugent's *White Squall*. The race started in a northeast gale, giving the advantage to the deep-ballast craft, and Green Bay carried off the cup and all the honors by capturing first, second, and third places.

But the year 1860 also saw South Carolina secede from the Union, and the ensuing war between the North and South pushed yacht racing into the background. Interest continued, however, and evidently some activity, for a Neenah yacht club is mentioned as having won the lake championship in 1863. This is the earliest reference found to a local club. Lloyd's Register of American Yachts gives the founding date as 1864.

After the war the *Mayflower* changed hands but remained in Menasha. Its new owner was Capt. Fairfield. The *Falcon*, built about 1860 for the Joubert brothers in Fond du Lac, was purchased first by E. W. Viall and Charles Riordan of Oshkosh and later by Charles May of Menasha. These two yachts kept competition lively at the northern end of the lake for some years.

In 1867 the *Mayflower* and *Falcon* competed in a match race that for public enthusiasm probably had never been equaled locally. The two owners, Capt. Fairfield and Charles May, were reputed to have laid a wager of \$100 between them, and estimated side bets totaling a thousand to fifteen hundred more indicate the outside interest in the contest. Sailboats and other craft carrying spectators dotted the lake, and an excursion steamer, filled with excited partisans followed the course.

The triangle to be sailed began at the Neenah lighthouse, crossed the lake southward to Stockbridge, then over to Garlic Island, and home, a distance of about twenty-five miles. The start was scheduled for nine o'clock. When the signal was given, the *Mayflower* was ready but the *Falcon* was not. Nevertheless Capt. Fairfield and his *Mayflower* immediately crossed the line and sailed away. By the time the *Falcon* left the lighthouse, the *Mayflower* had made well over a mile out on the first leg of the course. But Capt. Wilcox, who had lately refitted the *Falcon* and was sail-



ing her for Charles May, set his sights for Stockbridge, soon passed the *Mayflower*, and reached the marker well in the lead. On the run across the lake again, he widened the gap between the two boats to almost three miles. *Falcon* supporters went wild and considered the victory theirs. But a fickle breeze decided the contest differently. As the *Mayflower* headed for Neenah, her sails caught a favorable streak of wind and she reached the lighthouse an easy winner. Her erstwhile rival, almost two miles behind her, was plugging along combatting a head wind.

For a short distance during this race the new *Lady Maud* of Oshkosh, a ballasted yacht with a twenty-two-foot waterline, compared speed with the other boats. She had been built earlier that year for John H. and William H. Crawford, whose love for the sport went back to a racing yacht of the deep-cutter type owned by their father, John Crawford, in Toronto, Canada.

In the summer of 1868 the *Lady Maud*, *Mayflower*, and *Falcon* competed over a triangle that extended from Neenah to Clifton on the east shore, back to Garlic Island, and home. The start was auspicious enough. A good sailing breeze sent the three flying across the lake under light canvas. But as they approached Clifton a thunder squall out of the northwest struck almost without warning. Rain fell in sheets, so blinding that the boats could neither see each other nor find the marker. Left with no choice but to work out from the shore into open water, they headed across the lake under snug reef for the lee of Garlic Island. Just as they reached their goal the sun broke through the clouds. Their return to Neenah was without further incident, but the judges declared it no race because no one had found the eastern buoy.

Then followed a decade or more of great activity for Winnebago yachts. Clubs that were organized about this time in Fond du Lac and Oshkosh increased the rivalry and sharpened the edge of lake competition. Neenah held regattas usually in the spring and fall and participated in those of the other clubs. Match races, speed trials, practice runs, or just pleasure sailing kept the yachts out on the lake in the intervals between the scheduled events.







An encampment on Garlic Island as painted by a nineteenth-century artist.



Early in the decade the Oshkosh Yacht Club instituted its annual cruise for Winnebago yachts and an encampment on Garlic Island. The Fond du Lac and Oshkosh fleets would meet off Morley's Point and race to the Island, or they would cruise northward to pick up the Neenah fleet and the three clubs would then sail south to the encampment together.

According to the Fond du Lac *Commonwealth*, the Island in 1873 was "the very seat of grandeur and picturesque scenery." The underbrush had recently been cleared away, leaving a camping ground shaded by arching elms. This idyllic scene, as painted by some nineteenth-century artist, is reproduced here. During the encampments a white village of tents appeared under the elms and the shore was lined with gaily decorated yachts. Sailor talk, fishing, and games filled the time not occupied with the trial runs of the various craft and the races.

A few years later a cluster of cottages and a hotel, presided over by Capt. Eb Stevens, took over much of the Island. Capt. Stevens had sailed a three-masted schooner out of Neenah before the Civil War, carrying barrels of flour and general freight between lake ports. When yacht racing became popular he skippered many racers for their less experienced owners. While proprietor of the Island's hotel, he converted the *D. J. Pulling*, a sizable schooner with a 41-foot waterline and an overall measurement of 47 feet, into the steam yacht *Albina* for the use of Island passengers.

The racing yachts which represented the Neenah Yacht Club in the 1870's were the *Minnie Graves*, *Albatross*, *Myra Belle*, and *Mermaid*. They were built on the general plan of rounded stern, sharp bow, long graceful bowsprit, and a waterline of about five sixths of the over-all measurement. They carried topsails and club topsails, jibs and balloon jibs, spinnakers and kites. Usually the masts at the base were from ten to twelve inches in diameter. Differences in build and sail were equalized by time allowance.

This matter of time allowance continues to plague judges and baffle skippers even today, but in the early period, before the advent of the one-class yacht, it often provoked tempers and

aroused bitterness. Though judges used the accepted handicap rules based on measurement, many times their decisions left room for a difference of opinion.

The pride of Neenah in the early part of this decade was the *Minnie Graves*. According to hearsay she was built for Lake Michigan but was purchased by a group of Neenah men who hired Eb Stevens as her skipper. The *Minnie Graves* appears in the news as early as 1871, when listed in the *Fond du Lac Journal* as one of fourteen yachts scheduled to race there on October 2 for a purse of \$150. Neenah entered the *Minnie Graves* with Thomas Jones as her captain and the *Mayflower* with Joseph Thomson; Menasha, the *Little Hattie* skippered by Charles May and the *Falcon* with Capt. Beach. No account of the race has been found.

The most famous race of the *Minnie Graves*, one that passed into Winnebago sailing lore many years ago, was won off Oshkosh in July, 1873. Plans had been made by the Oshkosh Yacht Club for a gala occasion, and it was hoped that the purse, the largest yet offered on the lake, would draw a record number of contestants. Rufus B. Kellogg of Green Bay had presented \$200 as a cash prize for the winner, and the local club had raised the balance. Prizes in the *Minnie's* class were slated as \$200 for first place, \$100 for second, and \$50 for third. At stake also was the lake championship pennant. Preliminary announcements reported that yachts were entered from St. Louis, Madison, and Milwaukee. These failed to appear, however, the latter two, according to a local paper, because of "the extortionate freight charged by the railroads."

Throngs lined the shores on the day of the race, and other crowds followed the course from lake steamers, sailboats, and rowboats. One newspaper reported the number of spectators as in the thousands. Local club members could be spotted here and there in resplendent uniforms, "presenting a handsome and tasty appearance." From the deck of the *Tom Wall* a brass band enlivened the scene as well as the air.

Ten yachts competed. In addition to the *Minnie Graves*, with



Eb Stevens as skipper, and probably Charles May's *Little Hattie* from the Neenah fleet, the contestants were: *Penequa*, Capt. How, *Peerless*, Capt. Bridges, *Foam*, Capt. Levy, and *Dauntless*, Capt. Dickinson, all from Oshkosh; *Daisy*, Capt. Dodd, *White Cap*, Capt. Barlow, and *Liberty*, Capt. Alexander, from Fond du Lac; and from Green Lake the *H. B. Harshaw*, a former Oshkosh boat, with Capt. Peirce.

Capt. Hank Haff, who later sailed on a yacht competing for the America's Cup, was one of the *Minnie's* crew, though a stranger to the rest of the sailors at the time. Twenty-odd years later his presence was explained by an eyewitness of the race, who gave the following account of it:

I notice by the Milwaukee papers that an eastern man who was in town during the races last week [1895] stated that Capt. Hank Haff was a product of some town on Lake Winnebago near Oshkosh. I know this much, Capt. Hank Haff once sailed on a yacht in the annual regatta of the Lake Winnebago Yacht Club, and this is how it happened. 'Twas in 1873 and the regatta was held in July that year. The course sailed was off what is now North Park at Oshkosh. There were ten entries, including the *Minnie Graves* from this city, the *Peerless* and *Penequa* from Oshkosh, two sloops from Fond du Lac, and one from Green Lake, the balance being Oshkosh craft whose names I cannot recall. Then there was expected a couple of crack yachts from Buffalo or some lake city, whose owners were cruising for pleasure in Green Bay waters, but these failed to materialize, if I remember aright because the gate apparatus on one of the locks downstream had become so locked with mud that the tender could not find the combination to raise it.

Just as the boats were leaving Oshkosh River, a well-built man with blue clothes and the air of a sailor ambled along the Northwestern R'y track and, asking permission to take a spin with the boys, swung down into her cockpit. It happened that the *Minnie* was shy a hand that day, so liking the looks of the stranger, the crew just dumped a bag or two of gravel and invited him to make himself at home.

Thirty minutes later the start was made, and that race was a hot one, too. The lake was crowded with pleasure craft, from the *Island City* and the *Tom Wall*, with brass bands, gaily dressed women and lively men aboard, to the fishing smack filled with the fishermen and their friends. It was a stiff breeze, and while some of the yachts carried one to two



reefs in mainsail and jib, with topmasts housed, the old *Minnie*, with canvas shook out, shot past the starting point like a flitting sunray on the water. The course was twice around the triangle, and before the home buoy had been rounded the first time, the *Minnie* had closed big gaps between her and *Peerless* and *Penequa*, fairly outsailing the Oshkosh favorites, close-hauled or free-sheeted, and coming in the winner by nearly ten minutes, corrected time, which, with measurement allowance, made her a winner by half a minute more. The first money of \$200 went to the *Minnie Graves*, with the *Penequa* second and the *Peerless* third.

The Neenah boys were too much occupied during the race to pay much attention to their visitor aboard, other than to notice that he was unusually active in every movement made aboard the craft. But after the race, when talking over the events of the day, the stranger complimented the *Minnie's* crew and added that his name was Hank Haff. He said that he was skipper aboard the Buffalo boat then laid up in Green Bay for a day or two, and that he had run up to see the race that his boat could not start in. The prize of \$200 was the largest ever won by a boat on Lake Winnebago, and the *Minnie Graves*, though built here and after no particular model, was the swiftest boat on the lake.

A contemporary account of that race in the press varies in certain details from this story. According to that report, at the very outset the *Minnie Graves* "shot like an arrow to the front and although pressed quite hard toward the first buoy kept her distance throughout the entire race." This record also states that she crossed the finish line 4 minutes and 50 seconds ahead of the *Penequa*, but measurement allowance halved the time making her the winner by 2 minutes and 25 seconds. In the race for second-class yachts, *Dauntless* won first money and *Liberty* of Fond du Lac, second.

In 1874, at the election of officers in the Neenah Yacht Club, Sam F. Henry was chosen commodore, E. W. Clark, vice commodore, and Thomas Jones, measurer.

That spring Com. Henry launched his *Albatross*. This yacht seemed a potential candidate for first honors on the lake for six or seven years, but she was plagued by accidents during her entire career. On the club's cruise to Garlic Island in her first season, her mast carried away. She had to be towed home by the *Minnie*

*Graves*, who later proceeded to the Island with both crews. Following the Neenah regatta held on July 4, the local paper reported that she "disappointed her friends, for though apparently a fine sailer, she made to leeward fast, and upon coming about she broke her main boom square off . . . . As but a nice breeze was blowing at the time, the necessity of an accident of this kind may be safely questioned." Oshkosh easily carried away all the honors in this race, as the order of the various yachts at the finish, with their time, shows: *Niobe*, 1:35:00; *Peerless*, 1:36:30; *Penequa*, 1:38:30; *Minnie Graves*, 1:40:00; *Lady Maud*, 1:40:30. Admiral Peckham's *Little Hattie* also competed, but according to a news item she became unmanageable at the start, rearing and plunging wildly and starting for home. She finally was brought around with some difficulty.

The *Albatross* was given another opportunity to compete with the crack Oshkosh fleet when the Neenah Yacht Club, with Sam F. Henry as commodore, was again host to the other clubs at its annual regatta in 1875. The *Niobe*, *Penequa*, *Peerless*, and *Lady Maud* sailed over to meet Neenah's *Minnie Graves*, *Albatross*, and *Myra Belle*. Hundreds from the Neenah shore and on the lake thrilled to the spectacle of sixteen yachts and steamers all dressed in flying colors and greeted their favorites with resounding cheers. On the run to the second buoy the first yachts were so closely aligned that from the shore there appeared to be but one boat. Then the wind dropped and the fleet spread out. *Niobe* crossed the finish line first, followed in less than two minutes by the *Peerless* and a few seconds later by the *Albatross*.

A local editor wrote of this regatta:

It should be a matter of congratulations among our citizens that our Neenah Yacht Club should be the means of giving us such a fine display, and our people do well to encourage these regattas, as they call large numbers of strangers to our city, and cause our handsome location to be more generally known and appreciated.

For two consecutive years the *Albatross* won the Commodore's Cup in local competition, but neither victory was clear cut. In



1874, in a race with the *Minnie Graves*, she won by a fluke. When about a mile out on the course, the *Minnie's* topmast stay gave way, quickly followed by the main stay. "Alas for the frequency of break downs on Neenah boats," commented a reporter. In 1875 she defended the cup against the *Myra Belle*. These two boats were well matched and a strong wind made for a spirited contest until the final leg, when the *Myra* broke down. According to general opinion, the *Albatross* would have won anyway, for she was a minute ahead when the accident occurred. Her time for the nine miles, 1:12:00, was considered a record by some sailors.

Later, at the Neenah regatta held on July 27, 1876, she proved herself a match for the Oshkosh fleet and won the first money (\$30) by sailing the local twelve-mile course in 2:05:00. This regatta was described in a local paper as one of the finest and most harmonious ever held on the lake. The fleet was a fast one, entries were well matched, and not a single complaint was filed. *Niobe*, *Peerless*, *Penequa*, and *Lady Maud* again contested the course with Neenah's *Minnie Graves*, *Albatross*, and *Myra Belle*. One accident marred the race when the *Myra* capsized in rounding the first marker. The *Albatross*, skippered by Capt. James H. (Jimmie) Jones, who, like Eb Stevens, was hired on occasion by yacht owners to sail their craft, had the satisfaction of seeing the fleet-footed *Niobe* of Oshkosh trail her. The judges were Eb Stevens from Oshkosh and L. J. Matthews and J. R. Davis, Sr., of Neenah. After the race the Neenah Club entertained the Oshkosh sailors at a dinner at Page's Hotel, where prizes were awarded.

The officers of the Neenah Yacht Club in 1876 were Sam F. Henry, commodore; E. W. Clark, vice commodore; C. L. Weber, fleet captain; James Jameson, secretary; C. S. Cook, treasurer, and Will Cook, measurer. Some of the club meetings during these years were held at Dr. J. R. Barnett's office.

Jimmie Jones again took command of the *Albatross* in 1881, but her nemesis returned, to her undoing. In the first two-day regatta sponsored by the Oshkosh Club, accidents as well as sabotage marked the races. On the first day a perfect gale buffeted the fleet as it was getting off with a standing start. The mast of the *Pina-*



fore, a Fond du Lac boat, carried away and blew straight into the jib boom of the *Albatross*. Both boats were disabled. The Oshkosh *Northwestern* reported that the crew of the *Albatross*, preparing to go home, "was swearing mad at the whole regatta and kicked at all the arrangements." A detailed account of this regatta will be found in the following chapter.

The *Myra Belle*, the third sloop in the Neenah fleet during this period, was owned jointly by the Davis brothers and was usually sailed by William L. (Will) Davis. He was a colorful skipper and a redoubtable opponent in any lake race for almost fifty years. He drove his boats hard to turn every breath of wind in his sails into speed—sometimes to his grief. After the scow was introduced, he designed his own yachts and acquired a considerable reputation as a boat designer.

Like the *Albatross*, the *Myra Belle* seemed prone to accidents, but on more than one occasion in heavy seas she proved her mettle as well as that of her skipper. On October 4, 1877, a late date for Winnebago racing, she won a hard-earned victory over the *Mermaid*, then Neenah's newest and largest sloop, in a contest off Oshkosh. The prize was the Schuetzen Cup. The Schuetzen Society, the donor of the trophy, was a German social club whose sporting interest was centered in a rifle range on the outskirts of Neenah. The *Myra* and *Mermaid* were the only yachts to venture out on the lake for this contest. A sharp wind made sailing rough and the weather biting cold. Spectators wore overcoats and gloves, while judges and others in a small boat anchored to the home buoy had to indulge in "lively exercise to keep from freezing." Close-reefed, the two Neenah craft pitched and plowed their way once around the triangle. The *Myra's* time was 1:02:00.

A week or so later a notice in an Oshkosh paper announced:

TO THE EDITOR: The crew of the yacht *Myra Belle* take this method of thanking the Schuetzen Society of this city [Neenah] for the handsome silver cup which was offered by them as a regatta prize. The cup was won by the *Myra Belle*, and was delivered to the captain by officers of the society. YACHT CREW

At the autumn regatta held in Neenah about a year later, the

elements again tested the stamina and skill of "Windybago's" sailors. *Albatross*, *Myra Belle*, and *Mermaid* represented the Neenah Club. Oshkosh sent over *Niobe*, a veteran winner of several seasons, and the new *Carrie Morgan*, destined to be the all-time pride of that club. A powerful wind was blowing down the lake from the south, and as heavy a sea was running as anyone could recall. But in spite of high winds and high seas all yachts started out under full canvas. The mast on *Niobe* carried away on the first round and a bobstay snapped on *Albatross*, forcing both yachts to retire. The remainder of the fleet continued to carry full sail through to the end. According to the local press, no one had ever witnessed a race like it on the lake before. The first prize of \$15 went to the *Carrie*.

The *Mermaid*, owned by Albert and Howard Clement, had joined the Neenah fleet the year before, in 1877. She was the largest and the last of the club's sloops of this era. During her first season, on July 4, she competed on the local triangle with the *Albatross*, Capt. Ob. Clark, the *Myra Belle*, Capt. Will Davis, and the *Goldsmith Maid* of Green Bay, Capt. Conlee. Jimmie Jones skippered the *Mermaid*. The appointed judges were J. R. Davis, Sr., Joe Barnes, Sam Fernandez of Appleton, S. F. Wright of Chicago, and C. H. Boynton of Milwaukee. The steamer *Franklin*, skippered by George Thompson, carried judges and spectators around the course. All during the race a light wind favored first one boat and then another. Each had her turn at leading the fleet and each at some time brought up the rear. The *Mermaid* reached the home buoy first, *Myra Belle* was second, and *Goldsmith Maid* came in third, but adjusted time gave the race and the first prize, a silk flag, to the *Myra*. Second prize, a silver cup, went to the *Mermaid*.

Two weeks later a local paper announced that the contest of July 4 was "no race" and would be resailed on July 25. On that date the *Myra Belle* failed to appear and the *Mermaid* took home the silk flag. Of the other contestants, *Goldsmith Maid* lost her stays, a foul was claimed on *Albatross*, and presumably the only



other entry, *Minnie Graves*, who was not reported in the earlier race, came in second to receive the silver cup.

At the end of the next season, in 1878, a Neenah editor reported and prophesied:

Besides General Stager's steam yacht two sail yachts of first-class calibre will be built in Neenah next winter, one by Messrs. Symes and Thomas and one by Messrs. Young and Wilson. The fact is yachting on Lake Winnebago is in its infancy and in a few years we will see some of the finest yachts in the country hailing from Neenah, our Island City.

And activity in the yacht clubs during 1879 seemed to warrant his optimistic forecast. The Neenah Club invited the Fond du Lac and Oshkosh clubs to its Garlic Island cruise and encampment in June. Later in the month it turned out in force at Oshkosh. In August it competed at Fond du Lac and in September, at Oshkosh again for the Lancaster Cup.

The record for these races shows more accidents than victories. In the first June encounter, the *Myra Belle* had her spar carried away when she was leading the entire fleet, and in the second, her boom broke on the first round. At Fond du Lac both the *Myra* and the *Albatross* were held up by mishaps, one by a broken cross-tree and the other by a loose throat halyard. "This was nothing unexpected," reads a dispatch from the Fond du Lac *Commonwealth*, "for a Neenah boat never yet sailed a race in which some of the rigging did not give way. Despite this, one of them secured a prize." The yacht which saved the reputation of the Neenah Club was the *Mermaid*. She came in second, her time, 1:41:17. The *Carrie Morgan* of Oshkosh beat her to the home buoy by 2 minutes and 11 seconds.

After this near victory, the *Mermaid* challenged the *Carrie Morgan* to a race for the Lancaster Cup, then held by the latter yacht. On the scheduled date, September 22, 1879, the challenger lost her rudder on her way to Oshkosh and had to put back to Neenah. That left the *Albatross* and *Myra Belle* to represent the Neenah Club against the *Carrie Morgan* and *Penequa* of Oshkosh. The wind was blowing cold and strong from the southwest, but the sea was



not running high. Nevertheless, the *Myra's* mast carried away just before she crossed the starting line and the *Albatross* lost hers on the first round. The *Carrie* won over the *Penequa* by a little over nine minutes, actual time. This was her third successive victory in the Lancaster contest and it gave her owner permanent possession of the cup.

If the races here reported show a preponderance of bad luck, it did not dishearten the Neenah sailors. Being good sports, they were the more determined to improve the record another season. Also, it should be remembered that other 1879 contests, unreported and now in limbo, may have had happier endings. But winning or losing, the Neenah Yacht Club went ahead with plans for a yachting future, and in the spring of 1880 its members appeared in uniform—blue suits, brass buttons, and nautical caps.

Press accounts and other records for the 1880 season are scanty. The Neenah Club held a cruise to Garlic Island in June, and the Fond du Lac *Commonwealth* mentions an Oshkosh regatta held off Miller's Point on July 5. The *Albatross*, *Myra Belle*, and *Mermaid* entered from Neenah, and the *Myra* sailed in third. First and second places went to the *Niobe* and *Carrie Morgan*. Apparently this was the *Myra's* last season, for she does not appear in the two-day Oshkosh regatta held in August, 1881.

In July, 1881, at an Oshkosh regatta, the *Mermaid* captured the first prize of \$25 emblematic of the lake championship. This was perhaps her greatest day. She had defeated the Oshkosh invincibles and now reigned as queen of the lake. *Niobe* placed second, and *Carrie Morgan* third. The *Commonwealth* reported the race as magnificent and closely contested, with a sharp watch kept on measurements and time allowance; the *Mermaid* was the largest entry in the combined fleets. Intense excitement prevailed at the finish, for the three leaders rounded the home buoy in a huddle. The time for the twelve miles was 2:46:00. With her handicap the *Mermaid* won by just one minute.

Neenah sailors and townspeople again faced the future with rising enthusiasm. A local paper reflected their confidence when it

predicted that "the club will now take a fresh start and . . . will sail under the prosperous breeze of success." This prediction, however, was not immediately realized. According to the records at hand, the *Mermaid* continued to crowd the *Carrie Morgan* for the next two years, but she did not best her. She was the only Neenah entry in the last two of these contests. On September 2, 1882, in a match race with the *Carrie* over the Neenah course, her mast carried away. Her rival continued on alone, sailing only once around the triangle and making the six miles in fifty minutes.

Interest in yacht racing in Neenah had been on the wane for some little time, and by 1883 it definitely was down in the trough of the wave. In 1885, when the local paper printed an invitation to Neenah yachtsmen from Com. Charles W. Felker of Oshkosh to participate in a race on August 29 for "an elegant piece of plate," the editor added: "We do not know of a single yacht now owned in Neenah. . . ."

A week after this first race for the now famous Felker Cup, a local fleet of small sailboats competed on the Neenah course for the club's Commodore's Cup. The contestants as listed were: *Neva*, Dr. J. T. Enos, the winner; *Zodiac*, Will Smith; *Jingo*, David Symes; *Jessie*, John A. Kimberly, Jr.; *Helene*, Peter D. Kraby; *Alice*, Charles A. Bryan; *Cora*, Otto Jorgensen; *Stella*, John Roberts, and *Lulu*, A. Olson. Obviously Neenah's racing yachts had been beached; but already another generation of skip-pers was in the making.

It should be mentioned here that Menasha flashed into yacht-racing news in 1889, when a group of her citizens—among them, Will Miner, Theo Gilbert, and Dick Arft—purchased the *Pinafore*, a former Fond du Lac yacht. They renamed her the *Marguerite* and originally called themselves the Marguerite Club. Later this group is referred to as the Menasha Yacht Club. A former Menasha resident recalls that Will Miner was the commodore and that Dick Arft, Will Reed, George Utz, Joseph Long, Duncan MacKinnon, Frank Lake, Harry DeWolf, and Will, Albert,



Theo, and George Gilbert also were active. He remembers, too, the group lined up in blue uniforms and caps.

Before coming to Menasha the *Marguerite* as the *Pinafore* had already established her reputation in ten years of racing. She came onto the lake about 1879, toward the end of the period that witnessed Neenah's greatest activity. During her long career she sailed under the aegis of three clubs: the Fond du Lac when, owned and skippered by James Whitton, she carried on a friendly rivalry with the *Lolita*, also of Fond du Lac; the Oshkosh, when she won the Felker Cup in 1886 with Capt. Whitmier; and the Menasha, when under the command of Jimmie Jones she staged a remarkable comeback and twice more captured the Felker Cup. Whether as the *Pinafore* or as the *Marguerite*, she had a romantic career, and not the least colorful of her years was the first one she spent at Menasha.

Any contest between her and Fond du Lac boats was sure to be followed closely; rivalry was keen then and sometimes bitter, making for exciting sport. A series of such contests in 1890 began with a race off Neenah over a ten-mile course on July 24. The judges were D. R. Davis, Will Davis, and John Strange. First prize was \$15, and second, \$10. Three clubs competed: Menasha, Fond du Lac, and Oshkosh. In addition to the *Marguerite*, the chief contenders included the *Lolita*, the rival of her early racing days, the *Minerva*, Fond du Lac's newest sloop and the present holder of the Felker Cup, and the *Hattie* of Oshkosh, Johnnie Dickinson's cutter yacht which had won the Felker prize in 1885.

The *Marguerite* got away first, followed by the *Minerva* and *Hattie*. A light wind was blowing from the west and most of the boats were carrying kites. On the first stretch both the *Marguerite* and the *Minerva* set large balloon jibs. At the south buoy one of these boats fouled the other and before they could get clear, the *Hattie* stole the lead. In the tangle the *Minerva's* main boom carried away, forcing her to retire, and some minutes passed before the *Marguerite* could get under way again. On the home stretch, however, which was dead to windward or nearly so, she gradually



closed the gap between her and the *Hattie*, passed her rival, and crossed the finish line the winner by 1 minute 17 seconds, corrected time.

A few days later she sailed against the *Hattie* and *Minerva* in the second race of this series. The Felker Cup was at stake and the course was six miles to windward and return. A local paper describes this contest as the most exciting witnessed on the lake for years. At the start, *Hattie* led and *Marguerite* trailed well in the rear, but on the home stretch the tables were turned. A spurt by the *Minerva* brought her into first place. But the *Marguerite* came up nobly, raced the Fond du Lac boat neck and neck for a distance, and then crossed the finish line first, with a matter of seconds separating the two. Robert Brand, one of the judges, declared her the winner, but Fond du Lac's *Minerva* claimed the race on measurement. The judges at once requested further time to study the rules.

When Capt. James Whitton heard Judge Brand's decision, he walked down to the *Marguerite* and "with grace and dignity that would have done honor to old Neptune" bent himself double and kissed her figurehead. He loved the old yacht, whatever flag she was sailing under, and, as a local paper noted, he was not ashamed to let the people know it.

Some days later the judges handed down their final decision, the details of which appeared in a news item dated August 1.

Commodore Felker has sent on the Commodore's Cup. He held that the missing rule has been found and the time allowance figured out. The *Marguerite* must give the *Minerva* 2 and 55/100 seconds. Her actual sailing time was 55 seconds faster than that of the *Minerva*, consequently she wins the race by 52 and 45/100 seconds corrected time. The *Marguerite* proposes to hold that cup for all future time.

This decision gave the *Marguerite* the first two races of the series. The third and last was scheduled for the following day at Fond du Lac. Many spectators from Neenah and Menasha attended, but they witnessed only a floating match. The *Marguerite*, *Minerva*, and *Lolita* started but drifted in a frustrating calm for four hours without negotiating the triangle even once. The race

was called off. The Menasha and Fond du Lac sailors were as disappointed as the gallery and decided among themselves to sail two races in August, one at each of the two cities.

The first of these was scheduled for August 21 over the Fond du Lac course. The Marguerite Club chartered the Oshkosh steam yacht *Annie* and advertised a limited number of tickets for sale at fifty cents. The steamer was to leave Menasha at seven thirty in the morning and return immediately after the race.

Available news clippings offer nothing on either race. A storm encountered on the trip back to Menasha took the news spotlight away from the first contest and may well have caused the cancellation of the second. An Oshkosh paper, dated August 22, 1890, gives this account of the adventure:

The steamer *Annie*, of Oshkosh, with the yachts *Marguerite* of Menasha and *Minerva* of Fond du Lac in tow, and having about 50 passengers, left Fond du Lac harbor last night at dusk for Menasha, where it was expected the yachts would race today. When about an hour out the boats were struck by a strong gale and, in attempting to make the harbor here again, ran aground. They were out on the lake until 1 o'clock this morning, blowing a distress whistle before grounding. The passengers were very badly frightened and all sick. Sailors who were out say it was one of the worst storms they ever saw on the lake. The friends of the Menasha party on the steamer were greatly concerned for fear the boat had gone down, and telegraphed here early this morning.

In the September 1 issue of the paper, the Menasha Yacht Club acknowledged the receipt of \$20 from Fond du Lac in payment of the prize won by the *Marguerite* in the regatta, which suggests that she came off the victor in the August 21 race.

This burst of activity in Menasha marked the end of an era in lake racing. Four years were to elapse before a new club was organized on new principles to continue Neenah's yachting history. But before introducing this new group, a backward glance at the early Fond du Lac and Oshkosh fleets will show the kind of competition that the early Neenah sailors faced.



## Fond du Lac and Oshkosh Organize Yacht Clubs

**THE** rivals of Neenah boats in the 1870's and 1880's came for the most part from Fond du Lac and Oshkosh. Yachtsmen in these two cities organized about 1870.

### FOND DU LAC YACHT CLUB

The Daisy Club seems to have been the predecessor of the Fond du Lac Yacht Club. About 1870 or 1871, H. C. Dodd and S. A. Dudley purchased the *Daisy*, a very fast seaworthy boat for both cruising and racing. Friends of the new boat formed the Daisy Club and sailed her at Oshkosh in 1871 at the first annual regatta sponsored by the newly organized Oshkosh Yacht Club. She captured the first prize and the championship pennant in a contest with three Oshkosh yachts: the *H. B. Harshaw*, sailed by Robert Brand; the *Nautilus*, with W. W. Tolman; and the *Lady Maud*, the holder of the pennant, skippered by Capt. Crawford. This victory gave the new club a most auspicious start.

On October 2, 1871, the Daisy Club scheduled a regatta off the mouth of the Fond du Lac River free to all yachts accessible to Lake Winnebago. Five prizes totaling \$150 were offered and fourteen boats entered, a sizable fleet for the date. No account of the race has been found, but the entries as published in the local *Journal* of September 28, 1871, and given below, list many of the boats and men that helped make yacht-racing history on Winnebago.

<i>Penequa</i>	Capt. E. W. Viall	Oshkosh
<i>Nautilus</i>	W. W. Tolman	Oshkosh
<i>H. B. Harshaw</i>	J. S. Bridges	Oshkosh
<i>Lady Maud</i>	W. H. Crawford	Oshkosh
<i>K. M. Hutchinson</i>	J. D. Thomas	Oshkosh
<i>Dauntless</i>	J. M. Dickinson	Oshkosh



<i>Little Hattie</i>	Charles May	Menasha
<i>Falcon</i>	Capt. Beach	Menasha
<i>Minnie Graves</i>	Thomas Jones	Neenah
<i>Mayflower</i>	Joseph Thomson	Neenah
<i>Fanny Lake</i>	T. W. Lake	Winneconne
<i>Daisy</i>	S. A. Dudley	Fond du Lac
<i>Water Lily</i>	R. C. Baker	Fond du Lac
— (new boat)	J. Ridgeway	Fond du Lac

In 1873 the *Daisy* participated in the most famous of all encampments held on Garlic Island and by her belated arrival caused the officials considerable concern. The affair was scheduled for June 11, 1873, and the Oshkosh yachtsmen with their fleet arrived early in the day. Gabe Bouck brought down provisions and other supplies, even a cook stove "to dish up their hash on" presided over by Gib Lane. Fishing parties added pickerel and black bass to their larder during the afternoon.

Perfect weather in the evening tempted Capt. Tenbroeck, Judge Gary, and one or two others to venture far out on the lake for a moonlight sail. A gale blew up, lashing the water into a rolling sea, and they returned only with great difficulty, arriving about midnight and thoroughly soaked.

The predicament of the Fond du Lac contingent was far worse. Its two-master struggled in at one o'clock in the morning, half full of water, with one mast carried away and the jib torn to shreds. She was heavily loaded with a large stock of provisions, tents, other camping impedimenta, and twenty-one men who were drenched to the skin. Waves on the beach were rolling in so high that she barely made the shore in safety. No one knew the fate of the *Daisy*, which had become separated from the supply ship during the storm. About dawn Com. H. B. Harshaw sent out a searching party, but no trace of her could be found. Finally, at nine o'clock some one sighted her making her way toward the Island. About noon she arrived, safe and undamaged. Her captain had put in the night at Black Wolf to await the end of the storm.

