

FROSTBITE SAILING

There are some sailors who do not say goodbye to the sailing season when the wind turns cold and the snow starts to fly. They sit around some cozy bar, when all the boats are put away for the winter, and reminisce about the great races of summer. Drinks are drunk and tales are told and soon enthusiasm takes the place of common sense.

Such was the case in 1956, when the Ingersons (Helen and Joe), Mike Doyle, Carl Brown, Kent Hill, Fred Nusbaum, Ashley Palmer, and Bob Lawless decided that winter was not going to stop the fun. Permission was granted to sail the M.I.T. Tech Dinghies, then being used by RYC's Junior Sailing Program, and the Rochester Frostbite Association was born.

Originally called the Lake Ontario Frostbite Racing Association, they gathered on Sunday afternoons and held informal races. In September 1957 they held a formal meeting at RYC and elected officers, which included Eric C. "Uncle Pete" Moore as Honorary President. They set down rules, decided a crash-boat would be nice, charged dues to pay for it, and one of the happiest — some would say nuttiest — sailing fleets at the Club was on its way. Joe Ingerson was elected first and only Commodore of the Fleet.

Watching the Frostbiters race has become a popular source of enjoyment on Sunday afternoons throughout the winter for all clubmembers, as has the annual Spaghetti Dinner. Different than other one-design fleets, the Frostbiters do not restrict participation to RYC members only, but encourage members of other local yacht clubs to sail with the group.

Many things have changed over the years, including a switch from Tech Dinghies to O'Day Interclub Dinghies; however, the character of the fleet is still the same. Helen and Joe Ingerson are the only active sailors from that founding group but many others have maintained their membership "for old times sake" and to receive the "Frostbite flashes" and keep abreast of all the news.

Some fond recollections from this Frostbiters' newsletter are:

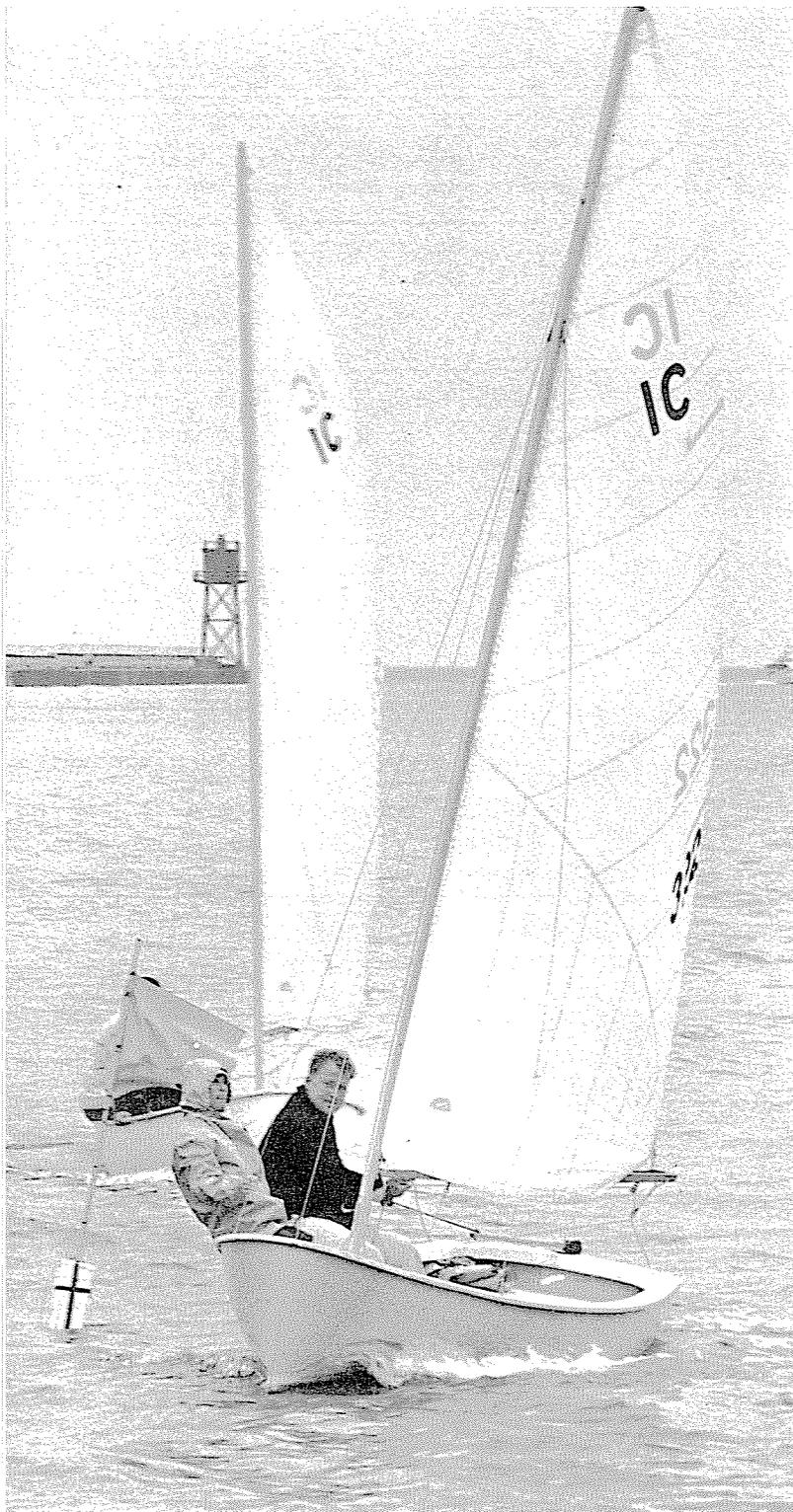
... Mac Storm and Barbara Woepple announced their engagement on April 21, 1963 with champagne and a 30 knot wind that almost ended it.

