

ICE YACHTING

S1 P08

A Review of Today's Organizations, Classes and Events

By RAY RUGE

ALL YACHTSMEN are aware of this winter madness called "ice boating" that overtakes certain of their confreres each year. Inevitably, some of them eagerly accept the invitations of their ice boating friends and, more often than not, succumb to the wiles of this fascinating, speedy sport. During the past decade, the increase in activity that accompanied the development of the speedy but inexpensive bow-steering racers led to better organization and a more orderly schedule of events wherever ice boating can be enjoyed.

ORGANIZATIONS: After a vigorous but rather disorganized youth lasting about a half century, ice yachting came of age with the formation of the Northwestern Ice Yachting Association at Oshkosh, Wis., in 1912. Existing yachts were classified for racing purposes and the organization conducted an annual regatta to which its various member clubs, from Wisconsin, Michigan and Illinois, sent their speediest craft to vie for regional honors. The standardization of racing classes which resulted was a boon to the sport. Interest ran high, except for a natural lull during World War I. Newer classes were recognized as they attained sufficient numbers and, by 1935, the NIYA listed the following: Class A, up to 350 sq. ft. sail area; Class B, up to 250 sq. ft.; Class C, up to 175 sq. ft.; and Class E, up to 75 sq. ft. Class D, 125 sq. ft., was admitted a few years later. No restrictions other than sail area were placed on design and the phenomenal growth of interest since 1935 can be largely traced to this "wide open" policy of classification, which encouraged experimenting and led directly to the trial and development of the bow-steering yacht in Wisconsin. Member Clubs of the NIYA include: Menominee, Kalamazoo, Battle Creek and Detroit, Mich.; Neenah, Oshkosh, Pewaukee, Four Lakes (Madison), Skeeter (Lake Geneva), Wis.; Fox Lake, Ill. The Secretary is Frank Myers, 809 Milwaukee Ave., South Milwaukee, Wis. and the 1947 regatta is scheduled for Neenah late in January. The NIYA sails a three-heat series for the championship of each class, followed by a free-for-all.

It was not until 1937 that a group of eastern enthusiasts met at the Larchmont Yacht Club and founded the Eastern Ice Yachting Association. The entire setup was deliberately patterned after the older Northwestern, with a view to future intersectional competition. One or two minor differences exist in the list of classes, reflecting local variations in size

and types of boats being raced. The EIYA lists the following racing classes: Class A, up to 350 sq. ft.; Class X, up to 250 sq. ft. (same as NIYA Class B); Class B, up to 200 sq. ft. (no 200 ft. class in NIYA); Class C, up to 175 sq. ft.; Class D, up to 125 sq. ft.; Class E, up to 75 sq. ft.

Within a few seasons, the South Bay Scooter Club of Long Island applied for membership and two scooter classes, known simply as "large" (over 150 sq. ft.) and "small" (under 150 sq. ft.) were added to the roster.

Developed as a work and life-saving craft by the men of the Great South Bay, the scooter is the only truly amphibious sailing craft in existence. Consisting of a simple flat-bottomed hull, with fixed runners fastened to her bottom and a long-base sloop rig, the scooter can and does sail over ice, into open water, across water and, with the aid of a pull or two on her bowsprit, back up onto the ice again. And the scooter boasts no rudder! Steering is done entirely by manipulating the jib and shifting live weights.

By 1946, the EIYA listed thirteen member clubs: North Shrewsbury and Monmouth (Red Bank), Rumson, Long Branch, Lake Hopatcong, Musconetcong (Netcong), Greenwood Lake, Lakeside (Greenwood Lake), in New Jersey; Hudson Highlands (Bear Mountain), Orange Lake (Newburgh), South Bay Scooter (Bellport), in New York; Connecticut Ice Yacht Club (Waterbury), Conn.; Winnicunnet Ice Yacht Club (Brockton), Mass.

At each annual regatta, the EIYA sails a three-heat series for the championship of each class, followed by a three-heat series among the class champions only, for the Open Championship. The Secretary is Ray Ruge, Piermont, New York. The 1947 Regatta will be held at Bellport, Long Island, New York, ice permitting, starting February 1st.