This near-tragic beginning apparently failed to dampen the spirits of the sailors, for the Fond du Lac *Commonwealth* of June 14 reported:

The boys are having a good time, and many of them declared a better one than ever before. On Wednesday there were over 150, visitors and all, on the Island. In the afternoon all the yachts turned out for a grand review and made a beautiful appearance. The wind was just right, the afternoon pleasant and all things in tip-top order.

Several years later a less sympathetic reporter on the *Commonwealth* described with a landsman's bias another stormy encampment of the two clubs:

The cruise of the Fond du Lac Yacht Club this year, which came to a close on Sunday afternoon, was not fraught with great success, the bad weather interfering greatly with the arrangements. Some of the yachts caught in the storm off Morley's Point were badly shaken and battered on the rocks, while tents and other paraphernalia were wrecked and torn. The Oshkosh boats had such severe handling that they had to abandon the cruise. . . . Notwithstanding all the discouragements attendant upon the cruise, those participating in its pleasures and discomforts enjoyed the affair only as those who like life of this sort can.

A brief item in the Fond du Lac *Journal* states that the *Daisy* won the first and second money for first-class boats on August 1, 1878, at a Green Lake regatta. Her name does not appear in available regatta news after that date.

In the following year, on August 27, 1879, the Fond du Lac Yacht Club sponsored a regatta which drew spectators as well as yachts from all three Winnebago clubs. The official record gives the starting and actual time as follows:

#### FIRST CLASS

<i>D. J. Pulling</i> , Oshkosh	3:03:53	1:48:24
<i>Mystic</i> , Fond du Lac	3:05:09	1:47:36 winner

#### SECOND CLASS

<i>Niobe</i> , Oshkosh	3:06:57	1:45:23
<i>Myra Belle</i> , Neenah	3:07:13	broke down
<i>Mermaid</i> , Neenah	3:07:40	1:41:17 second
<i>Lolita</i> , Fond du Lac	3:08:00	1:44:41
<i>Albatross</i> , Neenah	3:08:35	broke down
<i>Pinafore</i> , Fond du Lac	3:10:04	1:55:12
<i>Carrie Morgan</i> , Oshkosh	3:12:04	1:39:06 winner

## THIRD CLASS

<i>S. M. Hay</i> , Oshkosh	3:11:08	1:03:14
<i>Aura Lee</i> , Oshkosh	3:11:55	59:45 second
<i>Restless</i> , Oshkosh	3:12:50	1:01:05
<i>Beatrice</i> , Oshkosh	3:14:06	54:46 winner
<i>Black Hawk</i> , Fond du Lac	3:14:06	1:08:44
<i>Aquilla</i> , Fond du Lac	3:14:53	1:13:37
<i>Can't Help It</i> , Fond du Lac	3:26:04	1:20:26

Two of these Fond du Lac boats, the *Pinafore*, owned and sailed by James Whitton, and the *Lolita*, became great favorites locally and vied almost every year for the Fond du Lac port championship pennant. The 1880 race for this prize brought out the *Lolita*, *Pinafore*, *Mystic*, *Lulu*, *Juniata*, *Black Hawk*, and *Frolic*. The last three were third-class yachts. From the outset interest centered on the duel between the *Lolita* and the *Pinafore*. The *Lolita* won. Hoisted to her masthead as she sailed to her anchorage was a very dirty broom. According to the *Commonwealth* she had a right to it, for she had swept from her course all the brag of her opponents. Her time for the twelve miles was 1:59:30.

The following year the *Lolita* had to surrender the pennant to the *Pinafore*. At this race the *Mystic*, a first-class yacht, came in first, but she had to allow the *Pinafore* about four minutes on measurement allowance. T. S. Weeks, J. F. Ware, and H. F. Ross were the judges.

In 1883, the *Pinafore* successfully defended the prize in a hotly contested race. The two yachts crossed the line in a flying start before a stiff breeze, one slightly ahead of the other, and held the same relative positions so closely over the entire course that friends of each claimed the victory. Com. Dodd, who was "starter, judge, referee, and timekeeper," declared the *Pinafore* the winner by thirty seconds, and the *Lolita's* crew, according to the press, "gracefully submitted to the decision."

The Fond du Lac fleet in 1881 numbered eleven yachts, among which were the *Lulu*, *Juniata*, and *Black Hawk*. That spring the *Lulu*, a second-class boat, made the run from Oshkosh to Fond du Lac, twenty-two miles by her course, in 2 hours 10 minutes, even



with a delay caused by her chain plate carrying away when she rounded Morley's Point.

*Black Hawk* and *Juniata*, sometimes called the *Chin* because of her fearful prow, also carried on a sharp rivalry within the local fleet. A match race planned by the two crews for a Sunday afternoon in July, 1881, was announced in the *Commonwealth* with the comment: "It is to be regretted that the boys can't get off on a week day, but if they must go on Sunday afternoon it is to be hoped they will attend church in the morning." In the same vein the paper reported the race on the following Monday: "That boat racing isn't just right on the Sabbath was demonstrated Sunday by the *Black Hawk* capsizing while in a race with the *Juniata*." The *Juniata* won at least one victory over the Oshkosh favorite *Beatrice*; in June, 1879, she came in first, with *Madeline* of Oshkosh second and *Beatrice* third.

During the 1883 season, relations between the Fond du Lac and Oshkosh clubs were far from cordial. Fond du Lac had a good fleet and the local crews enjoyed competing among themselves. The club's port pennant race had been a closed contest for several years, and the members preferred to keep it so. Evidently, too, some feeling existed that in contests between the two cities the local club put up the prizes and Oshkosh regularly carried them home. The affair burst into print in the fall of 1883 after a Fond du Lac paper remarked that no local yachts would enter the Oshkosh regatta soon to be sailed.

The Oshkosh *Northwestern* immediately replied: "There appears to be a good reason why. The regatta committee decided not to invite the Fond du Lac boats. It is claimed by the club here that the Oshkosh boats have not been invited to take part in the Fond du Lac regattas, and the club here has stood a jug-handled business in this respect long enough." The paper went on to explain that several "yachtists" recently had gone over to Fond du Lac on the day of an advertised regatta and found that it had been sailed and the prizes awarded the day before. In the opinion of the sailors, the wrong date had been sent to them intentionally to keep them

out of the contest. Whatever the truth of the matter, a serious rupture developed between the two clubs. Reputedly Oshkosh herself had served the Lake Geneva Club in the same manner, so this device for restricting competition was not new with Fond du Lac.

The *Commonwealth* did little to soothe ruffled tempers in its reply to the Oshkosh paper: "The Fond du Lac boys say they had no intention of going to Oshkosh for the regatta, and the yachtists of that suburb [Oshkosh] need not feel so slighted about being invited here for it was only a 'scratch' race for the port pennant."

Seemingly the public controversy ended here. On August 28 the *Commonwealth* announced "the programme for the Oshkosh yachting regatta . . . in which the Fond du Lac boys are to take part." Oshkosh, too, wanted to make peace and when the *Northwestern* announced the Fond du Lac regatta the following spring, it carefully explained that the race to be sailed at Fond du Lac, June 10, 1884, for the port pennant would be open to all boats on the lake but that separate prizes, in addition to those restricted to Fond du Lac boats, would be offered. The item concluded sympathetically: "It does seem really hard for the Fond du Lac club to put up prizes for boats of other cities to certainly carry away every year, and there's some excuse, perhaps, for the members feeling like having a little family party all by themselves."

At this time the Oshkosh fleet included two speedy yachts, the *Hattie*, a fast cutter and its newest boat, and the *Carrie Morgan*, which had already made victory a habit. The *Hattie* entered this Fond du Lac regatta to compete with the *Lolita* and the *Pinafore*. The *Lolita* crossed the line first and was leading when she set out on the home stretch. But the wind died down, and the *Hattie*, with large topsails and extra sails set, "which the *Lolita* did not have," easily passed her. The time: *Hattie*, 2:49:00; *Lolita*, 2:52:51; *Pinafore*, distanced. In the second-class (formerly third-class) contest, the *Sylvia* won a slow race over the *Maud*; her time for the six miles was 1:41:49. Both yachts belonged to the Fond du Lac fleet.



That fall the *Lolita*, *Pinafore*, and *Sylvia* entered the Oshkosh regatta that was held on August 11, 1884. On this occasion the *Sylvia* sailed the Oshkosh six-mile triangle in 3:36:27 and raised a question of rules which completely baffled the judges. A practically windless day and a lake almost as smooth as a mirror greeted the fleet. The *Hattie* and *Carrie Morgan* of Oshkosh and the *Lolita* and *Pinafore* of Fond du Lac drifted more or less listlessly the entire afternoon, trying to sail twice around the triangle. The *Sylvia*, being a second-class yacht and having to sail the triangle only once, completed her course within the four-hour time limit. She won over the Oshkosh *Mary*. Her time of 3:36:27 validated that of the *Mary*, 4:06:03. The race began at two o'clock. By six no first-class boat had completed the twelve-mile circuit and the contest was called off.

The judges were now confronted with the question: Is the second-class contest canceled out by the judges' decision to call off the race? Some maintained that it was. Others contended that the smaller craft had completed their course within the time limit and were entitled to their prizes. No Oshkosh Club rule covered the point. After deliberating for some time, the judges promised a decision by the next morning. The local press is silent on any settlement.

During the mid-1800's, interest in yacht racing in Fond du Lac, as elsewhere on the lake, waned, but about 1888 a new yacht, the *Minerva*, sparked a revival and gave to the Fond du Lac Club what it had long desired—victory over Oshkosh. For two consecutive years, 1888 and 1889, with H. Dittmar as skipper, she won the most highly prized trophy on Winnebago, the Felker Cup. The next year she lost it to the *Marguerite*, the former *Pinafore* of Fond du Lac. In 1894, however, she captured it for a third time, but only to lose it the following year to the Kimberly-Stuart *Nirvana*, the new yacht of the new Nodaway Yacht Club in Neenah. This was the *Minerva's* last regatta. Through her the Fond du Lac Yacht Club had realized its fondest dreams and it did not long survive her defeat.



## OSHKOSH YACHT CLUB

Oshkosh, without question, made the most significant contribution to yacht racing on Lake Winnebago during this early period. By virtue of its location and size and through the far-sighted planning of its yachting leaders, it became the rallying point for the sport on the lake. Largest of the four cities, it had the largest club, usually the largest fleet, and very often the strongest.

On September 15, 1870, after a year or two of hard spade work, a group of its citizens took advantage of the enthusiasm then prevalent and organized the Oshkosh Yacht Club. Col. John Hancock was chosen commodore; Col. Henry B. Harshaw, vice commodore; Robert Brand, treasurer and measurer; and W. M. Strong, secretary. Others active in the project were Capt. E. W. Viall and Judge George W. Burnell. The city directory of 1872 states that the club then numbered nearly one hundred members and that the fleet was composed of ten fast sailing yachts of ample size for comfort and safety. That year Col. Harshaw succeeded Col. Hancock as commodore and then followed Judge Burnell in 1878 and the Hon. Charles W. Felker in 1885.

Many of the victories of the club's famous craft from 1870 to 1890 have already been recorded. All yachtsmen throughout the lake region knew the *Penequa*, *Peerless*, *Niobe*, *Carrie Morgan*, and *Hattie* for their exploits. The *H. B. Harshaw*, owned by Com. Harshaw, successfully competed in the earliest days of the club. She represented Oshkosh on Lake Mendota in 1871 and brought home all the prizes. In 1872 she won the club's challenge cup, offered for the first time that season. Probably the most admired and beloved boat of the entire Oshkosh fleet was the *Carrie Morgan*. She was a graceful yacht with a 25-foot waterline, 31-foot over-all measurement, sharp prow, and tapering bowsprit. In 1896, some years after her last race was sailed, she was cremated with appropriate ceremonies. Few racing craft have been accorded this distinction.

Com. Felker, who piloted the fortunes of the Oshkosh Club from 1885 to 1897, later wrote of the ships of his day and the men who sailed them:

The modern yacht has entirely superseded the old style as a racing machine. But nevertheless we had royal races in the early yachting days. I have seen thirty-five first- and second-class yachts start from the home buoy at the foot of Washington street during the annual races. In their day and generation the *Carrie Morgan*, the *Niobe*, the *Hattie*, the *Marguerite*, the *Minerva*, the *Lolita*, and the *Pinafore* were not to be despised as racing yachts. The canvas carried by the *Morgan* alone would quite equal the entire spread of the fleet of racing yachts of the Oshkosh Yacht Club of the present day [1899]. They were commodious, good cruisers and fine sailers.

Right royal men were those old yachtsmen as ever sailed a yacht or cracked a joke. . . . The discipline in the Winnebago Lake fleet in the early days was rigorous, in fact of the real man-o'-war cut. For instance, for unnecessarily drawing the "long bow" Capt. Stevens was sentenced to commit to memory all the stanzas of that poem containing the line "Truth crushed to earth shall rise again," and to repeat the same before a board of inquiry once a day for three succeeding days; for oversalting the lobsouse with intent to create thirst among the officers and men, Steward McPeck, of the schooner yacht *Mollie*, was compelled to eat the whole batch at a meal (which he easily did) and to go without drink, except water, for three hours thereafter; for a light infraction of the regulations as to late hours, Lieut. Crary was sentenced to refrain from speaking to, or associating with, any of the female sex for three days. He begged for a mitigation of the sentence, but this was denied him, and his conduct ever after was exemplary. This severe discipline had a marked effect upon the manners as well as the morals of the officers and men.

From the beginning, the Oshkosh Yacht Club devoted time, energy, and thought to promoting the sport, not only on Lake Winnebago but in the surrounding country as well. It publicized Winnebago racing by inviting clubs in Green Bay, Geneva, Madison, Green Lake, and even Chicago to enter their boats in the Oshkosh regattas. In 1877, Eb Stevens and others went to a Chicago regatta to awaken interest in Winnebago events by offering to tow any visiting yachts from Green Bay to the lake and return.

At home it instituted the two-day regatta, held for the first time on August 11-12, 1881, and for variety replaced the flying start with the standing start. This regatta adds its own chapter to the epic story of Winnebago sailing. It stands out not so much because it was a first or because it demonstrated the standing start but



rather because it was almost disrupted by an act of sabotage. Yachts entered from Neenah, Fond du Lac, and Oshkosh fleets as well as from Madison.

The standing start required the yachts to line up near the judges' boat and anchor to the wind, headsails down. At the starting signal they weighed anchor and got under way as promptly as possible. The judges' whistle blew one blast to make ready and, five minutes later, two to go. At this particular event the line was to begin at the buoy and extend toward the shore. The numbers for position were to be drawn the night before the race. To make allowance for advantage of windward positions, the windward boats took their places as far back at the start as they were to windward. The local press noted that in a race of this kind the spectators could follow the contest as easily as the judges.

Visiting yachts and yachtsmen arrived in Oshkosh the night before the opening and drew their numbers. No doubt some of the men, if not all, attended the sale of pools at the Tremont House that evening. According to the betting the Oshkosh boats were expected to win. The *Carrie Morgan* was the favorite among the boats of her class and the *Niobe* was second choice. Pools sold at about the ratio of \$5 for first, \$2 for second, and \$3 for the field. The *Beatrice* was favored among the third-class yachts, and pools sold were up with her against the field.

Early the next morning the first sailors to arrive at the docks were horrified to discover that some one had "maliciously tampered" with the *Carrie Morgan* of Oshkosh and the *Mermaid* of Neenah. The furled sails of both boats had been slashed in many places along the booms, cutting through several folds of the canvas. In addition all halyards had been cut squarely off. Citizens and club members alike were filled with indignation. How could anyone perpetrate such a contemptible act, and on the very eve of the regatta.

At first it was thought that the day's race would have to be postponed, but a sailmaker was found who immediately made a new jib for the *Carrie* and repaired and patched both mainsails. In



the meantime many willing hands procured new ropes and replaced the several halyards.

About two o'clock the contestants sailed into position, followed by the *Tom Wall* carrying judges and spectators. People on foot and in carriages lined the shore at the foot of Washington Street, a much larger crowd than had attended a regatta for years.

The order of the boats, as they lined up from the shore to the buoy, was the *Carrie Morgan* of Oshkosh, *Albatross* of Neenah, *Gray Hawk* of Madison, *Lolita* of Fond du Lac, *Mermaid* of Neenah, *Niobe* of Oshkosh, *Pinafore* of Fond du Lac, and, next the buoy, *Lulu* of Madison. The third-class yachts, the *Beatrice*, *Sappho*, *Venaroth*, *Aura Lee*, *Prospect*, and *Bessie Otto*, took their places in that order just behind the second class.

When the starting whistle sounded, a stiff gale was blowing from the southeast. Three yachts capsized. The *Pinafore's* mast carried away and became lodged in the rigging of the *Albatross*, breaking the boom and gaff of the Neenah boat. The race soon narrowed to the *Carrie Morgan* and *Niobe*, with the *Mermaid* trailing and the *Gray Hawk* far in the rear. The *Carrie Morgan* won, followed eight minutes later by the *Niobe*. Her time was 1:54:00 for twice around the six-mile triangle.

For the third-class yachts the race turned out to be a duel between the *Beatrice* and *Venaroth*, both of Oshkosh. First honors went to the favorite as she crossed the line a minute ahead of *Venaroth*. This third-class contest created considerable interest locally because three of the Oshkosh entries had been sharp rivals for the last few years. On August 27, 1879, at Fond du Lac, *Beatrice* had won with *Aura Lee* second. In 1880 at Oshkosh, *Venaroth* was first, *Beatrice* second, and *Aura Lee* third. In July, 1881, also at Oshkosh, *Beatrice* won over *Venaroth*.

Happily the second day of the regatta dawned clear and sunny with a brisk offshore breeze. The story of this day's events as told in the Fond du Lac *Commonwealth* gives a good picture of the race and the bustling activity which preceded it.

## AT THE YACHT DOCK

Everything was early astir and the boys were busily engaged all morning in repairing minor damages of yesterday's gale and getting their boats in the best trim possible for this afternoon. The *Aura Lee* had been towed in and it was found that her port had been considerably banged upon the bottom of the point on which she had drifted, but not enough to keep her out of the race today. The *Pinafore* of course was damaged beyond present repair. The crew of the *Albatross* was preparing to go home. They were swearing mad at the whole regatta and kicked at all the arrangements. Their boom and gaff were broken by the accident with the *Pinafore*. The *Carrie Morgan* had an iron strip loose on the centre board which had to be taken out for repairs. The *Sappho* had a broken main stay and lost her top-mast and was being tinkered. Altogether matters were rather lively at the dock.

## THE RACE

The race this afternoon was by all odds the finest and most exciting ever held on Lake Winnebago. Never were the conditions better for a fine race. The wind blew even harder than yesterday from the west, and being offshore the surface of the lake was comparatively smooth. The following boats started at just three o'clock:

Second class: *Carrie Morgan*, *Mermaid*, *Niobe*, *Lolita*

Third class: *Beatrice*, *Venaroth*, *Aura Lee*, *Bessie Otto*

The boats got an even start off, but the *Carrie Morgan*, being to windward on the line, had a slight advantage. The yachts sped off on a heavy beam wind for the southeast buoy as follows: Second class—*Mermaid*, *Carrie Morgan*, *Niobe*, *Lolita*. Third class—*Beatrice*, *Venaroth*. On the first part of the northeast stretch the *Lolita* crawled up and passed the *Niobe*. The race now became intensely exciting. The *Mermaid* was holding first place and the *Niobe* had dropped to fourth place.

On the windward stretch towards the home buoy the *Carrie* outmaneuvered the *Mermaid* badly. The *Mermaid* ran farther out to the northwest on the port tack than was necessary to make the home buoy and lost ground. The *Carrie Morgan* rounded the home buoy at 3:50:12 and *Mermaid* crossed it just twenty seconds later and both boats, making fearful headway, sped away on the second round, nip and tuck. The *Niobe* took different tactics and tacked first to the southeast instead of bearing to the northwest as the other boats did, and lost if anything over the leading boats, but gained a minute or so on the *Lolita*, which followed the same extreme course as the *Mermaid*. The *Niobe* reached the home



buoy at 3:55:40 and the *Lolita* at 3:56:35. But a few minutes later the *Beatrice* rounded considerably ahead of the *Venaroth*. The boats have just started off on the second round at this writing with prospects of a close contest between the *Mermaid* and *Carrie Morgan* for first place. The *Niobe* from present appearances cannot possibly gain more than third place, barring accidents.

#### THE LATEST 4:45

The *Carrie Morgan* won the race, *Mermaid* second. The *Mermaid* met with some accident to her rigging by which she lost ground in the second round.

In 1882 the Oshkosh Yacht Club appointed a committee to study new methods of measurement for classifying racing boats. Outbuilding was becoming a problem. Neenah's *Mermaid* was superior to the other yachts in size. The cutter *Hattie* introduced a new type. It was felt that in some way a change in the measurement rules could correct or minimize existing inequalities so that the skill of the sailors and not the size or build of the boat would be the deciding factor in a victory.

According to the Fond du Lac *Commonwealth*, the committee recommended that a boat be classed according to its cubic feet rather than by its length and that time allowance be ascertained from the same measurements. To compute the cubic feet, it was suggested that the length at the waterline be added to half the overhang and that this sum be multiplied by the girth, which should be obtained by measuring the boat from gunwale to gunwale around the keel at its greatest width. The committee also recommended that second-class (later to be called first-class) boats be limited to a product of 350 by this method of computation. This scheme would allow an owner to build his boat long and narrow, broad and short, or with or without overhang, so long as he did not exceed the 350-cubic-foot limit. The only yacht on the lake at that time exceeding this figure was Neenah's *Mermaid*, with 400 cubic feet, and if the suggested rules were adopted, an exception would be made in her case.

Other proposals made at this time concerned the rules on bal-



last. Yachts then carried bags of sand as ballast and for that reason were referred to sometimes as sand-baggers. The committee felt that some regulations should be made to prohibit the shifting of ballast or the disposal of it overboard when it was no longer needed.

The Oshkosh Yacht Club at this time tried in other ways to inject new life in lake racing. In 1883 it featured a steam-yacht contest and a canoe race at its fall regatta as added attractions for those interested in other types of craft. Several steam yachts were navigating the lake at this time, and in many ways they were out-bidding sailboats for the support and interest of the sailors. They accommodated large parties, were fast, convenient, and popular for picnicking, fishing, or cruising, and, of course, they did not have to depend on unreliable winds for power.

But as the Oshkosh yachtsmen early found, one of the surest and most lasting methods for arousing interest was also one of the oldest—the trophy or challenge cup. The Lancaster and Schuetzen cups have already been mentioned. There were several others. In 1885, Com. Charles W. Felker presented the club with the Felker Cup. This prize, the oldest challenge trophy on the lake and the best known in the Northwest, is a magnificent silver-plated bowl, designed and manufactured by Tiffany. The only cup in this region to antedate it is Lake Geneva's Sheridan trophy, which was put up by Gen. Philip H. Sheridan in 1874. The Felker Cup was presented as a perpetual challenge trophy to be sailed for annually off Oshkosh. More than once it has revived lake yachting when interest seemed all but dead.

But in spite of all efforts, a wave of apathy finally struck Oshkosh, too. The club continued to sponsor its annual cruises and regattas, though its own fleet was depleted, and it staged the Felker Cup race even when it had no boat to enter. Something more than stimulants was needed to quicken Winnebago's yachting spirit. Revival came and on a grand scale, but it had to wait for a new generation of skippers and a new kind of yacht.



The Felker Cup.







## *The Nodaway Yacht Club Is Organized*

*IN THE* spring of 1893, William Z. Stuart of Neenah brought the catyaw! *Yosida* to Lake Winnebago from Toledo, Ohio. It was a small, single-handed craft, with few pretensions, but as the inspiration for the Nodaway Yacht Club it was destined to make yachting history on the lake. Easily handled, seaworthy, and only about sixteen feet long, it completely captivated him and his friends as they sailed it that summer.

Before the end of the season the group was seriously discussing the organization of a yacht club, a new kind of club in which every boat would be built to the same specifications, a suggestion first advanced by young Stuart. The aim of a yacht club, as the group saw it, was to promote sailing skill and good seamanship. In a race of identical yachts the best skipper would win; victory would not depend upon the size or build of a boat but upon seamanship. Competition for top honors would be keen, and good skippers would strive constantly to improve their skill. Members would pursue the sport for the sport's sake and the club would prosper. It was an exciting idea.

William Z. Stuart, John A. Kimberly, Jr., James C. Kimberly, Edward P. Sherry, James H. Wright, and Lucius K. Henry, all in their twenties, joined together in the enterprise. Some of the group were novices in the sport and some were amateur sailors who had grown up around the lake. The older ones had followed, with more or less interest, Winnebago yacht racing. They knew by reputation the *Minnie Graves*, *Albatross*, *Myra Belle*, and *Mermaid* and may even have witnessed the *Marguerite's* victory over the *Minerva*. They had also seen outbuilding force spiraling costs and inequalities on local racing, and to them the one sure remedy for the ailing sport was a fleet made up of identical boats.

Though general classes for racing craft had been acknowledged

on the lake for some time, the idea of rigid class dimensions was new in the region and was even scoffed at by some of the veteran skippers. Nevertheless, the young sailors, considering all angles of their venture as seriously as they would a business undertaking, pushed ahead with their plan, defined their principles, and analyzed their problems. By midwinter they were ready to organize.

On February 13, 1894, William Z. Stuart called the first formal meeting of the group at his home. Present, in addition to Stuart, were John A. Kimberly, Jr., James C. Kimberly, Edward P. Sherry, James H. Wright, Lucius K. Henry, and, from Appleton, T. W. Orbison and W. L. Conkey. By a unanimous vote James C. Kimberly was elected presiding officer or commodore and James H. Wright, secretary and treasurer.

The object of the meeting, after the election, was to adopt a model and dimensions for the club boat and a uniform sail area. Discussion centered on two favorite plans, the *Myra* and the *Scarecrow*, both designed by J. W. Hepburn of Toledo, Ohio. The club finally voted for one between the two. The approved dimensions called for a boat 21 feet over all, 15 feet 9 inches at the waterline, a beam of 5 feet 6 inches, and a draught of 9 inches without the board. The rig of the boat was to be a catyawl, with the sail area of the two sails 250 square feet and the size of the spinnaker left to the sailmaker. In due time plans and bids were requested from G. B. Carpenter and J. W. Hepburn. Eventually the contract was placed with the former though the plans of the latter were used. Carpenter's price for the six sets of sails was \$32.50 per set, including blocks of ash and Manila rope. As delivered, the mainsail measured 176 square feet, the mizzen, 74, and the spinnaker, 112.

The members now were ready to place their orders. W. Z. Stuart, J. C. Kimberly, E. P. Sherry, and the joint owners from Appleton, T. W. Orbison and W. L. Conkey, contracted with J. W. Hepburn of Toledo, the builder of the *Yosida*; J. A. Kimberly, Jr., commissioned Dan Kidney & Son of DePere to build

his boat, and J. H. Wright placed his order locally at LaBorde & Sorenson's Menasha Boat Works.

With the more urgent business of boat specifications and contracts out of the way, the club turned its attention to organizational matters—a name, ensigns, by-laws, and sailing rules. At the second meeting, held on February 25 at the home of J. A. Kimberly, Jr., W. Z. Stuart produced what was probably as imposing a list of yacht names as had ever been assembled, over five hundred of them. Some had been suggested by members, others he himself had selected from various sources. Com. Kimberly appointed Sherry and Wright to choose four names from the list for the club's consideration. At the same time he named W. Z. Stuart a committee of one to draw up a set of rules.

The committee on names proposed Nodawa (or Nodaway), Navona, Onawa, and Bonita. A unanimous vote was cast for Nodawa, and the full title of the club became the Nodawa Boat Club. Within a few months, however, without any formal vote, "Nodawa" became "Nodaway," and that fall, when registration of the club was proposed, "Boat" was changed to "Yacht," so that by the end of the first season the official name of the organization was the Nodaway Yacht Club.

After some discussion the rules as submitted by W. Z. Stuart were accepted with the proviso that final adoption be withheld pending further study. Com. Kimberly was added to the committee at the request of the other members.

The matter of ensigns was turned over to J. A. Kimberly, Jr., and E. P. Sherry. On March 4, 1894, acting upon their report, the club chose as its official flag a dark blue burgee with a white five-pointed star in the upper masthead corner. This still remains the official ensign of the Neenah-Nodaway Yacht Club. At a later meeting (February 17, 1895) designs and colors for officers' flags were adopted, a blue rectangle bearing a blue five-pointed star set in a white circle in the upper masthead corner for the commodore and the same design but with colors reversed for the vice commodore.



On April 22, with the sailing season fast approaching, Com. Kimberly appointed as the club's first regatta committee L. K. Henry, J. A. Kimberly, Jr., and J. H. Wright. Their immediate duties were to arrange for buoys to mark a club course and make the other preparations necessary for the coming racing season.

The new catyawls began to arrive in May, and with their appearance a blow from a most unexpected quarter swept down on the brand-new fleet. As soon as the craft were lined up on the lake it was noticed that John A. Kimberly, Jr.'s, boat lay lower in the water than the others and seemed to have a broader deck. Here was an infraction of the rules which struck at the very heart of the organization: the rigid class dimensions of the club model. Hot words flew back and forth. Kimberly submitted his resignation. The secretary read it to the members on May 20, just ten days before the scheduled date for the club's first regatta.

Neenah, Wis. 5/20/94

To Nodawa Boat Club

Gentlemen:

In view of the fact that there has been considerable dissatisfaction expressed by certain members of the club on account of my boat not being exactly like the others, I tender my resignation as a member of the Nodawa Boat Club.

Yours very truly  
John A. Kimberly, Jr.

Com. J. C. Kimberly called for an expression of sentiment, and after some discussion the following resolutions were adopted:

Whereas Mr. John Kimberly has handed in his resignation because of the fact that his boat is not exactly like the others—

Resolved—that a committee of three including the chair be appointed to confer with Mr. John Kimberly regarding said difference and the extent thereof;

Resolved—that said committee report result of such conference at a special meeting of the club at 7:30 o'clock Wednesday even May 23 '94.

By a unanimous vote the resignation was then laid on the table

pending the conference and the commodore appointed Sherry and Wright to serve with him on the committee. It was decided that the committee should measure all six boats and report its findings.

The results of the investigation as announced at the May 23 meeting provided another shock. Of the six catyawls in the fleet only J. H. Wright's adhered strictly to the over-all and beam measurements of the club model and no two yachts were exactly alike. In addition to the over-all length and the beam width, the committee had taken five cross-measurements on each yacht. The variance was small, for the most part an inch or two. In view of this general deviation from the standard, it was recommended that all six be admitted as club boats and that J. A. Kimberly, Jr., withdraw his resignation, which he promptly did. When all the facts in the case became known, it was found that the DePere firm had intentionally departed from its instructions in order to build what it considered would be a faster boat; the record proved otherwise. This time the boys had been able to confine the tempest within a teapot; a few years later they were not so fortunate.

With harmony restored, preparations were continued for the club's Decoration Day regatta. To publicize the event E. P. Sherry and J. H. Wright wrote articles for the *News* and the *Times*. The commodore appointed L. K. Henry to see that twelve copies of the rules were written for the regatta, and he himself notified the *Appleton Post* and prepared a form for entrance blanks.

The only unfinished business that now remained was a consideration of the Articles of Association and the revision of the club's by-laws and sailing rules. On May 27, 1894, with Com. Kimberly in the chair and J. A. Kimberly, Jr., W. Z. Stuart, E. P. Sherry, J. H. Wright, L. K. Henry, and S. A. Benedict present, the members voted their approval. This was the first code of regulations drawn up in Neenah to govern local yacht racing.

The Articles of Association had already been signed with due formality by the five charter members assembled at the home of W. Z. Stuart on April 23, 1894. This document was a concise statement of the founders' purpose, and because it presents certain

basic principles introduced by the club to lake racing it is given here in full.

We, James C. Kimberly, John A. Kimberly, Jr., William Z. Stuart, Edward P. Sherry, and James H. Wright, residents of the city of Neenah, Wisconsin, do hereby associate ourselves together for the purpose of forming, and do hereby form, a yacht club, and to that end we make, sign and acknowledge these written articles and become thereby the charter members of the club.

The purpose of this club is:

First—To promote pleasure sailing and racing under equal conditions on Lake Winnebago.

Second—To limit and define the building of new boats to certain class dimensions and club models.

Third—To establish a standard code of rules and signals for the lake.

Fourth—To discourage extravagant expenditure in this revival of yachting, both in the matter of outbuilding and in the matter of prizes.

IN WITNESS WHEREBY we have hereunto set our names this 23rd day of April, 1894.

James C. Kimberly  
John A. Kimberly, Jr.  
William Z. Stuart  
Edward P. Sherry  
James H. Wright

Most of the ideas here expressed were well-nigh revolutionary for that time and place. Were "equal" racing conditions, as proposed in Article 1, possible or even desirable? Time-allowance charts and handicaps, as practiced elsewhere, had been in operation for years on Winnebago in an attempt to equalize differences in measurement and build. Though with such methods equality was approximated rather than achieved, competition had been keen and great races had been sailed. To veteran sailors the idea of "equal" conditions seemed visionary indeed, an unrealistic ideal of youth.

The second Article, which introduced class dimensions for a fleet to bring about these equal racing conditions, was likewise looked upon askance by many local yachtsmen. A skipper always had been allowed considerable freedom in planning or selecting



his boat; variety in a fleet gave zest to a race, and anyway the allowance table was there to take care of differences. The Nodaway Club, as the first group to promote class dimensions in this region, had to convince both doubters and an outright opposition.

Article 3 was designed, as it clearly states, to establish a standard code of rules and signals for the lake. Though this aim may have been considered ambitious by a few, certainly no one could quarrel with it. The old Neenah Club had followed in general the yachting regulations observed over the country. Oshkosh had added special rules to govern its regattas. The set of rules contemplated by this Article was the first local code to regulate Neenah races. The aim was more fully realized later when, at the instigation of the Nodaways, delegates from the Nodaway, Oshkosh, and Fond du Lac clubs worked out common rules for interclub races on Winnebago. Such joint action governed lake contests until the advent of the Inland Lake Yachting Association and its regional code.