... References were made to collisions with ice floes, boats, logs, walls, oil slicks, weeds, tar, and trees.

... Many remarks were included about the participants' condition on Sunday after certain activities on Saturday, when nicknames sprang up, such as Barf and Gourd.

... The weather was invariably reported as too wet, too cold, too windy, or beautiful.

Births, weddings, operations, dog fights, snowball fights, and honeymoons were all included, along with fashion notes on the proper attire for a Frostbiter when the temperature is 30 and so is the wind.



Two Interclubs going to weather on a cold day.

The Team Races--ahhhha--where the teams tried to outdo each other, not just in racing but costumes, bands, partying, and even poetry. They came from Canada, Marblehead, Scituate, Duxbury, and other far-flung places and RYC sailors travelled there too.

The Protest Committee was always busy after the races. Their reports were indeed interesting as were the stories of those who had been swimming, rocking his or her boat, capsizing or causing other kinds of mischief. It was considered the mark of a great sailor to capsize without getting wet, using any means available--including a jump into someone else's boat.

The "Flashes" give credit, much deserved, to the intrepid souls who have withstood the freezing cold over the years, starting races and manning the crash boats with no hope for a first in the standings. Doug Hooper, Herb Mylacraine, Ken Teagarden and Hank Darnell are some of the recent stalwarts.

The Rochester Frostbite Association now has a reasonably active membership list of 32. Frequent starters on a Sunday afternoon include Wes Dawes, Knobby Walsh, Hank Mills, Bob Fields, Helen Ingerson, Bruce Cameron, Jim Tompkins, Joe Hale, Howie Rekers, Dick Handler, Ross Richards, Ethan Welch, John McGrath, Mark Converse, Jerry Cook, Tarry Polidor, Marge Robfogel, Dave Rutherford, and Dan Hawryschuk.

5-0-5

The 5-0-5 made its entry to the RYC in the 1970 Memorial Day Race. Chuck Angle, Jr. brought his *Usilias* to the Club and immediately the 5-0's were the talk of those sailors who were looking for a more challenging boat than the 420.

Fast, responsive, exhilarating, the 5-0's represent something approaching the ultimate in a two-man racing dinghy. With an LOA of 16'4", a sail area of 150 sq. ft., and a weight of only 285 pounds, the boat is about the fastest monohull afloat, reportedly capable of reaching 20 knots.

Slow deliveries delayed the build-up of the fleet the first year, but it eventually included five boats owned by Chuck Angle, Ted Castle, Bob Fields, Peter Sachs, and Tom Roth. In addition to hosting the East Coast Championship in 1970, the group traveled widely to many regattas the following year.

Unfortunately, as fast as they were accepted, the 5-0's left the Rochester scene. Why one class is successful and another fails to keep its momentum is well demonstrated in this instance. When Chuck Angle left Rochester, there was no one to continue the year-round promotion that is required (all of the other owners were away at college for most of the year). The lack of promotion, combined with continued extended deliveries of new boats from England with no source of U.S. builders, brought the demise of the Rochester fleet.

Maybe someday the 5-0-5 will return to Rochester. It will be welcomed back.



Chuck Lee, Deedee Darnell, Teagarden and Hank Darnell preparing for a Sunday race.



Chuck Angle in 505 on a Fast Reach