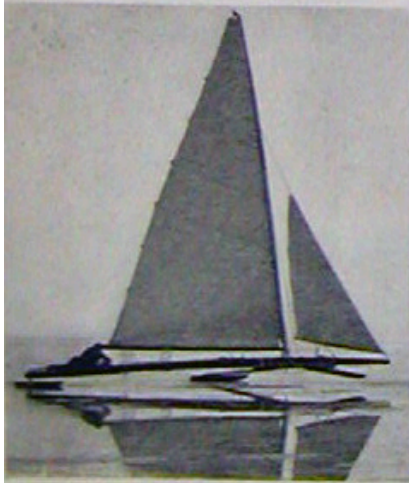
The third major organization is the International Skeeter Association, founded in 1939 to promote interest and competition in Class E only. Patterned after the International Star Class Y.R.A., the ISA has for members the owners of Class E yachts, rather than a group of clubs. These individuals are grouped in "Fleets." Each fleet conducts its own annual championship race series and the central organization runs off the International and Interfleet championships each season. In 1942, individual members numbered 120 and the secretary (David Hall, 111 W. Jackson Blvd., Chicago) reports the list nearing 150 at present. The 1947 ISA Championships

Ruge



Fanta Photos

O. Lyman Dwight's "Marcia II" (above). The largest bow-steerer ever built, she eventually broke her backbone as a result of the down pressure of the big rig. Fred Jungbluth's "Fritz" (left), the highest development of the "Hudson River" type. "Miss Jane II" (right) is a typical Western stern-steerer.





Fanta



Sozio



Sozio

"Eva II" (left), Clarence Thiele's cat-rigged bow-steerer, the largest boat of her type in the country. Ernst von Lengerke's "Trudle III" (center) is fast in light airs. Homer Sieder's "Swordfish" holds the North American Class B Pennant and two EIYA Class B Championship

are scheduled for Lake Geneva, Wis., probably February 15th and 16th. The Detroit Ice Yacht Club has scheduled its annual Invitation Regatta for the Gar Wood Trophy for the following week-end, February 22nd and 23rd. This series is for Class E yachts from the United States and Canada, where considerable activity centers around Toronto and Hamilton.

CLASSES: Class A (up to 350 sq. ft.) NIYA and EIYA. The 350-footers were top class, both in size and interest, in the Midwest and at Long Branch and Red Bank in the East, until 1935. They still retain their fascination for the "big boat" men (those to whom anything smaller is "just a boy's plaything") but, due to size, cost and transportation difficulties, there has been little new building in the class for the past 17 years. With one exception (O. Lyman Dwight's unsuccessful *Marcia II*, of Pewaukee), there have been no bow-steering A's. *Marcia II*'s lack of success, plus the obvious danger of a big bow-steerer in case of a capsizing, has prevented any further experimenting with the newer type in the big class. Typical of the most recent and fastest Class A yachts are *Pirate* and *Eskimo*, of the North Shrewsbury Club at Red Bank, *Ferdinand*, of Detroit, and *Fritz*, of Madison. All these run from 35 to 40 ft. in length, with 20 to 24 ft. runner planks, and marconi jib-and-mainsail rigs. *Fritz* and *Ferdinand* sport streamlined, pivoting masts and full-length battens in both sails. All use cast alloy runners with tool steel insert cutting blades, one set of which costs as much as an entire racing Skeeter. Total outlay for a Class A racer runs in the neighborhood of \$5000.

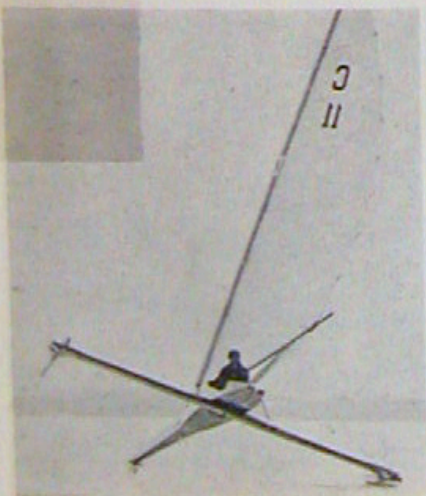
Class B, NIYA, and Class X, EIYA, (up to 250 sq. ft.). Once the busiest class in the NIYA and traditionally the class at the

Orange Lake Ice Yacht Club, the 250-footers have fallen on evil days. Neither a "big boat" nor a fast boat (judging by recent standards), they have seen no active building for a decade and little or none is in prospect. There is just one bow-steering 250 in the West, and one in the East, and both have more or less monopolized their class championships in Association events. Neither can stay with a modern Skeeter in any weather. The western boat, Clarence Thiele's *Eva III*, is particularly interesting because in her early days, as Starke Meyer's *Paula III*, she was the first bow-steering ice yacht in the country. More recently (1942) she has been defeated by *Miss Jane II*, a typically western stern-steerer, extremely fast.



Sozio

A typical group of Eastern Class Cs. They are of varying designs and rigs, and include both bow- and stern-steerers



Fanta



Sozio



Fanta

"Crazy Craft" (left) Ben Lampert's well-known bow-steerer of early design. Ray Ruge's "Charette II" (center) has won numerous EIYA championships. A Palmer Class D tandem (right). When their sail area is cut down to the prescribed 125 sq. ft., they have proven fast and safe