But to seasoned yachtsmen perhaps the most surprising aim of all was presented in Article 4: "To discourage extravagant expenditure. . . ." One newspaper referred to it as a "very novel plan of conducting a yacht club." However, the Nodaway founders were convinced that extravagant outbuilding had forced high price tags on the sport, thereby limiting participation, and that extravagant prizes had placed the emphasis on the prize instead of on the skill that won it. The objective of the Nodaway founders, though not explicitly stated in these Articles, was to promote a lively interest in the sport by developing good seamanship and sailing skill. Past history had proved to them that free spending did not guarantee this end or even encourage broad competition.

On the evening of May 26, 1894, the club received its first trophy. At a dinner honoring the Nodaways, the Tea Kettle Club, whose members were the wives and friends of the young sailors, presented them with a beautiful white silk pennant. On one side it bore the Tea Kettle Club crest and the word "Nodaway" and on the other, a romantic painting of a young lady's head, done in the

style of the celebrated Gibson Girl. This unique prize was sailed for annually by Nodaway Class boats and is now in the possession of James C. Kimberly.

The first Nodaway regatta took place on May 30, 1894. This date established a precedent. Decoration Day still officially opens the season each year. All six small yachts, numbered and skippered as follows, reported for the race:

- |  |                                   |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| 1. <i>Ysleta</i> , W. Z. Stuart              | 4. <i>Nethla</i> , J. C. Kimberly |
| 2. <i>Vinita</i> , J. A. Kimberly, Jr.       | 5. <i>Wingra</i> , E. P. Sherry   |
| 3. <i>Ina</i> , T. W. Orbison & W. L. Conkey | 6. <i>Verona</i> , J. H. Wright   |

The judges, veteran lake yachtsmen, were Will Davis of *Myra Belle* fame, who generously included with his services his steamer *Mocking Bird* for the judges' boat, William Gilbert, and Frank A. Leavens. Edmund Griswold served as timekeeper. The course was twice around the club's four-mile triangle.

A heavy wind blowing down from the northeast made for an interesting contest but eliminated the *Ysleta* even before the race began. She shipped considerable water while getting into position. The rest of the fleet crossed the line in a flying start with the *Verona* leading, followed by the *Nethla*, *Wingra*, *Ina*, and *Vinita* in that order. The first three boats used spinnakers. Com. J. C. Kimberly in *Nethla* won and *Ina* came in second, thirty seconds later. *Vinita* dropped out when bringing up the rear on the last leg. Only seconds separated the various boats over most of the course, as the official time shows:

Boat	Start	3rd buoy	Home buoy	3rd buoy	Finish	Elapsed
	10:11:00	1st time	1st time	2nd time		time
<i>Nethla</i>	10:11:15	10:42:10	10:51:42	11:19:40	11:29:30	1:18:30
<i>Ina</i>	10:13:00	10:42:00	10:52:10	11:20:20	11:30:00	1:19:00
<i>Wingra</i>	10:12:20	10:42:05	10:52:54	11:22:00	11:31:00	1:20:00
<i>Verona</i>	10:11:10	10:43:10	10:53:00		11:33:50	1:22:50

Before the second regatta the Nodaway Club felt the time had come to play host to its yachting neighbors. Invitations were issued to the Oshkosh and Fond du Lac clubs for an open race to be sailed on the afternoon of July 4. The Nodaway Class contest for the Tea Kettle Club pennant was scheduled for the morning.



Money prizes of \$7, \$5, and \$3 were offered for the afternoon event.

A pleasant sailing breeze greeted the club fleet on the holiday, and the *Nethla*, *Ina*, and *Verona* side by side led the *Ysleta*, *Vinita*, and *Wingra* across the line. Gradually the *Ysleta* pulled to the front, closely followed and sometimes headed by the *Ina*. The second time around both boats were holding off the third buoy when a fresh breeze caught up with the trailers, filled their sails, and the four shot forward, leaving *Ysleta* in the rear. E. P. Sherry in *Wingra* won the race and the pennant. At the finish the order and time were: *Wingra*, 1:09:00; *Nethla*, 1:09:45; *Vinita* and *Ina*, 1:10:00; *Verona*, 1:10:45; and *Ysleta*, 1:11:45. Aboard the *Mocking Bird*, Will Davis, David R. Davis, and William Gilbert served as judges and Frank A. Leavens kept the time.

Eight entries assembled for the open contest in the afternoon. Unfortunately neither their captains nor their home ports appear in the record. This race had been awaited with considerable interest locally. Nodaway members J. A. Kimberly, Jr., W. Z. Stuart, and Lucius K. Henry served as judges aboard the steam yacht *Bernice*, hired for the occasion by John A. Kimberly, Sr., Harry Babcock, and F. C. Shattuck. E. P. Sherry was the time-keeper. The judges' duties did not prove overly taxing, for the intermittent breeze of the morning died down almost completely in the afternoon. A floating match tested the patience of the skippers rather than their skill. The *Daisy*, *Allie*, *Oriole*, *Yosida* (Neenah owned), *Cora*, *Dorothea*, *Mattie*, and a boat unnamed in the records crossed the finish line in that order. Prizes were awarded to the first three.

This July 4 regatta, of slight if any importance as a contest, had far-reaching consequences for the Nodaway Club. At a business meeting held after the event, on July 8, several motions were passed reflecting the club's own enthusiasm and a letter was read which registered the favorable impression made on at least one outsider. According to the club minutes, a membership committee was appointed to capitalize on current interest; a proposition to



print a book of rules was referred to the rules committee for consideration and report; a vote of gratitude was extended to the non-members who had given of their time or money to help make the regatta a success; and a design for the championship pennant was considered and the matter turned over to E. P. Sherry for a later report. The single critical comment that found its way into the record censured Orbison and Conkey for permitting a third person to sail the *Ina*; according to a Nodaway rule a club boat had to be sailed by an owner. But this one lapse in an otherwise commendable performance ruffled the members very little and they signified their satisfaction with the regatta by voting to pay all expenses out of club funds, "such expenditure not being called extraordinary."

The letter which was read at this meeting came from Fred Felker of the Oshkosh Club, inviting the Nodaways to sail for a separate trophy at the time of the Felker Cup race. Such recognition by a neighbor club was welcome indeed and the secretary promptly accepted.

An erratic wind, at times a gale, swept the lake as the Nodaway fleet gathered at Oshkosh on July 28. Spectators crowded steam yachts from Neenah, Menasha, Fond du Lac, and Oshkosh to witness the double attraction. All six club boats entered the Nodaway race and all covered the course of two miles to leeward and return. At the finish the *Vinita*, J. A. Kimberly, Jr., captain, crossed the line first to win the pennant and ensign offered as prize. Following him were the *Wingra*, *Ina*, *Verona*, *Nethla*, and *Ysleta*.

This race was sailed during the contest for the Felker Cup, which that year went to the *Minerva* of Fond du Lac. Possibly the idea of broadening the club to enable members to compete for this trophy another year flashed through the mind of at least one Nodaway skipper on the homeward sail to Neenah.

The two remaining regattas of the season gave the sailors a variety of weather. On August 11, 1894, pockets of calm and streaky air currents, which favored first one captain and then another, left more to chance than skill. Twice the entire fleet was

becalmed; both *Ina* and *Wingra* lay motionless on the sidelines for so long that they withdrew from the race. After leading the fleet for more than halfway, the *Ysleta* seemed headed for victory, but on rounding the second buoy the second time around she tacked toward the bay and lost her breeze. First the *Verona* and then the *Nethla* passed her. The *Verona* remained out front until near the finish line, when the *Nethla*, bringing down a fresh breeze, overhauled her and won the race. *Nethla's* time was about 2:20:00; sixteen seconds later the *Verona* crossed the line. *Ysleta* sailed in third and *Vinita*, fourth.

Following this regatta the club voted a time limit of two hours for Nodaway Class races and decided to allow sculling with the rudder. On the other hand it explicitly outlawed the practice of greasing boat bottoms or temporarily increasing the speed of boats by the use of any lubricant. Two years later, however, the ban on greasing was removed for the 1896 Nodaway championship races. This practice of greasing the bottoms of boats had been introduced years earlier in Neenah during the heyday of the *Myra Belle* and *Mermaid*. An abandoned grease pit, all that remained of an old brewery, in what is now Riverside Park supplied the grease.

The last race of the season was held on Labor Day in such a heavy wind that dandies were single-reefed. Only four boats contested and a matter of seconds separated the first and last as they crossed the starting line. At the finish the records show *Nethla*, 58 minutes 30 seconds; *Verona*, 60:40; *Yselta*, 62:40; and *Wingra*, 64:00. This rather exceptional time was due in part to the fact that the home buoy was moved out about an eighth of a mile because of weeds, but it was a fast race in any case. That regatta gave J. C. Kimberly his third victory and the championship pennant.

The next spring, after profiting from the experience of this first racing season, the rules committee submitted a new code for the purpose of "broadening the club." It was adopted at a special meeting on March 16, 1895, and continued in force as long as the Nodaway Yacht Club remained a separate entity. To show how it

carried out the four Articles of Association—and also to throw light on the subsequent history of the club—a sampling of its provisions is given below.

## ARTICLE I

### NAME

This Club shall be known as the Nodaway Yacht Club of Lake Winnebago.

## ARTICLE II

### SEAL

The seal of the Club shall be a circle of one inch diameter; in the center a five-pointed white star on a dark blue background and in the white rim of the circle the name "Nodaway Yacht Club" "Lake Winnebago."

## ARTICLE III

### CLASSES OF MEMBERS

There shall be two classes of members: Directing and Honorary.

SEC. 1. Directing Members are those who reside in Neenah or Menasha, Wisconsin, and retain an interest in one or more sailing yachts which are enrolled in the Club Squadron. These gentlemen constitute the Board of Directors and are the only members entitled to vote; one vote to each yacht as provided in Article X.

SEC. 2. Honorary Members are those who either do not own an interest in a Squadron Yacht or who, owning an interest, are non-residents of Neenah or Menasha.

## ARTICLE IV

### MEMBERSHIP

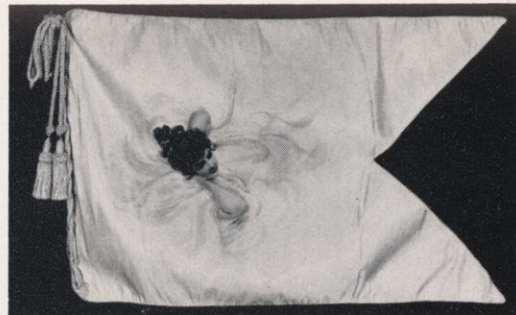
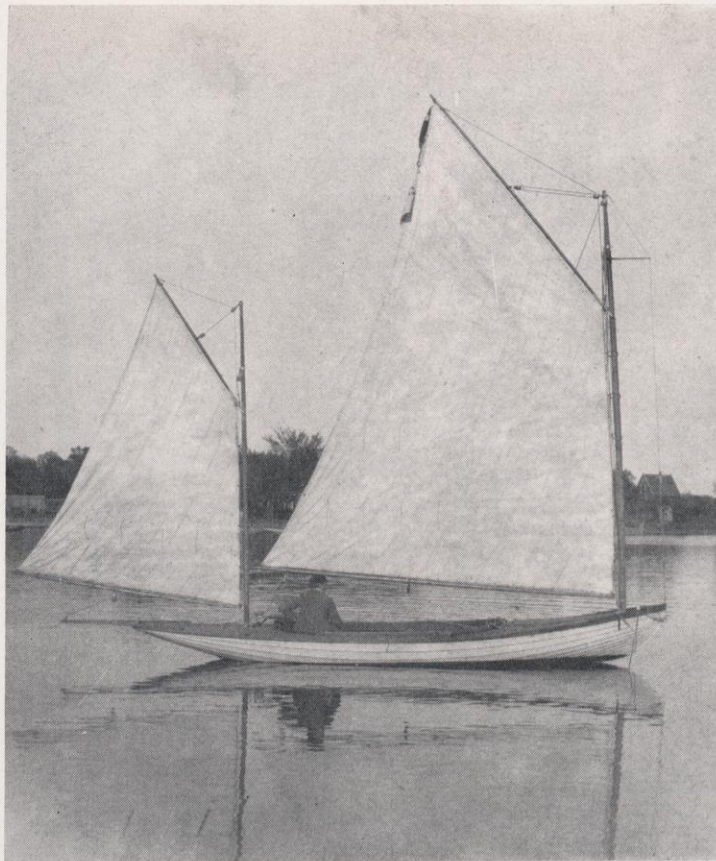
SEC. 3. A Directing Member becomes an Honorary Member on the disposal of his interest in a Squadron Yacht. A Resident Honorary Member becomes a Directing Member on the purchase of an interest in a Squadron Yacht.

## ARTICLE V

### OFFICERS

SEC. 1. The officers shall consist of a Commodore, a Vice-Commodore, Secretary and Treasurer, a Measurer, and a Regatta Committee of three, and each officer except the Measurer must be a Directing Member.





Pennant, R. H. Larson photograph

Left: *Nethla*, Nodaway Class yacht. Upper right: Tea Kettle Club Pennant. Lower right: *Yosida*, the sailboat that started the Nodaway Yacht Club.



## ARTICLE IX

## OFFENCES AND THEIR PUNISHMENTS

SEC. 1. Failure to pay dues for ten days after notification by the Treasurer, unless the member is absent or sick or excused by the Directors, suspends such member from the Club and a further delay of ten days renders such member liable to expulsion at any regular meeting.

SEC. 2. Persistent or malicious breaking of the rules or conduct unbecoming a gentleman are sufficient causes for expulsion at any meeting on a two-thirds vote.

## ARTICLE X

## RIGHTS OF VOTING

When two or more Directors own one yacht, such yacht is entitled to one vote, the voting delegate being appointed by the owners in a regular preferred order and such list reported in writing to the Secretary. Said voting member shall be subject to full dues, while each other owner of the yacht shall be an Honorary Member and subject to an Honorary Member's dues. . . .

## ARTICLE XII

## DUES

SEC. 1. The dues for Directing Members shall be \$4 for initiation fee and monthly dues from May to October inclusive \$1 per month in advance.

SEC. 2. The dues for Honorary Members shall be \$2 for initiation fee; monthly dues from May to October inclusive, 50 cents per month in advance.

SEC. 3. Where money accumulates in the treasury in excess of the probable needs of the Club the monthly dues may be remitted by a majority vote of the Club, or a rebate may be made at the close of the year.

## ARTICLE XIII

## EXPENDITURES

SEC. 1. No extravagant expenditure shall be entered into by the Club, viz., no expenditure exceeding the amount in the treasury.

SEC. 2. When an extravagant expenditure seems desirable it may be entered into only where a voluntary contribution has been paid in to the Treasurer and in raising such subscription no pressure is to be brought to bear on any member.



SEC. 3. A member's financial duties are at an end when his regular dues are paid.

## ARTICLE XVII

### CHAMPION PENNANT

SEC. 1. A Champion Pennant in each class shall be sailed for each year. . . .

SEC. 2. The yacht of its class having the highest score at the end of the season shall receive the class pennant as a souvenir. . . .

SEC. 3. The score for the winning yacht is 4 points. The score for the second yacht is 2 points. The score for the third yacht is 1 point.

Other Articles enumerated the duties of the officers, defined the Nodaway Class or Club Model, giving its dimensions, described the club flags, and provided for special meetings, amendments, and other pertinent matters.

The sailing rules, given in considerable detail, were, in general, similar to those in force today. One important provision specified five classes, ranging in size from the Nodaway Class to a boat with a 35-foot waterline.

Certain regulations, which applied to Nodaway regattas exclusively, have a historical interest, and because they show that this code, too, was kept in line with the club's goal, a few of them are quoted here.

## SAILING RULES

### RULE VI

#### NODAWAY RULE

(a) No person who has ever raced a yacht for hire shall sail a yacht in the Nodaway Regattas.

(b) This rule applies only to yachts whose sailing length is 35 feet or less.

(c) In all Regattas, each yacht must be steered by the owner or the appointee of the Club.

### RULE IX

#### CREW, FITTINGS AND BALLAST

Yachts contending for prizes may carry one man for each four feet of length on water-line, or fractional part thereof. [This provision was included to dispense with a time allowance schedule.] Each yacht must

bring back the same crew and ballast with which it started. No water shall be started from or taken into the tanks after the preparatory signal has been given. Only the usual anchors and chains shall be carried during a race, and they must not be used as shifting ballast, nor for altering the trim of the yacht. Ballast shall not be shifted or trimmed in any way whatever nor outriggers used during a race. Bailing or pumping of water will be permitted. [The various bans noted above were explicitly stated because they represented a break with the old order, which countenanced more liberal racing practices.]

## RULE X

No means of propulsion except sails shall be employed.

A mixed reception greeted both the aims and the by-laws of the Nodaway Yacht Club, especially those advocating and providing for class dimensions and club economy. Some people approved, others looked on with indulgence, and many were skeptical. But with the passage of time all had to agree that the members adhered strictly to their principles. After the October 7, 1894, meeting, Secretary Wright recorded: "On account of the surplus in the treasury it was agreed to remit the entrance fees of the honorary members who joined too late in the season to derive any benefits of the club." The following brief financial statement shows the size of the surplus referred to:

Receipts for 1894	\$99.50
Disbursements	73.25
	<hr/>
Surplus	\$26.25

Frequently the initiation fees for honorary members were waived, and in 1896 all dues for this class were again remitted. Such action placed a curb on spending, for according to Article XIII in the by-laws the balance in the treasury could regulate expenditure.

Since costly prizes also were discouraged in the Articles of Association, the by-laws provided for pennants instead of cups. Whenever cups were offered for prizes, either they were presented to the club as gifts or their purchase price was raised by private subscription.

A plush club life never figured in the plans of the Nodaway founders. There was no clubroom; meetings were held in the home or office of one member or another. Club "uniforms," voted on May 16, 1896, consisted of a distinctive cap (Hempstead Bay Club style) with a ribbed band bearing a club pin or emblem. Each member paid for his own, though they were purchased through the club.

This emphasis on economy and the class-dimension yacht drew attention to the club in yachting circles far beyond Lake Winnebago. Publicity went out to certain metropolitan dailies in Wisconsin and to national yachting magazines. Editorial response showed interesting contrasts in the reaction of the press. One newspaper, under a Milwaukee dateline, commented somewhat skeptically:

Its [Neenah's] club is organized on lines very unusual in such bodies. As a usual thing the matter of expense cuts no figure in yachting. But with the Nodaway Club economy is strictly enforced. In the articles of incorporation it was set forth that one of the objects of the club was "to discourage extravagant expenditures in this revival of yachting, both in the matter of outbuilding and in the matter of prizes." Later on it was provided in the by-laws that no extravagant expenditure should be entered into by the club exceeding the amount in the treasury. It was further provided that when any unusual expenditure was deemed necessary it should be met by voluntary contributions, to which any member might contribute or not as he saw fit.

It was one of the hobbies of the organizers that in the club races the conditions should be as equal as possible, leaving the predominating factor of success, the skill and seamanship of the skipper of the winning boat, and to do this a certain type was necessary. This was found in a single-handed cruiser designed for the club by Hepburn. . . .

In contrast, the editor of *Rudder*, the leading professional magazine, ignored the economy measures completely and considered class dimensions much more than a hobby. The following paragraph appeared on the editorial page of his magazine:

Somewhere in this number there is a communication from the Nodaway Yacht Club, a new organization that has its sailing ground on a



Western Lake. I want you all to read it, as it is in line with what I have been preaching for sometime. It is an old idea, the one class—one design, but I tell you boys, it is the right one, if we want to make the sport of yacht racing what it should be.

Time, as everyone knows, has proved the class idea right beyond the shadow of a doubt, from both the point of view of equal racing conditions and the economy angle.

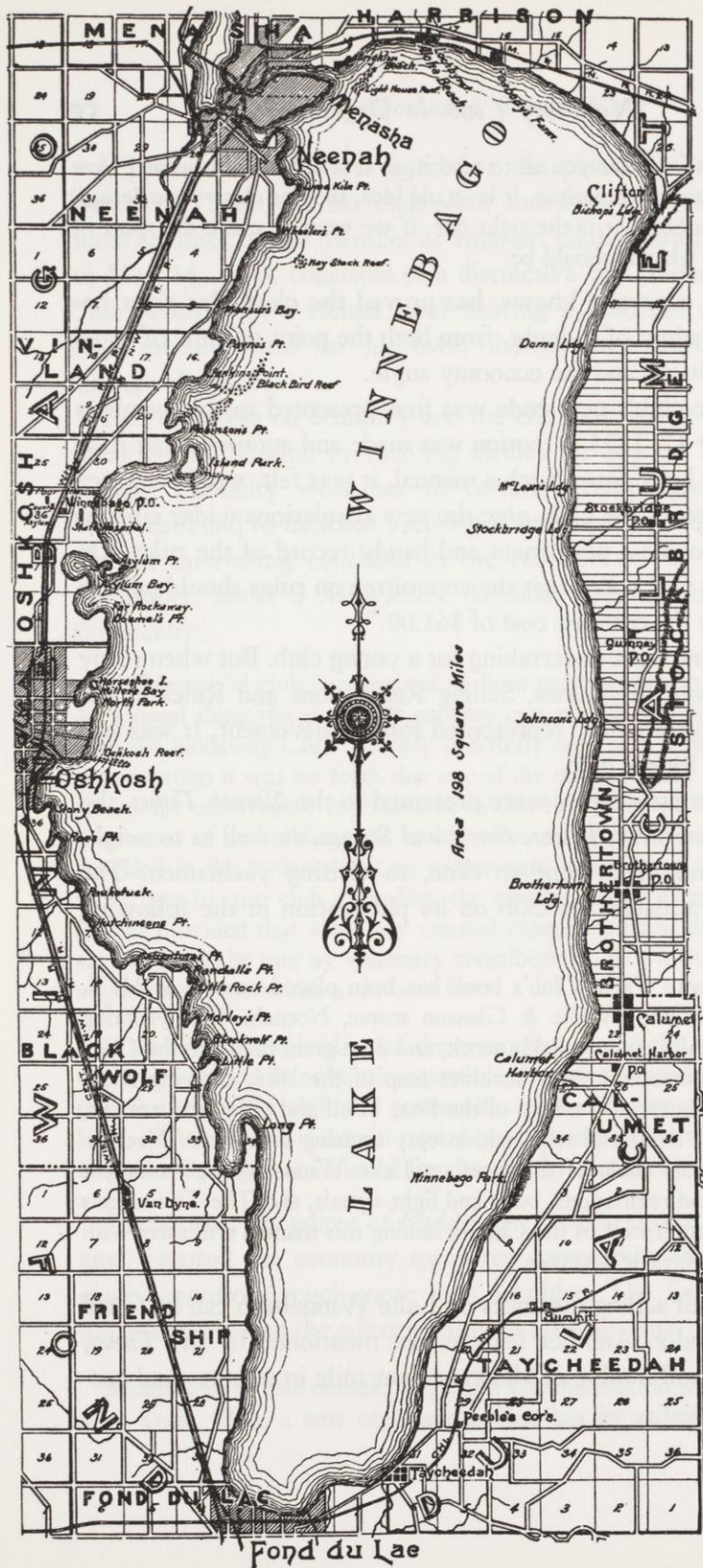
When the club's new code was first presented to the members on February 17, 1895, a motion was made and approved that it be published in book form. Such a manual, it was felt, would enhance the reputation of the club, give the new regulations wider circulation, and provide a permanent and handy record of the rules. On March 16 it was voted that the committee on rules should publish the book "at the extreme cost of \$65.00."

This was no light undertaking for a young club. But when ready for circulation, "By-Laws, Sailing Regulations and Rules of the Nodaway Yacht Club" represented solid achievement. It was still another first for the club.

Complimentary copies were presented to the *Neenah Times*, the *News*, *Northwestern*, *Breeze*, *Forest and Stream*, as well as to neighbor clubs and, from time to time, to visiting yachtsmen. The *Times* congratulated the club on its publication in the following paragraph:

The Nodaway Yacht Club's book has been placed on sale at M. E. Barnett & Co. and Wildie & Gleason stores, Neenah. This yachting manual is a really commendable work, and does great credit to the Club. The manual contains a very accurate map of the lake, showing reefs, points and harbors; also a map of the Fox, Wolf and tributary streams, showing many delightful trips within easy cruising distance of Neenah. Also an accurate table of distances on Lake Winnebago, government sailing rules and regulations, buoy and light signals, etc. The *Times* feels sure that the enterprise of the Club in issuing this manual will meet with the encouragement it deserves.

The table of sailing distances on Lake Winnebago can be found in the Appendix. Another feature, not mentioned by the *Times*, gave Herreshoff's table of allowance per mile in minutes and seconds.



Map of Lake Winnebago, from the Nodaway Club's book of by-laws and sailing rules.



The treasurer's report for 1895, given in part below, shows that the publisher's bills exceeded the "extreme cost of \$65.00"; later sales, however, more than made up the difference.

May 22	Book a/c	Binding	\$16.90
		Express & collection	1.00
		Sim & Co. plates	5.00
		Printing	30.00
		Map	5.00
		Sim bill	28.75
		100 extra	6.00
			34.75
			<hr/>
			92.65
		less rebate	3.75
			<hr/>
			\$88.90

The extraordinary record chalked up by this small group of young sailors before their second racing season shows the enterprise, determination, and careful planning that characterized their work. Within little more than a year they had organized a yacht club on entirely new principles, drawn up by-laws and sailing rules to make those principles effective, assembled a fleet, conducted a successful racing season, received recognition as a yacht-racing club, and published an impressive manual. And in addition they had won not only the admiration of their friends but even the respect and support of erstwhile critics.

A local paper, looking ahead to the coming season, hoped that "this is only the beginning of a yacht club that will make our lake the headquarters for the best sport in the state." Prophetic words and true.





## *The Nodaway Yacht Club Wins the Felker Cup*

**EVEN** before its first anniversary the Nodaway Club began to broaden its interests and activities. Its first membership drive added over thirty names to its rolls, some recruits new to the sport, others veterans. Among the former were J. P. Roberts, who presented the club with a challenge flag his first season; Lyall J. Pinkerton, for several years its secretary-treasurer and later its commodore; and S. F. (Frank) Shattuck, who in his more than fifty-five years with the club served as its vice commodore, commodore, and, either as chairman or member, on its regatta committee. He named four of his racers *Onaway*, one of the names first suggested for the club. Among the veteran skippers who joined at this time was Will Davis, that stormy petrel of the lake whose presence always foretold excitement and often a tempest.

Increased membership brought new boats into the fleet, and some of the old ones changed hands. The *Ysleta* became the joint property of W. Z. Stuart and J. C. Kimberly; Lyall J. Pinkerton purchased the *Nethla*, and H. K. Babcock, the *Yosida*. Of the new craft Frank Shattuck's *Uarda* and J. P. Roberts's *Wauwataysa* entered club contests regularly. The sensation, however, was the *Nirvana*, a sloop purchased by W. Z. Stuart and J. C. Kimberly.

Two new prizes were donated to the club in 1895, the J. P. Roberts challenge flag and a silver plaque presented by Mrs. J. A. Kimberly, Jr. In 1897 the Ladies Industrial Society gave a championship pennant for the Nodaway Class races. The silver trophy is still sailed for each summer and is now the oldest prize in the club's collection.

Interest in Nodaway Class races snowballed, and good crowds followed the contests around the course in steam yachts and numerous lighter craft. The annual series of catyawls races, with an open



*Nirvana*, the first "skimming dish" on Winnebago and the 1895 winner of the Felker Cup.





contest on July 4, continued for several years and proved its value as a training school. For the first three years J. C. Kimberly took most of the prizes. In 1897, when he was in Europe with his bride, first place went to James H. Wright in *Verona*.

The final Nodaway race that season set a record of sorts, which still stands. In spite of unusually heavy seas, the whole fleet managed to plow its way twice around the triangle without a mishap until it approached the home buoy. Then the *Verona* capsized and, with one exception, the others all ran together and fouled. The single exception was *Uarda*. Skippered by Frank Shattuck, she crossed the line the victor.

But by far the most exciting contests during this period of expansion centered around the new and larger yachts in the club. As already noted, the revised code provided for several classes in addition to the club model, a change that was introduced for those members who wished to try out their skill on a more challenging boat. In 1895, W. Z. Stuart and J. C. Kimberly acquired the *Nirvana*, a Minnetonka model, from White Bear Lake in Minnesota. She was a flat-bottomed sloop with a short stern, an extreme overhang forward, and no bowsprit, designed by Joseph Dingle of St. Paul. She measured 30 feet 6 inches over all and 22 feet at the waterline, with a beam of 8 feet 4 inches and, like the catyawls, a draught of 9 inches without the board. A local paper described her as "an elegant sailing yacht."

Her first official contest on Winnebago was over the Nodaway course in the open race on July 4, 1895, when J. C. Kimberly sailed her to an easy victory. The *Ysleta*, skippered by W. Z. Stuart, came in second and the *Wauwataysa*, with J. P. Roberts, third; the smaller boats were granted the usual time allowance.

Yachtsmen over the lake watched the *Nirvana* with considerable speculation. In Fond du Lac the *Reporter* expressed the desire of the *Minerva's* crew for a match race, and this offhand invitation was accepted as casually as it was given when the *Nirvana* was cruising at the southern end of the lake later in the month. J. C. Kimberly, W. Z. Stuart, C. E. Escott, and E. D. Bergstrom were

sailing her at the time. The race was a walkaway for the Nodaway craft. The *Neenah Times* quoted the story of the match as it appeared in the *Reporter* and added a paragraph of its own:

"Capt. Dittmar of the *Minerva* was agreeable to the proposition of the Neenah visitors and with Capt. Frank McKee in charge and Will F. Rink took the *Minerva* out for the race. The *Nirvana* walked right away from the Fond du Lac boat. And it did it gracefully and easily. The *Minerva* looked as if it were standing still compared with the speed with which the Neenah boat skimmed over the water. The *Minerva* of course was not equipped for racing and the bout with the *Nirvana* this morning is no sign that the Neenah boat is the speediest of the two, but the merits of the *Nirvana* were well shown and emphasize the assertion which has frequently been made that the Fond du Lac boat will have its hands full to hold the cup another season."

The *Reporter* claims that the Fond du Lac yacht was not in racing trim and that the *Minerva* can win in a regular race. The Neenah yacht was also in cruising and not in racing rig, and the *Times* will back the faith that is in it that the *Nirvana* will outstrip the Fond du Lac yacht in fair or foul weather, choppy or heavy sea, rain or sunshine, snow or hail.

The Felker Cup race, sailed on August 31, 1895, settled the question of her superiority once and for all. A clear sky and a good sailing breeze with little sea drew yachting devotees to Oshkosh from all around the lake. Two steamers and numerous other craft carried Neenah and Menasha supporters to the contest. Fond du Lac's *Minerva*, defender of the cup, was the only other competitor; rivals of her former days had been sold off the lake or were no longer racing. Com. Charles W. Felker himself was chief judge, assisted by boat builder Robert Brand and Alton Ripley. George Hasbrouck served as timer.

According to the *Neenah Times*:

The *Nirvana* crossed the line at 1:56:10, getting away very neatly. The course was six miles to leeward and return. Soon after, the *Minerva* bore away after the *Nirvana*. At the rounding of the outer buoy the *Nirvana* had gained two minutes on her competitor, and in the sail to windward she out-footed her rival still more easily. The *Nirvana* came home at 3:33 and was greeted with the tooting of whistles. The *Minerva* finished



at 3:55:08. The time of the *Nirvana* was 1:36:50 and of the *Minerva* 1:51:58, the Neenah yacht winning by 15 minutes 8 seconds.

This victory brought the most famous and best loved yachting prize in the Northwest to the Nodaway Yacht Club in its second year, and for the first time Neenah knew the honor.

One detail not reported in the paper concerned the *Minerva's* departure from the course: she crossed the finish line without giving as much as a nod to judges, rivals, or friends and continued on to her home port. Her crew claimed that according to measurement the *Nirvana* was not in her class. The judges' decision, however, stood. This defeat dealt a fatal blow to the Fond du Lac Yacht Club. When the *Minerva* sailed off to the south and home, the club virtually sailed out of the Winnebago sport.

The following year John A. Kimberly, Jr., Charles A. Babcock, John P. Shiells, and Harry Frambach purchased the 23-foot sloop *Corona* from White Bear Lake. Though somewhat smaller than the *Nirvana*, she was built on similar lines and had the flatter bottom that helped this type skim over the water. When she arrived at Neenah she was already the champion of Minnesota racing; in 1895, after winning the trial contests at White Bear she had gone on to capture the interlake cup in two straight races. For her new owners she won every race she entered on Lake Winnebago in 1896 but one. In that contest the two Kimberly brothers, the only competitors in the free-for-all on July 4, 1896, fought a seesaw battle twice around the Nodaway triangle. The *Nirvana* won by 1 minute 56 seconds, her time, 2:16:1/5.

This family rivalry continued into the Felker Cup race that fall. Again the two Nodaway craft were the only competitors, but sometime prior to this classic the measurement of the *Corona* had been changed, slightly increasing her time allowance. With the additional handicap she won over the *Nirvana*. The Felker Cup changed hands but it still remained within the Nodaway Club and at Neenah.

Without a doubt the victories of the *Nirvana* and *Corona*—and perhaps the presence in Neenah of the Felker Cup—sparked the



enthusiasm for yachting which swept over Winnebago in 1897. In preparation for that season an effort was made early in the spring to draw up regulations to govern lake races. In March, W. Z. Stuart, J. A. Kimberly, Jr., and E. P. Sherry discussed the subject with delegates from Oshkosh and Fond du Lac. Out of this conference came the Winnebago Yacht Racing Association and the adoption of a few primary rules specifying two classes, maximum and minimum racing lengths, and the number of crew. Thus the third aim of the Nodaway founders—a standard code of rules for the lake—was partially realized.

Members of the Oshkosh Club, under their new commodore, L. F. (Frank) Gates, began early to build up a new fleet. A syndicate purchased the *Wasp* from Lake Minnetonka, and Com. Gates bought the unbeaten *Gleaner* from Massachusetts. The *Gleaner* held the New England championship and Gates expected to clean up with her on Winnebago. The *Centipede* also joined the Oshkosh fleet at this time.

At the northern end of the lake, Will Davis joined with Frank A. Leavens and Charles H. Brown to purchase the *Kathleen* from Minneapolis. According to a Neenah journal, she was a “speedy fin-keeler yacht,” 31 feet over all, 23 feet on the waterline, 8 feet at the beam, and sloop-rigged, with 670 square feet of canvas. She was designed by Sam Stickney of St. Paul and the preceding season on White Bear had defeated the crack Herreshoff model *Alfreda*. With the *Kathleen* and the *Corona*—the *Nirvana* was sold off the lake that year—the Nodaway Club prepared to meet the new challenge from the south.

The Winnebago Yacht Racing Association arranged a season’s schedule of six races to be sailed alternately at Neenah and Oshkosh. But the excitement began even before the series got under way. At the trial heats at Oshkosh the Saturday before the opening, the *Kathleen* alone dared the stiff breeze and rough sea. Her challenge to local skippers went unheeded, so she made a short run close-rigged and departed the winner. The Oshkosh *Enterprise* publicly denounced the local yachtsmen responsible for this “disgrace” in a scathing rebuke. It read in part:

Johnnie Dickinson must have turned over in his grave Saturday when a craft from out of town was skipping around the lake daring the local fleet to send out a yacht to defend the city and its reputation for dead-game sportsmen. It was a sight that would make the old school of Winnebago tars seasick. A race was set for Saturday afternoon, but the wind was too strong for the old maids who own the Oshkosh boats and they clung to the wharf, evidently afraid of taking the creases out of their pantaloons or getting their pretty belts wet. They claim they were not ready, but the *Centipede* got ready just about the time the wind began to moderate. The *Gleaner* could have been put in shape in twenty minutes, and she was the only boat the Neenah boys wanted a chance at. There is every indication that the stiff breeze and white caps took the nerve out of the sissies. . . .

Oshkosh sailors were decidedly nettled, if not angered, by this lacing. A Neenah paper quoted the article in its entirety and the Nodaways were jubilant. So at the very outset emotion cracked on the sails, and it was never allowed to subside. All during that summer sports columns bristled with good-natured joshing as well as with taunts that were meant to sting.

As the season progressed, the real contest proved to be between the two Nodaway yachts, the *Corona* and the *Kathleen*, with the *Gleaner* of Oshkosh taking third place. Hundreds of loyal supporters followed the two fleets, first to one city and then to the other, gathering on the shore or crowding every available steamer or the smaller boats to watch the races on the lake.

Scoring was by the point system, with 100 for first place, 50 for second, and 25 for third. At the end of the third race the *Corona* was leading with 250 points, *Kathleen* had 200, *Gleaner*, 50, and *Wasp*, 25. Interest in the contests by now was widespread. The Milwaukee *Sentinel* carried the story of that race under bold headlines: "KATHLEEN THE WINNER" "Imported Yacht *Gleaner* . . . Over Twenty Minutes Behind. . . ." The Oshkosh yachtsmen had counted heavily on the *Gleaner* and were considerably ruffled by her repeated failures. Even with such experienced captains as Robert Brand and Jimmie Jones in command, she consistently trailed the Nodaway boats. The reason was to be found in her deep hull. Her type was no match for the flatter-bottomed boats designed especially for fresh-water sailing.



Before the next contest an Oshkosh syndicate, headed by Frank H. Libby, acquired a new entry, the *Elk* from White Bear Lake. There, as *Corona II*, she had already beaten the best boats in the Northwest. She was shipped direct to Green Lake and won the challenge cup here before arriving at Oshkosh. This addition inflated Oshkosh hopes again, but it also stiffened the determination in Neenah to win. Larger than either Neenah yacht or any of the other Oshkosh craft, she had to give them all time allowance. The fourth race in the series and the Felker Cup contest were scheduled for August 21, the former in the morning and the latter in the afternoon. The *Elk* entered both.

Fair skies, a good sailing breeze, and a bitter row made the day memorable. Hundreds of people went over from Neenah, Menasha, and Appleton to back the Nodaway yachts, and Oshkosh supporters turned out in even greater number. A holiday had been declared in Oshkosh and business houses were closed to enable the populace, as one merchant put it, "to see the *Elk* get away with the entire Neenah fleet." Even Fond du Lac was represented by "a new lot of men," and a Fond du Lac yacht, the *Otomie*, arrived as a spectator. Scores of lake craft dotted the harbor, including steamers from Neenah, Menasha, Green Bay, Appleton, Portage, Fond du Lac, and Oshkosh. Admirers of the various yachts wore the insignia of their favorite, some white, some yellow, others, blue, and for the followers of the Irish boat, as many called the *Kathleen*, green.

All seven entries reported for the lake championship race in the morning. The *Corona* was sailed by John A. Kimberly, Jr., Harry Hewitt, Charles Babcock, Harry Frambach, William Kurtz, and Fred Herrick. The *Kathleen's* crew included Will Davis, Will Krueger, Charles H. Brown, George A. Davis, Frank A. Leavens, and Randall Arndt. Dr. Welch of Minneapolis was hired to sail his former boat, the *Elk*, and Jimmie Jones, also hired for the occasion, commanded the *Gleaner* for Frank Gates. The other entries were the *Wasp* and *Centipede* of Oshkosh and the *Vandura* from Milwaukee. The deed of gift for the Felker Cup, which restricted



competition to Winnebago yachts, had recently been amended to open the contest to any American yacht, and this change had brought the *Vanduaara* to these waters.

From the starting signal the race was a duel between the *Elk* and the *Kathleen*. Broken throat halyards early retired the *Vanduaara*; the *Gleaner*, caught in a puff of wind, capsized and the *Corona* immediately came about to rescue her crew. The *Centipede*, hopelessly distanced, dropped out after the first time around. The *Kathleen* led to the first buoy but was then passed by the *Elk* and at the second buoy was two minutes behind. By the next buoy the *Elk* had increased her lead to three minutes. But on the third leg the *Kathleen* outsailed her rival and was only a minute behind at the close. With her time allowance of 58 seconds, she lost to the *Elk* by only two seconds. Will Davis protested and called for a remeasurement of the *Elk*. The judges, Chester Cleveland and Phil Sawyer of Oshkosh and W. M. Gilbert of Neenah, took the matter under advisement but in the end stood by their decision.

Because of the morning tiff, all the more tension and excitement greeted the Felker Cup race in the afternoon. According to a news item the *Vanduaara's* crew had brought along a special box for the celebrated prize while the Oshkosh yachtsmen had made a handsome glass case to hold it.

Full of surprises, the Felker race fittingly climaxed this contentious season. All seven yachts again competed. At the outset, the *Corona's* crew failed to hear the first signal and just happened to come about as the rest of the fleet bore down on the starting line in a body. J. A. Kimberly, Jr., who guessed the meaning of all the activity, made after them in haste and managed to cross the line in the sixth position but to leeward; only *Centipede* trailed him.

Out front the *Elk*, *Kathleen*, and *Gleaner* fought a battle royal for the lead. The *Elk* was slightly ahead and every little burst of speed on her part was greeted with ear-splitting blasts from the whistles on boats carrying Oshkosh partisans. Along the course, steamers belched forth black clouds of smoke as they plowed through the lake under full head to make each buoy in time to witness positions.

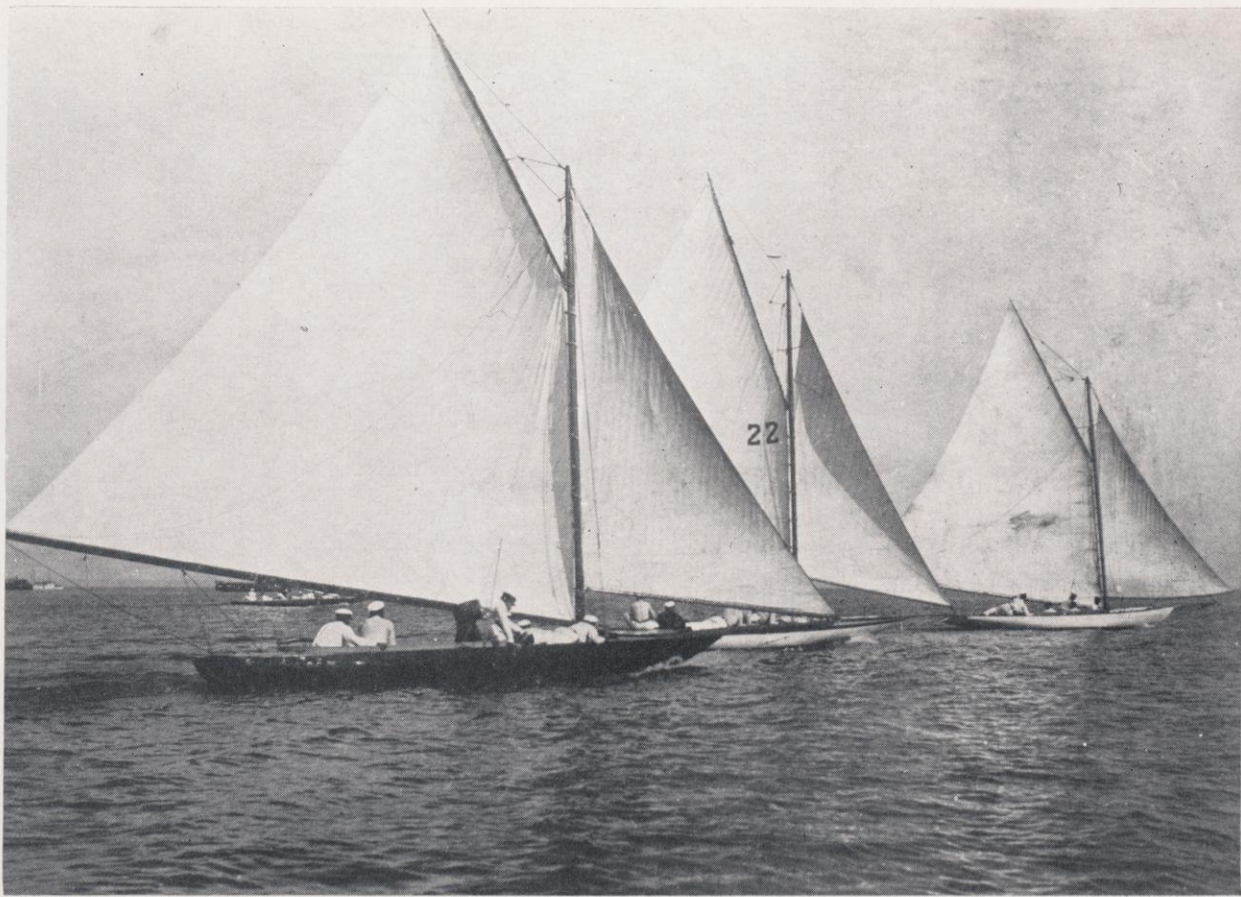
As the vanguard of the fleet rounded the second buoy, both yachts and men seemed to conspire for advantage. Spectators concentrated on the maneuvers to see who would gain or lose at the turn, and no one missed the *Corona* until suddenly it was noticed that she never made the turn at all but was continuing northward toward Neenah and home. "Quitter" and like epithets were hurled at the captain and his sailing. Unaware of the consternation among his supporters behind him, J. A. Kimberly, Jr., kept his northerly course for about two miles. Then coming gracefully about, closer to the shore, he caught a heavier wind and bore down with a straight single tack to the starting point. He reached the home buoy two minutes ahead of the *Elk*, and with almost a free run ahead of him. The Neenah contingent was beside itself. John Stevens let loose the screecher on the *Cambria*, and whistles from the *Mystic*, *Mocking Bird*, *Anna M.*, and *Bernice* added to the din. The course, however, was only half covered. At first Kimberly continued to widen the gap between the *Corona* and the others and then he steadily lost ground. On the last leg the *Corona*, *Elk*, and *Kathleen* started a larboard tack together, side by side, but when they came about for the run home, the *Elk* held the flow of vantage and made the most of it.

Just at this point Jimmie Jones at the tiller of the *Gleaner* was spied racing for the finish line from a different direction, and for a few moments it appeared as if he too would beat the Nodaway entries to the finish. All that prevented him was a drop in the wind.

Amid blasts from whistles on Oshkosh steamers, the *Elk* crossed the finish line first at 5:53:48; *Kathleen* came in second at 5:55:09; *Corona*, third at 5:55:30; and *Gleaner*, fourth at 5:56:00, followed by *Wasp* and *Vanduaara*; *Centipede* did not finish. But the wild ovation given the *Elk* proved premature. Handicap time had yet to be considered, and the *Corona's* allowance of 3 minutes and 23 seconds gave her the race by something over a minute. She had successfully defended her right to the Felker Cup, and the Nodaway Club could celebrate a victory for the third consecutive year.

Immediately after the races the press of both cities paid brief





Felker Cup race of 1897, showing the *Wasp*, *Kathleen*, and *Corona* (winner).





homage to the social amenities. An Oshkosh paper commended J. A. Kimberly, Jr., and his crew for their good sportsmanship and "magnanimous action" in leaving the morning race to go to the aid of the capsized *Gleaner*. And in Neenah the reporter who described the reception held at the new Oshkosh clubhouse dealt only in superlatives: the visitors were entertained "in a right royal manner"; "nothing was too good for them"; "refreshments were of the finest"; and "the Neenah sailors are profuse in their thanks for their handsome treatment." But below the surface, grievances, whether real or imagined, long continued to rankle.

Will Davis, who had questioned the measurement of the *Elk* after the morning race, now widened the breach by claiming that the *Elk* had deliberately fouled the *Kathleen* in the Felker contest. Charges and countercharges, disavowals and contradictions filled the air. Local newspapers took up the quarrel, and the Oshkosh *Enterprise*, overzealous in its support of the defeated club, provoked a Neenah paper into the following defense:

The Oshkosh *Enterprise*, as the mouthpiece for the Oshkosh yachtsmen, doesn't like the way the Twin City papers applauded the *Corona's* victory last Saturday and tries to be smart by saying untruthful and unsportsmanlike things about the Neenah boats, etc. To begin with it says that Oshkosh has three boats that can beat the *Corona*. Why not make it four and ring in the *Centipede* also. The *Corona* has been sailing all around the whole Oshkosh fleet all summer. The next assertion made is that Capt. Davis is playing the baby act in asking for a remeasurement. If it is playing the baby act to kick when you are getting cheated that's all right. But when it says that the *Kathleen* fouled the *Elk* they are all wrong. 'Twas the other way, boys, and we can prove it by unprejudiced witnesses. And now a word about the *Elk* and Doc Welch. If the Neenah yachtsmen had so wished they could have had that boat thrown out of the race for two different reasons. First—For maliciously fouling the *Kathleen* in the Felker event after being warned in advance. Second—If measured correctly she should be thrown out of the class.

This yacht had been measured twice, once before the Saturday races when the Neenah yachtsmen were present and later again after they had gone home. It was the last measurement that allowed the *Kathleen* 58 seconds time. The first measurement was the one that should have been

used and by that the *Kathleen* won the morning race by five seconds. Official Measurer Brand acknowledged this yesterday in conversation with the Neenah yachtsmen. This is their reason for protesting the race. There was no need for a second measurement of the *Elk*—except of course to “fix” things to suit Oshkosh. The Neenah boys dislike being played horse with and demand a fair deal, hence their protest and request for a third measurement when someone besides Oshkosh parties is present.

Mrs. Will Davis reportedly found seventeen inches more than was figured Saturday in the measurement of the *Elk*, and the Neenah faction was confident that the judges would change their minds. But the decision stood and the feud continued. According to newspaper accounts, Will Davis suggested to the *Elk*'s owners that the differences be settled by another race, the measurement of the *Elk* to be settled beforehand. The owners replied that “they were not disposed to reckon a difference of two seconds as a dead heat.” Some Oshkosh sailors, however, approved the idea but attached a condition that a \$500 purse be raised for the winner. No action was taken on either suggestion and the *Kathleen*'s backers continued to voice their claims to her superiority.

Finally, on September 14, a proposition to end all propositions was reported in an Oshkosh paper: “The continued bragging of the owners of the yacht *Kathleen* of Neenah has induced the owners of the *Elk* of this city to issue a sweeping challenge as follows: The Oshkosh yachtsmen will cover any amount deposited by the Neenah parties, the winner to take the entire stakes and both boats.” The Green Bay *Advocate* commented: “If Neenah accepts this challenge it will be the hottest boat race ever sailed on Lake Winnebago.”

A group of Neenah yachtsmen accepted the challenge but made certain stipulations; to wit, Nodaway rules to apply in the best two out of three races to be sailed over the Nodaway triangle, twice around, on consecutive days in September barring Sundays; each club to elect a judge and these together choose a third, and the helmsman of each yacht to be a resident member of the respective club. The contest was never held.



The last two races of the season's series, though interesting, provided only anticlimax. The *Elk* did not participate in the fifth because the controversy over her measurement was still raging, and in the sixth she was disqualified for failing to round a buoy.

When the scores for the six races were totaled, the *Kathleen*, with 400 points, was declared the lake champion. The *Corona* placed second with 350, and the *Gleaner*, third with 125. The Nodaways now held not only the Felker Cup but also the lake championship.

That the caustic attacks from both sides in the *Elk* affair did not seriously corrode the ties between the two clubs is evident from the joint action taken even before the end of that season. On October 11, 1897, a meeting of the Winnebago Yacht Racing Association was held at Oshkosh. W. Z. Stuart, J. C. Kimberly, and Will Davis represented the Nodaway Club and Robert and William Brand, Frank Gates, William McCoy, Jimmie Jones, and Ted Lampel, the Oshkosh Club. Robert Brand was elected president and W. Z. Stuart, secretary.

This joint committee adopted for a two-year period the rules for classification and measurement then in effect but added certain restrictions. To forestall any such wrangle as that which had just occurred, they drew up explicit regulations for measuring, so detailed that one provision required the measurers to determine the length of the waterline of each yacht (with a stated load) and fix a distinctive mark at both ends of it. In an effort to dispense with time allowance, new rules narrowed the choice for the racing length of yachts new to lake competition from 22-26 feet to 25-26 feet. But the most significant regulation of all stipulated that after 1899 "every boat sailing in this class shall be considered of equal dimensions and no time allowance will be taken into consideration." At last necessity was compelling even the skeptics to adopt the principle of equal racing conditions advocated four years earlier by the Nodaways.

*Rivalry Splits the  
Nodaway Club*

**BEFORE** the new rules of the Winnebago Association could be given a trial, the rise of the Inland Lake Yachting Association, sponsoring interlake competition, pushed Winnebago rivalries into the background. Interlake contests were not new in the Winnebago area, but heretofore they had been confined largely to clubs on neighboring lakes and were only sporadic. The Inland Lake Association, formed at White Bear Lake in Minnesota on August 24, 1897, aimed to broaden the field through a union of yacht clubs in Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Illinois. Clubs on the smaller lakes were quick to realize that membership in the Association would broaden their schedules and enlarge their battlefield. The Green Lake Club that first year presented it with a challenge cup for first-class yachts.

The Nodaway Club did not join the new organization immediately because, like the Minnetonka Club, it objected to the proposed handicap rules. Later, on March 26, 1898, after John A. Kimberly, Jr., reported on the second Inland meeting, it voted to become a member.

The first major concern of the Inland Lake Association was to find a boat which would favor no member club. The choice fell on a design of the Seawanhaka Club in New York. This yacht was similar to those in use in the Northwest but had a shorter waterline and a more pronounced belly. Two classes were adopted: first-class requirements specified a 20-foot waterline, a sail area of 500 square feet, and a crew allowance of 600 pounds; second-class, a 17-foot waterline, a sail area of 350 square feet, and a crew allowance of 450 pounds. Boats in either class were permitted a four-man crew. An open class, with a sail area of 500 square feet, provided for the old yachts.

At the first Inland regatta, held at White Bear Lake in August,

1898, eight yachts competed, three in the first class and five in the second. The only entry from Lake Winnebago was the *Iota*, a new boat designed for Edgar P. and Phil H. Sawyer of Oshkosh by Dr. Welch. The Nodaway Club again sent J. A. Kimberly as its delegate. Lucian P. Ordway of White Bear, a promoter of the Inland and one of the ablest sailors in the Northwest, entered the *Mahto*, a new boat built by Gus Amundson. It was one of the earliest scows in the area and as the winner of this regatta became the first champion of the Inland Association. *Zenia*, also of White Bear, won the second-class contest.

That fall the Oshkosh Yacht Club invited Inland yachts to Winnebago to compete in the Winnebago championship races. Eleven boats entered from seven clubs. The *Kathleen* and *Tarpon*, a new Kimberly boat, came from Neenah; the *Pistakee*, from Pistakee Lake, Illinois; the *Cutty Sark*, from Milwaukee; the *Pleasant Point*, from Green Lake; the *Gadfly*, from Fox Lake, Illinois, and the *Avis*, skippered by William Hale Thompson, from Oconomowoc. The *Gleaner*, *Elk*, *Wasp*, and *Iota* represented the Oshkosh Club. The *Avis* and *Iota* took all the competition into their own hands, and the *Avis* won every race, including the Felker Cup contest.

With the prospect of this Inland Lake fleet on Winnebago, the Nodaway Club planned a regatta to be held at Neenah after the Oshkosh races were over. A neat invitation, with the club ensign in color on the cover, was sent to Inland owners of first-class yachts and carried an offer to tow visiting yachts to and from Neenah. Local citizens presented a silver trophy cup as prize, a beautiful piece of ware made by Peacock of Chicago, with enameled signals on the sides. Yachts were entered from Pine and White Bear lakes, Oconomowoc, Chicago, Milwaukee, Oshkosh, and Neenah. The regatta was never held.

The second Inland regatta was scheduled for August 14-19, 1899, at Oshkosh. Lake Winnebago could easily accommodate as large a fleet as the Association could assemble and yachtsmen from White Bear to Milwaukee began early to confer with their build-



ers. Competition among the builders was every bit as keen as it was among the sailors, for every builder stood to gain or lose in prestige as well as in business by the victory or the defeat of his boat. The unprecedented interest in the sport this year set off a building boom which surpassed anything the region had ever known. White Bear, the acknowledged yacht-building center of the Northwest, was deluged with orders. Gus Amundson, Johnny Johnson, Ramaley, and, in Oshkosh, Jones & La Borde all found their facilities inadequate or taxed to the utmost. Peterson of Minnetonka and Palmer of Fox Lake in Illinois established new yards. Locally the Menasha Boat Works was doing a brisk business. As it happened, every new first-class yacht that season came from a different yard and no two were exactly alike. All were scows but specifications allowed considerable latitude in design. Builders were free to experiment as long as they held to the 20-foot waterline.

Another reason for the unparalleled activity at this time was the advent of the scow as a likely racer. Johnny Johnson of White Bear once said that in his opinion the real idea for the racing scow came from the *Alfreda*, a yacht built by Herreshoff in 1896 for Milton Griggs of the White Bear Club. It was designed with ribs extending across the bottom, canoe fashion, and without a keel. The following year Duggan's *Dominion*, also built with the canoe feature of rib construction and to Seawanhaka specifications, made its debut in Canada and successfully competed for the famed Seawanhaka-Corinthian Cup. She was a strange-appearing craft with twin hulls and a squared prow and stern. In 1898, Charles A. Reed of the architectural firm of Reed & Stem (which later built Grand Central Station in New York) used the canoe idea in a new design. Lucian P. Ordway immediately commissioned Ramaley to build him a boat on Reed's design. He named her the *Yankee* and tried her out with great success on White Bear against his *Mahto*, another new scow. Johnny Johnson considered the *Yankee* the first successful racing scow. She was the same size as the *Dominion* but presented a very different appearance, for her prow was pointed and

the shape of her hull was that of the early lake scows which followed her.

Confident that the *Yankee* could win over the *Dominion*, Ordway sought out Duggan. A series of races was scheduled for Lake St. Louis, Dorval, Quebec, in June, 1898. Yachting magazines and eastern papers gave pages of advance publicity to the event and aroused yachtsmen throughout the country, especially in the East. Would the *Yankee* and her fresh-water sailors carry yachting honors into the interior? The East speculated and L. P. Ordway was confident. Of the four races, the *Yankee* won only the second, and that victory proved little, for the *Dominion's* mast snapped soon after the start.

Though the Nodaway Club had only an outsider's interest in this contest, the effects of it were soon felt in Neenah—in fact, by every member of the Inland Association. Among the spectators who attended the races to study the two boats and analyze their performance was Jimmie Jones of Jones & LaBorde of Oshkosh. He and other experts agreed that the flat bottom of the *Yankee* and the long waterline of the *Dominion* when under way could well be exploited further; the double-hull idea of the *Dominion* was discarded as a factor contributing to speed, for when the boat heeled, one of the hulls was out of water.

Within a few days after Jones returned, he combined in a new design what he considered the most promising features of the two and began building the *Argo* for Frank Gates of Oshkosh. Generally speaking, this boat had the deck plan and squared bow and stern of the *Dominion*. The bottom and the turn of the bilges were taken from the *Yankee*, except that the riding edge ran the length of the boat. The *Argo* would never take a prize for beauty but she was to win several for her speed. Her first conquests were over the other members of the Oshkosh fleet.

News of the *Argo* further tensed an already excited sport. Builders, owners, and sailors began speculating anew and reshuffling the chances of the various boats. Every fleet in the Association could show at least one new racer, and some fleets were



entirely new. At this time each club in the Inland was allowed only one entry in each class. Unlimited representation, the authorities thought, would give the host club an unfair advantage over members who had to transport their craft some distance. Trial races, however, within each club offered each skipper his chance, at least theoretically.

This restriction set off an explosion in the Nodaway Club. Will Davis had designed his new scow, the *Aderyn*, himself. In trial matches with his old yacht, the *Kathleen*, it had won handily. He now felt ready to pit his skill as a designer and as a skipper against the best the Inland could offer. John A. Kimberly, Jr., had ordered his new scow from Ramaley, who not only was the builder of the *Yankee* but also had helped sail her at Lake St. Louis. Any contest between the two promised to be close. The question of which boat would represent the club became a burning issue. It split not only the club into factions but even the town.

Two weeks or more before the Kimberly craft arrived, seven races were scheduled to decide the representative. They were never sailed. Before now Davis and the Nodaway founders had disagreed on club policy and he had withheld his dues. Realizing that disciplinary action could be taken against him and that he could not change the offending Inland rule, he skirted both issues. On July 10, only two days before the first match race was to be sailed, he and his followers met and revived the old Neenah Yacht Club. William M. Gilbert was chosen commodore; William Krueger, vice commodore; W. C. Wing, secretary-treasurer; Frank A. Leavens, fleet captain, and John Young measurer. Oshkosh rules were adopted temporarily and a list of eighty-odd members was recorded.

Also meeting on July 10, the Nodaway Club took action on the impasse. It invoked Article IX of the by-laws and voted to expel both Davis and Leavens. The Kimberly *Harpoon*, as the only 20-footer in the club, was then entered for the Inland regatta.

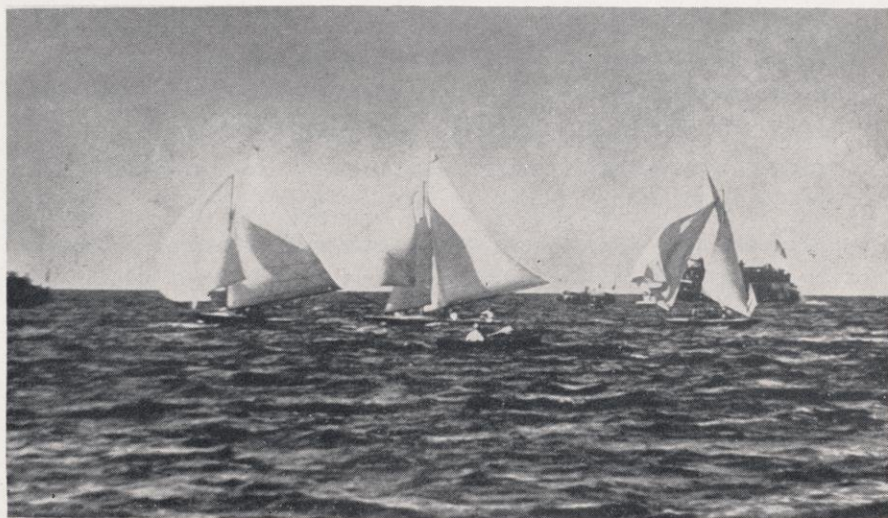






*Anita*, the Inland champion of 1900.

*Anita*, courtesy of Rudder



Felker Cup race of 1899, showing the *Algonquin*, *Argo*, and *Aderyn* (rounding the buoy), the winner.



## *The Neenah Yacht Club Sets the Pace*

*THE* suspense and excitement that prevailed in the boatyards during the spring of 1899 continued unabated straight through the summer races. This season ushered in an era that by and large was paced by Will Davis and his Neenah Yacht Club, ably backed by the Winnebago builders. Because he excelled as both designer and skipper, boatyards as well as yachtsmen were drawn into the hurly-burly of competition which he created. During the season his *Aderyn* and Frank Gates's *Argo* of Oshkosh, the two leaders, gave the sport and the public the most exciting races that Inland members had yet seen.

A five-day regatta sponsored by the Oconomowoc yachtsmen under the leadership of Com. William Hale Thompson opened the season on July 24. Their sailing ground, Lac LaBelle, was a small lake with many shoals to catch the uninitiated. It proved to be a hectic week for all the entries, but especially so for Capt. Davis and his *Aderyn*. Once she capsized, once she lost her centerboard, and twice she got stuck in the mud. Her single victory won him the Dupee Cup. The other honors were so well distributed throughout the fleet that when the regatta ended, the championship was still to be decided. The *Aderyn* and *Argo*, however, were generally conceded to be the star performers.

An Oshkosh paper wasted no time in expressing its opinion of Lac LaBelle as regatta ground. "The idea of holding yacht races at Lac LaBelle," the criticism read, "appears to be nonsensical if not farcical. It is said there is not water enough in the lake to float a scow and that the shoals are so numerous that only an expert Oconomowoc pilot knows how to dodge them." This statement, of course, was an exaggeration, but the argument was legitimate enough. In time the Oconomowoc Club itself gave up racing the larger yachts and concentrated on the smaller ones.



The Inland's own regatta for 1899 was scheduled for Oshkosh from August 14 to 19. This promised to be the largest gathering of Inland members and friends to date, and the local club early formulated its plans for their entertainment. The following excerpt from the Oshkosh *Times* gives the program in some detail under the headline "THE PACE THAT KILLS."

The opening day of the regatta falls on Monday and from that time until the following Saturday Oshkosh will be in gala attire. At 2:30 o'clock the Felker cup race will be started. That will take up the whole afternoon. After the strangers have eaten their evening meal they will gather around the Opera House square and listen to a band concert by the Arion Band which will be hired for the whole week to play where and when the committee instructs them to. On Tuesday morning the visitors will be driven around the city in open carriages. At 2:30 o'clock Tuesday afternoon the first race for the Inland Lake cup will be sailed, which will take up the afternoon. On Tuesday evening they will be given a trolley ride over the lines of the Traction Company. On Wednesday morning as the program now stands a boat ride up the river on Lake Butte des Morts will be the amusement. At 2:30 o'clock in the afternoon of the same day the second race is scheduled. On Wednesday evening the visitors will be taken to the show grounds in a special train of the Traction Company, where a section of reserved seats in the Ringling Brothers circus will be set aside for them. On Thursday morning the yachtsmen will be taken to Neenah over the interurban road. In the afternoon the third race will be sailed. That evening will be the crowning social event of the season. A grand ball will be given in the Century Roller Rink. As many as 500 persons can dance on the floor of this big place and not be crowded at all. To the rear of the building a large tent will be pitched in which refreshments will be served. When the orchestra is not playing in the hall, a mandolin club will play in the tent, while people partake of refreshments. Friday morning the Oshkosh Yacht Club trophy cup race will probably be sailed. Friday afternoon the fourth race, if a fourth is needed, for the Inland Lake cup will be sailed. Friday evening a moonlight excursion on Lake Winnebago on one or two of the big steamers will take the visitors out on the water and show them how our lake looks under the rays of the moon. Saturday afternoon the fifth race, if it is needed, for the cup will be sailed. That will wind up the week so far as is now calculated and if there be anyone who can go through that entire

program and live to tell the tale, they can only tell that up at Oshkosh they trot a pace that kills.

The clubs and their first-class yachts as registered for the regatta included: Minnetonka, *Cherokee*; White Bear, *Cavite*, the sister ship of the *Yankee*; Fox Lake and Pistakee, *Patricia*; Lake Geneva, *Algonquin*; Pine Lake, *Rajah*; Pewaukee, *Momo*; Nodaway, *Harpoon*; Neenah, *Aderyn*; Oshkosh, *Argo*; Lakeside, Fond du Lac, *Iota*; and Milwaukee, *Lassie*. Second-class boats were: White Bear, *Zenia* (the winner); Minnetonka, *Nightingale*; and Fox Lake, *Flying Fox*.

With the Oconomowoc regatta ending in a draw, both yachtsmen and public awaited a decisive contest here at Oshkosh. They did not get it immediately. The first race, for the Felker Cup, was so close that it took the judges four hours to decide who won it. The constant shift in the order of boats during this contest shows how well matched the competitors were. At the first buoy the *Argo*, skippered by Jimmie Jones, led by over three minutes, with *Cavite* second. In the run to windward the yachts divided, and at the second buoy the *Harpoon* took the lead, with *Aderyn* second and *Argo* fourth. Then in a freshened breeze, the *Aderyn* passed the *Harpoon*, and the *Argo*, in a spectacular burst of speed, sailed into second place. On the next leg she overhauled the *Aderyn*. In the run to windward she increased her lead over Davis but was seriously threatened again by the *Harpoon*. And on the last leg, when victory seemed assured, the *Algonquin*, sailing higher and higher, challenged her from another quarter. To meet the new danger, Jones shot his boat up to windward. This move gave Will Davis a clear course ahead on the lee of his rivals, and all three bore down on the finish line side by side. Davis, holding the advantage by virtue of his position next to the buoy, turned sharply and crossed the line only a splash ahead of the other two. A roar went up from the five thousand people ashore and afloat, and the whistle on the Davis *Mocking Bird* blew a blast that left her marooned without steam pressure for fifteen minutes. The host of



friends backing each of the leaders thought that its boat had won. The judges' decision, promised for eight o'clock but not announced until after nine, gave the victory to the *Aderyn* by the slim margin of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  seconds. The Felker Cup now returned to Neenah, this time in the possession of Will Davis.

Good strategy had won the Felker contest for the *Aderyn*, but the *Argo* soon proved herself the superior boat. In the races for the Inland championship which followed, she took three of the four. Her reign, however, was short-lived. Designer Davis planned her overthrow on his way home. To increase the *Aderyn's* speed he decided then and there to raise her gaff, carry the halyards forward to speed up the spinnaker work, and change the centerboard. Later in the month, when the two scows met in the Winnebago championship series, the *Aderyn* easily won all three races. Oshkosh was stunned.

The Nodaway Club *Harpoon* competed in most of the Winnebago races that season, but with limited success. From the very beginning she had disappointed her owners. When she arrived from Minnesota, John A. Kimberly, Jr., turned from the flatcar and would not even unload her. With his permission James C. Kimberly took her over and removed about half the belly. Then he put the mast in the stern and the rudder in the bow. Though improved by these major operations, she never was a match for the faster yachts and was retired to the sidelines.

With the passing of the *Harpoon*, the Nodaway Club decided to trim its sails and ride out the local crisis. Nodaway Class races, which had been allowed to lapse, were revived for a time, and occasionally a second-class boat represented the club at Inland regattas. No local contests were held with the Neenah Club, although both participated in invitation regattas.

This era that was just beginning witnessed significant changes in the scow. As it opened, Will Davis and Jimmie Jones were stressing lightness in their designs, and by producing winners in 1899 they forced the Minnesota yards and others to fall into line; the *Argo*, built with a canvas-covered deck, weighed about three



hundred pounds less than the other Inland boats in her class. As the era closed, steps were taken to retire the "cockleshell" scow and replace it with a new and sturdier model. The history of the intervening years shows some strange experiments with form and dimensions in the search for maximum speed in lake racers.

With the Winnebago yards determined to hold on to their gains and the builders elsewhere trying to recapture their prestige, competition in the spring of 1900 again became hectic—if not mad. A White Bear builder worked behind locked doors. One yachtsman, in his quest for lightness, built his craft of aluminum. It was a light and strong boat, but as it boomed and banged its way through the season it left more noise than laurels in its wake. Will Davis knocked the competition off balance by selling his *Aderyn* to George Brumder of Pine Lake, thereby giving that club a champion. For himself, Davis designed a new boat, the *Anita*. Frank Gates of Oshkosh planned to race his *Argo* again, but he found a new rival within his own club in Com. Frank H. Libby and the *Caroline*.

In general the new craft that season followed the *Argo* and *Aderyn* in design. They had the squared prow and stern which receded sharply from a thin edge, leaving about one-quarter of the hull, fore and aft, out of water. But each designer embodied in his plans ideas of his own which he hoped would produce a winner. Changes incorporated by Will Davis in a second-class model give an idea of the planning and ingenuity that went into a new design. The quotation is from the *Neenah Times*.

The style differs from that of the *Argo* and other crack boats of last year's regatta in that instead of the curved sides extending from the under side of the boat to the over-decking the sides are square. . . . It is expected that the right angle formed by the bottom and side will assist the centerboard in preventing the boat from sailing sidewise. The square corners at the top and bottom of the sides will also permit the boat to get the benefit of the curved sailing part. The bow is square and tapers down from about one-half inch, which will give a longer stretch of the side sailing part. The outside of the bottom of the boat is bowed out, the reverse curve being entirely in the middle.

But the most radical departure in design this season featured the twin-hull idea in the *Caroline*. Jimmie Jones of Jones & LaBorde built this boat for Com. Libby to provide him with something different. A description in a local paper introducing her to the yachting public called her "the 'freakiest' of all 'freak' boats" and then continued:

One look at her is enough to evoke this statement from anyone, be he yachtsman or landsman. She is not a double hulled boat and yet she is. . . . She has the most emphatic "tumble home" sides ever seen on a craft and in a word she looks like two huge cylinders connected with a floor. Whereas all boats of the racing type have convex bows, this one has a concave bow and a like stern.

In manufacturing their boats the builders and their workmen displayed the fine craftsmanship that is more usually associated with cabinetmakers. They skillfully bent, rounded, tapered, and joined their choice woods and then finished them to a satiny smoothness. The bottoms of the boats were hand-rubbed for days.

Many of these scows were too delicate to be left in the water and, like racing shells or canoes, had to be kept on supports or wooden horses on land. Tramways equipped with small cars or trucks which slid down under the boats were installed on the shore. The Oshkosh Club had five such marine railways, as they were called, and during regattas every scow was taken from the lake each evening.

Changes also were made in the sails and rigging during this period. Silk sails, introduced in 1899 by Alf Pillsbury and Will Davis, replaced the traditional canvas. They still carried reef points for two reefs, for reefing was still the rule in a strong wind, but the third line had disappeared; any three-reef breeze would keep this skimming-dish type of boat off Winnebago. The peak of the gaff continued to be carried higher and higher until ultimately it developed into the Marconi rig. The lower boom ran off the stern about five feet, and in some cases it was almost as long as the mast. A spinnaker pole carried a very large spinnaker, which was flown and trimmed on the same side of the mast (a



carry-over from the days of the bowsprit). In 1900, Will Davis introduced the hollow mast on his new *Anita*. His first two broke but the third held.

In the Oshkosh Club in the 1900 season, honors were divided between Com. Libby's *Caroline* and Frank Gates's *Argo*. The *Caroline* won the Oshkosh regatta and the Felker Cup; for the first time since the days of the *Carrie Morgan* this coveted prize now returned to the club of its donor. The *Argo* beat the *Caroline* in the trial races which decided the club representative to the Inland regatta, and at the Oconomowoc races she gained permanent possession of the Green Lake Cup by winning it for two consecutive years. Then she returned to Oshkosh only to find that the commodore's *Caroline* had been chosen to represent the club at the Inland. Feeling that the earlier trial races should be considered final, Frank Gates sold the *Argo* to Pewaukee interests and few blamed him.

The *Argo's* victory at Oconomowoc was almost overshadowed in the news by an extraordinary feat of Will Davis, who was sailing his old *Aderyn* there for her new owner. The *Aderyn* capsized, spilling her crew overboard. Davis righted her single-handed, and, with the jib crashing about unattended, proceeded to rescue his scattered crew. Then with the boat half full of water, he continued on his course and finished the race in the middle of the fleet.

Lake Geneva was the site of the Inland regatta that year. Contestants included the *Caroline*, *Anita*, and *Aderyn*, L. P. Ordway's *St. Paul* of the White Bear Club, and the *Henrietta*, a three-year-old yacht designed by Will Davis which was representing Lake Delavan. Among second-class entries were C. B. Clark's *Tramp* of the Nodaway Club, the *Sox*, sailed by Stephen (Steve) Davis, a son of Will Davis, and Ordway's *Atilla* (the winner). As fast as the yachts arrived by rail or team, tents were pitched along the shore for the out-of-town crews and numbered to correspond with the various boats.

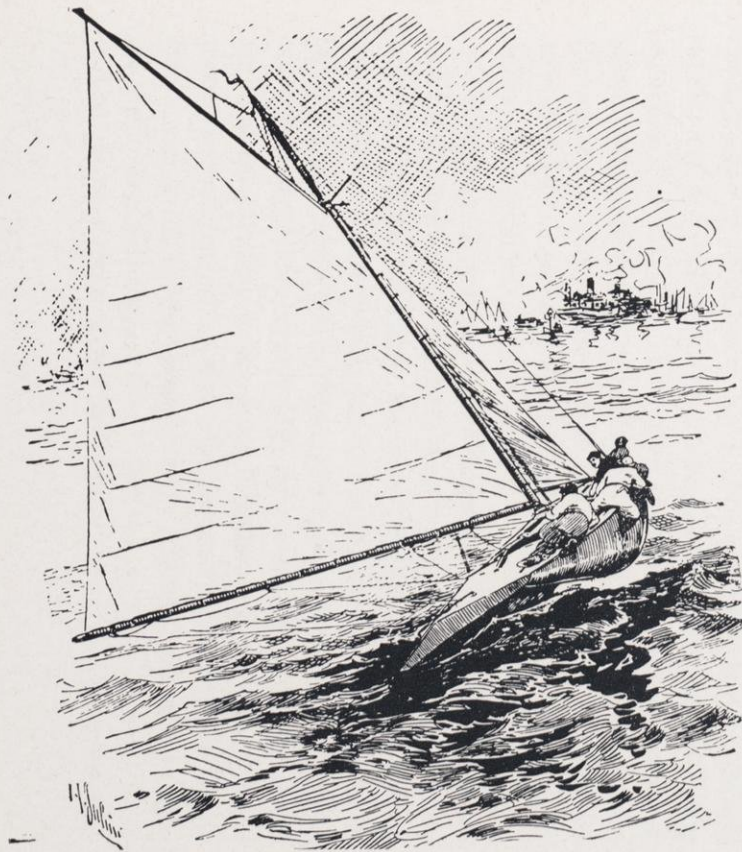
The Lake Geneva course presented visiting sailors who had been used to plenty of elbowroom with something of a problem,



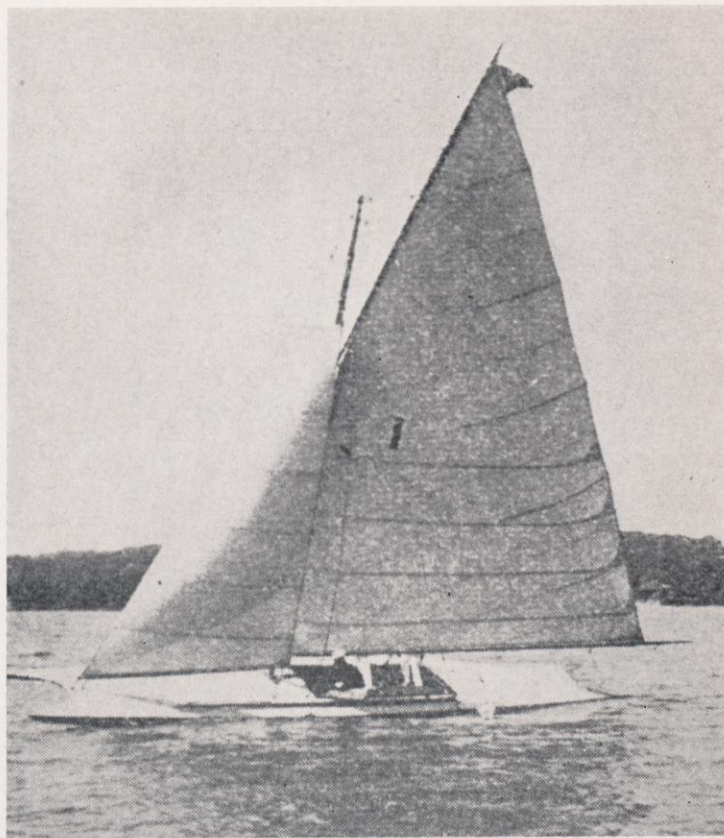
especially the narrow strip of water only about one-half mile wide which connected the two parts. A good stiff breeze on the opening day eliminated most of the competition before the race was half run. The main sheet traveler on the *Caroline* broke, *Anita's* hollow mast carried away, *Algonquin* capsized, *Henrietta's* throat halyard parted, and the lashing at the tack of the jib on the *Harriet H.*, the Pistakee entry, pulled out. The *Aderyn* won. On the second day the three-year-old *Henrietta* took advantage of a favorable slant of wind while her rivals were engaged in a luffing skirmish at one side and crossed the line unchallenged. This victory, though gained under unusual circumstances, gave pause to those who claimed that it took a new boat to win. They readily conceded that the skipper and his skill could tip the balance. The third heat ended in a sharply fought match between Capt. Davis in his *Anita* and Capt. Jones in the *Caroline*, two leading designers and their latest creations. The run was a broad reach, and Jones, gambling on a maneuver to windward of the *Anita*, gave Davis just the kind of opportunity he never failed to grasp. Running higher and higher in the *Anita*, he carried Jones under a bluff and out of the breeze. Will Davis won, but more searoom to windward might have given the victory to Jimmie Jones.

According to an Inland rule at this regatta, the fourth and final heat was restricted to the three previous winners—the *Aderyn*, *Henrietta*, and *Anita*, all Davis hulls but each from a different year. For this race Davis borrowed Jones for the main sheet, where his sensitive touch had already become legendary. The outcome was in doubt until the *Aderyn*, followed closely by the *Anita*, turned for the home stretch. She set her balloon jib and then immediately realized that the spinnaker carried as a balloon jib would serve her better, but too late. Davis cut to her windward and left her in his lee with a foredeck cluttered with collapsing sails. By these two victories, the *Anita* won for him the Inland championship and the Norton Cup.

The rivalry between the two Winnebago scows continued into early September, when the Neenah Yacht Club sponsored the final regatta of the season. The first heat went to the *Anita* by



Drawing of a double-hull yacht.



*Caroline.*

*Caroline*, courtesy of Rudder





forty seconds. The *Caroline* took the second by thirty. The third and last began with a reach and was lost then and there by Davis when he tried to carry a spinnaker in a shifting breeze. Sailing low on the marker, he was forced by a change in the wind into a beat and a pinch to round it. The *Caroline*, sailing high at the time, passed the buoy with no loss in speed and sailed home the winner.

It had been a short but profitable season for the Oshkosh and Neenah clubs. The light Winnebago-built yachts had again captured most of the prizes. But yachtsmen elsewhere in the Inland opposed the trend in yacht design favored by Davis and Jones and proposed to change it.

At the annual meeting of the Inland Association held early in 1901, three issues, stemming in part from the season just closed, confronted the membership: the inadequacies of the smaller lakes for Inland regattas; professional participation in Inland races; and the lightweight scow.

To settle the first problem, the organization voted to hold the annual regatta on Lake Winnebago permanently once it made the circuit of member clubs. Limited or cramped searoom, erratic winds, and a dearth of lodging places justified the change in the minds of the majority. This plan, however, worked better in theory than in practice, for time proved that member clubs needed the regatta to keep up interest in the sport. About 1920 another vote added Minnetonka, Mendota, and Geneva to Winnebago as Inland regatta lakes.

The subject of professional participation in the Inland races involved the builders. They had been serving as captain or crew members on their creations for years. With competition among them as keen as it then was, one can understand their reluctance to entrust a new boat—and perhaps their reputation—to hands which were considered less capable than their own. Nevertheless it was voted at this meeting to bar from Inland racing all who received monetary gain from the sport. The new rule marked the end of an Inland career for Jimmie Jones, Johnny Johnson, and others in the yacht-building business.

The problem created by the current trend to “paper weight

boats" (to quote a St. Paul paper) also called for drastic action. White Bear yachtsmen, especially, felt that the development of the lightweight scow had exceeded the limits of good judgment and common sense. It was fast becoming a feat to keep a boat upright and whole during a race. To solve this problem the Inland endorsed two new classes for the scow to replace the old and drew up new specifications for length, sail area, weight and thickness of planking, deck, and ribs to ensure greater uniformity in build. Henceforth Class A yachts were restricted to 38 feet over-all length and a sail area of 500 square feet; Class B, to 32 feet over-all length, with 350 square feet of sail.

No limit was set on the waterline in these new specifications, probably for two reasons. In the first place, the waterline limit was blamed for the odd and reckless building of the past few years; the twin-hulled *Dominion* and the *Caroline* both developed from efforts to overcome the waterline specification. In the second place, accurate measurement of the waterline presented well-nigh insuperable difficulties for measurer and judge. The current practice of measuring the waterline with the crew aboard, the lack of uniformity in the various hulls of that day, and the constant wash of waves from either the wind or the wake of passing traffic—all combined to defeat the best efforts of any judge hanging over a dock's edge with his tape. As an answer to the problem some clubs finally built tanks large enough to hold the craft. The new specification, by ignoring the troublesome measurement entirely, aimed to solve it more satisfactorily. Neither Davis nor Jones at the time showed any enthusiasm for the change, but it proved a healthy one nonetheless. A sturdier and trimmer scow was in the making as the bow and stern began their slow descent to the water.

About this time also, Lucian P. Ordway at White Bear and others sponsored further experiment with sail plans. Trial sets were ordered from George B. Carpenter of Chicago, the most popular Inland sailmaker, from Herreshoff in Rhode Island, and even from Ratsey in England.

These new scow specifications applied only to new yachts.



The older craft could still compete in Inland races, and a year or two elapsed before the Oshkosh and Neenah clubs accepted the new order. Will Davis continued to enter his *Anita* (he won the Green Lake Cup in 1901) and Frank H. Libby his *Caroline*.

In 1902, Will Davis found himself competing against his son Steve piloting one of the new scows. The younger Davis had been sailing under his father for years and had shown the same aptitude for the sport. Other yachtsmen knew of his ambition to win a race over his father and, early in August, Robert Nunnemacher of Milwaukee sent the *Adelaide* to the Neenah regatta for him to command. The *Adelaide*, a new Class A yacht modeled on the *Tecumseh* (an aspirant for the Seawanhaka-Corinthian Cup), had only recently come from the Jones & LaBorde yard. The Green Lake Cup and a trophy were at stake, but interest centered in the father-and-son contest. *Challenger*, a Class A scow owned and sailed by Walter Dupee of the Green Lake Club and built at White Bear, won the race. *Adelaide*, however, crossed the finish line only four seconds behind her and led the *Anita* and Will Davis by almost five minutes. Steve Davis had as his crew C. B. Clark, H. K. Babcock, and W. Fairlands.

Also competing at this regatta was the *Naiad*, sailed by J. C. Kimberly of the Nodaway Club, with Frank Shattuck, J. A. Kimberly, Jr., and Henry Kimberly as crew. The *Caroline* of Oshkosh started in the race, manned by Fred Luhm, Leo Eaton, and William Brand, but a broken rudder forced her withdrawal. *Challenger's* crew included her builder, Johnny Johnson. The *Anita* carried Will Davis, E. H. Van Ostrand, and George A. and Willie Davis.

Later in the week at the Oshkosh Club regatta, Steve Davis skippered the *Adelaide* to a thrilling and hard-won victory over *Challenger*, *Caroline*, and *Anita* in the race for the Felker Cup. His margin was fourteen seconds. In the afternoon of the same day he clinched the Oshkosh trophy and again defeated the *Anita*, this time by almost four minutes corrected time. This success catapulted the younger Davis into the forerank of Inland skippers.



When the *Anita* appeared at the Inland regatta, held that year at Pewaukee Lake, Capt. Steve was at her helm.

Will Davis, attending the regatta as a spectator, watched his son in *Anita* win the first heat by fourteen minutes, barely five minutes before the time limit expired, and his old *Aderyn* place second. Other competitors included the *Crusader* of White Bear, *Mavis* of Oshkosh, *Comet* of Pewaukee, *Emanon* of Oconomowoc (the 1901 Inland champion), *Adelaide* of Milwaukee, and *Challenger* of Green Lake, all of them the newer type of scow, and the old *Caroline* of Oshkosh. This regatta gave the sailors of the new and heavier scows a full week of frustration. Streaky and contrary winds, characteristic of the smaller lakes, favored the lighter boats. Scoring was by the point system, and when the show was over, the *Aderyn*, which had not won a single race, emerged the Inland champion with fifteen points. *Anita* was second and *Mavis*, third. To show how uneven the competition was, the *Challenger* and *Adelaide* scored only two points each.

*Comet*, built by Jones & LaBorde for Fred Pabst, Jr., and an entry in this regatta, merits special mention here because she was the first Inland contestant to carry double bilge boards. Jimmie Jones worked up his design after the Inland banned any new boats with twin hulls, like the *Caroline*, because of cost. Twin bilge boards, one on either side of the hull, served the same purpose and cost much less. Johnny Johnson of White Bear claimed to have had the idea some years earlier. According to his story he put double boards in the first boat he built in his own yard, the *Wierdling*, but the owner, Frank M. Douglas, thought them too much trouble and had them removed. Jones, however, can be credited with this now standard feature of the lake scow.

During the Pewaukee regatta the executive committee handed down a ruling on a protest similar to one which had confronted the judges at an Oshkosh regatta some twenty years earlier. At Pewaukee on the opening day the judges called off the Class B race when they became convinced that no Class B yacht could finish by 4 o'clock, the time limit. In the Class A race the *Anita*

validated the time of the others in her class by finishing shortly before four, and consequently each Class A yacht received the points due her. In Class B, Jack Ordway's *Jim Crack* completed the course after four but ahead of the Class A tail-enders who were allowed to score. A protest requesting points for the Class B boats was allowed by the judges. On the following day, displaying a fine spirit of sportsmanship, Ordway asked them to rule out the race and have it resailed. The executive committee agreed to his request but announced that for the remainder of the week a boat in either class finishing within the time limit would validate the race for both classes. Later the Inland Association adopted a time limit for each class.

At the close of this regatta Will Davis predicted the revival of the Menasha Yacht Club and the launching of several new boats on Winnebago another year. His predictions for the Menasha revival did not materialize but the new boats did.

The 1903 Winnebago scows all came from the Jones & LaBorde yard and all were equipped with double boards: *Alberta* of the Neenah Yacht Club, a Davis-Krueger-Gilbert syndicate boat; the Kimberlys' *Mokai* of the Nodaway Club; the *Kayoshk* of Oshkosh, Com. Libby's yacht which at first was known as the *Libby*; and E. C. Fahrney's *Creole*, also of Oshkosh, which early in the season was listed as the *Fahrney*. Will Davis expressed his enthusiasm for the new craft in one sentence after his first race—and incidentally his first sail—in the *Alberta*. "Every boat in the race can win," he said, implying that now seamanship alone would decide the contest.

In the Winnebago championship series the new scows proved to be record breakers. *Alberta* won three races straight, but, as Davis pointed out, she profited from accidents to the other contestants. The second race, at Oshkosh, ended in a match between the *Alberta* with her twin boards and the *Caroline* with her twin hulls. Capt. Davis not only won; he set two lake records for scows. He sailed the six-mile triangle once around in 54 minutes and the twelve-mile course in 1:49:45, some four minutes under the time



of 1:54:00 made by Phil H. Sawyer in *Iota* four or five years earlier. A broken jib staff had forced out the *Fahrney*, skippered by Chester D. Cleveland, and broken spars had retired the *Mokai*, with J. C. Kimberly, the *Libby*, with Fred Luhm, and the *Anita*, with Steve Davis. A week later, off Neenah, Will Davis broke his earlier record by sailing the local twelve-mile course in 1:30:00 flat. At this race *Mokai*, the only other entry, lost her rudder on the last leg when only five seconds behind *Alberta*.

Another Winnebago contest that season introduced to regatta competition a lad of fifteen, John D. Buckstaff of Oshkosh, who later became a twelve-time winner of the Felker Cup, still a record. In this early appearance he was sailing the old *Harpoon*, which, through a series of trades, had reached his father's lumber yard.

In mid-August, Steve Davis took the new *Alberta* to the Green Lake regatta and brought home both the Green Lake challenge cup and the Oakwood trophy. *Kite* represented the Oconomowoc Club there and *Ariel* and *Imp* the home club.

But in 1903, as always, the Inland regatta, now presided over by Com. Hertz, provided the climax for the season. Oshkosh recently had been designated as the permanent home of the regatta and to better perform its duties as host the Oshkosh Yacht Club, led by Com. Frank H. Libby, built and furnished a new clubhouse in three months' time at a cost of \$30,000. Fourteen Class A and seven Class B yachts competed. According to the press, ten thousand people lined the shore to watch the races.

The two Class A scows representing the Neenah clubs, the *Alberta*, skippered by Steve Davis, and the *Mokai*, with J. C. Kimberly, each won two heats. Capt. Kimberly gained his second victory by a long cruise to the south and east when standing on a port tack; his tactics occasioned much discussion and favorable comment at the clubhouse. In the fourth heat both Neenah boats lost their rudder and with it their hopes for a favorable score.

The Inland championship went to *Comet II*, which won the fourth heat and also placed high in the others. This yacht, the



entry of Fred Pabst, Jr., of Pewaukee, had been launched only the week before from the Jones & LaBorde yard. In addition to the Inland championship trophy and the Norton Cup, Pabst won the Felker Cup (which he successfully defended in 1904) and the Oshkosh trophy. Com. Libby's *Kayoshk*, sailed by Capt. Luhm, was second.

The jinx that haunted the A fleet at this regatta possessed the *Seeress* of White Bear the entire week. Monday a drop in the wind made her the sport of circumstances. Tuesday and Wednesday spinnaker trouble pursued her. Thursday she filled with water in a gale. Friday a nut lost from the rudder forced her withdrawal.

*Pluto*, White Bear's Class B entry, retrieved the club's reputation, not so much by her final standing—she placed second—as by the pluck and determination of her fourteen-year-old skipper, Theodore Schulze, and his young crew. These boys pioneered in junior competition at the Inland and proved conclusively that the younger generation had both the spirit and the skill for the contest. In *Pluto's* last race at this regatta she scored a dramatic victory over *Argo*, sailing out of Council Bluffs, Iowa. She fought for every foot of the six-mile run to the home buoy with canvas spread and one of the boys bailing. Six miles of straightaway windward sailing against heavy seas and a heavy wind. According to the St. Paul *Dispatch*:

It looked like a case of four lads lost. When a couple of big rollers came along together *Pluto's* bow would dash high in the air on one and then would lunge with a cloud of spray into the second. Then a hostile wave would knock her off her course, and it was labor everlastingly repeated to work her up to the mark.

But she got there ahead of *Argo*. As they came right to the line *Argo* hit a big wave as mash, stopped for a second, and *Pluto* slipped ahead a victor.

The crew came home wet, weary and hungry—but jolly and light of heart, for they had won another victory.

The 1903 season marked the end of an old era and the beginning of a new. Like the old Winnebago sand-baggers, the fantastic paper-weight boats now passed into history. The period of unre-

strained experimentation with the scow had ended and the Inland Association now settled down to consolidate its gains. With equal enthusiasm the membership endorsed the new design and the choice of Lake Winnebago for its regattas. Jones & LaBorde of Oshkosh emerged from the competition as the leading builders in the area and with a backlog of orders that necessitated an addition to their shop.

Midway in the season Will Davis had announced his retirement from active participation in the sport. Like many other star performers, he was to return again and again, but from 1903 on, his son is found very frequently in command of his yacht. He had become one of the leading yachtsmen in the Northwest, and his reputation and designs had focused the eyes of yachting interests in the Northwest on Neenah.

IN 1905 rumors of a reconciliation between the two Neenah clubs became an established fact. On July 13, 1905, Lyall J. Pinkerton, the Nodaway commodore, and James C. Kimberly met with William M. Gilbert and Stephen R. Davis of the Neenah Club. Their plans, as endorsed by the joint membership, launched the Neenah-Nodaway Yacht Club. The first place in the new title was given to the older club. The officers were drawn from the two organizations: Lyall J. Pinkerton, commodore; Will Davis, vice commodore; Frank Shattuck, secretary-treasurer; John Sensenbrenner, measurer; J. A. Kimberly, Jr., fleet captain; and Henry Kimberly, C. B. Clark, and William Krueger, regatta committee.

In the decade preceding the merger, the Nodaway Yacht Club had already achieved its main purpose: a revival of yachting on Lake Winnebago under equal racing conditions. It had introduced the class-dimension yacht to the lake and had seen the Inland Association not only adopt the principle but also, recently, enforce it.

The officers who had served the club during that period were: as commodore, James C. Kimberly (1894–1900), Frank Shattuck (1901–1903), Lyall J. Pinkerton (1904–1905); as vice commodore, James H. Wright (1895–1900), Charles B. Clark (1901–1905); as secretary-treasurer, James H. Wright (1894), Edward P. Sherry (1895–mid 1898), Lyall J. Pinkerton (mid 1898–1903), Frank Shattuck (1904–1905); as measurer, Lucius K. Henry, William Z. Stuart, Lyall J. Pinkerton, Will Davis, Frank Shattuck, Edward P. Sherry, Frank A. Leavens, Charles B. Clark, Henry H. Kimberly, and James C. Kimberly. Edward P. Sherry had resigned his office during 1898 when he left town, and W. Z. Stuart, who could be called the chief architect of the organization in its early days, had asked to be transferred to the honorary membership list the following year because of pressure of business.



John A. Kimberly, Jr., had been elected commodore in 1897, after his *Corona* won the Felker Cup, but he had declined to serve.

During the latest revival of the Neenah Yacht Club its officers had included: William M. Gilbert as commodore; William Krueger and Will Davis as vice commodore; Peter D. Kraby, William Krueger, and C. B. Clark as secretary and/or treasurer; Frank A. Leavens, R. W. Arndt, and Steve Davis as fleet captain; and George Davis as measurer.

For the next decade or so the activities of the local club and its yachts were overshadowed by developments elsewhere on Winnebago and in the Inland Association. In 1905 the Class A title of the Inland went to a new Oshkosh yacht, the *Glyndwr*, owned by Com. Charles P. Bray. About this time Winfield M. Thompson wrote an article in Collier's *Outdoor America* praising the Inland Lake scow as a racer and mentioned especially the *Glyndwr*. An excerpt, alluded to earlier in the Preface, reads:

The fastest going to the foot of boat length in American yachting today is found on board these scows, and in certain conditions of wind and water the little scow of the inland lakes could outsail any America's Cup defender, boat for boat. To rate such a performance at its proper value, we must remember that the scow's length is but 38 feet and its sail is but 500 square feet, while the America's Cup yacht is 140 feet long and carries 16,000 square feet of canvas.

Being light and shallow, the scow has its best point of sailing with the wind behind. In the clubhouse at Oshkosh is a picture of the finish of a race on Lake Winnebago, in which the winning boat, named the *Glyndwr*, covered a nautical mile, off the wind, in 4 minutes and 11 seconds, which is at the rate of  $14\frac{1}{2}$  knots an hour. No giant racing machine battling for the America's Cup ever made a mile at such a rate as that.

Other factors besides the outstanding performance of the new scows broadened the interest in the sport during this period. In 1906 the Inland Association introduced a new scow model, Class C. Designed especially for the juniors and for use on the smaller lakes, it measured only 20 feet in length and carried only a mainsail. With its low-lying hull, squared fore and aft like an A Class yacht, it provided an excellent training boat for young skippers.





R. H. Larson photograph

Start of the Inland Class C boats, Oshkosh, 1948.



Eventually the C boats constituted the largest scow class at Inland regattas, but in the beginning the new model was slow to take hold. At the first regatta for these catboats, held in 1906, the *O. Y. Cee* was the sole entry. No C races were scheduled for 1907. In 1910, Com. Charles P. Bray of Oshkosh presented the Bray challenge cup as an incentive and a few clubs responded with an entry. But by 1916 the C squadron almost outnumbered the A and was introducing to Inland competition teenagers Ernst C. Schmidt, Alan J. Hill, Hank, Starke, and C. J. Meyer, Leonard Carpenter, Eddie Brand, and John R. (Jack) Kimberly, all of whom later helped make Inland history. The Neenah-Nodaway Club has had comparatively few C boats in its fleet. For the most part Class C entries have come from the smaller lakes.

Also in 1906, Edgar P. Sawyer, an enthusiastic sailor who had been active in the Oshkosh Club for some years, organized, with others, the Butte des Morts Yacht Club. With its lake situated at the back door of Oshkosh, this club drew its membership largely from the older group. But it provided yet another contestant for Inland and Winnebago honors and thereby sharpened Inland rivalry and aroused local enthusiasm. That season the Winnebago championship races were increased to nine, with three of them sailed over the Butte des Morts course. The new club presented two perpetual challenge cups, the Sawyer Cup for Class A yachts and the Clark-Hollister Cup for Class B.

The Butte des Morts course was also the scene for the opening races of the 1906 Inland regatta. The contestants included several new Class A scows, notably, *Alberta II*, the Neenah-Nodaway representative designed by Will Davis; *Skidoo* of Butte des Morts; and *Troubadour* of the White Bear Club, owned and sailed by Jack Ordway, who had won the Inland championship in 1904 with his *Alpha*.

White Bear's A and B class entries made a clean sweep at the 1906 regatta. Class A *Troubadour* took the new Sawyer Cup and the Butte des Morts Club trophy, the Felker Cup and the Oshkosh trophy, and finally the Inland Lake championship and the Norton

Cup, which went with it. This marked the beginning of a winning streak for Jack Ordway and his *Troubadour*. In 1907 the pair again won all six prizes and in 1908 they captured the Sawyer Cup and the Inland title for the third time in succession. These Inland championship victories gave him permanent possession of the Norton challenge trophy. To replace it he and Homer Clark presented the Association with the Clark-Ordway Cup. White Bear's Class B *Gopher* also collected six firsts to take back to Minnesota at the 1906 regatta, including the new Clark-Hollister prize.

Though the young Butte des Morts Club won no firsts at this regatta—its Class A *Skidoo* placed third and its Class B *Twenty-Three*, second—it was soon to reap a record harvest with its prize-winning *Kathryns*. John D. Buckstaff, their skipper, made this name famous in yachting annals of the Northwest by winning the Felker Cup for owner Edgar P. Sawyer and the Butte des Morts Club in 1908; the Felker and Sawyer trophies in 1910 and 1911; the Inland championship in 1914; all three in 1916; and the Felker Cup in 1919, not to mention the Green Lake, Gilbert, and other prizes that he acquired during this period.

The activity in the Neenah-Nodaway Club from 1905 to 1915 centered around its Class A scows. J. C. Kimberly won the Felker Cup in 1905 sailing the syndicate-owned *Winnebago*. Three Davis boats, the *Alberta II* (1906), *Menasha* (1910), and *Aderyn II* (1913), though frequently described in the news as of the Menasha Club, then long defunct, represented Neenah-Nodaway at several Inland regattas. In 1915, Will Davis sailed *Aderyn II* to victory from fourth place on the final leg of a race for the Athearn Cup. This perpetual challenge trophy, a large punch bowl, was presented to the Oshkosh Club by George Athearn. It carried with it the stipulation that its winner could be challenged within twenty-four hours and that the loser must fill it before presenting it to his successor. Also included in the lists of entries during this period were Frank Shattuck's *Gretchens* and John Sensenbrenner's *Maybe*. In 1914 Capt. Shattuck won the Felker Cup with *Gretchen III*. The Winnebago rivals of the Neenah yachts included Com. Bray's



*Glyndwrs*, his *No-No*, and the two *Athearns*, all from Oshkosh, and the *Swallow* and the *Kathryns* of Butte des Morts.

In 1913 the Inland Association elected as its president Dr. Otto L. Schmidt, who served it with distinction for twenty-two years. He had been a member of the board of directors since 1910. Early in his administration the Inland rule limiting each club to one entry in a class was repealed. At this time Dr. Schmidt was also commodore of the Northwestern Regatta Association. That organization had been formed in 1909 with practically the same purpose as the Inland and covering about the same territory but with no restriction on the number of entries allowed each club. Through Dr. Schmidt's efforts the Northwestern was invited to join the Inland at the regatta held in Oshkosh in mid-August, 1915.

This regatta long since has added its records and its thrills to Winnebago legends. It brought out a record fleet and a record number of prizes (over fifty, the combined treasure of the two associations). And it also brought record weather, all bad—four days with almost no breeze and one with a gale. The snail-paced procession for the Felker Cup ended in the dark, with visibility zero. The gale toppled over five yachts like so many ninepins. One spectator remarked that he had seen sailboats capsize before but never in flocks.

At this regatta twelve Class A yachts represented eight clubs: *Aderyn II* and *Gretchen III* of Neenah-Nodaway; *LaBelle II* and *Minnewoc III* of Oconomowoc; *Corsair* and *Tornado* of White Bear; *No-No* and *Athearn III* of Oshkosh; *Senta*, Com. O. L. Schmidt's entry from the Lake Geneva Club; *Marian Jean* of Minnetonka; *Water Witch* of Mendota; and *Kathryn III* of Butte des Morts.

The Felker Cup contest was scheduled for August 14. The day was hot, with a blistering sun beating down on the crews and a glassy lake. The judges had called off drifting matches on the two preceding days when the time limit expired, and as the fleet began its painfully slow parade around the course that afternoon, the finish of the Felker race, too, looked doubtful. But the Felker contest had no time limit.



The first time around the four-mile triangle, *Minnewoc III* led a straggling line past the home buoy. On the second lap *No-No*, skippered by Com. Bray, crept past her in the dusk. After the leaders left the home buoy on the last round, they were swallowed up in the night. Lanterns marked the buoys and power boats stood by to spotlight them. The sailors could see nothing distinctly, even aboard their own craft, and, except as searchlights on private launches penetrated the darkness at intervals and picked up a white sail here and there, no one on shore could see the racers. These yachts were not equipped for night sailing; they carried neither riding lights nor lanterns. On the last lap Steve Davis in *Aderyn II*, making his way in the dark, overhauled *No-No*, the leader. He passed the northeast buoy and then led on a beat in a freshening breeze to the southeast marker. The judges in their boat hurried toward the mooring buoy in front of the brilliantly lighted clubhouse and strained their eyes to catch sight of the first yacht to break through the darkness.

A cry "A boat to starboard! Another one!" announced *Aderyn II*, followed closely by *LaBelle II*. Out of the night they came, ghost ships, with spinnakers, jibs, and mainsails all pulling. The Neenah-Nodaway boat was ahead. But even while the crowd on shore watched, *LaBelle II*, skippered by William N. Pelouze, overhauled and passed her to windward to win this eerie race by eight seconds. *LaBelle II* had trailed the leaders for almost seven hours and never once led until she crossed the finish line. *Aderyn II* was second and *Corsair*, third. *No-No*, in fourth place, had not known the *Corsair* was near until the White Bear boat passed between her and the lighted shore. After this experience the authorities decreed that henceforth sunset would mark the time limit for Felker contests.

It was hoped that Monday, the last day of the regatta, would produce breeze enough for an interesting race. A leaden sky to the northwest promised wind. At 2:30 o'clock the starting gun sent a closely bunched fleet off toward the northeast buoy at a smart clip. Those waiting at the marker watched the sloops streaking

over the water like a flock of swans in flight, their swelling canvas snow-white against the ominous gray of lake and sky. Every one noticed the storm clouds behind the city though no one expected much of a blow. But it came, wind and rain. And it hit the fleet a wallop just as the yachts were rounding the second buoy. What began as a reach speedily became a tempestuous beat to windward. *Minnewoc III*, which had started toward the lighthouse, was in the best position to ride out the squall. The others were in the thick of it. *Water Witch* capsized first. Then *LaBelle II* tilted almost to the water, righted herself, but tipped again and went over, with three of her crew diving between the deck and the mainsail boom. *Gretchen III* set her course for mid-lake, but she, too, capsized, followed by *No-No* and *Pachyderm*, a Class C boat near the home buoy. *Aderyn II*, with Will and Steve Davis and Mannie Hart aboard, managed to carry some canvas throughout the tempest. The rest dropped sail in time to avoid disaster and waited for the storm to slacken. For perhaps half an hour a thirty-mile wind swept the lake. It swung from the northwest to the northeast and before the end of the race it shifted to the southeast.

*Minnewoc III* returned to the course at the front of the fleet and held her position until her jib was in ribbons. *Kathryn III* then took the lead, closely followed by *Aderyn II*. The battle between these two continued twice around the triangle. Finally, on the beat to the northeast buoy the last time around, *Kathryn III* slipped into a calm pocket and *Aderyn II* pushed ahead. The race now, with only ten minutes remaining and a mile and a half to go, was between *Aderyn II* and the clock. And again the clock won. The wind turned fickle, and when the gun announced the time limit at 5:30 o'clock, *Aderyn II* was a quarter of a mile or so from the finish line.

The Inland Class A title at this regatta went to Jack Ordway and his *Tornado*. John D. Buckstaff and *Kathryn III* placed second, and Com. Schmidt and *Senta*, third. Milton Griggs of White Bear took the Northwestern championship cup with *Corsair*. Com. Schmidt won the second Northwestern prize, and Steve Davis, the third. Com. Schmidt also received from R. A. Hollister on behalf



of the judges a silver loving cup for his "consistent, all-round sailing ability and good sportsmanship." Neenah-Nodaway's Gilbert challenge cup went to Erle B. Savage of the *Marian Jean* from Minnetonka.

In spite of calms and capsizes, the visiting skippers all endorsed Lake Winnebago for the annual classic of the Association and registered their approval of the joint regatta. In 1916 the merger of the Northwestern and Inland associations was consummated.

The promise of keener competition held out to Inland skippers by this merger could not be fulfilled immediately. In 1917 the United States entered the European conflict. Many of the younger men in the clubs left for the armed forces, and the war effort demanded both time and energy from the older members. The Inland called off its 1917 and 1918 regattas, no Felker race was sailed in 1918, and all Inland clubs were forced to curtail their local programs.

After World War I, interest in racing was slow to revive in Neenah. Pleasure sailing had continued during the years but competitive schedules languished, a war casualty. In 1921 three veteran sailors whose enthusiasm for the sport never waned—Will Davis, James C. Kimberly, and Frank Shattuck—injected new life into Class A activity with their yachts *Eileen*, *Jerry*, and *Onaway*. The first two were new boats; the last had been built just before the war. These three racers represented the Neenah-Nodaway Club at the Inland regatta held that year at Oshkosh and introduced a new generation of Neenah-Nodaway sailors to Class A competition. Their crews included Leo Schubart, William (Bill) Kellett, Jack Kimberly, Ted Gilbert, Horace DuBois, Lyall and Irving Stilp, Kimberly Stuart, Van Pinkerton, and Jack Babcock.

The Inland Association officers had planned a full-scale revival for the classic that year, and fourteen fast Class A scows had registered for it. Chief among them were *Faith* of Oshkosh, *Dorla* of Pine Lake, *Blue Heron* of Minnetonka, and *Caprice* of Pewaukee. A glance at the records of these four will show the rugged competition that faced the Neenah trio. *Faith*, owned by Frank Gates and



skipped by John D. Buckstaff, carried the new Marconi rig and was one of the fastest boats ever to sail the lake. With her, Capt. Buckstaff had continued his record of victories by winning in 1920 the Winnebago and Inland championships and the Sawyer and Felker cups; at the current regatta he was soon to defend successfully the Felker prize and annex the Gilbert Cup. The *Dorla* of Pine Lake, owned by John Pritzlaff and Henry A. Meyer, her skipper, had twice won the Sawyer challenge trophy and once, in 1917, the Felker Cup; during this regatta she was soon to break Will Davis's record for Class A scows by sailing the twelve-mile course over the four-mile triangle in 1:25:05. *Caprice* of Pewaukee, skippered by Starke Meyer, had just been awarded the Sawyer Cup in the tune-up invitation race held before the Inland opening. The Minnetonka entry, *Blue Heron*, owned and sailed by Leonard Carpenter, was to win the Northwestern championship cup before this regatta ended.

The first four days of racing saw the leadership shift from day to day. On Thursday night the total score to date showed *Faith* as first, *Blue Heron* as second, and *Dorla* as third. But they were close and the last day's contest could reshuffle the lot.

A brisk wind swept the lake all during Friday morning. Toward 2 o'clock hardly a breath of air was stirring. Then dark clouds began to appear on the horizon, admittedly weather breeders. Nevertheless the entire A fleet of fourteen yachts assembled for the start. At the gun they all shot across the line, propelled by the first breath of the storm. Some of the officials wanted to cancel the race, but other experienced sailors believed that the squall would pass, and anyway, they reasoned, the boats were now two miles out from shore. Only half-convinced, the judges determined to call off the race if the storm worsened and hurried to the northeast buoy in the *Arnim*, skippered by Charles Dunkel. Before they were well on their way, the huge black cloud that had been rising behind Oshkosh swept up over the lake, and with it came a deluge. A gale whipped up the surface of the water into huge green walls. The story as told in the *Neenah Times* gives these details:

## FAITH GOES FIRST

The first sign of distress went up when *Faith* went over. Four guns, postponing the race, were fired, but it was too late. In one, two, three order the white sails disappeared beneath the water and in another moment the rain was so dense that sight was lost of them completely.

Nothing could be done then. Sailing sailors said later, when the squall came, those of them who had not had time to lower their sails saw their white canvases ripped into shreds. The shreds cracked like machine-gun fire in the wind and added to the confusion. The wind had increased to eighty miles an hour and Marshall Smith, who was on *Buccaneer*, said it was impossible to hear a word.

In their thin garments the sailors were thrown into the water. Many became entangled in the rigging and sails and were pinned beneath the boat when they went over, and had to be assisted by their comrades. Clinging to any part of the boat that was accessible, the boys were exposed to the mercies of the hail, wind and rain. That some were not swept away by the huge walls of water that dashed over them is miraculous.

## CAPTAIN IS SKILLFULL

The first blast of the storm that hit the judges' boat ripped off the canvas awning like tissue paper. With a skillfull hand, Captain Dunkel held the little craft dead into the bowlders. To have gotten down into the trough of one of the waves would have capsized the yacht. The cabin alone saved the boat, otherwise it would have been swamped with the waves that washed over the deck. They were all of six feet high. Danger from lightning, that was flashing all around, made the trip one of anxiety. . . . The wind, rain and darkness made proceeding a cautious proposition, for it was feared that some capsized yacht might be rammed accidentally. On board the judges' boat were D. D. Harmon, Ralph Buckstaff, William M. Bray, John A. Kimberly, Jr., of Neenah, C. W. Hollister, Jay O'Brien, E. H. Steiger of Milwaukee, Arthur H. Gruenwald and Captain Dunkel and his son Arnim.

At the first let up of the storm, a check on all yachts in sight was made. The sea was still rolling heavily and rain falling. The judges' boat immediately proceeded to the first yacht in distress, which happened to be *Senta*, from Lake Geneva. Her crew, E. Schmidt, W. Furbeck, W. Craven and D. and W. Coleman, were perched on her beam, her mast stuck fast in the mud below but still intact. With characteristic sailor courage and unselfishness they yelled that they were O.K. and begged the judges to proceed to the next yacht, *Buccaneer*, where a "buddy" was in distress.



## RESCUED BY MATES

The surface of the lake was strewn with wreckage, masts, sails, spinaker bags, floor boards and splinters literally covering the area. Dotted here and there on the lake were upturned boats, their crews clinging grimly to the sides. The scene was tense. A number of other gasoline craft, principally the cabin launch of James Jones, Rahr's launch, and the steamer *Mayflower* were seen making their way from the shore. All pitched into the work of rescue. . . .

The Smith-Hackett boat was floating bottom up, spar broken, and E. L. Steiger of her crew in a badly exhausted condition. All were taken into the judges' boat, consisting of Raymond Work, Marshall Smith, Carl Sullivan, E. L. Steiger, Dick Hackett and William Steling. Raymond Work was taking his initial hand at yachting. As the boat capsized he and Mr. Steiger were caught beneath in the rigging and had to be hauled up onto the top of the upturned boat by their mates Smith and Sullivan.

A bit to leeward was *Dorla* . . . , full of water and capsized. Part of the crew, consisting of A. Gallun, N. Kock, H. Meyer, and T. S. Pritzlaff, were taken on board the judges' boat, while R. Pritzlaff and W. Jahn remained aboard, righted the craft and were towed to port by James Jones. Much to the surprise of all, *Bat*, owned by E. Chapman and Bob Harmon, appeared on the scene. Her sails were up. She had been fortunate enough to get her sails lowered in time and was the only boat of the fourteen not capsized.

## MANY IN DANGER

*Caprice*, of Pewaukee, with her crew of E. Borsack, A. Meyer, Gil and H. Borsack, were picked up by the *Mayflower*. The Rahr launch took off the crew of *Commodore*, consisting of W. Bartle, T. Gould, Rahr, E. Lehr, E. Darling and Doemel. Another gasoline yacht picked up *Faith*, with her crew of John Buckstaff, John Thompson, H. Spink, F. Gates and R. Gates. The crew of *Eileen* of Neenah, T. Kellett, W. L. Davis, M. Hart, and L. W. Hollister, were also picked up by a small launch. On board the *Onaway* of Neenah were E. Thompson, S. F. Shattuck, J. Babcock, and L. Tripp. . . .

*Jerry*, Jack Kimberly's boat from Neenah, was one of the few who did not have its spar broken. The crew on that boat consisted of W. Kellett, Jack Kimberly, J. C. Kimberly, Ted Gilbert, H. DuBois, and G. B. Stevens. The crew of the *Marchioness*, the Pewaukee boat, was: E. J. Meyer, D. J. Meyer, Jr., F. R. Steniman, W. Aiegler and H. S. Powelk. The *Blue Heron* crew of Minnetonka was composed of L. G. Carpenter,



E. P. Pillsbury, E. Glueck, E. B. Savage, and T. Brackett. The *Deltax* crew was C. Steiger, F. Reinke, F. Shreiber, C. Felker and E. Brand. *Mistrall III* of Pine Lake had on board W. Hester, H. S. Vogel, N. Inbush, J. S. Van Dyke and C. Reshtger.

The crews of all were taken aboard while the capsized crafts were left to drift about in the lake. Later in the afternoon and evening they were all towed into port, and a sorry sight they were. All were damaged somewhat. Only six of the fourteen had masts upright. Others were broken in two or broken off completely. Not a yacht escaped without some damage, but *Bat* got by most fortunate of all.

At the end of the regatta the scoreboard still carried the winners as they were listed Thursday night: *Faith*, first; *Blue Heron*, second; *Dorla*, third. Prizes were awarded on the basis of the first four days' races.

NEENAH-NODAWAY'S skippers, undismayed by the buffeting they had just received from wind and water at the Inland regatta, or even by their failure to place, returned home determined to get back into the contest. At the annual meeting in the fall of 1921, the following officers were elected: Will Davis, commodore; Frank Shattuck, vice commodore; Jack Kimberly, secretary-treasurer; and John D. (Jack) Babcock, Bill Kellett, and Stewart Thompson, regatta committee. To stimulate interest and bring the club back to a sailboat racing club, Frank Shattuck suggested that races be conducted between Neenah and Oshkosh the next season with cups as awards. As a result an ambitious program was laid out for 1922. Six or eight races were scheduled between the two clubs for July and four for the Oshkosh regatta in August, all prior to the Inland event which that year was to be held on Lake Geneva.

During the early summer of 1922, Will Davis and Frank Shattuck equipped *Eileen* and *Onaway II* with the new Marconi rig. The first Marconi rig in the area had appeared about 1920 on Pine Lake yachts and at the same time some of the Minnetonka craft had changed to a high-gaff rig. Owners elsewhere in the region were fast falling in line, and racing during the 1922 season found first one boat and then another out of the sport for the change-over. *Faith* was so equipped in the 1921 Inland contest and yachtsmen felt that part of her success was due to the new gear.

In July the Oshkosh fleet—*Faith*, *Commodore*, *Marsh Turkey*, *Golpiador*, and *Bat*—offered the Neenah trio more competition than they were prepared to meet. Alterations in *Eileen's* rigging kept her out of the races until near the end of the month. *Jerry*, skippered by Jack Kimberly, and *Onaway II*, with Leo Schubart,

another young sailor, took three firsts between them, but the Oshkosh boats outnumbered and outpointed them.

There was nothing routine about some of the contests between the two clubs. On July 1, 1922, Frank Gates put *Faith* over the four-mile triangle at Oshkosh in 30:00 flat. The younger skippers were not far behind him. *Golpiador*, with Emil Steiger, finished in 30:45; *Onaway II*, with Leo Schubart, in 34:00; *Jerry*, with Jack Kimberly, 34:30; and *Commodore*, with Fred Athearn, in 35:00. Carl Steiger sailing *Marsh Turkey* failed to complete the course, though he had made it earlier in the day at 32:40. Serving on *Jerry* with Jack Kimberly were Bunny Bowen, Horace DuBois, Ted Gilbert, and Jack Babcock. Leo Schubart sailed *Onaway II* with Lyall and Irving Stilp, Kimberly Stuart, and Van Pinkerton.

Later in the series *Onaway II* rendered a better account of herself in a bout with the fast-flying *Faith*. Over the Oshkosh triangle she came off the victor, as the story in the *Neenah Times* relates:

The fleet was sent away at 3 o'clock in a moderate breeze by Starter J. H. Jones. The first leg was a free run with spinnakers set, the *Commodore* leading to the outer mark. Close astern came *Marsh Turkey*, *Faith*, *Onaway*, *Jerry*, and *Golpiador*. *Eileen* of Neenah was not entered. The second leg was a beat to windward in a steadily freshening breeze. *Faith* and *Commodore* hitched in shore while the rest of the fleet stood south. *Onaway* soon crept out from the lee of *Marsh Turkey* and as the yachts converged at the windward mark was seen to cross the bows of *Faith* by about three hundred feet, holding this until she rounded for the reach to home buoy. *Faith*, meanwhile, had caught and passed *Commodore*.

The final leg of the triangle was sailed in a squall out of the southeast with a driving rain. *Faith*, sailing with a tremendous burst of speed, closed some of the gap that separated her from *Onaway II*, but Skipper Schubart and his crew were not to be denied. So fast was the speed of *Faith* and *Onaway II* that none of the power boats, including the judges' launch, were able to reach the finish ahead of the sails. According to the best estimate, *Onaway II* came in fifteen seconds ahead of the classy *Faith*.

But the least routine of all the summer races was sailed on July 22 over the Oshkosh triangle. *Jerry*, skippered by Jack Kimberly, and *Eileen*, with young Willie Davis and a crew of George Boehm, Ed Haskins, and Mannie Hart, arrived at Oshkosh ten minutes be-





Yacht Basin of the Neenah-Nodaway Yacht Club.

R. H. Larson photograph



fore starting time only to find the lake deserted. They dropped anchor and waited—an hour and a half. Finally, about 4 o'clock, *Commodore*, with Fred Athearn, and *Golpiador*, with Bob Harmon, joined them. But there were no judges. Nevertheless the four lined up, with one of the captains pinch-hitting for the timer. A strong wind started them off at a lively clip for the southeast buoy. When they arrived there, the marker was missing. This awkward situation was saved by the timely appearance of the judges' boat, which served as a marker. The line then re-formed and the heat started all over again. The course was covered with no further embarrassment for the Oshkosh hosts. *Jerry* won and *Eileen* was third. In the second heat, which was sailed in the opposite direction, the missing buoy caused more confusion. Through someone's blunder, the Neenah skippers understood that the course would run to the northeast buoy and straight home. Accordingly, they made the full turn, with *Eileen* leading. Then they discovered the Oshkosh craft heading for the southeast corner. In spite of this bungling, *Jerry* came in second and *Eileen* third. *Golpiador* won, and *Commodore*, which had fouled *Jerry* at the first buoy, trailed.

At the Oshkosh regatta, held August 7-10, 1922, three Winnebago prizes were divided between *Faith* of Oshkosh, skippered by John Buckstaff, and *Caprice* of Pine Lake, with Starke Meyer at the helm. Meyer took home the Sawyer and Pine Lake challenge cups. In the Sawyer race, *Onaway II* finished in third place. The Felker trophy went to that inveterate winner, John Buckstaff. This race was a fast one, with all seven entries contesting for the historic prize. *Jerry* provided the excitement of the afternoon when on the last leg and at the tail-end of the fleet her skipper took good advantage of a lucky streak of air and sailed her from seventh into third place. The yachts in the order of finish were: *Faith*, *Caprice*, *Jerry*, *Eileen*, *Commodore*, *Onaway II*, and *Marsh Turkey*.

At the Inland regatta in 1922, held on Lake Geneva, John Buckstaff and *Faith* again annexed the championship title for A Class yachts and thus gained permanent possession of the Clark-Ordway trophy.

At the annual meeting of the Inland Association in 1922, the



Neenah-Nodaway Club invited the Association to hold its annual classic at Neenah in 1923. With the invitation went the assurance that the lake off Neenah was ideal racing ground with no unusual winds or storms such as those that wrecked the fleet at Oshkosh the year before. This boast caused no little amusement, but it proved to be the winning argument and the invitation was accepted.

With the work ahead in mind, the Neenah-Nodaway Club elected the following officers for 1923: Will Davis, commodore; Frank Shattuck, vice commodore; Leo Schubart, secretary-treasurer; and for the regatta committee, James C. Kimberly, chairman, with Frank Shattuck and Van Pinkerton as his aides.

A tune-up series of races between Neenah and Oshkosh was again scheduled for the early summer of 1923, prior to the Inland event. And again the pennant went to the Oshkosh Club. But by steady plugging and attendance at every race, Frank Shattuck's *Onaway II* took the Winnebago championship title for individual yachts away from *Faith*. Other Neenah craft participating in the series were *Eileen*, skippered by Bill Kellett; Leo Schubart's new Class A *Sparkplug*; *Jerry*, with J. C. Kimberly; and *Aderyn II*, Will Davis's recent acquisition.

J. C. Kimberly, Frank Shattuck, and Van Pinkerton spent much of the summer preparing for the Inland Association's first regatta at Neenah, scheduled for August 20-24. They provided launching facilities, moorage for about forty guest yachts, and storage area for the spare parts and supplies of the visiting boats. They also arranged for a camping ground in the park for those visitors who planned to spend the week in tents. Two race courses were laid out to be used on alternate days: one a three-mile straightaway, to be sailed twice around, and the other a four-mile triangle to be sailed three times around. Circular letters were sent to all Inland yachtsmen through their clubs, giving information on automobile routes, hotel accommodations, and other pertinent or interesting details.

Class C races were planned for 10 o'clock from Monday through Friday and Class A contests for 2:30 each day. Evening

entertainment included a stag smoker at the Riverview Country Club in Appleton for Monday; a motion picture of Inland races at the Doty Theater, which the club reserved, for Tuesday evening; the annual meeting of the Association at The Valley Inn and dancing on Wednesday; the commodore's dinner there on Thursday, followed by the annual regatta ball at E.F.U. Hall; and, on the final night, the cup-presentation ceremonies at the Riverview Country Club, also followed by dancing.

Prizes for the regatta included six new trophy cups purchased by the Inland for the three top-ranking skippers in each class and in addition several challenge cups. For Class C there were the Bray, Howard D. Colman, and J. C. Kimberly trophies. The Kimberly cup was a new one, to be awarded to the winner of the Saturday invitation tune-up race. Class A yachts were competing for the Gilbert Cup, a Neenah-Nodaway Club trophy that never yet had been won by a Neenah skipper; the Athearn punch bowl; the O. L. Schmidt Cup; the large P. A. Valentine Cup with its sea-horse handles; and the W. L. Davis Cup, presented this year by the Neenah-Nodaway commodore.

Edward Rosing of Chicago, H. C. Powelk of Wausau, and J. C. Thompson and R. A. Hollister of Oshkosh were the judges. Edward Breemeister was measurer, H. C. Bronson, timer, and Ralph Buckstaff, starter.

Forty-five yachts registered for the regatta, eighteen in Class A and twenty-seven in Class C. According to entry lists at hand, this first Inland regatta for Neenah was also a first for the lady skippers. Patricia Healy of the Lake Geneva Club registered her *Arizona* in the C Class.

Neenah-Nodaway's eight entries, with their captains, were listed as follows: Class A—*Aderyn III*, Stephen R. Davis; *Onarway II*, Frank Shattuck, with Leo Schubart in his crew; Jack Kimberly's new *Shadow*, James C. Kimberly; *Eileen*, William Kellett; in Class C—Frank Shattuck's *The Kid*, Norman Greenwood; *Susan*, Knox Kimberly; *Nahma*, James (Jim) Kimberly; *B.O.II*, William C. Wing, Jr.



The good sailing promised by the Neenah-Nodaway yachtsmen for regatta week turned out to be great sailing. Each day brought a shift in the wind and in its velocity. Fast and thrilling contests were the rule. For the entire week the newspaper reporters saw the lake as "extremely rough," "heavy," "churning" and the contest as "exceedingly fast," "a battle," "one of the sportiest in Inland history," requiring "expert skippering." More than once the judges' launch failed to keep pace with the sailboats. Considering the regatta as a whole, the time made by the yachts set an Inland record; in one race three times around the triangle all boats finished in less than an hour and three-quarters. Competition among the Class A yachts was remarkably close. The first four days produced four winners: *Kingfisher*, with Erle B. Savage, *Senta*, with Ernst C. Schmidt, *Blue Heron*, with Leonard Carpenter, and *Tornado*, with Alan J. Hill.

In a hard fight for second and third places in Monday's race it was nip and tuck between *Faith*, *Onarway II*, *Tornado*, *Shadow*, *Deltax III*, and *Blue Heron*. Eventually *Faith* won the second spot, and *Blue Heron*, climbing from ninth after the first leg, finished third. The sea was heavy that day and a twenty-mile wind put four yachts out of the sailing early in the afternoon. *Aderyn III* and *Dorla*, a Pewaukee yacht, capsized in an offshore gust while the fleet was assembling. Just before the starting gun a squall hit *Viking* of Lake Geneva and tipped her into *Caprice* of Pewaukee, breaking the latter's boom. *Viking* was righted and able to enter the contest but *Caprice* had to retire for repairs. *Deltax III*, the other casualty, was blown over by a strong puff of wind when on a deep tack out into the lake.

If any one race in this regatta stood out over another it was the second. *Senta*, veteran of ten seasons owned by Com. Otto L. Schmidt of the Lake Geneva Club, was the heroine of the day. Ernst L. Schmidt, her skipper and the owner's son, was credited in the local paper with sailing one of the best races ever seen on Winnebago. *Senta* won over the fleet-footed *Kingfisher* of Minnetonka, the previous day's winner, but only after a thrilling battle



on the long windward beat to home over the straightaway course. This race provided the spectators with one of the most exciting finishes and one of the prettiest contests ever sailed on the lake. The sailors broke out spinnakers as soon as the starting line was crossed, and the low-lying scows, with the wind behind them, fairly flew over the water. *Senta* was old, and three of her crew were obliged to bail continually to keep her afloat. For most of the distance around the course she held second place, but several minutes separated her from the leader, *Blue Heron*. Schmidt's big opportunity and the test of his seamanship came on the last leg, an absolute beat to windward for three miles. Setting his sights for the finishing stake, he kept *Senta's* nose headed into the wind on a close haul for a considerable period to cut his distance. It won him the race. *Blue Heron*, in coming about on several tacks, lost her lead to the Geneva craft and also fell behind *Kingfisher*, one of the fastest yachts in the Inland fleet. But *Senta* and her crew held their own and finished in first place, fourteen seconds ahead of the Minnetonka boat. Her time was 1:38:45, and her prize was her owner's cup, the O. L. Schmidt challenge trophy.

On the final day the victory again was decided on the windward beat, that acid test of a sailor's judgment and skill. Erle B. Savage nosed *Kingfisher* into the wind on the windward leg first time around over the triangular course and took the lead from Buckstaff and *Faith*. He was never headed on the two laps that remained, though Alan J. Hill in *Tornado* seriously threatened him on the windward stretch to home. In this race *Kingfisher* broke *Dorla's* record of the year before by making the twelve-mile course in 1:25:00. Her victory won her the Inland title for 1923.

The first official contest in the C Class at this Neenah regatta was an invitation race sailed over the four-mile triangle, twice around, on the Saturday preceding the Inland opening. Competing for the new J. C. Kimberly Cup were *Susan*, *Nahma*, and *The Kid* of the local fleet, *Tag-a-long* of Pewaukee, *Marchioness VII* of Minnetonka, and *Deuce* of Lake Geneva, skippered by Walter Colman. A thirty-five-mile wind from the southwest made for a very

fast race. First home was *Deuce*, who was announced the winner. But Skipper Colman immediately sailed up close to the judges and confessed fouling two buoys. His good sportsmanship cost him the race, points, and trophy, but it won him warm public commendation. As a result of his honesty, three Neenah-Nodaway catboats took the first three prizes. Jim Kimberly in *Nahma* won first and the cup, Knox Kimberly in *Susan* placed second, and S.F. Shattuck's *The Kid*, third. The one serious accident of the regatta occurred after this race. Knox Kimberly suffered a dislocated shoulder when *Susan* capsized. The injury kept him out of sailing during the entire week.

At the close of the regatta, Inland President Otto L. Schmidt and visiting yachtsmen had nothing but praise for the hospitality, ideal moorage, and harbor facilities provided by the club and for the perfect sailing conditions that prevailed at the northern end of the lake. The Association now added Neenah to the regular circuit for its classic.

The Felker Cup contest that September (1923) found three sister ships among the contestants. Six Class A scows entered but the real competition was between *Faith*, *Deltax III* (both of Oshkosh), and Neenah-Nodaway's *Shadow*. The latter two were modeled after the *Faith* and all were built by Jones & LaBorde. The Felker Cup, changing hands for the first time in several years, went to *Deltax III*, skippered by Com. Carl Steiger. *Faith*, with Edward Reinke, placed second and *Shadow*, with Jack Kimberly, third.

At the Inland regatta in 1924, held at Lake Minnetonka, the Association introduced the Class E scow, a smaller edition of the Class A boat. This scow measured 28 feet in length and carried a mainsail, jib, and spinnaker, double rudders and boards, and a crew of three. It provided senior skippers with a less costly scow than the A Class yacht, helped solve their crew problem, and gave the smaller lakes a more challenging model than the catboat. It immediately cut into the Class C squadron in every club.

At that regatta a tied score for first place—a rarity in Inland





Riding the bilge boards on Neenah-Nodaway Class E yachts. j

R. H. Larson photograph





history—divided top honors between Eugene Glueck's *Kingfisher* and Leonard Carpenter's *Blue Heron*, both skippered by the owners. *Tornado* won the third spot. All were Minnetonka yachts. With these victories the younger Minnetonka skippers who had been climbing toward the top for the last few years made a clean sweep. *Onarway III*, *Shadow*, and *Eileen* represented the Neenah-Nodaway Club.

Locally in 1924, Frank Shattuck's *Onarway III*, Jack Kimberly's *Shadow*, and Will Davis's *Aderyn III* raced occasionally with Carl Steiger's *Deltox III*, which was about the only yacht competing from Oshkosh that year. Neenah-Nodaway officers for 1924 and 1925 were: Frank Shattuck, commodore; Steve Davis, vice commodore; Van Pinkerton, secretary-treasurer; J. C. Kimberly, regatta chairman.

In 1925 the younger Neenah-Nodaway skippers came to the fore in both Winnebago and Inland contests. Frank Shattuck's *Onarway III*, manned by the owner, Leo Schubart, Kimberly Stuart, Philip Reimer, Norman Greenwood, and Howard Aderhold, brought the Gilbert challenge trophy home to Neenah for the first time in its history. Neenah-Nodaway Com. William N. Gilbert had presented this cup to the club in 1908 with the stipulation that it be sailed for on Lake Winnebago. *Kathryn* of the Lake Butte des Morts Club carried it off the first year and it had been visiting around in one port or another ever since.

To win it, *Onarway III* was forced to wage a battle royal. Other contestants included Carl Steiger's *Deltox III* of Oshkosh, *Shadow*, skippered by Jack Kimberly, and *Aderyn III* with Steve Davis. The race was sailed over the Neenah triangle, once around, in three heats. Jimmie Jones and Will Davis acted as judges. *Onarway III* took the lead early in the first heat and held it around the course. In the second heat, *Deltox III* romped home the victor with a good safe margin. The last and deciding heat gave the spectators the thrill of the afternoon when *Onarway* and *Shadow* settled into a duel on the second leg. Crews were piled to windward on both scows and decks were awash. At the marker *Onarway* had increased

her lead to thirty seconds, but on the reach to the home buoy *Shadow* continually threatened to close the gap. Yard by yard she wore down *Onarway's* lead until less than a boat length separated them. "Kimberly sailed a whale of a race," reported the local paper, but *Onarway III* crossed the line to win the Gilbert Cup five seconds in the lead.

At the Inland regatta that year the Minnetonka march was finally brought to a halt. *Shadow* and her crew of Jack Kimberly, John Williamson, Bill Kellett, William Ritchie, and Gilbert Stevens, scored first in the race on August 20 and placed second in the regatta. *Faith*, skippered by John D. Buckstaff, won the championship title for Class A, and *Caprice*, the Meyer boat, was third. This regatta was long remembered for its light winds. Five races were called off either before they started or because the time limit expired before a yacht crossed the finish line. Other Neenah-Nodaway entries were *Onarway III*, *Aderyn III*, and, in Class C, young Jim Kimberly's *Nahma*.

The climax of the 1925 season for the Neenah-Nodaway Club was the cup night sponsored by the club at The Valley Inn with the Oshkosh yachtsmen as guests. A large and light-hearted gathering of old and young testified to the camaraderie that marked the relationship of the two clubs at that time. Greetings received by wire from James C. Kimberly in Canada saluted "Jimmie Jones, our able designer and builder" and the club's skippers. John Buckstaff was presented the famed Felker Cup by Will Davis and also the Athearn trophy. Com. Frank Shattuck accepted the Steiner, Gilbert, and Sawyer awards, won by his *Onarway III*. Jack Kimberly received the new Jones Cup from the donor, Jimmie Jones. Plans and discussions for the coming season centered around new Class A and Class E scows for Winnebago and the contemplated fleet of dinghies to introduce young boys to the sport. For the veterans the get-together revived the spirit of the good old days.



*The Junior Division  
Comes of Age*

*THE* Neenah-Nodaway Junior program had its beginnings after three dinghies were offered to the club on April 13, 1926, by Frank Shattuck and Knox Kimberly for the use of Neenah lads who had no boats of their own. At the time, general interest in the sport needed a bracer, and it was thought that a program for teenagers would help turn the trick. Boys of this age had been skipping rowboats with sails or C boats off Neenah for years but without benefit of program or organization. Behind this project were the newly elected officers of the club: Jack Kimberly, commodore; Bill Kellett, vice commodore; John Williamson, secretary-treasurer. Frank Shattuck headed the regatta committee, which had charge of the project, and was assisted by Bill Kellett, James C. Kimberly, Knox Kimberly, and Leo Schubart.

By July 8 this group had settled on the qualifications for the members; drafted special regulations to supplement Inland Association rules; provided for a supervisor to be chosen from the club membership; and mapped out his duties. The new sailors were drawn from two local boys' clubs, the St. Thomas scouts and the Boys' Brigade. An applicant had to be between the ages of thirteen and eighteen, able to swim fifty yards, and had to have parental consent in writing.

Inland racing rules governed all contests, and special regulations were enforced to safeguard the lives of the boys and the property of the club. Crews were instructed in sailing, proper mooring, and the care of sails, rigging, boat covers, and other equipment. Each crew, after bringing a boat to dock, had to stand by for inspection before being dismissed by the supervisor.

Races were planned for Saturdays during July and August. No crew was allowed to sail the same boat in any two consecutive races, and at first only two boats were permitted to compete in a

heat. Each victory counted one point for the winning skipper. At the close of the season the skipper with the highest score received a pennant. The first race in this Junior project took place on July 12, 1926.

As the Juniors gained sailing skill, club skippers invited them to join their crews. In 1928 at the Class E invitation regatta on Lake Geneva, Mark Jorgensen, Stanley Severson, and John Arft sailed with Frank C. Shattuck on *Nan Tuck*; Donald Rusch, James Shea, and Robert H. (Gus) Larson, with Jim Kimberly on *Phantom*; and Woodrow Jensen with Jack Kimberly on *Folly*. *Phantom* won the first race at this regatta, sailing the eight-mile triangular course in 1:15:03.

The championship pennant for Juniors that year went to Woodrow Jensen, with a score of 24. He won all five races. Michael Donovan, with 11, was second, and Francis Olson and Mark Jorgensen tied for third place with 8 points each. Young Jensen, as a result of his good showing, was elected the first commodore of the Junior fleet on October 1, 1928.

In 1932 the country-wide business depression that was restricting senior activity on Winnebago focused local yachting interest on the Juniors; it was definitely their year. By that time regular Wednesday races supplemented the Saturday schedule. James C. Kimberly was commodore of the club; E. E. (Ed) Haskins, vice commodore; and Lyall C. Stilp, secretary-treasurer. The list of qualified Junior members at the opening of that season shows that sons of club members also were joining the group.

Scores ran exceedingly close all during the summer. In August the Saturday series closed with Gus Larson, 25; Ralph Stiegler, 23; John Schmerein, 23; Art Brown, 22; Edgar Wyberg, 21; and Vic Larsen, 18. "Closer boat racing than this does not exist," commented the *News-Times*.

A match race in three heats sailed on August 30, 1932, between the top scorers of the two series decided the Junior championship for that year. As reported in the *News-Times* it had all the drama of a senior race and testified to the determination that animated the young skippers:





X boats of the Neenah-Nodaway fleet.

R. H. Larson photograph





In a riotous wind, the junior championship of the Neenah-Nodaway Yacht Club was settled Tuesday. Skipper Bob Kuehl, winner of the Wednesday section, and Skipper Bob [Gus] Larson of the Saturday group, and their crews, reported for a match race, best two of three heats. The starts were well timed and even. Kuehl was able to squeeze through to a win in the first heat. The second heat was promptly started and had all the appearance of a spirited scrap when Kuehl capsized on the outer leg of the triangle and Larson romped home, an easy winner. Starter Solomon had an extra dory in reserve and the third heat was quickly under way. Everything about this race was all that championship sailing should be. With less than 100 feet to go for the finish, Larson was holding a slight lead when his tiller snapped. By grasping the rudder with his hands he was able to stagger across the line for a win with a bare six feet between the bows of the two boats. Award of the season's prizes will be made at a dinner to be held next week.

At that banquet, held at the Sign of the Fox, the Juniors were well represented. For the first time silver cups as well as pennants were awarded Junior winners. Gus Larson and Bob Kuehl received the trophies for first and second places, and a silver "consolation" cup went to Ralph Stiegler in third place.

In 1933 the match races between the two Wednesday and Saturday contests grew into a championship series. William Kuehl and his crew of Lee Gressler and Andy Borenz won the title by taking three firsts and a second in the four contests. A meeting of the Juniors, called by Com. Shattuck, elected Kenneth Heinz commodore of the younger group and voted to let him choose two members to serve with him as an executive committee.

Because of the response to the Junior program, the Neenah-Nodaway Club officers were considering new boats for the young sailors when the Inland Association, in September, 1934, introduced its Cub Class sailboat. This action ended the dinghy program. The new Inland-sponsored boat provided the Juniors with a small, sturdy, shallow draft sloop, low-priced and easily built by an amateur.

Cub Class regattas were invitation affairs until 1940, when the Inland held its first Cub races at Lake Geneva. Thirty-five entries registered, but none from Lake Winnebago. The Neenah-Nodaway Club, however, had a sizable Cub fleet. It launched several of

the small sailboats in 1935, and four years later it considered splitting the group. In 1939 the officers discussed putting on an invitation regatta for the Cubs but deferred action until later. In the meantime, first Johnny Johnson of the Johnson Boat Works in White Bear modified his X boat, which gradually took the place of the Cub, and, second, World War II canceled all Inland regattas.

The X boat immediately found favor with junior sailors, and the X squadron rapidly absorbed most of the former Cub enthusiasts. So popular did it become locally that in 1941 the X fleet was divided into junior and senior divisions. At present the Inland Association recognizes the X boat as a Junior model only.

The X Class introduced ladies (both teen-agers and adults) into the ranks of skippers and brother-and-sister teams into the local sport. In 1941, Dorothy Ridgeway, piloting *Dot & Dash*, won the X boat Junior special cup for placing second and also the Mrs. J. A. Kimberly, Jr., trophy. She was the first local Junior miss to win a prize for placing. Two brother-and-sister teams, Larry and Betty Neff in *Laribea* and Patsy and Sumner Parker in *P.S.*, also made the trophy lists through the X Class during this period. In some races the distaff side of the house skippered the boat and in others she served as crew. In 1949, Judy Croy, piloting X boat *Creeping Charlie*, became the first Champion Miss Skipper by winning the new H. B. Palmer trophy. It was her first year of sailing. That year another Junior beginner, Carol Bowman in her *Over Dew*, won the Fourth of July Spoor Cup for X boats against senior competition.

During the years just preceding World War II, sailing classes conducted by Jim Kimberly and occasional lessons in knot tying given by Rudy Lotz proved popular with the Juniors. In the circular letter announcing Capt. Kimberly's classes for 1941, Secretary Karl Oberreich pointedly asked: Do you understand all the sailing rules? Do you know how to tune up your boat properly? How to break in new sails? When to make a leeward start? What mistakes you made last season ("they are down in a little black book")?

During World War II and immediately following it, when



many of the older sailors were in government service, the Juniors dominated the competition again and carried off most of the prizes. Several of their number, notably Sumner Parker, John R. (Bob) Kimberly, Jr., Mel Frazee, Bob Bowman, Valentine Parker, Bob Schultz, Lawton Smith, and Bob Sage displayed the ability that later won them club honors and responsibilities. During this period the Frank B. Whiting Cup, symbol of the Neenah-Nodaway fleet championship, was awarded to teen-agers Sumner Parker, in 1943 and 1944; Bob Kimberly in 1945, when he won 323 points out of a possible 360; Mel Frazee in 1946 and 1947; and Jack Renner and Frank Luebben in 1948. In 1950, Conrad K. (Con) Woerner joined this group of Junior aces.

In 1946 the Inland Association introduced yet another Junior boat, the D Class. Designed for C Class graduates, this model carried a mainsail and jib on a C Class hull. In 1957 a spinnaker was added. Con Woerner, the first Neenah-Nodaway Junior to win an Inland trophy sailing a D scow, captured the Com. Sprinkman Cup at the Inland regatta held at Neenah in 1952.

The climax of the Neenah-Nodaway season for the Juniors is cup night, which usually is held at The Valley Inn shortly after Labor Day. Then their achievements and their enthusiasm can best be measured. Occasionally a young skipper carries his awards home by the armful. In 1944, Sumner and Patsy Parker collected seven and Bob Kimberly in his X boat *Bob White*, five. In 1949, Lawton Smith in his E scow *Snooks* also won five, among them the A. C. Gilbert perpetual challenge cup for his class. In 1950, Con Woerner in *Eight Ball* and Dick Schultz in the *Lightning Islander* each carried home seven, and in 1953, Don Schultz, also in *Islander*, collected six. Dick DuBois that year, just entering his teens, won five with his X boat *G'Whiz*, including the X boat fleet championship, and in 1955 he received seven.

On cup night the proportion of the awards received by the younger sailors may be taken as a fair representation of Junior activity. Their program has long since proved its value as a training school and in addition it has provided one of the best guarantees for the club's continuity.



## *The Sport on Winnebago Fights a Decline*

FOR a decade or so after 1926, interclub activity on Winnebago rose and fell with the Inland's visits to Neenah. As a result the Neenah-Nodaway story during this period centers largely around those years when the club was host to the Inland fleet. In the early 1930's a country-wide business depression dealt the sport a body blow and every club in the region curtailed its program. But in spite of all handicaps, Neenah-Nodaway continued to grow. The new Inland models—the E Class scow, the Cub, the X boat—gradually drew new sailors into the sport and new craft into the fleet, and by 1937 a renaissance was in the making.

At the very beginning of the period, Neenah sailors in occasional bouts continued to sharpen their skill against the superior seamanship of John D. Buckstaff. Competition now was between crews, not clubs as in the preceding season. In 1926, Carl Steiger in *Deltax III* again relieved Buckstaff of the Felker Cup, but Buckstaff, sailing the new *Haywire*, more than evened the score by winning the Green Lake challenge trophy at Pewaukee and the Inland championship at Oshkosh. Neenah-Nodaway yachts placed near the top in these two regattas. *Onarway IV*, skippered by Frank Shattuck, finished just behind the leader in two races at Pewaukee, and Jack Kimberly sailed *Shadow* into third place at the Inland meet.

In later Winnebago contests, held only very occasionally, *Smilin' Through*, *Silhouette*, and *Dad D* replaced *Onarway IV*, *Shadow*, and *Aderyn III*. At Oshkosh, *Independence* succeeded *Haywire*.

At the annual meeting of the Inland Association in 1926, Neenah was given the Inland regatta for 1927. Preparations for the event were in the hands of Jack Kimberly, Neenah-Nodaway's commodore.



The announcement of the regatta that was sent to the Inland membership was more elaborate than any issued heretofore. On the front it carried the Neenah-Nodaway burgee and a picture of Inland scows; on the back, a skipper's map of the Neenah shoreline and harbor, showing the courses, channel, shoals, and the various docks. This new feature proved so popular that other clubs have since continued the idea.

For entertainment the customary dinners and dances, which by now followed a pattern, were scheduled for The Valley Inn and the Riverview Country Club. The sailing program opened with a curtain raiser at Oshkosh, an invitation race to be sailed on the Saturday preceding the regatta with the Felker Cup as prize. For the regatta proper, contests were announced for the new Class E scows and the catboats each morning and a Class A race each afternoon. To accommodate the two morning classes, two triangles were laid out in the harbor with the home buoy common to both at the mouth of the river.

As an attraction for Junior competitors, the club offered a special prize on each of three days to the Junior captain with the highest score who had never won an Inland award. In addition, the Pistakee Club presented two new cups, one for catboats and the other for E boats.

Sixty-one entries registered: 15 A Class; 21 E Class; 25 C Class. The Neenah-Nodaway Club representatives were: in the A Class—Will Davis's *Dad D*, sailed by Steve Davis; E. E. Haskin's *Sea Puss* and Frank Shattuck's *Onarway*, both skippered by the owner; and J. C. Kimberly's *Shadow*, with Jack Kimberly at the tiller; in the new E Class—Jim Kimberly sailed his *Game Cock*; and in the C Class—*Way-We-Go*, owned and sailed by Frank C. Shattuck, and Carlton R. Smith's *Susan*, with James Sensenbrenner as captain.

On the opening day a capful of wind spent itself in helping the A fleet over the starting line. By taking an inshore tack Jack Kimberly in *Shadow* was able to round the first buoy and establish a good lead before it died. For the next two and a half hours the



sailors alternated between hope and despair. An extremely reluctant breeze favored a boat here or there but left most of the fleet becalmed. Finally, only fifteen minutes before the time limit, *Shadow's* sails filled with the first breath of a good northerly on the home stretch. It sent her across the line—with nine minutes to spare—while most of the yachts were still drifting along the southeast leg. The nearest boat to *Shadow* was *Highlander*, which was then trying to pass the home buoy the second time around. Kimberly's early maneuver on the first leg paid him off well, for at the head of the fleet he had been able to pick up a breeze that never reached the others. This success added the Gilbert Cup to the Sawyer and Felker trophies, which he had won on Saturday at Oshkosh.

The Inland championship title in the A Class at Neenah went to Minnetonka's *Red Raven* and Alan J. Hill. With this victory the Minnetonka Club again swept to the top of the list, where it remained for the next four years. In 1928, its *Two Sallies* sailed by Charles H. Bell beat *Red Raven* for first place at Lake Geneva. Twelve clubs registered for that regatta. Will Davis's *Dad D*, sailed by Steve Davis, and *Onarway*, with Frank Shattuck, were the only Class A entries from Neenah that year. In the E Class, J. C. Kimberly's *Folly*, Jim Kimberly's *Phantom*, and Frank C. Shattuck's *Nan Tuck* represented the club. *Phantom*, as has been mentioned, had won the first race at the invitation regatta on Green Lake earlier in the month.

In a local contest of interest, sailed on September 15, 1928, Frank Shattuck in *Onarway* and John Buckstaff in *Haywire* fought one of the most gruelling battles ever witnessed on the Neenah triangle. At stake was the Gilbert Cup. With decks awash and crews drenched with spray, both yachts sped around the course in a spanking thirty-five-mile breeze. Buckstaff won by the slim margin of eight seconds. But for a minute's hard luck the Neenah boat would have emerged the winner.

The Minnetonka Club took the top three places in the 1929 Inland meet held on its own course. *Sally Too*, with Capt. Bell, *Red*

*Raven*, with Capt. Hill, and *Kingfisher*, with Capt. John C. Savage, came through in that order. Minnetonka's Edmund P. Pillsbury, who had been competing in Inland events since 1926, also scored at this regatta when his Class C *Squall* placed second. Harry T. Nye, Jr., of Delavan in *Gale* won the championship in the C class. Minnetonka took its fourth straight victory at the Inland regatta held at Neenah in August, 1930.

That year the new North Shore Country Club was engaged for the commodore's dinner and four evenings of dancing, including cup-night festivities. In addition to the A, E, and C class races which filled the mornings and afternoons, invitation races for all three classes were announced for the Saturday preceding the official opening. Moorage was provided in the river for sixty yachts, the largest guest fleet that had yet assembled for an Inland meet: 17 Class A sloops, 28 Class E scows, and 20 Class C catboats. The launch *Mayflower* was chartered for those who wished to watch the races from the lake.

Com. J. C. Kimberly appointed the following committees in charge of arrangements: Reservations: Leo Schubart, chairman, L. C. Stilp, Ruby Hart, secretary; Finance: J. S. Sensenbrenner, chairman, John D. Babcock, Frank Shattuck, C. B. Clark, E. E. Haskins; Entertainment: Jack Kimberly, chairman, Bill Kellett, Donald Shepard; Printing and Publications: Kimberly Stuart; Guest Boat: E. E. Haskins, chairman, Mowry Smith; Docking, Unloading, and Loading: J. C. Kimberly; Trophy: Frank Shattuck; Regatta: J. C. Kimberly, chairman, Steve Davis, Frank Shattuck. Neenah-Nodaway officers at this time were, in addition to J. C. Kimberly: E. E. Haskins, vice commodore, and L. C. Stilp, secretary-treasurer.

Three Class A entries represented the local club: Frank Shattuck's *Smilin' Through*; Will Davis's *Dad D*, skippered by Steve Davis; and Jack Kimberly's *Silhouette*. In Class E, Jim Kimberly sailed his *Phantom II* and Frank C. Shattuck, *Nan Tuck*. In Class C, James Sensenbrenner skippered his *My Girl*.

A good sailing breeze out of the northeast prevailed during the



week, with neither a heavy blow nor a prolonged calm interfering with the schedule. Lake Winnebago looked and behaved its prettiest for the two to three hundred guests who attended the regatta.

The tune-up race which preceded the official opening provided a fast and sporty contest with three beats to windward in a better than twelve-knot breeze. Fifteen Class A sloops sailed the twelve-mile triangular course led virtually all the way by a Neenah-Nodaway boat. Frank Shattuck in his new *Smilin' Through* took the lead soon after the start and held it twice around the triangle. His victory seemed assured until Jack Kimberly in *Silhouette* came from behind and romped past him on the last lap to win the race in record time, 1:22:20.

The Inland championship for A Class yachts went to *Yellow Jacket* of Minnetonka and her skipper, Alan J. Hill. By winning the first race they captured the new Three Bells challenge trophy, presented that season by J. F., C. H., and S. H. Bell, and by placing first in four of the five heats at the regatta they set an Inland record. The final scores showed *Little Smoke*, owned by Harry N. Gifford of Lake Geneva and sailed by John Perrigo, second, and *Sally Too*, owned and sailed by Charles H. Bell, third.

Local records were broken also by Class E scows. At the invitation race on Saturday, John S. Pillsbury of Minnetonka sailed his *Wild Deuce* twice around the four-mile triangle in 1:07:50. Later, during the regatta, Joseph V. Quarles, Jr., of Pine Lake in *Wee Too* bettered this time by a few seconds. In a hotly contested finish, he completed the course in 1:07:43, only seven seconds ahead of *Marie Ann* of White Bear, sailed by W. E. Riedel, and seventeen ahead of *Phantom II* and Jim Kimberly. Twenty-six entries competed in that heat and the elapsed time from the start to the last boat across the line was 1:16:30. The first three places in the final score for E scows went to *Wee Too*, *Rokinben* of Lake Geneva, sailed by Robert F. Porter, and *Wild Deuce*.

The catboats, too, sailed a fast race on August 20. *Squall*, skippered by Edmund P. Pillsbury, covered the six-mile course in 1:05:20, leading *Gale II* of Delavan by eight seconds. *Gale II*, however, sailed by Harry T. Nye, Jr., won the championship. *Sis III*,



owned and skippered by I. L. Ellwood, and *Nuisance*, owned and sailed by Bruce T. Adams, both of the Lake Geneva Club, placed second and third, respectively.

In 1931, at Oshkosh, these records for E and C boats were beaten when *Lady Luck* of White Bear, sailed by Jule M. Hannaford, III, made the eight miles in 1:03:02 and H. T. Nye, Jr., sailed *Gale II* over the six-mile course in 59:25. A. F. Gartz, Jr., of the Lake Geneva Club, in *Big Foot* won the Inland title in the A Class that year. Three Neenah-Nodaway entries competed: Frank Shattuck's *Smilin' Through*, Jack Kimberly's *Silhouette*, and Jim Kimberly's Class E *Phantom II*, sailed by Edward Lehr.

At that regatta the Oshkosh Club offered the Felker Cup as prize for the invitation race which preceded the Inland schedule. It went to H. N. Gifford's *Little Smoke*, sailed by John Perrigo. A White Bear yacht crossed the line first but was disqualified. This decision moved *Smilin' Through*, skippered by Irving Stilp, up to second place. The Felker Cup was not sailed for again until 1938.

The business depression of the early 1930's, which made serious inroads on all Inland clubs, cut into the outside activity of Neenah-Nodaway's A squadron. The local skippers competed on the home triangle among themselves. Sometimes they were joined by John D. Buckstaff, who came down from Oshkosh and sailed one of the Kimberly boats. No Neenah-Nodaway yachts registered for the Inland held on Lake Geneva in 1932; *Blue Devil*, sailed by T. E. Irvine of the White Bear Club became the Class A champion. In 1933, Frank Shattuck's *Onarway IV* was the sole club representative at Lake Mendota. That year Edmund P. Pillsbury entered A Class competition with his *Sea Fox*. He won the title in his class and successfully defended it in 1934 on Lake Minnetonka and in 1935 at Neenah.

For the 1935 Inland regatta at Neenah, the local club brought out five entries: Frank Shattuck's *Smilin' Through*; J. C. Kimberly's *Shadow II*, sailed by Frank Kuehl; *Silhouette* with Jim Kimberly; Jack Kimberly and his new *Sea Gull*; and Frank C. Shattuck in his E Class *Nan Tuck*.

Com. Shattuck named the following committees to stage the

event: Regatta: Jack Kimberly, chairman, Lyall C. Stilp, Bill Kellett, John S. Sensenbrenner, and J. A. Kimberly, Jr.; Finance: T. M. Gilbert, chairman, C. B. Clark, and Ernst Mahler; Entertainment: Jack Kimberly; Publicity: Kimberly Stuart; Dock and Moorage: J. C. Kimberly; Trophies: J. A. Kimberly, Jr., Frank Shattuck, and J. C. Kimberly.

The star performer at this regatta was Edmund P. Pillsbury, who sailed his *Sea Fox* to victory in three out of the four heats. On the last day, he set a thrilling pace for the fleet, making some legs of the triangular course in nine minutes to establish a record average of 41 minutes around. Sensing that the championship was at stake, thousands of spectators lined the Neenah shore.

Jack Kimberly scored a first in one race by expert manipulation of a tricky parachute spinnaker and second in the regatta. On the day of his victory a calm delayed the start of the contest until 4:30, and even then the breeze was so faint that it took eleven entries seven minutes to cross the starting line. As his *Sea Gull* set out on her second circuit of the triangle, a good easterly revived the hopes of the sailors and the race. She made the next leg in fifteen minutes and won the race under cover of semi-darkness a little after 7 o'clock. *Sea Gull* had captured the Sawyer Cup before the regatta opened, and she successfully defended her title to it in 1936 and 1937.

Another trophy winner at the Neenah regatta of 1935 was Barbara Archer of White Bear, who competed in the C Class. She received the special cup presented annually to the highest ranking junior, the first girl to win this award.

Neenah-Nodaway and Lake Geneva were the only clubs which registered A sloops for the 1936 regatta on Lake Mendota. Both Lyall C. Stilp and Bill Kellett appeared on the entry list as captains that year. The former piloted Frank Shattuck's *Smilin' Through* and the latter Jack Kimberly's *Sea Gull*. Jim Kimberly skippered his new Class A *Phantom III*, and Frank Kuehl again was at the tiller of J. C. Kimberly's *Shadow II*. A. F. Gartz, Jr., took the title in *Big Foot Too*. In 1937, on his home course, he suc-







R. H. Larson photograph

Neenah-Nodaway Club Trophies. 1, Mowry Smith E Scow. 2, H. B. Palmer Miss Skipper Cup. 3, A. C. Gilbert E Scow. 4, Mrs. Ernst Mahler 3-Course E Scow. 5, Gilbert 3-Course X Boat for July 4. 6, Maid of Nine E Scow. 7, A. C. Gilbert Challenge Cup, E Scow. 8, Mrs. J. A. Kimberly, Jr., E Scow. 9, Roller Lightning for July 4. 10, J. C. Kimberly X Boat. 11, Mrs. Ernst Mahler X Boat. 12, Spoor X Boat for July 4. 13, Gus Woerner X Boat. 14, H. C. Schultz Lightning. 15, J. C. Kimberly D Scow. 16, John Sensenbrenner D Scow. 17, J. H. Kimberly X Boat. 18, J. R. Kimberly X Boat. 19, N.N.Y.C. Sailboat. 20, W. R. Kellett D Scow. 21, Mimi Mory X Boat for Labor Day. 22, J. A. Kimberly, Jr., X Boat. 23, Mrs. Cola G. Parker X Boat. 24, R. H. Spoor Lightning. 25, A. K. Kimberly Most Persistent Skipper. 26, F. B. Whiting Club Champion. 27, Mrs. Cola G. Parker D Scow. 28, J. C. Kimberly Lightning. 29, R. K. Neller Challenge Bell. 30, J. S. Sensenbrenner X Boat. 31, N.N.Y.C. Bowl. 32, N.N.Y.C. Plate. 33, Don Schultz for Labor Day. 34, N.N.Y.C. Sailboat. 35, J. C. Kimberly D Scow.

cessfully defended it, and in 1939 at Lake Minnetonka, he won it for the fourth time.

Early in 1937 the Neenah-Nodaway Club embarked on a promotion program. Bill Kellett was the new commodore and Rudy Lotz the new vice commodore. Lyall C. Stilp was secretary-treasurer. To help revive interest in the sport, the club decided to rent the old Stevens residence across East Wisconsin Avenue from the yacht basin for a clubhouse for five months. Jim Kimberly headed the house committee, and Mrs. Ruth Kimberly had charge of the ladies' committee which furnished it. Dances, teas, and gifts financed the project. In addition, a regatta committee, under the chairmanship of D. C. Beaulieu, prepared a racing schedule and reported on sailing rules. Fleet captains were appointed for the various classes. The club also discussed the matter of a printed club directory, with lists of the members, boat owners, boats by name and number, and a schedule of races.

In another effort to stimulate racing, Knox Kimberly secured new trophies to add to four which had been donated the year before. Several of the Neenah-Nodaway cups date from about this time, among them the Knox Kimberly trophy for the most persistent skipper and the Frank B. Whiting club championship cup. While most club awards testify to superior skill and seamanship, these two recognize other virtues. The former "goes to a skipper who is always out there plugging, getting the tough breaks but sticking by," to quote former commodore Richard K. Neller. It is usually presented to a Junior. The latter recognizes merit and sportsmanship as well as sailing ability.

In July, the officers proposed a picnic on Garlic Island, with a race to the Island and prizes for the winners in the various classes. No record of this event has been found, but the trophy list for the following year's race to the Island mentions Class A sloops, cat-boats, Cubs, X boats, Nationals, and an Open Class as competing. According to available material, this season marked the first in which a local Miss Skipper appeared among the trophy winners. Mimi Mory won the Labor Day cup for X boats. To celebrate her



victory she put up a perpetual challenge cup, the Mimi Mory Labor Day trophy for X boats.

Also in 1938 the Neenah-Nodaway Club again sponsored the Inland regatta. Mooring was provided for 104 entries, a record number. Boats flying the club colors registered in every class. Of the club's six A scows, three introduced new skippers to Inland competition: Charles Zemlock sailed J. C. Kimberly's *Silhouette*; Charles Overly, Frank Shattuck's *Smilin' Through*; and Rudy Lotz, Bob Kimberly's *Shadow*. Frank Shattuck's *Onaway IV*, Jack Kimberly's *Sea Gull*, and Jim Kimberly's *Phantom III* were all skippered by their respective owners.

Three club catboats entered: *Push Over*, owned and sailed by Bill Gilbert; *Easy Goin'*, owned by Dick Thickers and piloted by Bud Kimberly; and *Black Rhythm*, owned by Ted Perry and sailed by June Perry. In Class E, Charles H. Sage skippered his *Goly-Kell*.

The Spinnaker Splashers, an association of the crew members who handle the sails, presented the Inland with a new award to be sailed for at this regatta, the Spinnaker Splashers Cup. Later, the Bilge Pullers, the sailors who operate the bilge boards, also gave the Association a trophy. These two groups organized originally to provide crew members with a social evening like that enjoyed by the captains at the annual commodore's dinner.

John S. Pillsbury in *Sea Fox* won the Class A title that year. The invitation races that preceded the regatta again were sailed off Oshkosh with the Felker and Sawyer cups as the prizes. Harry T. Nye in *Gale*, a Class A sloop, won the former and Jim Kimberly in *Phantom III* the latter.

During most of this decade, as can be seen, the spotlight was focused on Inland competition and the Class A yachts because of the Inland regattas that were sponsored by the club. But by the end of the period, a fast-growing fleet of smaller craft, piloted by juniors and seniors, was nudging the big boats over for a share of the program and the local stage.



## CHAPTER 12 Neenah's Club Approaches the Century Mark

*THE* events which color the last twenty years of this Neenah-Nodaway story provide it with a proper climax. The record shows the incorporation of the club, victories that brought to Neenah the Sawyer, Felker, and Inland championship cups, and the election of two club members to the Inland presidency.

In 1939 a new administration incorporated the club to give it the advantages of a corporation and to replace its outmoded constitution and by-laws. The Articles of Incorporation vested the management in a board of directors, added a rear commodore to the staff of officers, and, the most radical change of all, gave the right to vote to all members in good standing, whether boat owners or not. Earlier, voting had been restricted to yacht owners and, traditionally, to owners of Class A boats, from whose ranks the commodore and vice commodore usually had been chosen. With the change, the commodore was elected from and by the whole membership and he usually has worked up to his office through first serving as rear commodore and vice commodore.

Inaugurating this new order, as incorporators, were: Albert C. Gilbert, commodore; William Wright, rear commodore; and Charles Zemlock, treasurer. Com. Gilbert immediately appointed committees for printing and publicity, trophies, housing, and promotion of sailing, as well as the customary regatta committee. In addition he added a fleet captain to his staff.

With this regeneration and the new Inland models, local interest in sailing was soon translated into a sizable fleet. In 1940, membership jumped to 148, then an all-time high, and in 1941 the fleet set a record for activity with 69 boats on the lake, 53 of them participating in races and 35 eligible for awards.

Another item of historical interest in the 1939 minutes concerned Jim Kimberly's motorboat *Betsey K.* This former lifeboat

off a lake freighter, converted by him into a power boat, had been used by the club as a police launch or judges' boat since 1933. In 1939, when it was voted to buy it, Kimberly gave it to the club. As the *Nodaway*, it has become as familiar to local sailors as the Neenah shoreline. Maurice Vogt, who has kept it and the club's equipment shipshape for almost twenty-five years, has served as its pilot from the beginning. Strangely enough, he has never skippered a sailboat—in fact, he claims to have been on one only once—but he probably has attended more yacht races than any Neenah skipper.

Also in 1939 the Neenah-Nodaway Club joined the North American Yacht Racing Union and thus allied itself with the association which represents virtually every yacht club in the country. The Union's objective, besides promoting the sport, is to unify sailing rules.

The club initiated plans for a new clubhouse but they did not materialize. William Kellett, J. H. Kimberly, and Karl Oberreich presented the idea to the Park Board, but the City Council turned it down. Another venture at this time ended more successfully: the club issued its first directory, a fourfold cardboard, about 1941. This form was superseded in 1949 by the present type of booklet.

Com. Gilbert, though not a sailor himself, was especially interested in promoting the Class E yacht. In 1940, to induce more Neenah sailors to enter Class E competition, he presented the club with the A. C. Gilbert perpetual challenge trophy for E scows, to be sailed for the last Saturday in July over the local course. Twice this trophy has been won by Eric Isakson sailing his *White Star*.

The club considered sponsoring an invitation regatta for Class E boats in 1942, when Neenah was scheduled to be the host of the Inland Association. With club membership, the fleet, and its activity at record highs and an Inland regatta in the offing, the club once again called on James C. Kimberly and Frank Shattuck to be commodore and vice commodore, respectively. But before the season started, the United States entered World War II.

In the years just before the war the club's A scows had given a

good account of themselves, especially in Winnebago contests. Jack Kimberly in *Sea Gull* brought home the Sawyer Cup in 1939, and *Phantom III*, skippered by Jim Kimberly, won the Felker Cup in 1939 and 1940, the Sawyer in 1940, and the Gilbert in 1941. Both boats chalked up firsts in single heats at the Inland regatta held on Lake Mendota in 1940. On the first day Jack Kimberly sent *Sea Gull* around the ten-mile triangular course in 1:30:05. In the second heat, Jim Kimberly in his *Phantom III* outsailed John Pillsbury, Jr., in *Sea Fox* to win by more than a minute. With this victory he placed third in the final score. *Sea Fox* carried off the Inland title for her class, and *Little Smoke III*, sailed by John F. Perrigo, placed second. Frank Shattuck's *Onaway IV*, skippered by Karl Oberreich, as well as several Neenah-Nodaway E Class boats also competed in this regatta.

In 1941, *Junior* of the Lake Geneva Club, sailed by Jack Vilas, Jr., won the Inland Class A championship. The Inland Association suspended all its regattas from 1942 through 1945, and no races were sailed for either the Felker or the Sawyer Cup from 1941 through 1944. For the third time in Neenah yachting history, war virtually beached the largest boats.

The war brought other changes, too. The patrol boats felt the pinch of gasoline rationing and managed to cover the races only through the donation of coupons by club members and the assistance of Marvin Porath of the Coast Guard and Irving Stilp with the police boat. With most of the sailing men called into government service, the Juniors dominated the racing program. They kept competition brisk even though the fleet was depleted. In 1945, the last year of the war, around thirty yachts were active, the average boat competed in about thirteen races, and the membership totaled 120. That same year the club began to collect newspaper clippings on club activities for a Neenah-Nodaway scrapbook. During the war for the first and only time in the club's history a lady held a major office. Mrs. M. Jane Spoor was elected secretary in 1942 and served through 1947.

Two events, one of lasting importance and the other of passing



interest, occurred in the early years of the war. The first was the arrival in Neenah of Richard K. Neller and his 19-foot International Lightning in August, 1942. He introduced this class boat to Neenah sailors. Well adapted to Winnebago sailing and comparatively easy to build, it became a popular model locally. Within a few years the club's Lightning squadron numbered eleven, even though the Inland Association never sponsored the class.

Of less importance, though it created more of a stir at the time, was the Neenah-Nodaway program for V-12 students from Lawrence College. The idea of offering sailing practice to the Naval Unit stationed there originated with the college authorities. On several Saturdays during the 1943 and 1944 seasons the club initiated as many would-be sailors into the sport as its craft would accommodate. Some of the recruits had never even been in a boat. During the second season the Vanderbilt rules were tried out but were soon abandoned.

With the end of the war in August, 1945, yachtsmen throughout the region began to plan full-scale activity again. The Oshkosh Yacht Club, some of whose members had been collecting Class A scows during the war, celebrated the return of peace by sponsoring the Felker Cup race on August 25. Seven Class A yachts competed, all from the local club. The coveted trophy went to John D. Buckstaff sailing the Waite-Buckstaff *Lake Fly*. J. C. Kimberly of the Neenah-Nodaway Club attended the race as honorary chief judge.

At Neenah, yachting plans centered around the postponed visit of the Inland Association, now planned for 1946. The special steering committee for the event included Com. Richard K. Neller, Frank Shattuck, Jack Kimberly, and Bill Kellett. Fourteen of the fifteen Inland clubs from four states registered over a hundred entries for this regatta. Young skippers from five clubs raced the new Class D scows, introduced only that year.

Neenah-Nodaway had two Class A representatives: Jack Kimberly's *Sea Gull II*, skippered by Bill Kellett because a dislocated hip prevented Kimberly from competing, and Kellett's *Winnebago*, skippered by Lyall C. Stilp; three Class E yachts: Charles H.



R. H. Larson photograph

*Last Chance*, Inland Class A champion of 1951 and 1953.





Sage's *Goly-Kell*, sailed by Robert S. Sage; *Brother F*, owned and skippered by F. J. Sensenbrenner; *ST37*, with the owner, D. C. (Chuck) Shepard, Jr., at the tiller; and two Class D boats: *Carrie's Command*, owned and sailed by Ernst Mahler, Jr., and M. Jane Spoor's *Bounty II*, piloted by Russell H. Spoor.

Jack Kimberly followed the races through binoculars from his bed and saw *Sea Gull II* score a victory that won for him the huge P. A. Valentine Cup. Serving as her crew with Bill Kellett were Carlton Smith, Russ Johnson, Mark Jorgensen, and Bob Kimberly.

By the end of the regatta it was abundantly clear that the Minnetonka skippers had not lost their skill during the war. Edmund P. Pillsbury in *Sea Fox* took the tune-up race and four of the five heats. Second place went to Archie J. Cochrane and *Killarney*, and third to A. B. Warner's *Sally Forth*. All were Minnetonka boats.

The Class E crown went to J. G. Ordway, Jr., in *Nushka*, the third generation of his family to take home an Inland title. Coleman Norris of the Oconomowoc Club in his D Class *Misbehave II* won his first Inland championship, and E. S. Sprinkman, Jr., skipper of *Suzanne* of the Cedar Lake Club, took the Class C title by consistent placing, without winning a race.

On the Saturday following the 1946 Inland regatta at Neenah, the Oshkosh Club sponsored the Felker Cup race. Tom Anger of Oshkosh won it in *Win-Some-Too*. For the next three years he successfully defended his title sailing the same yacht. His 1948 victory came only after the judges prolonged the race for fifteen minutes after sunset, the time limit, by a special ruling. This extension, justified because the race was fifteen minutes late in starting, enabled Tom Anger, Melville Jones of Lake Geneva in *Quest*, and Edmund P. Pillsbury in *Sea Hound* to finish the course. These three lapped most of the field.

In 1947, at Lake Minnetonka, Jack Kimberly sailed *Sea Gull II* to second place in the regatta in a field of seventeen. This was the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Inland Association, and over 175 yachts registered from fourteen clubs. Manfred Curry,

well-known yachting authority and guest of honor, witnessed his first Inland races at this time. Edmund P. Pillsbury in his new *Sea Hound* took the title in his class. He held it through 1948, lost it to his brother John Pillsbury, Jr., in *Hornet* in 1949, and regained it in 1950.

At the 1948 meet, Bill Kellett provided the gallery with the most thrilling moment of the week when he made a spectacular spurt on the final leg of one race. By clever maneuvering he brought his *Winnebago* from sixth place, when about two miles from the line, past the field to finish just feet behind *Sea Hound*.

On August 28, 1949, Jack Kimberly won the Sawyer Cup with *Sea Gull II* at Oshkosh and set the lake record of 1:11:42 for the twelve-mile course, three times around the triangle. It still stands. A stiff wind out of the northwest kept the contest close over the entire run. This race may well be the fastest for A Class scows ever clocked on Lake Winnebago. According to a news dispatch only 59 seconds separated the winner from the fifth boat to cross the line. Kimberly's crew consisted of Carlton Smith, Dick Boehm, Mowry Smith, Jr., and Bob Haas. Crowding *Sea Gull II* were *Win-Some-Too* with Tom Anger, *Lake Fly* with John D. Buckstaff, Ernst Schmidt's *Black Point III* with Harry Melges, and *Last Chance* with Bill Kellett.

Kellett had disposed of *Winnebago* the year before, when he and Jack Kimberly acquired a new boat. Setting their sights on an Inland championship, they named her *Last Chance*. At the Inland meet held on Lake Geneva in 1949, they sailed her into third place. The following year, skippered by Kellett, she won the Felker Cup from Tom Anger and *Win-Some-Too*.

This Felker victory was not the only one credited to Neenah yachtsmen in 1950. At the Inland classic held on Lake Mendota, the Neenah-Nodaway Y Class skippers took the three top places: Eric Isakson in *Maid of Nine*, first; Barney Webb in *Half Hitch*, second; and Kurt Hagen in *Jokur II*, third. That regatta was memorable for its rugged weather and gusty winds. One rescue crew pulled seventy-two yachtsmen out of the water after twenty-four



boats tipped over, and two days later a rougher sea and higher winds capsized forty-four yachts, spilling no less than one hundred twenty persons into the lake. The Y Class yacht (originally called the Super X Class) was at that time a fairly popular model in Neenah. It was designed by Johnny Johnson of White Bear to be a bit larger and sportier than his X Class boat. Some have considered it his answer to the Lightning.

The 1951 season proved even more of a bonanza to the Neenah-Nodaway Club than the preceding one. Because no entry in the Felker race finished the course before sundown, Bill Kellett held the Felker Cup for another year. At the Inland regatta, held at Oshkosh, Frank Grundman in his *Rascal* won the over-all Y Class honors and, in the final race, the new trophy put up that year by the Lake Butte des Morts Club, three of whose skippers were competing in this class under Oshkosh colors. Barney Webb in *Half Hitch* came in second and Eric Isakson in *Maid of Nine*, third.

But Bill Kellett and *Last Chance* brought home that year the prize desired above all others, the Class A championship. For the first time since 1900 a Neenah yacht captured the Inland A Class title. In addition, the annual meeting of the Inland Association re-elected Kellett commodore and awarded Neenah the 1952 regatta.

The tune-up races which preceded the Inland opening in 1952 were sailed at Oshkosh for the Felker and Sawyer trophies. *Sea Gull II*, now owned and skippered by Gus Larson, with a crew of M. Brooks, Chuck Shepard, Eric Isakson, and Don Brand, out-sailed her clubmate *Last Chance* to win the Felker Cup. The following season Larson successfully defended his title, and the cup remained in Neenah for the fourth successive year. The Sawyer trophy in 1952 went to Tom Anger in *Win-Some-Too*, who finished only twenty seconds ahead of Bob Kimberly in his new *Eskimo*. Trailing *Eskimo* were E. A. Malone sailing *Winnebago* and Larson in *Sea Gull II*. Malone, a Fond du Lac yachtsman sailing with the Oshkosh fleet, placed third in the Felker event also.

On the following day the 1952 Inland meet opened at Neenah.



The club's officers that year were: Paul E. Bowman, commodore; George Zitelman, vice commodore; D. H. Kutchera, rear commodore; E. O. Woerner, secretary-treasurer. Com. Bowman appointed James C. Kimberly honorary chairman of the regatta and Karl Oberreich administrative chairman.

At that time J. C. Kimberly, who had been the leader of the Nodaway founders, could look back over seventy-odd years of yacht racing on Lake Winnebago and down the entire stretch of Inland Association history. He had served the club as commodore eleven times and had helped stage every Inland regatta sponsored by Neenah-Nodaway. For several seasons he had been the club's chief judge, and on more than one cup night he had counseled young sailors: Practice, play the game, and learn the rules until reaction becomes automatic ("You cannot read the rule book in the middle of a race").

For the Inland regatta the committee scheduled C, D, and Y races for each morning and A and E contests for the afternoons. At the regatta's close the scores showed *Val-Lo-Will* of the Lake Geneva Club, skippered by William Grunow, Jr., as the new Class A champion and Neenah-Nodaway's Frank Grundman with his *Rascal* again the title holder in the Y Class. He won four firsts and a second in the five heats. Jay Ecklund of the Minnetonka Club was second and Eric Isakson, sailing *Maid of Nine*, third.

The lake lived up to its Windybago title on one morning of the regatta, and spills and broken masts marked the course. That afternoon the breeze mockingly turned its back on the sailors, and the A squadron in a lazy sail took more than two hours to finish its course. The last two days of the meet brought perfect weather and treated the spectators to one of the most unforgettable sights that Neenah has to offer—the A and E class yachts running off the breeze, their white sails catching sun and shadow and their huge spinnakers rounded full.

In 1953, at Lake Minnetonka, *Last Chance*, skippered by William H. (Buzz) Kellett, recaptured the Inland Class A title for Neenah-Nodaway. In that contest for the first time in Inland

history a triple tie threw the three top places to the horserace point system for decision. Young Kellett, William Grunow, Jr., and John Pillsbury, Jr., all tied for first place. The following year the Association abandoned this method of scoring for a modification of the Olympic and the new Long Island Sound systems.

In 1954 and 1956, *Last Chance* with Bill Kellett at the tiller won the Sawyer Cup, and in the latter year she placed third at the Inland meet at Oshkosh. The Felker race in 1954 again went to John D. Buckstaff in *Lake Fly*. William Grunow, Jr., won the Inland A Class championship that year and successfully defended his title in 1956. In 1955 a polio epidemic forced the cancellation of the Sawyer, Felker, and Inland contests.

Participation in the regattas over this period was by no means the only tie that the Neenah-Nodaway Club had with the Inland Association. For more than three decades Neenah-Nodaway skipper as officers of the Association have helped shape its policies: Stephen R. Davis, as member of the board of directors from 1920 to 1925; John R. Kimberly, as board member from 1926 to 1935 and 1940 to 1950, as commodore from 1936 to 1940 (J. R. Kimberly was elected an honorary board member in 1950, an honor he later relinquished, feeling that he no longer should continue to hold it); William R. Kellett, as board member from 1940 to 1948 and 1953 to —, vice commodore in 1948 and 1949, and commodore from 1950 to 1952.

Throughout these years the Inland officers have worked toward the "equal racing conditions" aspired to long before by the Nodaway Yacht Club. Each season the specifications for Inland yachts have become more sharply defined and more rigidly enforced. But as *Sail Slants*, the official organ of the Association, points out, the goal has not always been easy to attain. It has taken wit as well as wisdom to discover that a line on a spar can control the size of a sail more effectively than can a measuring tape. This simple device, as the authorities found, outsmarts the clever sailor who spreads his sail on the grass the night before a regatta to shrink it to size for the measurer, or one who sews a fishline in his bolt rope

to keep his sail down temporarily for the official OK. Plastic hulls, synthetic fibers, and other technological advances have further complicated their problem, but they have held to their mark—uniformity in a given class to let skill and seamanship decide the contest.

Yacht racing in the Northwest, as elsewhere, has experienced many changes during these years. The introduction of new models has broadened the competition by bringing in young skippers and the ladies. It is no longer exclusively a man's sport. He now shares it with the family. Brother teams, sister teams, brother-and-sister teams, and occasionally a husband-and-wife team enter the contests today.

To date, the distaff skippers have shown a preference for the C Class yacht. Inland trophy records for the Miss Skippers, according to press clippings at hand, began in 1935, when Barbara Archer of the White Bear Club received the Inland cup given yearly to a deserving Junior skipper. In 1949, Carolyn and Donna Mann of the Lake Geneva Club became the first ladies to win an Inland race at the annual meet. They sailed their *Witch Craft* to a slim victory in Class C. Jane Wiswell, also of Lake Geneva, was the first champion Miss Skipper. She captured the Cub Class title at an invitation regatta in 1948, and in 1953 in *Calamity Jane III* she won the C Class crown. Ladies have served as captain or crew also on the E and D scows and the X boat but to date the 38-foot A Class scow has remained a man's world.

To give all Inland classes an opportunity to compete, the enlarged fleet has made necessary the invitation regattas. In addition, two days of tune-up races now regularly supplement the annual classic. As the number of races has increased, so have the trophies, which usually have been donated by member clubs or individuals. According to the Association's handbook, the Neenah-Nodaway Club at present is represented by the Kimberly trophy for Class D scows, put up by James C. and John R. Kimberly in 1948, the James C. Kimberly Cup for Class A sloops given in





Some Inland Association trophies. 1, Valentine, Class A. 2, Pillsbury, Class A. 3, Pine Lake, Class E. 4, 1st and 2nd places in regatta, for permanent possession of the winners, Class A. 5, Gartz, Class A. 6, Weyerhaeuser, Class A. 7, Three Bells, Class A. 8, Green Lake, Class E. 9, Dr. Schmidt Memorial, Class A. 10, Inland Foundation, Class E. 11, Milwaukee *Journal*, Class E. 12, Culver Academy, Class E. 13, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd places in regatta, Class E. 14, Dr. Schmidt Memorial, Class E. 15, Bilge Pullers, Class E. 16, Bray, Class C. 17, Dr. Schmidt Memorial, Class C. 18, Warren-Carpenter-Freytag, Class C. 19, Winton, Class C.



1950, and the Mrs. Cola G. Parker award for the highest ranking Junior girl skipper of a Class D scow, presented in 1952.

On the home front the Neenah-Nodaway Club approaches the century mark sailing under a most propitious breeze. When the incorporation of the club was under discussion back in April, 1939, Albert C. Gilbert, then commodore, felt that what the club needed most was a "solid financial foundation." Jack Kimberly added that the lifeblood of a strong and vital club was a "sound racing program." Both men, perhaps unwittingly, were shaping up the policy that since has carried the club on its successful way. Regular, Junior, and Sustaining memberships, written into the Articles of Incorporation, have helped build a solid financial foundation, and each season a schedule of thirty-odd race days has provided a sound racing program. Behind all this, directors, hard-working commodores, scores of aides, and a corps of judges have pumped the lifeblood—be it money or races—through the organization to bring it to its present thriving state.





*AT THE* very beginning of the Neenah Club its chief asset was a fine sailing harbor. To this, four generations of sailors have since added a fund of intangibles—a deep love for the sport, an indomitable spirit, a high standard of sportsmanship, and splendid achievement. A long line of phantom ships tells the early story: the *Mayflower*, the *Minnie Graves*, *Albatross*, and *Myra Belle*, the *Mermaid* and *Marguerite*, the Nodaway catboats, the *Nirvana*, *Corona*, and *Kathleen*, the Jones-designed scows—all have made their contribution to Neenah-Nodaway tradition and all have sailed their last race. The chapter written by the more recent craft is familiar to every local sailor.

Outwardly yacht racing today bears little resemblance to the early sport of the Neenah Club, little more than the present harbor course bears to that great triangle that ran from Neenah to Stockbridge to Garlic Island and home again. The days of rough-and-ready competition, when sandbags were tossed overboard to permit a stranger to join a crew, are gone. The rules and the yachts have both changed. But the challenge of sails and the race sounds as clear and compelling to Neenah sailors as ever.

In recent years the club has invested in youth. Realizing what the sport can mean to the Juniors and what the Juniors can mean to the club, officers and volunteers from the senior ranks have given devoted service to this new division. Tomorrow these Juniors will become the stewards of the Neenah-Nodaway Club and its traditions. As the record already shows, they will not neglect their heritage. Under their leadership a salute to the club burgee will continue to be a salute to the future.

# Appendix

## CLUB COMMODORES

1864-73	Neenah Yacht Club	Records Missing
1874-78		S. F. Henry
1879-93		Records Missing
1894-1900	Nodaway Yacht Club	J. C. Kimberly
1901-03		S. F. Shattuck
1899-1903	Neenah Yacht Club	W. M. Gilbert
1904-05	Neenah-Nodaway Yacht Club	L. J. Pinkerton
1906-13		Records Missing
1914		W. M. Gilbert
1915-19		Records Missing
1920		W. M. Gilbert
1921-23		W. L. Davis
1924-25		S. F. Shattuck
1926-28		J. R. Kimberly
1929-32		J. C. Kimberly
1933-35		S. F. Shattuck
1936		J. H. Kimberly
1937		W. R. Kellett
1938		J. H. Kimberly
1939		A. C. Gilbert
1940		C. H. Sage
1941		J. L. Sensenbrenner
1942		J. C. Kimberly
1943		H. S. Craig
1944		B. F. Smith
1945		R. H. Spoor
1946		R. K. Neller
1947	K. A. Oberreich & R. S. Sage	
1948	W. W. Roller	
1949	H. B. Palmer	
1950	R. E. Risley	
1951-52	P. E. Bowman	
1953-54	H. S. Craig	
1955	F. Grundman	
1956	E. O. Woerner	
1957	T. Perry	

## NEENAH-NODAWAY CUPS

## CLASS A

- W. M. Gilbert Trophy  
 W. R. Kellett Trophy, 1st Series  
 W. R. Kellett Trophy, 2nd Series

## CLASS E

## Commodore Series

- A. C. Gilbert Trophy for 1st place (about 1940)  
 Mrs. J. A. Kimberly, Jr., Trophy for 2nd place (1895)

## Championship Series

- Mowry Smith Trophy for 1st place  
 Neenah-Nodaway Trophy for 2nd place

Mrs. Ernst Mahler 3-Course 4th of July Trophy (1942)

A. C. Gilbert Perpetual Challenge Cup (1940)

F. J. Sensenbrenner Boom & Sail Gaboon Labor Day Trophy (1947)

## CLASS D

## Commodore Series

- J. C. Kimberly Trophy for 1st place (1947)  
 A. K. Kimberly Trophy for 2nd place (1938)

## Championship Series

- J. S. Sensenbrenner, Jr., Trophy for 1st place (1939)  
 Neenah-Nodaway Trophy for 2nd place (1947)

W. R. Kellett 4th of July Trophy (1951)

Mrs. Cola G. Parker Labor Day Week-End Trophy (1947)

J. C. Kimberly Fleet Championship Trophy (1953)

## CLASS X

## Commodore Series

- |  |                              |
|--|------------------------------|
| J. A. Kimberly, Jr., Trophy for 1st place  | { Perhaps<br>1938 or<br>1939 |
| J. H. Kimberly Trophy of 2nd place         |                              |
| J. R. Kimberly Trophy for 3rd place        |                              |
| Neenah-Nodaway Trophy for 4th place (1948) |                              |

## Championship Series

- |  |                              |
|--|------------------------------|
| J. S. Sensenbrenner, Jr., Trophy for 1st place | { Perhaps<br>1938 or<br>1939 |
| Mrs. Ernst Mahler Trophy for 2nd place         |                              |
| J. C. Kimberly Trophy for 3rd place            |                              |
| Neenah-Nodaway Trophy for 4th place            |                              |



A. C. Gilbert 3-Course 4th of July Trophy (1943)  
 Mrs. R. H. Spoor 4th of July Trophy (1944)  
 Mimi Mory Labor Day Trophy (1939)  
 Mrs. Cola G. Parker Labor Day Week-End Trophy (1943)  
 H. A. DuBois Fleet Championship (1953)

## LIGHTNING CLASS

## Commodore Series

Neenah-Nodaway Trophy for 1st place (1945)  
 R. H. Spoor Trophy for 2nd place

## Championship Series

Neenah-Nodaway Trophy for 1st place (1945)  
 B. F. Smith Trophy for 2nd place

H. C. Schultz Memorial Day Trophy (1950)  
 Finette Roller 4th of July Trophy (1947)  
 R. K. Neller Challenge Bell Labor Day Week-End Trophy (1947)  
 Don Schultz Labor Day Trophy (1953)  
 J. C. Kimberly Fleet Championship Trophy (1953)

## SPECIAL TROPHIES

A. K. Kimberly Most Persistent Skipper Trophy (about 1938)  
 F. B. Whiting Club Championship Trophy (about 1938)  
 H. B. Palmer Miss Skipper Trophy (1949)  
 Wright Good Sportsmanship Trophy (1950)  
 Sage Trophy for Inland E Scows (1952)  
 E. J. Bergstrom Crew of the Year Trophy (1953)  
 Gus Woerner Memorial Trophy  
 Maid of Nine (E. N. Isakson) E Scow Trophy

## FELKER CUP WINNERS

YEAR	YACHT	SKIPPER	CLUB
1885	<i>Hattie</i>	John Dickinson	Oshkosh
1886	<i>Pinafore</i>	Capt. Whitmier	Oshkosh
1887	<i>Carrie Morgan</i>	B. Woodworth	Oshkosh
1888	<i>Minerva</i>	H. Dittmar	Fond du Lac
1889	<i>Minerva</i>	H. Dittmar	Fond du Lac
1890	<i>Marguerite</i>	J. H. Jones	Menasha
1891	<i>Carrie Morgan</i>	B. Woodworth	Oshkosh
1892	<i>Carrie Morgan</i>	B. Woodworth	Oshkosh
1893	<i>Marguerite</i>	J. H. Jones	Menasha

YEAR	YACHT	SKIPPER	CLUB
1894	<i>Minerva</i>	H. Dittmar	Fond du Lac
1895	<i>Nirvana</i>	J. C. Kimberly	Nodaway
1896	<i>Corona</i>	J. A. Kimberly, Jr.	Nodaway
1897	<i>Corona</i>	J. A. Kimberly, Jr.	Nodaway
1898	<i>Avis</i>	W. H. Thompson	Oconomowoc
1899	<i>Aderyn</i>	W. L. Davis	Neenah
1900	<i>Caroline</i>	J. H. Jones	Oshkosh
1901	<i>Anita</i>	W. L. Davis	Neenah
1902	<i>Adelaide</i>	S. R. Davis	Pine Lake
1903	<i>Comet II</i>	Fred Pabst, Jr.	Pewaukee
1904	<i>Comet II</i>	Fred Pabst, Jr.	Pewaukee
1905	<i>Winnebago</i>	J. C. Kimberly	Neenah-Nodaway
1906	<i>Troubadour</i>	Jack Ordway	White Bear
1907	<i>Troubadour</i>	Jack Ordway	White Bear
1908	<i>Kathryn III</i>	John Buckstaff	Butte des Morts
1909	<i>Kathryn III</i>	John Buckstaff	Butte des Morts
1910	<i>Kathryn III</i>	John Buckstaff	Butte des Morts
1911	<i>Kathryn III</i>	John Buckstaff	Butte des Morts
1912	<i>Kathryn III</i>	John Buckstaff	Butte des Morts
1913		No Record	
1914	<i>Gretchen III</i>	S. F. Shattuck	Neenah-Nodaway
1915	<i>LaBelle II</i>	William Pelouze	Oconomowoc
1916	<i>Kathryn III</i>	John Buckstaff	Butte des Morts
1917	<i>Dorla</i>	Henry Meyer	Pewaukee
1918		No Record	
1919	<i>Kathryn IV</i>	John Buckstaff	Butte des Morts
1920	<i>Faith</i>	John Buckstaff	Oshkosh
1921	<i>Faith</i>	John Buckstaff	Oshkosh
1922	<i>Faith</i>	John Buckstaff	Oshkosh
1923	<i>Deltax III</i>	Carl Steiger	Oshkosh
1924		No Record	
1925	<i>Faith</i>	John Buckstaff	Oshkosh
1926	<i>Deltax III</i>	Carl Steiger	Oshkosh
1927	<i>Shadow</i>	Jack Kimberly	Neenah-Nodaway
1928-30		No Record	
1931	<i>Little Smoke</i>	J. F. Perrigo	Lake Geneva
1932-37		No Record	
1938	<i>Gale</i>	Harry Nye, Jr.	Lake Geneva
1939	<i>Phantom III</i>	J. H. Kimberly	Neenah-Nodaway

YEAR	YACHT	SKIPPER	CLUB
1940	<i>Phantom III</i>	J. H. Kimberly	Neenah-Nodaway
1941-44		No Record	
1945	<i>Lake Fly</i>	John Buckstaff	Oshkosh
1946	<i>Win-Some-Too</i>	Tom Anger	Oshkosh
1947	<i>Win-Some-Too</i>	Tom Anger	Oshkosh
1948	<i>Win-Some-Too</i>	Tom Anger	Oshkosh
1949	<i>Win-Some-Too</i>	Tom Anger	Oshkosh
1950	<i>Last Chance</i>	W. R. Kellett	Neenah-Nodaway
1951		Time Limit Expired	
1952	<i>Sea Gull II</i>	R. H. Larson	Neenah-Nodaway
1953	<i>Sea Gull II</i>	R. H. Larson	Neenah-Nodaway
1954	<i>Lake Fly</i>	John Buckstaff	Oshkosh
1955		No Race	
1956		Harry Melges	Lake Geneva

## INLAND CLASS A CHAMPIONS

1898	<i>Mahto</i>	L. P. Ordway, Sr.	White Bear
1899	<i>Argo</i>	J. H. Jones	Oshkosh
1900	<i>Anita</i>	W. L. Davis	Neenah
1901	<i>Emanon</i>		Wawasee (Ind.)
1902	<i>Aderyn</i>	Herman Brumder	Pine Lake
1903	<i>Comet II</i>	Fred Pabst, Jr.	Pewaukee
1904	<i>Alpha</i>	Jack Ordway	White Bear
1905	<i>Glyndwr</i>	William Bray	Oshkosh
1906	<i>Troubadour</i>	Jack Ordway	White Bear
1907	<i>Troubadour</i>	Jack Ordway	White Bear
1908	<i>Troubadour</i>	Jack Ordway	White Bear
1909	<i>Kathryn III</i>	John Buckstaff	Butte des Morts
1910	<i>Marian Jean</i>	Erle B. Savage	Minnetonka
1911	<i>Wax Wing</i>	E. T. Stevens	Delavan
1912	<i>Troubadour</i>	Jack Ordway	White Bear
1913	<i>Senta</i>	O. L. Schmidt	Lake Geneva
1914	<i>Kathryn III</i>	John Buckstaff	Butte des Morts
1915	<i>Tornado</i>	Jack Ordway	White Bear
1916	<i>Kathryn III</i>	John Buckstaff	Butte des Morts
1917-18		No Regatta	
1919	<i>Dorla</i>	Henry Meyer	Pewaukee
1920	<i>Faith</i>	John Buckstaff	Oshkosh



YEAR	YACHT	SKIPPER	CLUB
1921	<i>Faith</i>	John Buckstaff	Oshkosh
1922	<i>Faith</i>	John Buckstaff	Oshkosh
1923	<i>Kingfisher</i>	Erle B. Savage	Minnetonka
1924	<i>Blue Heron</i>	Leonard Carpenter	A tie. Both
	<i>Kingfisher</i>	Eugene Glueck	Minnetonka
1925	<i>Faith</i>	John Buckstaff	Oshkosh
1926	<i>Haywire</i>	John Buckstaff	Oshkosh
1927	<i>Red Raven</i>	Alan J. Hill	Minnetonka
1928	<i>Two Sallies</i>	C. H. Bell	Minnetonka
1929	<i>Sally Too</i>	C. H. Bell	Minnetonka
1930	<i>Yellow Jacket</i>	Alan J. Hill	Minnetonka
1931	<i>Big Foot</i>	A. F. Gartz, Jr.	Lake Geneva
1932	<i>Blue Devil</i>	T. E. Irvine	White Bear
1933	<i>Sea Fox</i>	E. P. Pillsbury	Minnetonka
1934	<i>Sea Fox</i>	E. P. Pillsbury	Minnetonka
1935	<i>Sea Fox</i>	E. P. Pillsbury	Minnetonka
1936	<i>Big Foot Too</i>	A. F. Gartz, Jr.	Lake Geneva
1937	<i>Big Foot Too</i>	A. F. Gartz, Jr.	Lake Geneva
1938	<i>Sea Fox</i>	John Pillsbury, Jr.	Minnetonka
1939	<i>Big Foot Too</i>	A. F. Gartz, Jr.	Lake Geneva
1940	<i>Sea Fox</i>	E. P. Pillsbury	Minnetonka
1941	<i>Junior</i>	Jack Vilas, Jr.	Lake Geneva
1942-45		No Regatta	
1946	<i>Sea Fox</i>	E. P. Pillsbury	Minnetonka
1947	<i>Sea Hound</i>	E. P. Pillsbury	Minnetonka
1948	<i>Sea Hound</i>	E. P. Pillsbury	Minnetonka
1949	<i>Hornet</i>	John Pillsbury, Jr.	Minnetonka
1950	<i>Sea Hound</i>	E. P. Pillsbury	Minnetonka
1951	<i>Last Chance</i>	W. R. Kellett	Neenah-Nodaway
1952	<i>Val-Lo-Will</i>	William Grunow, Jr.	Lake Geneva
1953	<i>Last Chance</i>	W. H. Kellett	Neenah-Nodaway
1954	<i>Val-Lo-Will</i>	William Grunow, Jr.	Lake Geneva
1955		No Regatta	
1956	<i>Val-Lo-Will</i>	William Grunow, Jr.	Lake Geneva

# APPROXIMATE DISTANCES ON LAKE WINNEBAGO

## NEENAH

2.0 MENASHA

3.5 2.0 LOCHYRST

4.5 3.2 1.3 PEABODY'S

7.4 6.5 5.0 4.0 CLIFTON

9.8 9.8 9.7 9.0 8.3 STOCKBRIDGE

15.8 16.0 16.3 15.8 15.3 7.0 BROTHERTOWN

19.0 19.5 19.8 19.3 18.8 10.5 3.8 CALUMET

20.8 21.5 22.0 21.3 20.5 12.2 6.0 1.4 WINNEBAGO PARK

26.5 27.5 28.0 27.9 27.0 19.5 13.7 10.1 8.0 FOND DU LAC

19.0 20.0 20.8 20.6 19.5 12.8 8.0 6.2 5.4 7.5 LONG POINT

17.4 18.0 19.0 19.0 18.0 11.9 7.9 7.0 7.0 9.8 2.3 MORLEY'S POINT

16.5 17.2 18.2 18.2 17.5 11.2 7.8 7.5 7.5 10.8 3.3 1.0 RANDALL'S POINT

16.2 17.5 17.5 17.6 17.2 11.8 9.8 9.9 10.3 13.3 5.8 3.5 2.5 PAUKOTUCK

15.5 16.8 16.3 16.5 15.5 11.3 10.4 11.0 11.5 14.8 7.3 5.0 4.0 1.8 STONY BEACH

15.5 16.8 16.3 16.5 16.5 11.3 10.3 11.4 12.0 15.4 7.9 5.6 4.6 2.5 1.0 OSHKOSH

10.0 10.5 12.0 12.5 12.6 8.5 11.0 13.0 14.0 18.5 11.0 9.0 7.8 6.5 6.0 6.0 ASYLUM POINT

7.7 8.2 9.5 9.8 10.5 7.8 11.4 13.9 15.4 20.0 12.5 10.9 9.8 8.6 7.6 7.6 2.5 ISLAND PARK DOCK

2.5 3.3 4.6 5.4 7.5 8.0 13.9 16.9 18.8 24.2 16.8 15.0 14.0 13.0 13.0 13.0 7.6 4.8 WHEELER'S POINT

1.6 2.3 3.8 4.5 7.0 8.4 14.5 17.5 19.5 25.0 17.8 16.0 15.0 14.5 14.0 14.0 8.6 5.8 1.0 LIME KILN POINT





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# SKIPPERS' MAP NEENAH-NODAWAY YACHT CLUB NEENAH, WISCONSIN

